Violence and the (trans)formation of the state in the Yemen Arab Republic 1962-1970

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ABSTRACT

Did the civil war in North Yemen during the 1960s 'make' the new Yemeni state? If it did, how did it do so, and what was the nature of the state it made? To answer these questions, the thesis draws on hitherto untapped Egyptian and German archival material. It develops a model of the specific and contingent processes linking practices of civil war to state formation outcomes and uses the model to trace the processes whereby war (trans)formed the state.

The thesis reveals dynamics of state formation that have been hitherto neglected or misunderstood during this decisive episode of Yemen's history. Wartime violence and the practices associated with its mobilisation, administration, and financing shifted the political settlement of the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). The prominence of tribal leaders during the 1980s and 1990s and the concomitant tribalisation of the military and militarisation of the tribes are shown to be outcomes of the civil war. Similarly, the investigation reveals a dramatic and largely untold fiscal transformation of the YAR during the 1960s, which meant that government income came to rely primarily on external donors. Finally, the war, or rather the practices associated with it, altered the very idea of political order in North Yemen between 1962 and 1970. Spurred by competition for public support, elite discourses converged around the rhetorical commonplaces of modernity, development and the people. Although fragmentary and contradictory, these new commonplaces all privileged the central state as an actor and addressee of claims.

In addition to these insights into the specific legacies of the civil war, the thesis uses points of disagreement and slippage between the model and the rarely studied case of Yemen to problematise and suggest additions to the literatures on civil war, state building, and state formation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

£ British Pounds

$ United States Dollars

DWQ Dar al-wathaʾiq al-qawmiyya (Egyptian National Archives)

E£ Egyptian Pounds

FLOSY Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen

IBRD International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

LDA Local Development Association

MT Maria Theresa Thaler

NLF National Liberation Front

PAAA Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (German Foreign Ministry Archives)

PDRY People's Democratic Republic of Yemen

PRF Popular Resistance Forces

SWB BBC Monitoring Service Summary of World Broadcasts

UAR United Arab Republic

UKNA United Kingdom National Archive

USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

YAR Yemen Arab Republic

YBRD Yemen Bank for Reconstruction and Development

YR Yemeni Riyals

Note on transliteration

Transliteration loosely follows the International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES), while erring towards full transliteration. While adopting the IJMES conventions around common words, places, and names outside North Yemen, I have opted for full transliteration of personal names and places connected to what became the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR), following many a frustrating attempt to match people and places from the Arabic literature with their transliterated alter-egos. I have also fully transliterated all Arabic sources.

PROLOGUE

The revolution and civil war in North Yemen in the 1960s marked a watershed moment in Yemen's history, yet it remains poorly studied and misunderstood. Before delving into the arguments of the thesis proper, it may be useful to introduce the *dramatis personae* and to summarise the plot.

The war occurred in north Yemen, whose borders with British-controlled south Yemen and with north Yemen's northern neighbour, Saudi Arabia, had been internationally agreed in the 1930s. At the beginning of 1962, north Yemen was known as the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen and was ruled by Imam Yaḥiyā Ḥamīd al-Dīn. Ḥamīd al-Dīn rule had been facing growing opposition from a range of social forces and was finally cut short by a military coup in September 1962, remembered in Yemen as the September Revolution. The ensuing civil war pitted the republicans, who overthrew the Imam, against the royalists, who supported the restoration of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn dynasty.

The royalists comprised the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family and many former high-ranking officials and leading local notables, particularly from families that suffered executions, saw their lands confiscated, or lost positions of influence in the first weeks of republican rule. The royalists also drew on tribal support, in particular from the Bakīl tribal confederation. Geographically, their support was concentrated in the highland north of the country.

The republicans had broad popular support in the central highlands of Yemen around Taʿiz and ʾIbb, in the Tihāma, and among Shāfiʿī merchants. At their head were military officers trained abroad, nationalist intellectuals, lowland traders, and tribal opponents to the Imam -- an initial alliance between highland and lowland enemies of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn royal family, which began to break down in the course of the war.

Within this unravelling alliance there were, on the one hand, those 'radical republicans,' within the terminology of republican politics, who sought to re-make or at least significantly reform Yemeni society in-line with the ideals of Arab Socialism. They refused status distinctions on the basis of sect or north Yemen's traditional status hierarchy and, at least rhetorically, aspired to equal citizenship, land redistribution, and nationalisation. These groups were concentrated in the officer corps or organised around the main Arab political parties of the day – Nasserist, Baʿathist, and Arab Nationalist. They organised as a clandestine network of plotters before the overthrow of the Imam and became institutionalised in the committees and hierarchies of the republican state after 1962. They were united by their centre of gravity in lower Yemen and their outsider status: many of their leaders hailed from

outside the circles of Yemen's traditional elites. They were the main beneficiaries of Egyptian support.

On the other hand, there were those republicans dubbed 'moderate' by their supporters and 'dissident' (*munashiqūn*) by their opponents. Though the moderate republican leaders had hardly been at the pinnacle of the Imamic state, they were culturally and educationally products of the Imamate, often hailed from well-known tribal or learned families, and drew their support from their religious learning, their patronage networks, and their positions of prominence in tribes, towns, or villages. More invested in the status quo, they tended to invoke liberal ideas of progress, Yemeni nationalism, and the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood, while hoping to keep more far-reaching social change at bay. They aimed to overthrow the Imamate and to replace it with a mode of notable-based representative rule, seeking modernisation and improved standards of living largely within the framework of the traditional social order. They played an important role at the local level of republican politics and organised nationally through a series of tribal peace conferences during which they built support for their anti-Imamate and anti-Egyptian position.

Inside Yemen, tribal dynamics played a central role during the war. Two of northern Yemen's main tribal confederations, Bakīl and Ḥāshid, were a crucial source of military power for both of the contending sides. Both were split in terms of their political alignment. However, most of the tribes associated with Bakīl backed the royalists throughout most of the war. Meanwhile, the paramount shaykh of Ḥāshid supported the overthrow of the Imam and did much to push tribes affiliated with the Ḥāshid confederation into the republican camp. On the whole, the revolution was more popular among shaykhs, including important Bakīl leaders, than amongst tribesmen, yet the tribal politics of alignment during the war were complex. Tribes and sub-tribes were split in their allegiance and frequently changed sides. Ultimately, the war was to substantially re-draw the political role of tribal leaders and the relations between tribal leaders and ordinary members of tribes.

In terms of the broader politics of the Middle East during the 1960s, the civil war in Yemen became the 'hot' flashpoint for the regional Cold War between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The Egyptian leadership, seeking to export its Nasserist revolution, to gain access to oil rents, and to overthrow the region's remaining monarchies (Saudi Arabia first and foremost), supported the republicans. They saw the Imamate in Yemen as the weakest link—the chink in the armour of the Arab Peninsula's monarchies. They believed that if the Imam could be toppled in Yemen, the rulers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Emirates, and other monarchs would soon fall too. As a result, they supported the republicans. In a classic case of mission creep, the

initial symbolic Egyptian deployment of troops eventually turned into a full-blown occupation, with some 70,000 soldiers and hundreds of civilian advisors. The Egyptian intervention left a lasting mark on emerging Yemeni military and civilian government institutions. The USSR also actively supported the Republicans and became, after Egyptian withdrawal in 1967, the main supporter of the Republican cause alongside Syria and Algeria, who also stepped in after Egyptian withdrawal.

The Saudi royal family was deeply worried about an Egyptian military presence and an Egyptian-supported client state on its southern border and provided substantial funding for the royalist war effort, purchased arms for the royalists, and paid for British and French mercenaries to train the royalist militaries. As the Saudi system of payments evolved and became institutionalised, it laid the foundations for Saudi Arabian sponsorship of Yemeni tribal leaders and politicians and institutionalised Saudi Arabia's deepening involvement in the internal politics of the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). Alongside Saudi Arabia, Iran, Jordan, Great Britain, France, and Israel lent varying levels of clandestine or official support to the royalist cause.

1 INTRODUCTION

"Yemen went out of the darkness and into the light" (al-Maqāliḥ, 1987, p.136)

The revolution of 26 September 1962 and the ensuing civil war in North Yemen between royalists and republicans constituted, according to much of the Yemeni historiography, a momentous transition from 'darkness' to 'light' and from 'backwardness' to 'modernity.' It was the revolution that gave birth to the modern Yemeni state and unleashed rapid economic development.[1]

This historiography appears to support the claims of war-centred accounts of state formation. There is a tendency to reduce this literature to Charles Tilly's (1992, 1985, 1978) explorations of state formation in early modern Europe. Yet, writers stressing how the establishment of monopolies on the use of force and taxation were intimately bound up with the struggle of revolutionary or incumbent rulers against domestic competitors and foreign rivals have looked, inter alia, to twentieth century Russia and China (Skocpol, 1979), nineteenth century Latin America (Centeno, 2002; Lopez-Alves, 2000), and contemporary Afghanistan (Giustozzi, 2009). There is also a partially forgotten nineteenth and early twentieth century tradition of scholarship, encompassing such figures as Franz Oppenheimer, Georges Sorel, Georg Simmel, and Vilfredo Pareto, who analysed and sometimes glorified the way political order and the state emerged through war and violence.[2] Their common claim is that war making and state making are intimately intertwined, though they by no means suggest that the states wars make are identical. These writers have focused on both international and domestic wars, suggesting that "statemaking and what we now call 'internal war' are two sides of the same coin" (Ayoob, 1998, p.42).[3]

The celebration of the revolution in Yemeni historical writing and the broader arguments of war-centred accounts of state formation stand in contrast to a literature from the 1990s and 2000s on the relationship between violent conflict and state fragility and failure. This literature stresses that war, particularly internal war in the contemporary developing world,

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[1] Since "revolution" (*thawra*) is by far the dominant label given to the events of September 1962 in the Arabic-language literature, I, too, use it, without making a classificatory claim.

[2] For a recent discussion see: Malešević, 2010; also: Oppenheimer, 1907; Peter, 1996.

[3] Other war-centric accounts of state formation have argued that civil wars and interstate wars have opposite effects e.g.: Herbst, 2004, pp.310–311; Kasfir, 2004.

unmakes the state. This perspective has its roots in liberal views of war as (only) dangerous and destructive and has been particularly evident in policy centred work, which has claimed that civil wars result from and contribute directly to state weakness, fragility, or failure (OECD, 2008; USAID, 2005; Rotberg, 2004; World Bank, 2002). Because of a limited engagement with the actual historical trajectories of state formation at different times and in different parts of the world, these accounts arguably miss the centrality of violence, particularly internal violence, for the establishment and reproduction of states. A second, partially overlapping literature has stressed that wars now unmake states because of the radically different nature of the contemporary world since the end of the Cold War. Because of changing norms of sovereignty, changing patterns of international trade, investment and exploitation, and changing technologies of violence, wars have become new wars, states have become quasi-states, and civil wars now unravel the state (Jackson, 1990; Kaldor, 2013, 1999; Leander, 2004).

The present inquiry begins from this puzzle: do conflicts within the bounds of internationally recognised states support the centralising processes associated with state-formation; or do they undermine and weaken them? And what of the civil war in Yemen during the 1960s? Did war make the new Yemeni state? If so, how did it do so and what was the nature of the state it made?

In answering these questions, the study departs from much of the writing on the impact of civil war on the state by subjecting the central terms to an interrogation that has been too frequently absent. It applies insights from the literature on political settlements in order to trouble unitary conceptions of the state and to unpick the complex of practices, power relations, and ideas that produce the state. It also investigates definitions and typologies of civil war to ultimately draw attention to the *practices* that compose internal conflict, rather than focusing on the classifications of international law, the coding rules of international datasets, the resources underpinning conflict, or belligerents' and experts' claims about their causes and framings. These analytical moves help to decentre the analysis and reveal the multiple linkages between the compound and sometimes fuzzy concepts at the heart of the investigation. This allows the thesis to trace the varied, but specific linkages between the practices of internal war, shifts in social power, the creation of state institutions, and the production of ideas of coherent domination. This allows the argument to move beyond the conclusion that there is "no single unambiguous causal relation between states and wars" (Schlichte, 2003, p.38) and to illuminate the multiple, contextual, contingent, yet recurrent, causal relations between them. Throughout, the argument is based on a view of war and

violence as productive. This does not imply that the products of violence are good things, but that conflict produces and defines political order.

The following chapters use process tracing to examine the transformations linked to the 1960s civil war in Yemen. This reveals the wartime origins of central features of the YAR, providing a hitherto missing account of how these defining features of the YAR state took shape. The centrality of the civil war for state formation in North Yemen has previously been almost wholly overlooked and the formation of the YAR state more broadly has remained understudied and misunderstood.

The process tracing reveals how the civil war in Yemen produced new power relations that favoured the belligerents and left them to dominate the peace, allowing military officers and the tribal leaders who backed the republic to dominate the political settlement into the 21st century. The war also re-fashioned the relationship of formal central and informal local institutions. The model of state building Egyptian experts and military planners applied to Yemen combined with Cold-War era international rents and the projects of emerging Yemeni technocratic elites to rapidly expand central ministries. These ministries and other government institutions became focal points for domestic lobbying and international cooperation and produced constituencies with vested interests in their continued existence and expansion. At the same time, wartime dislocations and the ways in which the war directly fed the growing power of local, especially tribal, strongmen, meant that these central ministries could not regulate the local institutions they theoretically sat atop of, except by providing and withholding funding and through alliances with local power brokers. This mode of integration defined the limited power of the central YAR state and has structured how it has come apart in the 2010s, when rent flows slowed.

In addition, the war, or rather Egyptian intervention, directly caused a fiscal reorientation of the central state from domestic extraction to international rents, thereby transforming lines of accountability and dependence and reorienting the domestic political economy around the pursuit of international aid. The war thus made the fiscal basis of the new Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and defined its externally-orientated political economy. Finally, mobilising for war and rivalry between royalists and republicans for domestic support and international backing produced a convergence of ideas of the state around a set of modernist and nationalist rhetorical commonplaces: the war produced a language of politics in which sovereignty resides with 'the people,' but in which the people were imagined in partially tribal terms; unity and economic modernisation became the agreed goal of government, but both were initially imagined as prerogatives of the military.

Of these important and defining changes, only the growing role of tribal leaders has been examined in any detail to date. The thesis thus provides an account of institutional change and state formation that is substantively new. It adds a hitherto entirely missing account of how the fiscal basis of the YAR state emerged and was shaped by the war; reinterprets how new government institutions were formed and articulated with pre-existing institutions; adds detail and nuance to existing accounts of the impact of the war on the political settlement; and systematises accounts of changes in ideas, relating them clearly to shifts in social power and changes in institutions.

While the main contribution is thus to understanding the civil war in North Yemen in the 1960s and its legacies, the process tracing also helps to solve the broader puzzle sketched above and to identify and explain the causal linkages between civil war and state formation more broadly, beyond the doubtlessly true, but ultimately unsatisfying, conclusion that there is no single causal relationship or universal covering law connecting the two. Without falling into determinism, it reveals the central importance of wartime mobilising and funding strategies, and the decisive, if often unintended and counterproductive, role of external intervention as the main drivers of change. Ultimately, this approach to studying the civil war in Yemen reveals four limitations of much of the literature on civil war. The conclusion returns to these points in more detail.

First, the experience of Yemen during the 1960s highlights the central importance of external intervention while revealing that most of its impact operates via unintended effects. Interveners decisively define wartime dynamics, yet rarely get their way. Paradoxically, the opposite view defines the literature: much writing on civil wars continues to neglect intervention, at best treating internationalisation as a variable or looking at ways intervention shapes the calculations of domestic actors. Conversely, much of the literature focused explicitly on intervention continues to over-estimate the ability of interveners to reshape institutions and societies. The case of Yemen suggests the importance of placing intervention and the connections between domestic and international politics front and centre in scholarship on civil war and underscores the utility of an emerging research agenda on the unintended consequences of external state building and intervention.

Second, the chapters below reveal at every turn the limits of constructing a political economy of conflict that abstracts from the specific politics of domestic alliances. It underscores the importance of recent calls to bring politics back in to the study of conflict, while questioning whether recent moves to do so via 'ideology' can be effective. Instead, it makes the case for

taking seriously historically and geographically specific political settlements and the thick alliances they bring with them: the personal connections of cohort, family, and faction.

Third, the fiscal transformation of the Yemen Arab Republic during the civil war highlights that the growing literature on state formation and established attempts to think about 'state strength' in fiscal terms must take the ways in which government *spending* can at least partially substitute for direct control far more seriously. With regard to post-conflict state building, thinking about taxation and the fiscal underpinnings of the state at all is recent and remains underdeveloped. Thinking about taxation in conjunction with spending and taking seriously the effects of neopatrimonial strategies of allocation and patronage on state formation remains almost wholly absent. Yet the case highlights the central role of such strategies and underscores that more work is needed in this area.

Fourth, the shifting role of Yemen's tribes and tribal leaders reveals that tribal logics need not be, in fact were not, antithetical to 'the state,' so much as providing a particular vision of state authority. Despite a surge of interest in 'hybrid' and 'local' forms of governance over the past decade, there is an enduring belief in 'state' institutions as at least distinct from, if not opposite or antithetical to, 'social' institutions. The case reveals that not only that this assumption should be relaxed but shows that dynamics often postulated as being a matter of 'either-or', may sometimes more fruitfully be thought of in terms of combining and intertwining.

The remainder of this chapter develops the central questions and concepts and explains why we should be interested in them both from the perspective of Yemen as well as the thematic perspective of literatures concerned with the relationship between violent conflict and state formation. Section 1.1 presents the existing work on the civil war in North Yemen. It highlights the centrality of the war for the formation of the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and suggests that past explorations, while forming an essential point of departure, have left significant gaps that warrant further consideration. The questions animating the exploration of the case – whether war made the new Yemeni state, how did it do so, and what the nature of the state it made was – have received only passing attention and, at best, partial and contradictory answers.

Section 1.2 further develops the central puzzle from the perspective of thematic literatures exploring the relationship between violence and social order. It argues that much of the existing work on the relationship between violent conflict and state formation gets stuck in a conceptual dead end when it treats both civil war and the state as single and straightforward concepts. Instead, they are composite and complex, and Section 1.3 develops an alternative

way to think about these central terms and their potential relationship. Investigating the impact of civil war on state formation requires understanding civil war in terms of a recurring but variable set of practices. The most important of these practices centre on mobilisation, financing, territorial control, and maintaining or creating elite bargains. It is these practices, not some abstraction called 'war,' that transform, reproduce, or undermine political order. Similarly, the state is not usefully conceptualised as a singular thing. The division between 'state' and 'society,' the relative power of institutions, the political settlement on which it is based, and the rhetorical commonplaces that legitimate political domination are sites of ongoing and constitutive conflicts that bring the state itself into being.

Taking the re-conceptualisation of civil war and the state from Section 1.3 as its point of departure, Chapter 2 develops a methodology for probing their relationship. It introduces process tracing, presents how it can help resolve the central puzzle by drawing on hitherto untapped material from the Egyptian National Archives and the German Foreign Ministry Archives, and explains why the royalist-republican civil war in Yemen is a suitable case. The bulk of the chapter is devoted to developing the model that guides the remainder of the inquiry. Having reframed the central terms of 'civil war' and 'the state' in Chapter 1 allows the model to draw on a variety of rich, grounded research into such issues as the micro-dynamics of conflict, the development of wartime institutions, and the logics of violence in civil war, rather than needing to rely on general accounts of the relationship between civil war and state formation. The model draws on these literatures to specify the linkages between civil war and state formation. Starting from three recurrent features of civil war, the model proposes rival pathways with differing, often opposite outcomes on state formation. Its purpose is not to generate predictions. As the model itself serves to highlight, the links between wartime practices and state effects are potentially contradictory as well as being contextual and contingent. Rather, the model provides the framework for the subsequent analysis. It highlights what practices, specifically, we should be looking at and the causal connections between them and state formation understood in terms of changes in the political settlement, government institutions, and ideas of the state.

Chapters 4 to 7 form the empirical heart of the thesis, exploring developments during the civil war in Yemen through the analytical lens of the model. Chapter 3 lays the groundwork, detailing the *status quo ante bellum* by presenting the political settlement of the Imamate, the institutions of the Imamic state, and the foundations of the Imams' claims to legitimacy. Each of the following chapters takes up one aspect of this tripartite division, exploring the transformations associated with the civil war through the model. Each probes to what extent the model accurately captures not only what changes occurred, but how they did, and

suggests alternative explanations where the model – and by extension the literatures it draws on – falls short. Chapter 4 explores changes to the political settlement wrought by the war, Chapter 5 investigates changes to formal institutions, and Chapter 6 investigates the role of the conflict in shifting ideas of the state. These chapters illuminate in far more detail than currently available a central episode in Yemen's modern history, demonstrate the model's utility for revealing processes of state formation that have been hitherto neglected or misunderstood, and suggest how a careful consideration of the case of Yemen nuances and inflects existing literatures on state formation and civil war.

1.1 Blanks in the historiography of Yemen

Our understanding of North Yemen's modern history and of state formation in the YAR remains patchy. There is a longstanding tendency in more general treatments of the state in the Middle East to either ignore the experience of Yemen or to view the state in North Yemen as altogether absent or non-existent (e.g. Anderson, 1987, p.3), although this tendency has been attenuated since Yemeni unification in 1990 (Dresch, 1993a, p.67). Writing in European languages specifically focused on the development of state institutions in North Yemen has generally bracketed the civil war, social upheaval, and external intervention that marked the 1960s in Yemen, declaring it a period of disorder and 'development in reverse.' Studies of the war, by contrast, have largely ignored questions of state formation and longer-term social and political change. Both literatures have paid insufficient attention to the way the civil war determined the winners and losers who shaped – or did not shape – Yemeni politics through the 1980s at least.

To date, studies of Yemen's civil war from 1962-1970 have been journalistic and heavy on battles, military leaders, and peace negotiations, with some of the main studies written as fighting continued (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969; O'Ballance, 1971; Schmidt, 1968; Wenner, 1967). Since then, much of the writing on the civil war has been concerned with the foreign policies of the great powers and regional actors with interests in Yemen. Important recent studies include work on the impact of the Yemen war on Egyptian politics and Egypt's regional standing (Ferris, 2012; Ḥajjāj, 2014), the internal politics of British support to the royalists (Jones, 2004), and the evolution of great power politics towards the Yemen war (Orkaby, 2014). These join an established literature with a similar focus on the Egyptian presence in Yemen (ʾAḥmad, 1981; al-Bayḍānī, 1993; Dawisha, 1975; Rahmy, 1983; ʾAḥmad, 1992), Soviet and US policy towards Yemen (Page, 1985; Al-Madhagi, 1995), and a limited literature on Saudi Arabia's evolving perceptions of and policy towards the conflict (Badeeb, 1986; Gause, 1990). However, with few exceptions, Yemen is only of coincidental interest to

these studies. Instead, they seek to unpick the relationship between different centres of power in the setting of Egyptian, Saudi, American, British, or Soviet foreign policy or aim to understand the impact of engagement in Yemen on shifting policies towards the region. As a result, they often have little to say about developments in Yemen itself.

In Yemen, the civil war and its role in state formation has received more attention, but the centrality of the 'September Revolution' to the modern mythology of the Yemen Arab Republic and the Republic of Yemen after 1990 has perhaps restricted the space available for scholars to critically interrogate the episode and its legacy. Much of the literature produced in Yemen has tended towards hagiography, celebrating the 'revolution' as a broad-based popular movement (al-ʾAshwal, 2001, p.11) and a transformative "social revolution" (Zabarah, 1984) that brought Yemen "out of the Middle Ages" (al-ʿĀlam, 1987, p.135; also: al-Ḥulwa, 1987; al-Maqramī, 1991; in a more careful and circumscribed register: Zabarah, 1982; al-Abiadh, 1984).

By contrast, much of the literature available in European languages has either ignored the impact of the war[4] or taken a dim view of the civil war's role in state formation as a period of frozen development and retrogression, identifying the 1970s as the true period of institutional change. These authors insist that only after the end of the civil war "could the first foundations of a modern, effective state be established" (Peterson, 1986, p.xiii) because the war "put much state-building and socioeconomic development on hold" (Burrowes, 2009, "Yemeni civil war;" also: Burrowes, 1987; Peterson, 1984, 1982).[5] Interestingly, the Arabic and non-Arabic literatures thus reproduce the debate between the state making and state breaking effects of civil war outlined at the beginning of this chapter and investigated in the next section. That is, to the extent that this critical moment has been studied at all, it has

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[4] This appears true for the study of the Middle East more broadly, despite Steven Heydemann (2000, p.3) noting some years ago that "lack of attention to war in statemaking is puzzling" in literature on the region.

[5] This is also the default position of scholars who do not explore the period directly (Rabi, 2015, p.xvi; Swagman, 1988a, p.1). An exception are the revisionist claims of Orkaby that the civil war "helped further the establishment of a modern political bureaucracy, a national army, and an increase in revenue with the expansion of existing taxation and the postal networks (Orkaby, 2014, pp.10–11). While the first part of this statement is almost certainly true, the claims about revenue and taxation, as we will see in Chapter 5, are less compelling.

involved a sort of dialogue of the deaf between scholars writing in Arabic about the civil war as a period of rapid modernisation and revolution and a largely English-language literature that has argued, or simply assumed, that war and state formation do not mix. An exploration of Yemeni state formation during this period thus promises to contribute significantly to our understanding of a critical and under-studied episode in Yemen's history.

Attempts to take the civil war seriously as a transformative period that shaped institutions and the relative influence of different power brokers, without falling directly into hagiography and mistaking grand plans and pronouncements for actual change, are rare. In an important study that has not yet reached beyond a German-speaking audience, Mohamed El-Azzazi (1978, e.g. p.106) highlights that the civil war not only marked a decisive period in the political development of Yemen but changed the balance of political power and hence influenced the formal development of institutions as well as their functioning. Paul Dresch's (2000) history of modern Yemen crams much that is useful and rings true in its short chapter on the civil war and his earlier work explores the legacies of the civil war on the relationship between tribes and the central state in some detail (Dresch, 1993b, 1984). The most recent work on the civil war makes a similar point, arguing that "the trajectory of contemporary Yemen was set during the 1960s, and it is still playing out today" (Johnsen, 2017, p.189). Johnsen's is one of the first English-language monographs on the civil war to seriously engage with the complicated elite politics of the war and insist on Yemeni agency. However, its central claim that the defining legacy of the civil war was a sort of crisis of identity around the question of what it meant to be Zaydī without an Imam, is only partially convincing.[6] It is perhaps a missed opportunity that a study surveying Yemen's long 20th century from 1914 to 2014 finds little to say about the ways in which the civil war may have paved the way for a succession of military officers and tribal leaders to dominate YAR politics, how it shaped government dependence on external funding, or how it influenced institutional legacies.

1.2 (Mis)understanding the link between civil war and state-formation

The discussion above suggests that the literature on Yemen partially reproduces a broader puzzle: scholars insisting on the way in which the war 'froze' development espouse views akin

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[6] The study's silence on the period between 1970 and the mid-1980s sits uneasily with other attempts to understand Zaydī revivalism in Yemen in the context of Saudi Arabian proselytising, the complex politics of the Salafi movement in Yemen, the evolution of the ʾIṣlāḥ party, or the doctrinal debates of the 1990s. See e.g.: Bonnefoy, 2011; Brandt, 2017; vom Bruck, 1999.

to those found in a literature that identifies civil war with state fragility and failure. Those that celebrate the 'September Revolution' as a period of significant and enduring transformation are not far from those who insist on the close relationship between war making and state making.

One attempt to resolve the apparent paradox between these literatures has been to 'test' the state making and state breaking effects of civil war. After brief discussions of Tilly's work, often reduced to what Tilly himself once called a "cartoon history" of early modern Europe (Tilly, 1992, p.206),[7] these authors tend to test the proposition that war makes states by running regressions for various groups of countries with war or civil war as the independent variable and state strength as the dependent variable. Such tests have been conducted for a number of regions and with slightly differing specifications of how state making and unmaking might be measured (e.g. Chowdhury and Murshed, 2014; Lu and Thies, 2013; Thies, 2005; Schwarz, 2012). Overall, they suggest that civil war weakens states measured in terms of the ratio of tax to GDP.[8] Yet, in addition to a number of potential technical issues,[9] there is a marked lack of engagement in this literature with the central variables ostensibly of interest and often less still with the mechanisms connecting them. This is a concern, since, as we will see below, it is likely that 'civil war' as well as 'the state' are not so much things in themselves

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[7] Tilly was wary of taking the European historical experience as a straightforward model, warning against inferring sequences, stages, or probable events. At the same time, he argued for the enduring importance of war for defining state structures and the utility of exploring them in comparative perspective (Tilly, 1975, p.82, 1992, pp.193–197).

[8] This is by no means an unreasonable choice of single indicator, though it is not clear why a single indicator is appropriate, since state strength or capacity – to the extent that this is a useful conceptualisation of the state at all (compare 1.3.2 below) – appears to be a multi-dimensional measure (Hendrix, 2010).

[9] They have generally not engaged with evidence from studies of civil war onset that coding decisions about civil war can have substantial impacts on findings (Sambanis, 2004), with evidence that GDP data is highly unreliable (Jerven, 2013), or with arguments that missing data may be systematically absent: "For it is in the nature of things that [the quality of] state-performance information is directly proportional to the level of development and the strength of the state" (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2009, p.9). Moreover, as Bruce Porter (1994, pp.11–17) points out, Europe went from having 500 states in 1500 to 25 in 1900. Running regressions on the data might show that war makes states fail or disappear – which it did; except for the successful ones, whose structures it decisively shaped.

as attempts to analytically bracket a set of processes or practices. Similarly, lack of engagement with the mechanisms connecting the two leads to propositions that suggest that "following the Tillyan approach" means that "we would expect the emergence of an institutionally strong state in those states that experienced war-making" and weak states in those without war (Schwarz, 2012, p.7).

War as a necessary and sufficient condition for state strength, is, of course, not the argument advanced by Tilly and many of the more thoughtful attempts to explore the relationship between civil war and state formation have taken his arguments – and those of others – more seriously.[10] War making in early modern Europe *pace* Tilly was state making to the extent that consolidating power against internal and external rivals required large standing armies, which in turn required bureaucracies for logistics and supply and large amounts of capital. Taxation and borrowing from creditors[11] required still more sophisticated bureaucracies as well as bargains with the holders of capital. The paradoxical outcome was that – given the technologies of violence, the nature of inter-state competition, the distribution of capital, and other factors that a student of the *longue durée* like Tilly was well-aware were historically specific – war within and between states created standing armies, sophisticated centralised bureaucracies, and, increasingly, civilian control over the state (Tilly, 1992, 1985, 1978).[12]

Spelled out in these terms, the question becomes whether the proposed mechanisms linking war to standing armies, armies to bureaucracies, and bureaucracies to bargaining still hold, or whether different domestic conditions and changed international contexts mean that they

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[10] The more war you put in, the more state you get out, is a similar simplification and appears to be the position of those who argue that it is the absence of war, not its changed character, that explains state weakness in the developing world (Herbst, 2004; Jackson, 1990; in different terms: Migdal, 1988, pp.273–274), or, in more nuanced terms, that 'limited war' made 'limited states' (Centeno, 2002, 1997; Lopez-Alves, 2000).

[11] Bargains with bankers and alliances with a rising bourgeoisie that afforded access to increasingly sophisticated capital markets was part of the financing story in Tilly's terms, but these have been eclipsed by a focus on taxation.

[12] By contrast, Hui (2005) argues that many of the expedients adopted by rulers to make war in early modern Europe were in fact "self-weakening." On this view, state making wars before mass conscription were rare and the European trajectory was far more contingent than generally assumed.

are no longer applicable. There is a significant literature from the 2000s, in particular, arguing that changed international conditions have undermined and reversed the logic whereby war made the state.

Some have argued that the absence of international wars and external competitors has changed the dynamic of war making as state making. International norms of sovereignty mean that foreign invasions are unlikely. States have internationally agreed and largely fixed borders (Atzili, 2007) and are no longer in danger of suffering 'state death' (Fazal, 2004). As a result, the large armies required for interstate wars are no-longer needed and their centralising knock-on effects no longer hold (Kasfir, 2004; Sørensen, 2001). Instead, civil wars favour militias, the outsourcing of coercion to local strongmen, and deliberate strategies of fragmentation, which allow rulers to defeat local insurgencies while protecting them from concentrating too much power in the military, minimising the chance of a coup (Leander, 2004; Reno, 1998, 2001).[13]

Other authors have instead (or also) stressed changes to the international political economy whereby the availability of external funds from states, international financial institutions, and corporations undermines the link between war making, expanding bureaucracies, and taxation. Lootable resources, loans with attached conditionality, or geopolitical rents do not encourage taxation and attendant bargaining, but rather encourage privatisation of formerly public institutions to local warlords, predatory elites, or international investors, constituting a 'criminalisation' of the state (Leander, 2004, pp.72–75; Bayart et al., 1997, p.42). Relatedly, there is a literature about the way domestic rulers use disorder as a way to extract external rents, increase profits, and enhance political control (Chabal and Daloz, 1999; on Yemen during the 1990s and 2000s: Phillips, 2011). In the unregulated environment of war, violence entrepreneurs capture increasing concentrations of power (Reno, 2001).

These studies share the assumption that the political economy of war remains intimately connected to the political economy of central rule, but that how the two relate depends on other factors and supposes that these have changed. They form an essential point of departure, for they begin to engage at the level of specific mechanisms with the relationship between civil war and the state. Yet, they have also tended to be highly selective in their

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[13] Ian Lustick (1997) makes a related argument about the Middle East, analysing how European great powers prevented potential regional hegemons from waging war and expanding their territory.

focus, problematic in their conceptualisation of the central terms, and perhaps too ready to simply invert the war making as state making narrative.

These studies have focused their attention almost exclusively on instances of perceived state 'failure,' without investigating cases where civil war did not have the expected effect. The states that emerged through internal conflict in Colombia, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Eritrea, or Algeria in the past three decades – or in Yemen during the 1960s – may not resemble the desired civilianised European end-state, yet these states are also not obviously 'weaker' than at the outset of hostilities. Although some have argued that they are 'stronger,'[14] the next sub-section highlights that it may be that thinking in terms of state strength and weakness at all – as if these were measures along a single axis, independent of expectations of what states should do, and of the broader balance of power within societies – is part of the problem.

As Jonathan Di John (2010b) has highlighted, authors who are certain that war in the contemporary developing world un-makes the state have also been so concerned with the negative effects of patrimonial politics that they have been unwilling to acknowledge that patrimonialism is the norm in both developmental and failing states (Khan, 2007, 2010). This is perhaps emblematic of two further problems: First, a tendency to take the war making as state making narrative as the (European) norm and insist that 'non-Europe' can best be explained by the absence of factors that explain 'positive' outcomes in the European context (Heydemann, 2000, p.4). And second, a tendency not to take domestic politics seriously enough. This literature sees similar external pressures playing out in similar ways irrespective of domestic institutions and the political economy. Yet state formation implies that governing elites reduce the autonomy and rule-making ability, access to violence, and fiscal and other resources of rival *domestic* actors (Giustozzi, 2011a, 2011b; Schlichte, 2007) and we have good reasons to believe that the domestic alliances on which rule is based define in important measure the incentives and possibilities facing regimes (Rueschemeyer, 1991; North et al., 2009; Putzel and Di John, 2009; Eriksen, 2012).

Moreover, as the discussion below highlights, there is a great deal of diversity both between different instances of what we refer to as 'civil war,' as well as between the amalgamation of actors, institutions, and beliefs we refer to as 'the state.' If this is true, then it is a problem that much of this literature has "not focused in a detailed fashion on actual states engaged in

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[14] On Algeria e.g. see: Rich, 1997; Martinez, 2000. On the central but ambivalent role of violence in Ethiopian and Eritrean state formation see: Clapham, 2001.

specific wars" (Taylor and Botea, 2008, p.33), for there are almost certainly multiple competing and contradictory causal pathways linking civil wars to outcomes in terms of state formation (see e.g. O'Kane, 2000).

A few existing studies show how fruitful a specific focus can be. In the Middle Eastern context, two stand out: Michael Barnett (1993) highlights the central importance of interstate violence and capital accumulation for state formation in Israel and Egypt and finds evidence for both 'state-strengthening' and 'state-weakening' impacts of war. Whether war makes the state depends, in this account, on the state building strategy pursued by rulers and, especially, relations with domestic economic elites. Similarly, Steven Heydemann and contributors (2000) highlight the centrality of war making in defining distinctive institutional configurations, state-society relations, and techniques of governance in the Middle East, while highlighting that these depended both on external configurations and internal bargaining – conflict led to the "emergence of domestic political economies organised around the regional and international pursuit of strategic rents" (Heydemann, 2000, p.13).

1.3 Towards a definition of civil war and the state

The above discussion suggests that much hinges on how we think about the main concepts of interest, civil war and the state, while also suggesting that both are far from straightforward. They are both not so much distinct objects with clear boundaries, as compound concepts with fuzzy and contested limits.

1.3.1   Civil war

Too often, thinking about civil war and particularly about the connections between civil war and the state has engaged in little analysis of what civil war is and what may characterise phenomena labelled in this way. Yet there are, to quote the title of an influential paper, "conceptual and empirical complexities" involved in the definition (Sambanis, 2004).

That is not to say the term has been poorly defined. The Uppsala Conflict Database, the Correlates of War, and other similar attempts to systematically collect information about contemporary conflict have detailed codebooks that include specific and widely-used definitions. For Uppsala, for instance, "internal conflict" is defined as "a form of state-based

armed conflict"[15] that occurs between a "government"[16] and a "non-governmental party," "with or without external intervention"[17] (Themnér, 2017, p.9). The Correlates of War calls a similar phenomenon "civil war," defined as "wars involving the government of the state against a non-state entity" (Sarkees, 2010).[18] These definitions stress the presence of conflict within existing internationally recognised territorial boundaries and the involvement of the central government. In this, they accord with a recent exploration of the history of the idea of civil war, focused on its evolution in Europe and the United States, that stresses the intrusion of armed conflict into a space previously marked by cooperation under a single authority as being central to thinking about civil war since the Romans coined the concept of *bellum civile* (Armitage, 2017).

Yet, while operational definitions are widely accepted, there have been limited attempts to explain why and how civil wars constitute a meaningful category of things. This is potentially an issue because for long periods other terms, that draw attention to other features, have been analytically preferred. Much of the literature on conflict within the territorial confines of internationally recognised states throughout the Cold War period, for instance, preferred the vocabulary of revolution to that of civil war. Theda Skocpol's (1979) arguments about the link between violent conflict and state formation focused initially on social revolutions,[19] as did much of the work of Ted Gurr (e.g. 1988). Some recent efforts to explore the relationship of civil war and state formation have, as a consequence, stressed the necessity of distinguishing between different types of intra-state conflicts and specifically called for taking revolution seriously again as a category distinct from civil war (Taylor and Botea, 2008). This

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[15] "A contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year" (Themnér, 2017, p.1).

[16] "The party controlling the capital of the state" (Themnér, 2017, p.2).

[17] This results in two possible values, either "conflict, intrastate" or "conflict, intrastate with foreign involvement."

[18] For the Correlates of War, the government of the state is "those forces that were at the start of the war in de facto control of the nation's institutions." Civil war is one of three types of intra-state war in their coding, the other two being "regional internal war" and "inter-communal war," both defined by the non-involvement of the 'government of the state' (Sarkees, 2010, pp.2–3).

[19] Skocpol later (1996) focused on civil war.

approach, of disaggregating and distinguishing different types, has also been adopted by those arguing that ethnic and non-ethnic civil wars follow different logics (Cederman et al., 2013; Doyle and Sambanis, 2000; Sambanis, 2001), and that secessionist conflicts, rebellions, and coups likely include differential dynamics and may be made more likely by different factors (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Kalyvas, 2005; Le Billon, 2001, 2012).

However, not only does such a more ambitious classificatory undertaking quickly, as any typology must, highlight difficult liminal cases, but more fundamentally, it runs into the messy politics of naming that is often itself at issue in such conflicts. Civil war, as a contest between competing groups and political projects, has features of an essentially contested concept – the conflict is in part about what it will be called. Where insurgents win, they declare a revolution, where something resembling the *status quo ante* is re-established, the conflict becomes glossed as mere 'troubles' or 'rebellion.' The civil war in Yemen is a case in point: the dominant republican historiography insists that it was a revolution, while the royalist narrative imagined it as an Egyptian invasion. Had they been victorious, the royalists would likely have commemorated the war as a struggle for independence, analogous to the Imam's victories over Ottoman attempts to maintain Yemen as part of the Empire. Others, taking a geopolitical perspective, found it politic to frame the conflict as a proxy war between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The civil war label is largely one adopted by Western scholars.

Such long running contests over the naming of specific conflicts and efforts to make conceptual distinctions between different types of conflicts generally classed as civil war suggests that there is great diversity both between different instances of what we refer to as civil wars and between what happens in different places and to different (types of) people within any given such conflict. Because of this, it may be most useful to focus at a more grounded level on the processes present in such conflicts and to view civil war as a form of violent claim making and collective action sharing features with other forms of contentious politics. This has become a common theme of work focusing on the micro-dynamics of conflict at least since Kalyvas' (2006) important contribution (e.g. Justino et al., 2013). In this view, civil war is collective contentious action exhibiting high levels of coordination and in

which violent coercion is the main way in which power is exercised and contested – that is, the 'salience of violence' is high (Tilly, 2003).[20]

Such an approach to civil war readily acknowledges the wide diversity of causes, consequences, forms, and objectives at work in the group of events and processes we call civil war. It can also deal with the fact that civil war, as a form of contention, is always about challenging the status quo: Insurgents claim to fight to establish or maintain a more just order for some fraction of the population (Jung, 2003, p.15). In this sense, it is unlikely that civil war has a single effect on the institutions of the state and the dominant coalitions that emerge from conflict. The status quo and the alternative being offered matter: What is being contested, by whom, against whom, and how. Insurgent aims, degrees of success, wartime institutional developments by both incumbents and insurgents, and the peace agreements that end conflict shape the political order that emerges.[21]

However, such a definition also highlights that civil war is likely to exhibit important similarities at the meso-level (Tarrow and Tilly, 2007; Tilly, 2003). This is because as a form of highly coordinated collective action in which the salience of violence is high, civil war requires the public articulation of a challenge to the status quo and thus (1) reveals the existence of rivals to the dominant coalition. In addition, as a form of contention in which violent coercion is the main way in which power is exercised and contested, (2) civil war increases the salience of violence for contestation and rule maintenance. Finally, because of widespread coordinated violence for control of territory, population, and/or resources, (3) civil war re-draws zones of control, with far-reaching implications for strategies of rule maintenance. Overlying these processes, the violence, death, and destruction of war itself is liable to cast a long shadow.[22] That we can construct such a list of common processes operational during civil

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[20] While there is no obvious boundary between civil war and related phenomena, in important ways, political violence is *not* simply a continuation of non-violent contentious politics by other means (Rogers, 2011, p.51).

[21] Such an approach may also instil a sensible scepticism about the various efforts to pin down precise and consistent definitions and coding rules for civil war (Cramer, 2006, pp.57-76).

[22] Viewing civil wars in this way also alerts us to dangers of reification and glorification that have accompanied war, in the sense that it is only one form – and often a destructive and ineffective one – of claim making and collective action. At the same time, viewing civil war as a set of processes within a

war highlights that such wars, or rather the practices that compose them, have the potential to influence the state in systematic ways.

1.3.2   The state and state formation

Attempts to theorise the state in the fields of development and conflict studies have tended to focus on crises of the state in parts of the global South; crises that have typically been conceptualised in terms of state collapse, fragility, or weakness (Herbst, 2004; Milliken, 2003; Patrick, 2006; Rotberg, 2004; Zartman, 1995). Implicitly or explicitly, this literature shares a vision of the state as the supplier of rights and public goods and as the arena of peaceful democratic and market-based competition. It defines the state in terms of functions and determines whether states are strong or weak based on the extent to which they fulfil these functions. Where this notion of the state is made explicit, we are offered lists of state functions – to supply public goods, provide social welfare, encourage civility, or give citizens the right to vote – whether codified as ten such functions (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008) or a more compact four (Levi, 2002; Zürcher, 2007).

Arguably, this literature has courted tautology,[23] is characterised by serious confusion between the concept of state weakness and its consequences (see e.g. Woodward, 2017, pp.11-25), and, more broadly, is orientated towards externally imposed criteria and suppresses power, politics, and history. The analysis relies on categories that are "subjective, arbitrary and externally imposed," to borrow from Kriger's (2003, p.11) assessment of peacebuilding criteria; for the functions of the state are derived from a particular historical notion of the state, which itself has always been something of an idealisation. Indeed, for decades after Weber (1980) formulated his thoughts on the state, even in the most powerful states, the legitimate use of force was not only exercised, but successfully claimed, by party and private militias, vigilantes, and by private security and detective companies like the Pinkertons (O'Hara, 2016).

When trying to evaluate whether the state is strong or weak from the perspective of state functions, practical difficulties, surrounding the choice of indicators, quality of data, and

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continuum of political violence and collective action highlights its political nature and cautions against the similarly reifying demonization of any violent challenge to the status quo.

[23] For instance, in defining 'weak states' as ones that have 'weak political institutions' (Vallings and Torres, 2005).

issues of aggregation, abound (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2009). Major theoretical difficulties accompany them. Thinking about the state in terms of functions by its nature requires a (normative) theory of what states should do, an account of the boundaries between the state and society, and a theory of how the state should be doing the things states are supposed to do. None of these are unproblematic, as the 'third wave' of state theorising underscored (Jessop, 2001; Migdal, 2001; Mitchell, 2006, 2002, 1991).[24] Moreover, such thinking about the state is blind to the identity of powerful actors and the very different political orders implied by different dominant coalitions.

Rather, to understand how civil war influences the state, we must approach the state through the prism of state formation: exploring the often contradictory historical processes by which certain types of centralised political order have come into existence.

There has been a marked convergence in recent work in political economy (Cramer, 2006; Cramer and Goodhand, 2002; Putzel and Di John, 2009), institutional economics (Khan, 2007; North et al., 2009, 2013) and established sociological writing interested in long-term historical trajectories (Mann, 2012, 1993, 1986; Tilly, 1992, 1985, 1978), offering a view of the state and state-formation focusing on conflict, power, and violence, rather than state functions. Indeed, this literature views such functions almost as by-products. These works all share an interest in the historical processes by which actually existing states have been formed and stress that the 'state' is not a unitary abstract thing, but a concrete set of institutions and relationships whose goals and functioning are defined in important measure by the specific groups that control it, by its historical antecedents, and by the processes that brought it into being. They tend to view the forms and institutions of the state as a product of significant and ongoing conflict over social power, located primarily in control of capital, coercion, and consent; and they tend to assume a central role for violence and war for contesting, establishing, and reproducing the state.

A promising way to capture these insights lies in the conceptual vocabulary of the political settlement (Khan, 2010; Putzel and Di John, 2009) or dominant coalition (North et al., 2009,

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[24] In attenuated form, this is also a problem for attempts to assess state strength via state autonomy (Mann, 1984) or coercive and extractive capabilities (Migdal and Schlichte, 2016). All regimes have constituencies, autonomy can reflect isolation and even irrelevance, and state and 'society' in the form of everything from business associations and trade unions, to local notables, tribal structures, and secret societies, interpenetrate.

2013). This approach stresses that any political order is based on an agreement between groups with access to violence, particularly those that could bring down the existing order were they to revolt. I call these groups, whose alliance is at the heart of state power, the dominant coalition and refer to the implicit or explicit agreement governing the allocation of obligations and rights (to violence, property, political influence, and dispute resolution) amongst them as the political settlement. This settlement reflects the underlying political economy, for the powerful interests that make up the dominant coalition and their (imperfect) control of coercion and capital determine whose interests are reflected in laws and state practice. Although often stable for long periods, any political settlement is subject to recurrent renegotiation, in which external shocks or gradually-accruing changes in bargaining power can lead to (sudden) shifts in the settlement. A focus on political settlements requires enquiring into the influence of conflict on the dominant coalition in control of capital and coercion and the bargains underpinning their alliances.

Though it has rarely used this terminology, some of the literature on the state in the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula has long adopted a framework akin to a political settlement perspective.[25] The evident importance of ruling families, tribes, military peer groups, and other lines of trust and belonging that do not follow formal institutional divisions, has encouraged inquiry into elite networks, lines of patronage, and the unspoken deals sustaining rulers. This is evident in studies focused on the political economy of the region's states (Achcar, 2016; Heydemann, 2004; Richards and Waterbury, 1990) on analysing elite bargains (Asseburg and Wimmen, 2016; Mufti, 1999; Perthes, 2002b), and on the role of the military and militias as political and economic actors (e.g. Grawert and Abul-Magd, 2016; Picard, 2000, 1988). Though at some remove from a strict political settlement perspective, the pioneering accounts of the state and modern state formation in the region likewise placed a premium on the production and reproduction of elites and the bargains between them, whether taking Tilly (Anderson, 1987), Michael Mann (Gongora, 1997) or Antonio Gramsci (Ayubi, 1995) as their point of departure.

Proponents of the political settlement view have generally advanced it as an alternative to the vexed language of the state. Yet, in abandoning the state as a concept, there is a danger

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[25] This is but one of a range of approaches, with another important strand of the literature on political authority and the state emphasising the role of cultural practice and particularly Islam. See e.g.: Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996.

of throwing out the twin babies of institutions and legitimacy with the bathwater of a narrow focus on state functions.

The tendency of the political settlement literature to treat institutions primarily as epiphenomena of more or less inclusive coalitions underestimates institutions' importance. Institutions entrench, administer and reproduce the political settlement. On their own, political settlements are liable to break down as a result of even minor changes in relative position and bargaining power. Institutions and administrative personnel that uphold, police, and administer the settlement and develop a vested interest in its maintenance – and thus partial autonomy from the elite interests of the dominant coalition – are central to stabilising it (Fukuyama, 2018). Institutions also generate new interests and even social groups, thus creating path dependencies, altering the political settlement in turn, and constraining the range of options open to the dominant coalition (Hall, 1997; Hall and Taylor, 1996). A focus on institutions, that is the organisations, rules, formal procedures, functionaries, and bureaucrats that embody the state in practice and provide both its organisational form and the officials who conceive of themselves as its agents, is therefore essential.

Without a focus on institutions, making sense of central aspects of political order that have animated past efforts to evaluate the impact of war on the state is difficult. The political settlement view on its own has little to say about the organisation of power and associated tendencies of fragmentation vs. cohesion, centralisation vs. de-centralisation, and routinisation and formalisation vs. informalisation. The familiar and appropriate political settlement charge that superficially identical institutions function differently in the context of different settlements and the insight that institutions are legacies and outcomes of past conflicts do not obviate the need to place a central focus on institutions *in conjunction with* an exploration of the political settlement.

Moreover, there is a danger in an exclusive focus on the political settlement of losing sight of the shifting ideas of political order that help define potential configurations of the settlement itself. Such ideas of the state operate at two levels. First, from the perspective of dominant coalitions, "identifying who is – and is not – a potential ally is rarely an obvious calculation" (Staniland, 2015, p.771). Assessments of threats and the possibility of alliances hinge on which cleavages and ideas dominant coalitions fear or value. It is a function of ideas and ideologies whether the dominant coalition views support for "leftist revolution, ethnolinguistic fragmentation, religious radicalism, or majoritarian sectarianism, for instance" as a threat or as a vehicle for entrenching its power (Staniland, 2015, p.777). It is impossible to make sense of state formation and particularly state formation during episodes of conflict

without paying attention to the ideas, symbols and cleavages that dominant coalitions draw on and are located within and how these relate to views held more broadly within society (Holsti, 1996). Second, and more fundamentally, ideas of the appropriate domains for political regulation and the rules defining legitimate authority do not exist outside and prior to state formation, but are produced by claims and counter-claims, encroachment and resistance (Mitchell, 2006).

In accordance with these considerations, the following discussion views state formation in Yemen in terms of changes to the (1) political settlement, to (2) institutions administering coercion, capital and consent, and to (3) ideas of the state. Such a view, as noted above, is compatible with important writing on the state in the Middle East and North Africa, though it clearly disagrees with other perspectives that have sought neat distinctions between state and society as analytical categories (Migdal, 1988)[26] or have analysed the region's rentier states based on the assumption that rents accrue to 'the state' or 'the ruler' as opposed to a potentially heterogenous dominant coalition dependent on alliances with other holders of social power (Beblawi, 1987, 2016; Schwarz, 2004; but see: Hertog, 2011).

Against such views, it asserts the primary importance of analysing the state from the perspective of the political settlement, while inflecting and complementing political settlement views with a focus on institutions and on the ways ideas of the state structure expectations and possibilities of rule. It conceives, in other words, of the state as a system of domination defined by the balance of power between powerful groups in society, incarnated in rules and patterned behaviours, and structured by shifting but durable ideas about the parameters of legitimate rule and the relevant cleavages identifying allies and enemies.[27]

1.4 Conclusion to Chapter 1

Large blanks in the historiography of Yemen invite an exploration of the impact of the civil war during the 1960s on the development of the YAR state. The case of Yemen also replicates and is partially emblematic of a broader puzzle about the impact of civil war on the state. Approaching this puzzle requires abandoning straightforward but misleading accounts of the

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[26] Migdal has subsequently (2004, 2001) troubled these distinctions.

[27] C.f. Weber posing the analytical problem in the *Protestant Ethic* (1930, p.91) as being about understanding the "interdependent influences between the material basis, the forms of social and political organisation, and the ideas current in the time."

central variables of interest and to think instead about civil war as an amalgamation of processes associated with violent contentious politics exhibiting important recurrent features at the meso-level: the existence of rivals to the dominant coalition, an increased salience of violence for rule contestation and maintenance, and re-drawing and contestation of zones of control. Similarly, state formation should be conceptualised as an actually occurring historical process, likely to be reversible, contingent and not reducible to a list of state functions irrespective of place and time. This, in turn, suggests the need to move beyond a binary debate of whether civil war 'strengthens' or 'weakens' the state and towards an examination of the processes of change such conflicts precipitate in the political settlement, in institutions administering coercion, capital and consent, and in ideas of the state. Examining the characteristics of the political orders created by civil war, albeit framed in slightly different terms, has recently been identified as an "extremely important area for future research" as "we have only started to open the black box of […] types of institutional change promoted by different processes of armed violence" (Justino, 2013, p.301).

2 BUILDING A MODEL FOR PROCESS TRACING

If, as the above discussion suggests, both civil war and state formation are compound concepts, there is no *a priori* reason why all the processes linking civil war to state formation should operate in the same direction, or why they should have consistent effects across the political settlement, institutions, and ideas of the state. The linkages between the two variables of interest are likely to be complex[28] and we will see that process tracing is best suited to disentangling their multiple and mediated connections.

After presenting process tracing as a methodology in 2.1, the remainder of the chapter develops a model of the process to be traced, building on the definitions developed above. Having unpacked the aggregate concepts of 'civil war' and 'the state,' this model can focus on how recurrent features of civil war (the existence of rivals, an increased salience of violence, and the redrawing of social and spatial zones of control), can transform the political settlement, formal institutions, and ideas of the state. Drawing on grounded research on the micro-dynamics of conflict and the development of wartime institutions, each section of the chapter develops a set of causal processes along one of these dimensions: 2.2 focuses on effects on the political settlement, 2.3 on changes in institutions, and 2.4 on ideas of the state current in popular and elite thinking.

2.1 Process tracing

It is now widely acknowledged that there are clear trade-offs between intensive and extensive research designs and that understanding causality and theory development require intensive designs (Sayer, 1992, pp.241–251). In particular, a single case design promises the space to make a genuine contribution to the literature on Yemen and is the method of choice for exploring complex causal relationships like that postulated between the variables of interest (George and Bennett, 2005, p.19).

The specific case-study method employed is process tracing, defined by its ambition "to identify the intervening process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable" (George and Bennett, 2005, pp.206–207). It represents an attempt to "peer into the box of causality" to link "some structural cause and its purported effect" (Gerring, 2007, p.45). As this language

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[28] Complexity is used throughout in the sense of complexity theory, as relating to emergent properties of mutual interaction. See: Miller and Page, 2007, p.3.

suggests, process tracing as a methodology places causality and a search for causal mechanisms at the centre and hence implies a 'mechanismic' ontology – the belief that statements of causality can go beyond statements of constant conjunction. Inverting David Hume, it suggests that *we can and should* be interested in gravitational force; not merely in the constant conjunction of apples and falling (Sayer, 1992).[29]

Causal mechanisms are understood as relatively simple, parsimonious pathways that link one variable of interest (X) to another (Y) via a series of intervening steps. In a simple formulation, X may cause A, which under condition B causes Y. The nature of the causal relationship implied at each stage in the process need not involve constant conjunction, nor does it require that the cause is a necessary and sufficient condition of the effect. In fact, most statements of the sort X causes Y are making claims about contributory causes – they are INUS conditions: *i*nsufficient but *n*onredundant parts of an *u*nnecessary but *s*ufficient condition (Brady, 2008; Mackie, 1965). In INUS conditions, the further attributes of a given context determine what type of outcome the mechanism generates (Beach and Pedersen, 2013, pp.34, 12). It is therefore important to recognize that "mechanisms alone cannot cause outcomes. Rather, causation resides in the interaction between the mechanism and the context within which it operates" (Falleti and Lynch, 2009, p.1145).

To take the issue at hand, the claim that 'war made the state' is not a claim that war is a necessary condition for the emergence of states with specific features, i.e. it is not a statement of the form 'the formation of all states involves war.' It is also not a claim that it is a sufficient condition – it does not claim that 'all wars make states (though non-war state formation is a possibility).' Rather, it is a statement that approximates an INUS condition: war, given a set of further circumstances, causes forms of institutional development associated with the formation of the modern state, although it is not the only thing that does.

Process tracing is particularly suited to exploring contingent and complex causal relationships (George and Bennett, 2005, p.212) and processes that are path dependent or rooted in strategic interaction (Hall, 2006, pp.29–30). This makes it the preferred choice for an exploration of the relationship between two variables, which, as Section 1.3 highlighted,

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[29] Causal mechanisms, according to one widely cited and influential definition are the "ultimately unobservable physical, social, or psychological processes through which agents with causal capacities operate, but only in specific contexts or conditions, to transfer energy, information, or matter to other entities" (George and Bennett, 2005, p.137).

appear to be compound concepts. There is no *a priori* reason to assume that all the recurrent features of civil war influence actors' incentives in the same direction – there may simultaneously be pressures towards centralisation due to the salience of violence for rule maintenance and towards fragmentation due to the existence of rivals to the dominant coalition, for instance. Similarly, there is no reason to believe that any one of these features will have consistent effects across different contexts and across the political settlement, formal institutions, and the idea of the state.

Process tracing is not simply thick description. It requires a theory-driven account of the various ways the variables of interest are likely to relate and the associated evidence we would expect to find, before undertaking the exploration of the case. That is, it deduces the likely relationships between the variables of interest based on the existing literature and then examines "whether evidence shows that each part of a hypothesized causal mechanism is present in a given case" (Beach and Pedersen, 2013, pp.3, 57).[30] As such, the investigation proceeds along the following steps (Beach and Pedersen, 2013, pp.14, 34; also: Kay and Baker, 2015, p.12):

1) Conceptualize a causal process linking civil war and state formation based on a wide reading of the existing literature, making explicit the context within which it is expected to function. Ideally, such a process should include a wide range of different and rival potential linkages (George and Bennett, 2005, p.217).

2) Operationalise the linkages of the proposed process with reference to a case, translating theoretical expectations into case-specific descriptions of what observable manifestations each step in the process should generate. This operationalisation provides the framework for collecting empirical evidence and defines what kind of evidence is of interest for the process tracing.

3) Trace the process to determine whether (and what part) of the hypothesized mechanism was present in the case and whether it functioned as predicted. This constitutes the 'test' of the process and provides additional information to update the process, explore alternative explanations, and new within-case inferences, with the aim of contributing to a mid-range theory of mechanisms and context conditions for the proposed process.

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[30] Beach and Pedersen call this 'theory testing' process tracing. Others have conceptualised the same method as theory-development (George and Bennett, 2005, p.209).

These steps provide the framework for the following exploration. The following sections (2.2-2.4) complete step one, developing a model of the causal process to be investigated, based on a wide reading of the existing literature.

Step two, operationalising the linkages of the model, preceded data collection and features at the beginning of each of the main empirical chapters 4, 5 and 6 as a short description of the rival predictions of the model.[31] Tracing the model, as per the third step, takes up the bulk of these chapters. Chapter 7 then reflects on the successes and failures of the model in explaining the case, highlighting the ways in which the case inflects and modifies the model and discussing the limitations it reveals in the literatures the model is based on.

Process tracing is, of course, no panacea. Like most intensive designs, it is better at ensuring internal than external validity: while it should be able to tell us a great deal about Yemen, we will want to subject any more general causal relationships it suggests to further scrutiny. At the same time, the theory-led nature of the inquiry and the way evidence can be compared against rival predictions should allow the tracing of individual cases to significantly affect our confidence in the existence and operation of the proposed mechanism(s). Process tracing also does not make claims to completeness: more than one causal process may be consistent with the facts and process tracing may not be able to distinguish whether different processes are complementary or one is wholly spurious (George and Bennett, 2005, p.222). Mechanisms may or may not be portable between contexts and their scope conditions may be difficult to specify – particularly based on a single case.

2.1.1   *Yemen: a typical case?*

Case selection criteria for process tracing suggest that in cases, such as this, where we are in the dark regarding potential mechanisms linking the dependent and independent variable, we should seek to examine a "typical case to identify a plausible causal mechanism that can be tested empirically in subsequent research." A typical case is one where all the variables of interest are present along with relevant scope conditions (Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p.154; see also: Gerring, 2007, pp.91–97).

Of course, what looks like a typical case depends strongly on the theoretical framing of the issue. There is no obviously unsuited case for this sort of exploratory process tracing,

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[31] See Annex 1 for a table of process-derived questions and potential sources prepared prior to fieldwork, which guided research.

provided the basic variables of interest are present; and, as we saw in Section 1.1, there are good reasons to investigate the rarely examined case of Yemen in its own right. This is especially true since Middle Eastern states have rarely animated discussions of violence and state formation more broadly. Existing examinations have largely focused on Sub-Saharan Africa and to a lesser extent on Latin America and South, Central, and South-East Asian cases (e.g. Centeno, 2002; Khan, 2013; Lopez-Alves, 2000; Stubbs, 1997). Thus, Yemen promises to add to the evidence and update the scope conditions for which extant theories may apply by contributing to identifying what causal linkages may hold across regions.

From the perspective of different literatures about the connections between the dependent and independent variables, Yemen will seem like a more or less 'typical' case. This can be made to work to our advantage. If they have described their scope conditions accurately, we would expect approaches stressing the importance of colonial gatekeeper states, post-Cold War changes to strategic rents, the global economy and illicit flows, or historical particularities of Sub-Saharan Africa (see the discussion in 1.2 above) to be inapplicable or at least unimportant for the case of Yemen in the 1960s. Since the investigation will find that foreign rents convincingly account for the absence of domestic taxation and bargaining with domestic holders of capital, this suggests that the mechanisms associated with external funding that these literatures propose are robust, but that their scope conditions need updating.

Conversely, Yemen exhibited many of the 'risk factors' identified with state weakness and fragility like rough terrain (Jimenez-Avora and Ulubasoğlu, 2015), (tribally) segmented societies (Giustozzi, 2016), low GDP per capita (Fearon, 2010), and regional inequalities (Stewart, 2008). Since, in a setting that from the perspective of this literature is so unlikely to experience any measure of durable state formation, we will observe conflict generating such dynamics, this suggests that such risk factors, while potentially useful indicators and parameters, do not determine developments. The presence of centralising dynamics and rapid institutional developments linked to conflict in Yemen suggests that similar dynamics are likely to exist in less unlikely contexts as well.

2.1.2   Sources and caveats

Process tracing relies on "histories, archival documents, interview transcripts and other sources to see whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes […] is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables" (George and Bennett, 2005, p.6). In order to explore the ways in which the 1960s civil war in North Yemen influenced the trajectory of state formation in the Yemen Arab Republic, the following study draws primarily on

contemporary documents, reports, and analysis. It focuses in particular on papers from the Egyptian and West German Ministries of Foreign Affairs, since these have hitherto not been consulted for their perspective on state formation in Yemen.[32]

The Egyptian embassy had a hand in the preparations for the coup that overthrew Imam al-Badr on 26 September 1962 and within half a year, Egypt had tens of thousands of combat troops and hundreds of civilian experts stationed in the Yemen Arab Republic. The Egyptian government was heavily implicated in fighting in Yemen and was on the forefront of state building efforts. The Egyptian archives provide a privileged perspective on these developments. They are also a hitherto untapped source and as recently as 2012, Jesse Ferris (2012, p.16) identified "the closure of the relevant Egyptian archives to researchers," as a major obstacle to understanding the civil war in Yemen.

This research draws on the papers of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs held by the Egyptian National Archives, the *Dar al-Wathaʾiq al-Qawmiyya* (DWQ). The records of the Egyptian presidency and military appear to remain off-limits to researchers. It was also clear from the papers I consulted that they were only a fraction of the total material that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must have produced on Yemen during the 1960s. For instance, I was able to consult one folder of routine daily correspondence between the Egyptian embassy in Taʿiz and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Cairo, which covered the six-month period from September 1967 to February 1968. No analogous folders existed for the remainder of the period.

Despite these limitations, the documents provide a great deal of information on the civilian side of Egypt's presence in Yemen, including details of the numbers and specific roles of Egyptian secondees, details of individual projects, discussions of grants and loans, and Egyptian economic and trade policy towards the YAR. Although material directly related to the Egyptian military mission in Yemen remains off-limits, references and evaluations in the documents nonetheless offer important glimpses of the military side of the Egyptian presence. In particular, the papers add detail about official Egyptian support for and perceptions of the republican military.

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[32] The papers of the German Democratic Republic were also consulted but proved less useful as the GDR presence was far smaller and increasingly focused on relations with South Yemen and the PDRY. They are cited as PAAA MfAA (Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten). On the GDR's policy towards the Arab World and especially South Yemen see: Müller, 2015.

The other main archival source the study draws on is the regular reporting of the Federal Republic of Germany's embassy in Taʿiz and later Ṣanaʿāʾ from the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (PAAA) in Berlin. Together with Italy, the Federal Republic was the only Western country to have diplomats in Yemen throughout the civil war period, yet none of the existing studies of 1960s Yemen has drawn on these papers. Britain and France did not recognise the new Republic until after the end of the war and were not allowed to maintain diplomatic representation after early 1963. The US embassy was shut down following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and diplomatic relations were only re-established in July 1972. Although the embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in the YAR was also officially closed after the Federal Republic and Israel established diplomatic relations in May 1965, in practice this was of little consequence: embassy staff remained in Yemen, continued to meet with Yemeni politicians, and sent regular reports to Bonn. Throughout the 1960s, the Federal Republic was also an important source of development assistance for the new republican state and, in part because it had few tangible interests in Yemen, aside from preventing a Yemeni recognition of the German Democratic Republic, the reports its diplomats sent to Bonn are rich in observations of the minutiae of daily politics: government initiatives, cabinet reshuffles, behind the scenes manoeuvring, and evaluations of the republican military and state apparatus. Egyptian and West German archival sources were selectively supplemented with material published in the Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) series and indirectly via the substantial scholarship that exists on the British (Jones, 2004) and US American archives (Ferris, 2012; Johnsen, 2017; Orkaby, 2014).

Yemeni archives could not be consulted, as a new round of heavily internationalized civil war accompanied this study almost from its outset, making travel to Ṣanaʿāʾ impossible. Relevant archives in Ṣanaʿāʾ were only intermittently functioning, suffering from aerial bombing, power outages, and growing political censorship. However, it appears that what material is available for this period has been explored in some detail and could be consulted via previous studies or published documents (Chaudhry, 1997; Markaz al-Dirāsāt wa al-buḥūth al-yamanī, 1987).

To gain insight into the perspectives of those involved first-hand, the study also draws on the published memoirs of Yemeni politicians and Egyptian military officers, as well as interviews. There has been a slew of recent memoirs, some published posthumously. These include those of tribal leaders (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008; ʾAbū Luḥūm, 2002) and leading politicians (al-ʾIryānī, 2013; Alaini, 2004; Zayd, 2004), as well as the earlier memoirs of military officers (Juzaylān, 1977; Muṭahar, 1984), and high-ranking Egyptian military commanders or intelligence operatives (Ḥajjāj, 2014; ʾAḥmad, 1992; al-Ḥadīdī, 1984). In addition, the *markaz al-dirāsāt wa al-buḥūth al-Yamanī* (Centre of Yemeni Studies and Research) has recorded and published

(1987) collections of testimonies. I also conducted a series of interviews. The following people kindly agreed to give time for sometimes extensive conversations in London, Cairo, and Amman: Prime Minister Muḥsin al-ʿAynī, General Ḥamūd Baydar, Ambassador ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, *Sayyid* ʿAbd Allah al-Kibsī, *Sayyid* ʿAbbās al-Mukhtafī, General Talaʿat Musallam, *Sayyid* ʾAḥmad al-Sayyānī, and *Sayyid* Qāsim bin ʿAlī al-Wazīr.

In order to supplement these perspectives, located primarily at the level of elite politics on both republican and royalist sides of the civil war, the study draws on ethnographic work conducted in the immediate post-war period up to the early 1980s (Caton, 2005; Dresch, 1993b; Gerholm, 1977; Meissner, 1987; Messick, 1978; Stevenson, 1985; Swagman, 1988a; Tutwiler, 1987; Weir, 2007; Mundy, 1995). Despite sometimes quite different interests and areas of focus, these were invaluable sources for many of the changes under investigation.

In addition, the investigation draws on general histories of modern Yemen, journalistic contemporary accounts of the war (O'Ballance, 1971; Schmidt, 1968; Deffarge and Troeller, 1969), as well as scholarly work focusing on the Yemeni military (Nājī, 1988), the political role of Yemen's tribes (al-Ẓāhirī, 1996), the Free Yemeni Movement (Douglas, 1987), local development associations (Carapico, 1998), urbanisation during the 1960s (Serjeant and Lewcock, 1983; Grandguillaume et al., 1995) and other relevant topics. The small number of existing studies focusing on the development of the YAR state have likewise been of central importance, even when the study takes issue with some of their arguments about the role of the civil war in state formation (Burrowes, 1987; Peterson, 1982; Stookey, 1978; Wenner, 1967). A recent clutch of PhD theses, some since converted into monographs, focusing on the civil war from various perspectives, have also added much to our knowledge – particularly in terms of Egyptian operations in Yemen (Ferris, 2012), the wider international context, crucially including Soviet perspectives (Orkaby, 2014), as well as continuities of Zaydī thought across the divide of the civil war (Johnsen, 2017).

Two caveats about these sources must be kept in mind. First, the following chapters navigate a certain mismatch between the categories and concerns of the thematic literature and the interests of the sources. Egyptian diplomatic reporting was heavily inflected by the vocabulary of Arab nationalist politics, identifying the main protagonists in Yemen as Nasirists, 'dissident republicans,' including Baʿathists and Arab Nationalists, the 'third force,' and royalists. The German papers are marked by a focus on the international implications of events in Yemen, assumptions about modernisation, fears of communist infiltration, and vague ideas about tribalism. Memoirs tend to focus on personalities, their connections, and conflicts. By contrast, the model developed in the next sections draws on conventional social

science distinctions between social groups along such lines as class, sect, generation, and region. Such categories are at a remove from the way most of the sources made sense of events. At important points in the analysis, the argument seeks to bring politics into the story and by extension back into the literature on civil wars and the political settlement and at these points party labels feature. Yet, overall, the politics it seeks to bring back in are not party labels, which often obscure more than they reveal. The micropolitics of networks of power and broad, structural views of the relative position of different social groups are the preferred mode of analysis.

The second caveat relates to the reliability of statistical data gleaned from these sources. Throughout, the discussion draws on official YAR government data and expert estimates. This data is problematic and contemporary sources sometimes claim that there were "no economic or social statistics," in the YAR during the 1960s (IBRD, 1970, p.i), indeed, that North Yemen was marked by a "complete absence of all information" relating to economic matters (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, 11 Apr. 1968). Few systems were in place to accurately track, record, and aggregate government income and expenditure. In the first decade in which some statistics exist – from the mid-1960s to mid-1970s – fundamental measures remain unavailable or deeply suspect. As a result, the figures presented in the following chapters must be treated as rough approximations and even the careful conclusions based on the available data may be misleading.

2.2 Effects on the political settlement

Process tracing requires a model of the process to be traced. The following sections conceptualize the causal processes linking civil war and state formation based on a wide reading of the existing literature. Presenting in relatively simple, abstracted form the complex linkages between civil war and state formation, they reveal the different ways in which civil war may fundamentally re-shape the state.

This model's utility does not lie in 'predicting' what will happen, but in highlighting what sorts of things may and how they do so, thus telling us where to look. Assembling evidence for process tracing is sometimes described as searching for the proverbial needle in the haystack. In keeping with this metaphor, the model tells us what kind of a needle we are looking for and in what part of the haystack we are likely to find it. Developing the model also provides an opportunity to spell out the implications of much current research on civil wars for the questions of interest. As such, it provides the framework not only for exploring the case of Yemen, but for identifying where the case departs from, challenges, or prompts a reconsideration of the thematic state of the art.

Unintended consequences abound and the same choices in different contexts do not necessarily lead to the same or even similar outcomes, as rival potential pathways make clear. For those seeking (probabilistic) prediction, it will be frustrating when the model highlights that a wartime response to a specific challenge may lead to one outcome or its opposite. As a framework for analysis, the same statement is invaluable, because it tells us that this particular response needs investigating: It will likely hold part of the answer to how this particular war transformed the specific state in question.

This first section discusses the potential linkages between civil war and changes in the political settlement.

Revealing the existence of rivals to the dominant coalition, civil war both creates and reflects an elite crisis. On the one hand, civil wars tend to arise under conditions of renegotiation or crisis of the political settlement (Giustozzi, 2011b; Skocpol, 1979); on the other, war and civil war generally open up "new arenas of conflict, bargaining and accommodation" between elites in and of themselves (Heydemann, 2000, p.17). As a result, internal armed conflict often translates into conflict between and defection of elements of the dominant coalition, as it calls into question existing alliances and places a premium on the bases of political trust (Staniland, 2015). This opens the door to rapid shifts in power and in the composition of the dominant coalition itself. Moreover, since war provides opportunities for primitive accumulation (Cramer, 2006) and extreme returns on investment are possible for those willing to take the risks of operating during war or to serve the needs of violence specialists (Cramer and Goodhand, 2002), civil war tends to create stark winners and losers among economic actors, thereby again re-drawing the membership of the dominant coalition. These dynamics are summarised in the first row of Table 1. We will see this dynamic playing out in the civil war in Yemen, where the war broke the power of the hereditary administrative elite, the *sāda* and where a handful of violence entrepreneurs, some of them major tribal figures, but many more of them small and relatively unimportant shaykhs at the outset of hostilities, became tremendously powerful members of the dominant coalition by its end.

The second set of pathways in Table 1 relate to the control of coercion. They begin from the observation that civil war increases the salience of violence for rule maintenance, creating strong incentives for its use (Giustozzi, 2011b). At the same time, civil war redraws zones of control, reducing dominant coalitions' and challengers' ability to use selective violence (Kalyvas, 2006). As a result, it increases their need for coercion, while simultaneously

reducing their ability to use it effectively, creating strong pressures to gain access to new sources of organised violence – whether by mobilising existing local violence specialists,[33] by creating new security organisations, or by seeking external allies. In the simplifying terms of the model, each has a different effect on the political settlement, since access to violence determines the distribution of the benefits and opportunities war offers (Raeymaekers, 2013).[34] However, these choices need not be mutually exclusive, and there may be elements of all three – and consequently an activation of contradictory causal pathways – in any given situation.

If members of the dominant coalition or those seeking to challenge them predominantly build alliances with existing local violence specialists, this is likely to decentralise power over coercion. It usually involves giving up large amounts of central oversight and transferring rights to revenue extraction and control over resources from the centre to local violence specialists to buy loyalty (Giustozzi, 2011b, p.63). Such additional rights and resources make local violence specialists more independent and strengthen them within the dominant coalition. Moreover, as Joel Migdal (2001, p.68) has argued, powerful local intermediaries tend to undermine conditions for centralising control of coercion in the longer term, thus potentially weakening officers in command of the central military within the evolving political settlement. Indeed, while 'taming' violence may make sense viewed from the capital, violence and brinkmanship are often tools for local violence specialists to increase their leverage (Giustozzi, 2009, p.13). This causal story appears to be borne-out in the case of Yemen, where both republican and royalist wartime mobilisation relied to a significant extent

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[33] The term "violence specialists," introduced by Charles Tilly (2003), has been fruitfully adopted (e.g. Collins, 2009) to capture the range of actors for whom using physical violence is one of their central roles: from members of police and military forces, over mercenaries and underworld bruisers, to guerrilla fighters. Labelling these groups violence specialists does not imply that they are intrinsically violent, but highlights that using and performing violence are accepted parts of their social roles, generally connected to training (specialisation) in violence. See Section 4.2. for a discussion of the applicability of this framework to tribal fighters in the civil war in Yemen.

[34] Different conditions of warfare influence choices over mobilising. According to Gongora, (1997), the need to access advanced weapons for interstate conflict has underwritten rulers' preference for large-scale external support in the Middle East since the 1950s. In this sense, civil war, which is often characterised by less technology-intensive warfare, may be one of the few forms of contemporary warfare in which belligerents might predominantly rely on domestic resources and technologies.

on Yemen's highland tribes, transferring large amounts of resources to them in the process. These resources, in turn, allowed tribal leaders to dominate the peace.

By contrast, successful attempts to create new security organisations are likely to strengthen the officers at their head within the dominant coalition, providing them with additional resources, autonomy, and opportunities for patronage, as appears to have been the case in Peru during the 1980s (Mauceri, 1997). This view captures something important about military mobilisation in Yemen during the civil war, although the distinction between the two strategies – of empowering local violence specialists versus creating new organisations – may not be clear-cut and the range and variation between armed groups falling somewhere between national militaries and local village, tribal, or landlord levies is significant (Jentzsch et al., 2015). Certainly in Yemen, as we will see, distinctions between tribal militias and the royalist and republican armies were blurred. In trying to disentangle the two, the exploration enquires into the networks of political trust that predominate in purportedly 'new' organisations and into the elite alliances that the political settlement view foregrounds. Yet, despite this blurring and the fact that, for a range of reasons discussed in the following chapters, military mobilisation was by far subordinate to mobilising tribal fighters, several short and abortive efforts at mass mobilisation nonetheless left lasting legacies and created an alternative centre of power among a part of the officer corps that contested the emerging dominance of tribal leaders, local notables, and high-ranking officers.

The third way to access new sources of organised coercion lies in securing large-scale external military support or direct intervention. Such external intervention decisively shapes the parameters and incentives within which domestic actors pursue strategies and tends to supply coercive capacities well in excess of those available by other means. However, this does not mean interveners tend to get their way, or that domestic factors become irrelevant during foreign intervention. External intervention may be associated with increased power and influence for both local power brokers and officers atop the central military. On the one hand, it has, in the 20th and 21st centuries, tended to involve sophisticated technologies of violence – such as aircraft or armoured vehicles – that gave an advantage to the military and the officers at its highest levels. On the other, interveners have tended to seek alliances with local violence specialists as suppliers of local knowledge. Not only, but perhaps especially, in an age of nationalism, legitimacy and local information have been among the most elusive resources for external interveners.

In addition, intervention has tended to add the resources necessary for sustaining a broad range of potential dominant coalitions not necessarily supported by the domestic political

economy. As a result, the political settlement in these contexts may be highly unstable when intervention changes or ends (Giustozzi, 2011b, p.227; Putzel and Di John, 2012, pp.33–38) and domestic political economies tend to become organised around the pursuit of international strategic rents to sustain externally-orientated dominant coalitions (Heydemann, 2000, p.13). Interventions may also disadvantage the domestic holders of capital in particular, as it provides domestic violence specialists with sophisticated weapons and funds without having to strike bargains with the holders of capital. As we will see, the Egyptian military intervention in Yemen helped create a political settlement dependent on external rents and increased the power of tribal leaders and military officers. The commercial elites that most enthusiastically supported Egyptian intervention, gained little from it.

Finally, the reconfiguration of zones of control means that under conditions of civil war, dominant coalitions lose access to domestic revenue, even as the cost of rule-maintenance increases.[35] The economic core of the state may be in question: the capacity to mobilise, allocate, and spend public resources (Boyce and O'Donnell, 2007a, p.1). From the perspective of the political settlement, four potential reactions are particularly relevant. As in the case of mobilisation strategies, incumbents and insurgents can and do pursue multiple financing strategies at a time (Mampilly, 2011, p.14), meaning more than one of these pathways may be active at once.

The first concerns gaining large-scale external financing. Particularly for incumbents in post-colonial settings, who inherited institutions designed to face the imperial metropole, export resources, and collect revenues from cross-border trade (Bayart, 1996; Bayart et al., 1997; Cooper, 2002; Young, 1994), this has often been a favoured strategy.[36] Post-independence incumbents and many of the insurgencies they faced derived much of their income from natural resource extraction and international strategic alliances (Mampilly, 2011, pp.69–72; Moore, 2004). Like access to large-scale external coercion, external funding changes the

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[35] How important loss of territory is for revenues depends on the political economy and the resources in question. Loss of territorial control may be of marginal importance in some cases, such as offshore oil or other 'non-lootable' 'point resources' (Snyder and Bhavani, 2005) and any loss of revenue may be offset by strategic rent related to the conflict itself.

[36] As a result, it has often been insurgents, not incumbents, who attempt to create systems of taxation offering benefits for the taxed – though we should avoid equating all forms of (rebel) governance with state formation (Arjona et al., 2015).

parameters for forming a dominant coalition. Where financing does not rely on taxation and the bargains with domestic holders of capital it implies, the potential composition of the dominant coalition is more variable and coalitions that are unsustainably narrow in domestic terms and must rely on continued access to external resources can emerge. Within this variability, external financing appears especially likely to undermine the role of domestic capital in the political settlement, while strengthening the position of domestic actors in control of coercion. As foreign funding becomes central to deploying coercion and thus the survival of the dominant coalition, this weakens the bargaining power of domestic holders of capital and therefore cancels out incentives for (other) members of the dominant coalition to respond to their demands (Leander, 2004, pp.72–76).[37] Constituencies that gain bargaining power are those that provide access to violence, as well as external donors. However, which coalitions do emerge depends in important measure on the agendas of external interveners and on different domestic actors' ability to successfully use such funding for their own ends.

Contrary to authors who have seen such external financing and especially access to global financial flows as a recent phenomenon or a feature of 'new wars' (Kaldor, 1999; Leander, 2004), this dynamic has a longer pedigree. For example, Miguel Centeno (2002) argues that the availability of international financing for Latin American governments in the 19th century diminished their need to extract revenue from their citizens to finance wars, leading to the formation of externally-orientated states. We will also see that in Yemen during the 1960s, foreign funding played an important role and helped to keep commercial elites out of power.

There are other ways in which both incumbents and challengers might react to a loss of revenue, even as the costs of control increase, most notably the fiscal innovations that have often accompanied the high capital requirements of war: printing money, expanding (government) borrowing, and domestic resource mobilisation through taxation. Table 1

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[37] The distinction between groups whose power depends on capital and those whose power depends on coercion is analytically useful in thinking about different interests within the dominant coalition, since commercial and martial interests are often at odds and organised in different ways. It is also a simplification, in that power is fungible: capital can buy coercion and access to coercion can create lucrative markets in protection or enforce monopolies.

Table 1: Effect of civil war on the political settlement

Starting point →	Intervening process →	Effects on the political settlement
Civil war reveals the existence of alternatives to the incumbent	Reflects and provokes crisis in the dominant coalition	Rapid shifts in the dominant coalition and renegotiation of the political settlement
Civil war increases the salience of violence for rule maintenance	Contenders mobilise local violence specialists	Increases the independence of local violence specialists and strengthens them within the dominant coalition
	Contenders organise new violence specialists, creating more sophisticated security institutions	Strengthens the leaders of security forces within the dominant coalition
	Contenders gain outside coercive capabilities	Enables the formation of domestically unviable dominant coalitions; may weaken domestic capital within the dominant coalition
Civil War redraws zones of control, decreasing income derived from territorial control and increasing costs of rule maintenance	Contenders gain external financing	Enables the formation of a domestically unviable dominant coalition; may weaken domestic capital within the dominant coalition and strengthen local and/or central actors in control of coercion
	Contenders expand taxation or borrow money domestically	Strengthens domestic capital in the dominant coalition

suggests that strategies of money-creation, because of the inflationary pressures they cause, will tend to weaken the holders of capital within the dominant coalition. By contrast, increasing domestic debt and borrowing likely empowers them, since, all other things being equal, they gain influence as creditors. Both of these tendencies should not be over-stated.[38] Likewise, mobilising additional resources through taxation will tend to strengthen the holders of capital within the dominant coalition and often encourages a broadening of the coalition. Since taxation, to be successful, is reliant on at least the passive acquiescence of those paying taxes (Levi, 1988), expanding taxation requires bargaining and often the extension of rights or

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[38] Holders of capital can make enormous profits under conditions of (hyper)inflation (see e.g. Picard, 2000 on Lebanon), while leaders in control of coercion have often rid themselves of debts through the use of force, pointing to the limits of control exercised through the purse alone. As Machiavelli pointed out: "while gold by itself will not gain you good soldiers, good soldiers may readily get you gold" (Machiavelli, 2004, Ch. 10).

other benefits to broader constituencies – an idea that can be found in a succession of influential thinking about state formation from Joseph Schumpeter (1991) over Michael Mann (1984), to Charles Tilly (1992).

2.3 Effects on institutions

The second set of connections links civil war to outcomes in terms of institutions, that is changes in organisations, rules, formal procedures, functionaries, and bureaucrats. These linkages are summarised in Table 2 below. They begin from the same recurrent features of civil war.

Revealing the existence of alternatives to the incumbent, civil war reflects and provokes a crisis in the dominant coalition. This is likely, at least in the short term, to fragment political authority and central institutions as the rump coalition loses the resources – including violence specialists – provided by the defecting elements, weakening central control over violence. Where control is tenuous, loyalty is too (Kalyvas, 2006), thus increasing the margin of manoeuvre of local power brokers.

In addition, the increased salience of violence for regime maintenance and contestation increases incumbents' and challengers' need for violence. In response, they can empower local violence specialists, create new organisations for violence, or secure external military support. These choices are familiar from the discussion above.

In terms of institutional change, the literature suggests that empowering local violence specialists tends to multiply competing local institutions and weakens central institutions for control of violence. It has been associated with a disintegration of the military as a centralised institution in a variety of contexts, including Sierra Leone (Arnold, 2008), South Sudan (De Waal, 1994), and Tajikistan (Nourzhanov, 2005). In his discussion of warlordism in Afghanistan, Antonio Giustozzi (2009) likewise highlights that attempts to recruit local violence specialists for counterinsurgency fragmented central control over violence. Such dynamics may be unintentional, or incumbents may deliberately empower local violence specialists to avoid military concentrations of power (Leander, 2004; Reno, 1998). A substantial literature also suggests that the fragmentation resulting from empowering local violence specialists increases the incidence of violence because in 'markets' of violence, the actors that provide 'security' are, paradoxically, in a position to increase demand for their services by creating insecurity (De Waal, 2015b; Elwert, 1997; Mehler, 2004). However, Yemen calls into question elements of this story, as we will see below. Tribal militias developed alongside and in alliance with the central military and local autonomy and indirect

rule were compatible at different times with both high levels of stability and significant instability, recalling dynamics analysed in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Naseemullah, 2014).

Incumbent elites and insurgents may also organise new coercive organisations. A substantial literature suggests that this should generate more centralised control over coercion and create more sophisticated security organisations. The centralising impetus of new coercive organisations stems from the direct relationships they create between actors at the centre and various locales not mediated through local gatekeepers, generating support for the central government and extending the reach of its patronage networks (Lowi, 2005, p.235; Martinez, 2000, pp.194–195; Wood, 2008, p.545).[39] In a related dynamic, the pressures of civil war to increase selective violence can in some cases put a check on recruitment and organising strategies in the armed forces that exclusively prioritise political loyalty, creating incentives for institutionalisation and professionalization and thus fostering more sophisticated security organisations (Finer, 1976, 1975; Giustozzi, 2011b, pp.43–74).[40] These centralising dynamics help explain why proponents of modernisation theory saw militaries as meritocratic, modernising, and nationalist, opposed to particularism and with a hierarchical organisation able to effectively mobilise resources (Halpern, 1965; Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p.357; Ball, 1988).

If this view now appears overly rosy, it is in part due to the caveats about mixed strategies discussed in Section 2.2 and the difficulties raised when, as in Yemen, new military units are organised along the very particularistic lines of (tribal) belonging they were believed to efface. More generally, different groups in the military may ally with different civilian groups and these alliances can shift over time. Corporate interests do not necessarily trump personal connections or interests associated with other markers of belonging (Ball, 1988, p.23).

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[39] Most military spending tends to be on salaries for personnel (Ball, 1988, pp.29-30).

[40] How soldiers and rebel fighters are recruited may be important in its own right (Weinstein, 2007, 2005), though disentangling logics and distinguishing types is far from straightforward and the identity of members (who participates in armed groups), organisational structures and logics (how they participate) and individuals' motivation and socialisation within the armed group (why they participate) determine the longer-term effects of military recruitment and militia formation (Guichaoua, 2013, 2012; Gutiérrez Sanín, 2008, 2003; Mampilly, 2011, p.14).

Even where they strengthen militaries, strategies that create new violence organisations may have ambivalent and potentially contradictory impacts on formal institutions not primarily about the administration of violence. They may weaken other formal institutions by crowding out investment and capacity or strengthen them by providing an organisational model and experience with large, centrally controlled hierarchical organisations.

On the one hand, stronger central institutions dealing in violence may weaken institutions not primarily concerned with administering coercion. This pathway emphasises the potential for military expenditure to crowd out other forms of state spending, capture investment in unproductive ways, and impede concentrations of expertise and human capital in other institutions (Ball, 1988, pp.173-4). In situations characterised by limited organisational capacity and perceived internal and external threats, a unified, professional military has often dominated other institutions and appropriated rents and investments to their detriment (Giustozzi, 2011a, p.10; Grawert, 2016). In addition, stronger coercive central institutions can hollow-out civilian forms of administration as areas come under outright military rule, the civilian administration is subordinated to the war effort, and military institutions substitute for civilian ones, through military administration, martial law, and military-led construction efforts. To the extent that this pathway is operational, the formation of more sophisticated military organisations should lead to a weakening of non-coercive institutions. In Yemen we will see elements of this dynamic playing out, as military influence in local government and of officers as governors contributed to the absence and irrelevance of central institutions at the local level after the civil war.

On the other hand, more sophisticated security organisations can have the opposite effect, providing an organisational model and a conduit for other forms of bureaucratic and hierarchical organisation. As Weber argued with reference to the European experience, the rule-bound behaviour and organisational discipline of the military may be transferable to the civilian bureaucracy (Weber, 1980, pp.681–686). Hierarchical, centralised, and disciplined security organisations have formed the organisational kernel of hierarchical, centralised, and often repressive administrative institutions (Straus and Waldorf, 2011; Cronin, 2014, p.17). In addition, mobilising, keeping track of, equipping, paying and otherwise managing new militaries can create demand for similarly centralised bodies to organise everything from the growing of food (Collingham, 2013), over the recruitment of soldiers, to overseeing industrial production (Wilson, 2006), thus driving selective bureaucratic penetration and expansion. In a related logic, Richard Stubbs describes a process whereby, during the 'Malayan Emergency,' the colonial government's attempts to control territories "cleared" of insurgents and to avoid their return led it to significantly expand the civil service at the local level and send

government agents into areas where they had not hitherto been present (Stubbs, 1997, pp.65–66).

If incumbent elites or challengers turn to external military intervention, the effect on institutions is similarly ambivalent. Outside military aid can directly train and equip the military, strengthen it as an institution, and supply additional capital resources and training (Ball, 1988, p.238). However, external intervention can also appear to guarantee the security of the incumbent regime, removing incentives to develop or invest in centralised security services and making 'fragmentation strategies' more attractive (Giustozzi, 2011a).

Table 2: Effect of civil war on institutions

Starting point →	Intervening process →	Effects on institutions
Civil war reveals the existence of alternatives to the incumbent	Reflects and provokes a crisis in the dominant coalition	Multiplies competing local institutions and weakens central control of violence
Civil war increases the salience of violence for rule maintenance	Contenders empower local violence specialists	Multiplies competing local institutions and weakens central control of violence
	Contenders organise new violence specialists, creating more sophisticated security institutions	Strengthens central control of violence
		Weakens non-coercive formal institutions by crowding-out investment and capacity
		Strengthens non-coercive formal institutions through linkages and demonstration effects
	Contenders gain outside coercive capabilities	Security guarantees allow neglect or purposive fragmentation of central institutions in control of violence
		Outside training and equipment strengthen the security forces and central control of violence
Civil War redraws zones of control, decreasing income and increasing costs of rule maintenance	Contenders gain external financing	Donors define institutional forms and priorities; accountability flows to donor
	Contenders decentralise taxation	Weakens non-coercive formal institutions through crowding-out
	Contenders expand taxation or borrow money domestically	Strengthens non-coercive formal institutions through demonstration and emulation

The third common feature of civil wars in this framework, redrawing and contestation of zones of control, often reduces both central control and the ability locally to sustain complex institutions that provide public goods (Arjona, 2014). Combined with the increased costs of maintaining effective control implied by a coordinated, violent challenge to the status quo, this creates strong incentives for incumbents to seek additional sources of funding or to more

aggressively exploit existing ones. Again, analogous to Section 2.2, incumbents and insurgents face difficult choices between different strategies. The literature suggests that the most important options from the perspective of institutional change are likely to be decentralising taxation to local power holders, expanding taxation to mobilise domestic resources, and gaining large-scale external financing. As before, these are not mutually exclusive options.

Decentralising taxation often accompanies strategies to decentralise control over violence. If insurgents or members of the dominant coalition seek predominantly to decentralise taxation to existing local violence specialists, this is liable to weaken central institutions and non-coercive institutions in particular. Contemporary warlord politics and historical variations of feudal models approximate such a system (Marten, 2007).

Conversely, the literature suggests that seeking to centralise control over revenue strengthens non-coercive formal institutions and generates (selective) bureaucratic strength. Some research suggests that the state formation impact of internal conflict operates primarily via taxation and other measures to centralise control over revenues (Rodríguez-Franco, 2016).[41] On the whole, these are measures that require centralisation, rule-bound behaviour, and, because they are reliant on at least the passive acquiescence of important portions of the population, require bargaining and imply direct linkages between state officials and the broader population (Levi, 1988, 2002). The acute crisis of civil war may also be one of the few opportunities in which dominant coalitions, fearing insurgent victory, acquiesce to higher taxes (Stubbs, 1997, pp.60–62, 2004). However, the specific impact of taxation strategies will depend on the detail of their implementation. Whether tax is collected from all parts of the territory, whether there are other actors with the right or ability to tax, and whether taxation requires bargains with large numbers of economic actors or is purely rent-based is likely to temper the straightforward equation of taxation and bureaucratic strength and penetration (Di John, 2010a). Taxation, precisely because of the bargaining and institution-building it implies, may often be a final resort. In Yemen, even fiscal crisis did no more than prompt a flurry of new tax laws that remained unimplemented. To the extent that the new government generated income, it rested on control of trade, strategies of patronage, and the selective co-option of holders of capital.

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[41] Measures like marketing boards and compulsory savings schemes have historically been equally or more important (Di John, 2010a).

Finally, external funding has meant that donor preferences, via conditionality, affect institutions and procedures, often in unintended ways. External funding generates links of accountability to donors, allowing donor preferences to shape institutional structures, procedures, and priorities, often creating externally-orientated institutions in the donors' image, generating economic distortions, or producing institutions that cannot be sustained by the domestic political economy (Ghani et al., 2007, p.182). External funding can also crowd out domestic institutions, bypass them, or erode the legitimacy that comes from delivery of services (Boyce and O'Donnell, 2007a p. 10-11). Certainly, the republican-royalist war in Yemen witnessed the wholesale reorientation of the YAR government apparatus to pursuing international rents and Egyptian spending largely bypassed the republican state in support of Egypt's own 'hearts and minds' campaigns. However, the stronger claims in some of the literature, of de-institutionalisation as a systematic response to external financial flows (Chabal and Daloz, 1999; Reno, 2001, 1998) may generally not hold-up (Di John, 2010b, pp.20–22). In Yemen, though there were instances of crowding out and bypassing, there was also much externally-led institution building, suggesting, perhaps, the importance of donor agendas, the project being pursued, and the domestic political settlement, which defined how such financing was utilised and adapted.

2.4 Effects on ideas of the state

Civil wars and associated violence and upheaval are periods of intense and discontinuous change in conceptions of the state and popular ideas about what constitutes legitimate authority. Claim-making escalates and contenders articulate competing visions of 'what we are fighting for.' Table 3 summarises the ways in which the literature suggests this is likely to occur, presenting several potential pathways linking civil war to notions of legitimate authority and expectations of rule.[42]

Since mobilisation during conflict is not only about recruiting fighters, but about generating much broader civilian support (Wood, 2016, p.458), contenders seeking to mobilise allies and followers tend to polarise and politicise the population and reshape public discourse and

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[42] As Lisa Wedeen (1999) reminds us, ideas need not be universally or even widely believed to be powerful in structuring elite decisions and popular expectations.

action along the macro-cleavages of the conflict (Tarrow and Tilly, 2007).[43] Such politicisation can call into question the prevalent political common sense and make accepted elements of the status quo a point of contention between rivals. As a result, it provides an opening for shifts in the parameters of legitimacy.

One way to analyse such shifts is to focus on rhetorical commonplaces, concepts like 'civilization,' modernity' or 'the people,' with vague and symbolically charged meanings that along with their collocates define the terms in legitimation contests. A rhetorical commonplace is a specific word or phrase appealed to by contending political forces. The vocabulary of rhetorical commonplaces draws attention to language not primarily as system of meaning, a formation of power, or a totalising system, but as a site of contention. Analysis of rhetorical commonplaces then is not analysis of discourse, of referents and difference, but of public rhetorical contests of the meaning of central terms used to claim legitimacy within a discourse — that is the public utterances and positionings of actors within a discourse in contests over terms whose importance is uncontested, while their meaning is. The idea of rhetorical commonplaces is also distinct from ideology in its focus: rather than drawing attention to the way a political organisation or philosophical movement bundles a set of specific understandings of such commonplaces and their relationships, it draws attention to public contests over the meaning of these central terms. It focuses not on where ideas come from, but on how they are used publicly. Specifically, Jackson (2006) introduces the term 'rhetorical commonplace' to analyse how the trope of 'western civilisation' entered the post-war German political lexicon. It became a central consensual reference point for a broad range of West German political forces, even while they sought to invest this commonplace with rival specific meanings. We can identify rhetorical commonplaces by identifying the most commonly used terms in contests over legitimacy. Such contests involve intersubjective, observable articulations of rhetorical commonplaces and claims about their meaning and relationship to one another. A given commonplace both shapes possibilities of public justification and is a site for contests over legitimacy (Jackson, 2006). It is primarily through the analysis of rhetorical commonplaces that the following investigation traces changes in

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[43] The idea that armed conflict can be associated with dramatic ideational change is also familiar from Castroist and Guevarist approaches to insurgency that view armed struggle as a means for rapid popular politicisation (Debray, 1969).

ideas of the state.[44] Rapid changes in macro cleavages and acute contests over rhetorical commonplaces can also provide a legitimating framework, often tied to material support from incumbents and challengers, for groups and individuals seeking to alter or undermine existing forms of local authority and control. Micro-level studies of civil war have discussed this dynamic in terms of the co-production of cleavages at the local level, where the macro-cleavages the conflict is 'about,' afford the framework for local actors to pursue their own interests, re-casting local allegiances and challenging traditional authorities (Kalyvas, 2003; Wood, 2008). The fact that the competencies required for success in violent settings are rarely those that are socially accepted and dominant during peace (Guichaoua, 2013, p.71, 2011; Reno, 2001), strengthens this dynamic. Thus, war shifts the relative power of different local actors and affords opportunities to challenge existing local power brokers, re-configuring power at the local level. This tends to undermine the legitimacy of the political order more broadly because it reveals it to be contingent and open to challenge, and re-opens negotiations over the allocation of rights over control of capital and coercion (Cramer, 2006). At the same time, political polarisation and more violent politics can produce a rally to the established order, not least by making the state more visible and its categories matter more immediately to everyday life as the dominant coalition cracks down on opposition and dissent (Heydemann, 2000, p.18). Indeed, political polarisation is likely to both produce and reinforce state centric identities *and* reduce the legitimacy of the political order, as rival groups mobilise followers to violently attack or defend the status quo.

Civil war also increases the salience of violence for rule maintenance, so that the dominant coalition has an increased need for violence. Incumbents and challengers can meet this need by outsourcing violence to existing local violence specialists, mobilising new constituencies for violence, or gaining external military support. These choices are familiar from the previous sections.

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[44] The analysis of such commonplaces allows a serious consideration of how political actors use ideas in public contests over legitimacy, the main dimension of interest, while making fewer demands on sources, genealogical digging, and the longue durée than more Foucauldian-inspired analyses of discourse. This was an important consideration given the paucity of data and recorded texts of speeches, radio, and print media, especially on the royalist side, as well the greater weight placed on the political economy dimensions of analysis in the thesis.

From the vantage point of literatures on ideas of the state, providing resources and social sanction to local strongmen, tribal militias, or the levies of local landlords, reinforces established social organisations operating according to rules and logics that are different from and in many cases in rivalry with, those of the central state, generating political fragmentation and undermining the idea of the state as a coherent system of domination (Migdal, 2001). Indeed, if processes of state formation have in common the attempt to bring separate communities under the control of a central power and to redirect resources and loyalties previously embedded in local networks towards the political centre (Tilly, 1975), then by definition, outsourcing coercion in this way constitutes a reversal of such processes. Yet, while this view captures important dynamics in Yemen, we will see that, ultimately, a simple opposition between local and central, state and society is not helpful. Although this view has been largely absent in the civil war literature, we will see that literatures on tribes and (neo)patrimonialism in the Middle East that have highlighted the different modalities of co-option, cooperation, and incorporation of local and traditional institutions in state building processes (Charrad, 2011; Dresch, 1990; Kostiner, 1990), provide a more convincing reading of the case than one that views central and local projects and ideas as being fundamentally at odds with one another.

Alternatively, dominant coalitions as well as insurgents can create new organisations dealing in violence. This will tend to reinforce state-centric identities because collective violence requires potent mechanisms of justification and widely-shared narratives about what is being fought for (Malešević, 2010). Military mobilisation has tended to "stress citizenship, collective identity, aggressive nationalism and mass mobilisation" (Heydemann, 2000, p.14; see also: Weber, 1977). It is likely that the identities thus created or reinforced will be heavily militarised, since the state and its violence specialists often become coterminous in elite representations and popular imaginings during wartime. The military tends to become the guardian of national values and the avatar of modernisation (Heydemann, 2000, p.19). The case suggests that such militarisation of ideas of the state can occur vicariously through external intervention.

Gaining foreign military intervention is often associated with a loss of legitimacy for the dominant coalition, whose members become vulnerable to charges of being foreign agents, collaborators, or compradors (Cronin, 2014, p.10). Despite efforts to win 'hearts and minds' and investment in state building, citizens have primarily understood foreign military deployments – and the aid that accompanies them – as attempts by foreign powers to dominate their homeland, as important parts of the population did in Yemen and as appears to have been the case in Vietnam (Elkind, 2016).

Table 3: Effects of civil war on ideas of the state

Starting point →	Intervening process →	Effects on ideas of state
Civil war reveals the existence of alternatives to the incumbent	Reflects and provokes a crisis in the dominant coalition, leading to political polarisation	Creates an opening for shifts in the parameters of legitimacy
		Produces and reinforces state-centric identities
		Inscribes violence into 'politics as usual'
Civil war increases the salience of violence for rule maintenance	Contenders empower local violence specialists	Reinforces non-state local logics and reduces legitimacy of the political order
	Contenders organise new violence specialists	New, direct relations between central and local actors reinforce state-centric identities
		Larger coercive institutions militarise ideas of the state
	Contenders gain outside coercive capabilities, making them vulnerable to charges of foreign occupation and control	Reduces legitimacy of the dominant coalition
Civil War redraws zones of control, decreasing income derived from territorial control and increasing costs of rule maintenance	Contenders print money, potentially triggering inflation and economic crisis	Reduces legitimacy of the dominant coalition
	Incumbents decentralise taxation	Increased predation reinforces state-centric identities
		Reinforces non-state local logics and reduces legitimacy of the political order
	Contenders expand central taxation	Increased taxes make the state present and visible, reinforcing state-centric identities
		Increased taxes are a grievance, reducing the legitimacy of the political order

The increased salience of violence for rule maintenance is also likely to lead to the incorporation of violence itself into conceptions of the state in the sense that violence becomes inscribed into social networks, interactions, and institutions and is legitimised, legalised, and routinized (Justino et al., 2013, p.7; Justino, 2012). By raising the stakes of political disagreement and because violence itself has the ability to create and reinforce divisions, this is also likely to be closely bound-up with political polarisation (Appadurai, 1998). It is easy to over-state or essentialise the brutalising effect of conflict, but if violence shapes political identities across generations (Balcells, 2012) and moulds the very imagination of what power is (Tripp, 2013, p.21), it is liable to shape the idea of the state in important ways, although the effect appears ambivalent: the proliferation of physical violence and its inscription in everyday life can underwrite a rally to 'normalcy' and legitimate (any) order by

comparison to the traumatic violence of war, or it can undermine legitimacy by reducing faith in the benefits of domination by the dominant coalition, as the state's ability to afford even the most basic protection to its citizens is called into question.

Finally, wartime dynamics surrounding control of capital likewise affect ideas of the state. This pathway begins from the observation that civil war involves the redrawing of zones of control, so that dominant coalitions lose access to domestic revenue. Combined with the fact that the increased salience of violence for rule maintenance will tend to increase the cost of maintaining effective control, this creates strong incentives to seek additional sources of funding or to more aggressively exploit existing ones.

In this context, dominant coalitions can choose to outsource taxation – often in combination with outsourcing violence – providing de facto or de jure permission to local violence specialists to loot or extract resources in other ways. There is a tendency in the literature to equate such 'warlord' control with increased predation (Reno, 1998, 2002a; Leander, 2004). This is liable to be something of an oversimplification as there is mounting evidence that modes of extraction and governance depend on incumbents' and challengers' time horizons, as well as specific ideologies, levels of community organisation, and the connections between violence specialists and local communities (Arjona, 2014, 2011; Mampilly, 2007; see also: Jackson, 2003). Alternatively, contenders may seek to expand the tax bureaucracy and centrally-controlled extraction to increase revenues. Both outsourcing and expanding taxation likely have ambivalent effects. Increased predation by local violence specialists can retroactively justify central control, or conversely highlight the incoherence of existing institutions and the indifference of the dominant coalition to the everyday travails of the population. Similarly, increasing taxation can make the state more present, powerful and meaningful in popular imagining, if only by signalling that such a thing as 'the state' exists (Weigel, 2018) or, conversely, serve only to escalate grievances against the exactions of the dominant coalition.

Other options involve gaining external funding or relying on other forms of rent that are less dependent on territorial control, printing money, or increasing domestic borrowing. The literature has little to say about these. Some research suggests that strategies of money creation that have a strong inflationary effect are associated with low growth and economic crisis if inflation surpasses context-specific thresholds (Bruno and Easterly, 1998; Eggoh and Khan, 2014). As such, it may create discontent with rulers, although not necessarily with the broader political settlement.

2.5 Conclusion to Chapter 2

In place of the question whether civil war in general weakens or strengthens the state, which Chapter 1 rejected as simplistic, the model reveals the range of political orders created by and through war. In terms of the political settlement, it encompasses outcomes that include significant narrowing or broadening of the dominant coalition and decisive changes in the relative ascendancy of actors in control of coercion and capital within it. Institutional outcomes range from stronger and more centralised coercive and non-coercive institutions to fragmenting political power and the establishment of more localised coalitions and institutions. From the perspective of ideas of the state, it highlights the possibility of both continuity and fundamental transformation.

The model reveals that war is neither 'development in reverse,' nor, as Heraclitus would have had it, the father of all things – a view continuing through 19th and 20th century thought to bring us advocates of 'giving war a chance' today (Herbst, 2004; Luttwak, 1999). Instead, it reveals civil war as a complex social process, which can be analysed in terms of recurring features. At the level of these recurring features, the model also demonstrates the utility of a variety of existing writing that has sought to derive mid-level contingent theory from the grounded, in-depth analysis of specific conflicts. This writing proved productive for developing a model of how civil war impacts the state, even though this is a question that has not, generally, been at the centre of this literature's concerns.

The model tells us what sort of transformations civil war may cause and draws attention to different alliances among contending groups, mobilisation for violence, and war financing. As rival potential pathways make clear, the same choices in different contexts do not necessarily lead to the same or even similar outcomes and context and contingency loom large. Moreover, the three layers of the model are likely to interact: some dynamics may be self-reinforcing (for instance, accumulation of power by local power brokers is likely to hasten formal decentralisation and institutional fragmentation and vice-versa), while others may be self-weakening (for instance, if foreign intervention empowers military officers in the dominant coalition, but tends to weaken the military they command). It is a model that wants application to specific states engaged in specific wars, in fact, it shows why analysis only makes sense at that level.

The model derived from these literatures sets the scene for process tracing and the subsequent discussion by telling us where to look and what sort of dynamics, within the almost unlimited richness of social reality, we should be interested in. At the same time, as the discussion has looked ahead to the application of the model to Yemen, it has highlighted

developments that do not seem to fit the causal relationships the dominant literature suggests. In this way, the model provides a means to identify where the case departs from, challenges, or prompts us to reconsider and critique the thematic literature, allowing us, through process tracing, to use the case study to reflect back systematically on the state of the art in civil war research.

In applying the model, the following chapters seek to do justice to nearly eight years of conflict in North Yemen, full of changes, reversals and contradictions. Groups and individuals rapidly gained positions of power and just as quickly lost them again. To some extent, the discussion charts this ebb and flow of an ongoing power struggle, highlighting the different elements of the process active at different times, and the contingency of the final outcome. At the same time, the chapters give special prominence to the end points of these struggles – the final outcomes of wartime transformation are the explananda of interest.

3 STARTING POINTS: ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

Evaluating changes to the political settlement, institutions and ideas of the state wrought by the civil war requires an account of the 'state starting points' prior to the war as well as a discussion of the trajectories of state formation up to the 1960s. If civil war made a specific state, assessing the changes caused by war requires an account of the political order that preceded it, to allow the analysis to separate elements of stability and continuity from changes linked to the conflict.

Continuing the preparatory work of Chapter 2, this chapter lays the empirical foundations for process tracing by examining the Imamate state before the civil war along the dimensions of the political settlement, institutions, and ideas of the state. In doing so, it seeks to adjudicate between older accounts, both within Yemen and without, stressing the static, backwards, and traditionalist nature of Yemeni society, the administration, and the underlying political settlement during the first half of the twentieth century,[45] with more recent scholarship that has brought out the significant turmoil and changes of this time. There is much to commend the recent revisionist insistence that Imam Yaḥiyā Ḥamīd al-Dīn (r1918-1948)[46] "transformed the Imamate, an otherwise marginal Shiʿi spiritual and temporal institution, into a powerful state that challenged British rule in the South and made claims to lead the entire Islamic world" (Willis, 2012, p.12). This scholarship stresses the dramatic changes under way in administering Yemen under the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imams (Messick, 1993; Willis, 2004; and with qualifications: Bin Daghar, 2005). Yet, it may at times have over-compensated, veering too far down the revisionist path. Dramatic changes in dominant coalitions and their social underpinnings, in institutions, and ideas of the state were the rule, not the exception, in the Arabian Peninsula, the Horn of Africa and the rest of Yemen's near abroad during the first half of the 20th century. Within this context, the changes in Yemen were among the most cautious until the 1962 revolution.

Section 3.1 explores the political settlement under Imam Yaḥiyā and his son Imam ʾAḥmad (r1948-1962). It discusses the role of Yemen's powerful Hashemite families, the *sāda*, the

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[45] This persists, e.g. in: Jones, 2004, p.21.

[46] Arguably, Ḥamīd al-Dīn rule began in 1890 when the Zaydī *ʿulamaʾ* selected Muḥammad bin Yaḥiyā Ḥamīd al-Dīn, Imam Yaḥiyāʾs father, as Imam. Yaḥiyā issued his *daʿwa*, his call to be recognised as Imam, in 1904. The Ottomans withdrew from Yemen in 1918, handing control to Imam Yaḥiyā.

religiously learned secondary elite, the *quḍāa*, and the important role of tribes and tribal leaders in the dominant coalition. It traces fault lines and divisions within the political settlement and highlights how growing centralisation of power within the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family called the political settlement into question as formerly powerful groups came to resent their increasing marginalisation. It closes with a discussion of merchants and military officers, whose political influence remained limited even as their control over capital and coercion expanded.

Section 3.2 moves to a discussion of formal institutions, covering taxation and fiscal institutions (3.2.1), the military and security institutions (3.2.2), and the organisation of central and local administration (3.2.3). After Ottoman withdrawal, the Imams first adopted many recent Ottoman administrative and military innovations and then expanded upon them, extending their rule to areas that had rarely come under the influence of previous Imams.[47] North Yemen's political institutions during this time were marked by an extensive, effective, and widely resented bureaucracy for collecting and administering taxes; a growing central military that increasingly limited tribal influence in politics; and growing administrative centralisation in a context of minimal delegation of authority, limited institutionalisation, and low levels of functional differentiation.

Section 3.3 discusses ideas of the state, describing the religious and anti-colonial rhetorical commonplaces that structured expectations of just rule during the Imamate. During the 1940s and 50s, ideas about Imamic rule from Zaydī jurisprudence were increasingly supplemented and displaced by other concerns, which the Imams struggled to accommodate. First, emigration to Aden and experiences studying abroad catalysed elite demands for political reform couched in nationalist terms. Then, during the 1950s, Arab nationalism, socialism, and development became the predominant rhetorical commonplaces. Increasingly, existing ideas of just political order and legitimate rule were in question.

Section 3.4 closes the chapter with a brief exploration of Crown Prince al-Badr's regency in 1959. An important moment of crisis, it is an episode that reveals the eroding foundations of the Imamate political settlement and changing parameters of legitimacy on the eve of the revolution, at a time when formal central institutions reached an unprecedented level of

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[47] Arguably, the early 20th century Imamic state and its innovations were themselves the product of the war against the Ottomans and Ottoman counterinsurgency. See: Wilhite, 2003.

influence. As such, it sets the stage for the analysis of wartime changes in the succeeding chapters.

3.1 The political settlement on the eve of the revolution

Imam Yaḥiyā and his son ʾAḥmad pursued an aggressive policy of centralisation and directly challenged alternative power centres, so that on-going conflict and change characterised the political settlement throughout the first half of the 20th century. The Imamic settlement, consolidated in the 1930s, was dominated by an alliance of spiritual and temporal authority between families of notables who claimed descent from the Prophet Muhammad, known in Yemen as the *sāda* (singular *sayyid*), and the highland tribes, most notably the heads of the Ḥāshid and Bakīl tribal confederations.

This settlement was under significant strain by the 1950s: *Sayyid* families with rival claims to the Imamate assassinated Imam Yaḥiyā in 1948.[48] Military officers largely excluded from the settlement played a key role in fighting between factions of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family in 1955 and threatened mutiny in 1959. In addition, a series of tribal revolts, involving elements of the powerful tribal confederations of Ḥāshid, Bakīl, and Khawlān, called the alliance between the Ḥamīd al-Dīn and the highland tribes into question during the tumultuous years leading up to the 1962 revolution.

3.1.1   The sayyid and qāḍī families

Unlike much of the rest of the Arab world, where colonialism, domestic modernisation drives, and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire weakened traditional elites, northern Yemen exhibited remarkable elite continuity until the middle of the twentieth century (vom Bruck, 2005, p.7).[49] This continuity found its clearest reflection in the enduring role of a number of 'great houses' or families (*buyut kubar*), who claimed descent from the Prophet Muhammad and formed a quasi-hereditary administrative elite. This religious establishment largely belonged to the Zaydī school of Islam, a branch of Shiʿi Islam. It taught, judged, and ruled and was defined by descent, endogamous marriage, and a tradition of scholarship and public

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[48] On *sayyid* dominance of the coup, see: Douglas, 1987, pp.131–132.

[49] Sometimes this stability, purportedly combined with endogamy and residential segregation, has been likened to caste structures (Chelhod et al., 1985, pp.15–16).

service (vom Bruck, 2005, pp.4, 44, 131).[50] The *sayyid* families were flanked by a religiously learned secondary elite, the *quḍāa* (singular *qāḍī*), who held positions as government judges and functionaries, or as officials in mosques and the ʾ*awqāf*. They did not claim descent from the Prophet Muhammad and included both Shāfiʿīs and Zaydīs.

Not all *sāda* were wealthy or part of the dominant coalition, nor were all wealthy landowners or high officials *sāda*. The male members of *sayyid* families might be teachers in religious schools, minor functionaries, and some were destitute. Some, like the Ghamdān family, even became involved in trading, long a low-status occupation in Zaydī thought (Stookey, 1978, p.180; vom Bruck, 2005, p.44). Conversely, a number of *qāḍī* families had comparable wealth and political influence to the great *sayyid* houses, including, for instance, the al-ʿAmrī, and al-Siyāghī families (Stookey, 1978, p.180). Yet, quintessentially, the *sāda* were identified with large landholdings and high office and only *sāda* could aspire to become Imam.[51] Governorships, ministerial positions, and other leading government posts were generally held by *sāda* and *sāda* appear to have been exempt from government taxation (PAAA, B36 45, 24 Apr. 1963).

Moreover, in occupying administrative positions at the local level, the *sāda* were closely identified with state power and Ḥamīd al-Dīn rule as the everyday agents of the state, reading out political news and announcing government decrees and proclamations (Swagman, 1988a, p.79). In the North, this accorded with tribal conventions of rule and the *sāda* had a long-standing role as mosque preachers, judges, mediators, and as administrators of religious endowments and markets, even during the periods of extensive tribal self-administration when central control lapsed throughout much of the 19th century (al-Saidi, 1981; Meissner, 1987; Messick, 1993). In lower Yemen, their role was far less established prior to the rise of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imams. Here, the Imams partially replaced Shāfiʿī shaykhs and ʿulamaʾ, religious scholars, with Zaydī officials, many of them *sāda* (Douglas, 1987, p.13). Thus, particularly in lower Yemen, *sāda* became identified with Imamic government and rival local

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[50] *Sayyid* families are spread across Yemen, generally living among other groups. However, in the tribal north, a significant fraction of *sāda* lived in specific towns and settlements known as *hijrāt* (sing. *hijra*), where they were the majority of the population (Chelhod et al., 1985, p.28).

[51] In the North, *sayyid* landed wealth was comparable to that of tribesmen (Mundy, 1995, p.47). In the Tihāma, large landholdings by *sayyid*, and to a lesser extent *qāḍī* and shaykhly, families was the norm. See 3.1.4.

elites encouraged opposition to the *sāda.* By the late 1950s, anti-*sāda* sentiment formed an important part of the discourse of opposition to the Imam (see Section 3.3) and "the monopoly of power by the Seyeds [sic. …] was much resented" in the lead up to the 1962 revolution (UKNA, PREM 11/3877, 6 Oct. 1962). Indeed, some *sāda* believed that Imam ʾAḥmad deliberately fostered hostility to them as a group to rally the *sāda* to the Imamate (vom Bruck, 2005, p.56).

3.1.2   The Ḥamīd al-Dīn

If this was the case, it was at best a partially successful strategy. For at the centre of *sayyid* power in the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen, but at the same time increasingly at loggerheads with the ambitions of other *sayyid* families, was the house of Ḥamīd al-Dīn, one of the *sayyid* families with a historical claim to the Imamate. The Ḥamīd al-Dīn rulers brought an unprecedented level of centralisation to North Yemen. At least since the 1970s, students of Yemen have highlighted Imam Yaḥiyā's "notable feat" of constructing a unified state after Ottoman withdrawal in 1918 through "more or less constant campaigns of conquest" during the 1920s (Stookey, 1978, p.167).

Growing centralisation of power under the Ḥamīd al-Dīn contrasted with the chronic inability of the Ottoman government in Yemen to collect taxes and maintain a modicum of security (Willis, 2012, p.110). As such, the observation of British travellers in the late 1930s that, "if any ruler can say I am the state, it is the ruler of Yemen" (Scott and Britton, 1942, p.171), reflected recent changes in governance, rather than a constant of Yemeni history. Growing centralisation was accompanied by a gradual narrowing of the dominant coalition, as notable Shāfiʿī families, tribal leaders, and rival *sayyid* families were increasingly side lined (Stookey, 1978, p.167). Yet, plenty of governance remained decentralised. Central authority focused on security and taxation and even here, tax farming and shaykhs' command over 'their' tribal levies highlights how embedded forms of indirect rule remained (see 3.2).

The Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imams pursued an increasingly dynastic vision of kingship at some variance with traditional Zaydī doctrine. In combination with the growing centralisation of power within the family, this upset and alienated powerful men of the other great houses like the Sharaf al-Dīn and al-Wazīr families, who found their offices transferred to relatives of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn (vom Bruck, 2005, p.49; Douglas, 1987, p.14). By the mid-1940s, the most lucrative provinces, in terms of their tax incomes, were governed by Ḥamīd al-Dīn princes, including Crown Prince ʾAḥmad in Taʿiz, Prince Ḥassan in ʾIbb, and Prince ʿAbd Allah in al-Ḥudayda (Stookey, 1978, p.194). Less powerful *sayyid* families likewise saw their influence under threat due to centralising administrative reforms, such as growing treasury control

over the management of religious endowments (ʾawqāf), which had previously been administered by local sayyid families. Such measures generated growing resentment among other sāda, who considered themselves socially equal to the Ḥamīd al-Dīn but were increasingly politically subordinated (vom Bruck, 2005, p.51). Moreover, riches increasingly flowed to the family in ways that violated Zaydī prohibitions on using public office for personal gain. Imam ʾAḥmad created a monopoly on pharmaceutical products and received a large cut of several large commercial ventures (Stookey, 1978, p.195). For example, the Imam received over 50% of profits of the Yemen Trading Company, which enjoyed a near monopoly on imports of sugar, flour, rice, and tobacco. Prince Ḥassan, the Imam's advisors, and several other princes also received significant shares. Only 12% of profits went to the merchant families who actually ran the business (Dresch, 2000, p.71). Narrowing access to power and the rents deriving from it, increasingly called the settlement overall into question.[52]

3.1.3   Tribal leaders

Yemen's tribes have been decisive political actors and an important source of organised violence for successive rulers. Mostly, but not exclusively, defined by (myths of) shared ancestry (Weir, 2007, p.2), the vast majority of Yemen's tribes are sedentary and hence territorially defined. Tribesmen in the first half of the 20th century were almost exclusively farmers, primarily owner-cultivators (Dresch, 1984, p.158).

Scholars of Yemen's tribes have disagreed on the extent to which tribes form meaningful collective actors and whether tribe and state formed alternative or complementary systems of political order.[53] Yet they have been united by an insistence that 'tribe' is a meaningful social category and one that, certainly in North Yemen, had little to do with the knowledge production of imperial governance.[54] Tribe (qabīla) and tribalism (qabīliyya) remain central

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[52] These internal rivalries among the sāda confound simpler versions of political settlement approaches that suggest settlements are defined by broad markers of ascriptive identity.

[53] Mundy (1995, p.203) suggests tribal power was historically a separate sphere of power and Carapico (1998, p.64) suggests it "presented itself as an alternative to the state," while Dresch (1990) has stressed how tribal conceptions of rule viewed the tribe as embedded in the Imamic state and Lackner (2017, p.194) has recently suggested that tribe and state have complementary roles and "work best together in alliance."

[54] Attempts to write about Yemen while rejecting the category have been far between (Blumi, 2011, 2003; Wedeen, 2008) and arguably unconvincing.

categories for writing about history and politics by Yemeni and non-Yemeni scholars and continue to play an important role in how Yemenis who identify as members of a tribe describe their own identity (Brandt, 2017, pp.15–18; Weir, 2007, pp.1–4).

Different evaluations of the role of tribes in part reflect regional variation and change over time. Tribes in Upper Yemen form larger units with more sophisticated mechanisms of federation and coordination than in the central highlands south of Ṣanaʿāʾ and in lower Yemen. Tribal organisation is also shaped by Yemen's diverse ecology and topography (Weir, 2007, pp.2–3). In Upper Yemen, most tribes belong to two large confederations, Ḥāshid and Bakīl, both headed by a paramount shaykh (*shaykh al-mashāyikh*) with significant influence in Yemeni politics throughout much of the 20th century. Other tribes and confederations exist alongside them, like the Khawlān bin ʿĀmir (Dresch, 1984, p.154). These tribes have sophisticated organisational structures, an administrative and juridical apparatus, written laws, durable alliances, a culture of mediation and dialogue, and historically evolved links with state power (Weir, 2007, p.4; see also: Brandt, 2017, p.17). By contrast, in lower Yemen, 'tribal' organisation in the middle of the twentieth century was largely village-based (Stookey, 1978, pp.183–184), leading some to suggest tribes were wholly absent in these areas (Dresch, 1990, p.254).

Even at the head of the most coherent tribes, tribal leaders "se rapprochent d'avantage de présidents de comités que de chefs d'état" (Serjeant, 1967, p.286) and collective action required bargaining and deal-making. The position of the paramount shaykh was contested (Brandt, 2014, pp.100–104) and tribes, sub-tribes, and families maintained bargaining power vis-à-vis tribal leaders, through defaults on tribal subscriptions, threatening defection, and even the use of force (Weir, 2007, p.277).[55] Imam's Yaḥiyā's skilful exploitation of such divisions between and within tribes was key to his ability to manage tribal rebellions and impose chosen officials and central rules on tribes (Weir, 2007, pp.264–265; al-Saidi, 1981, pp.148–149). Similarly, during the civil war, many shaykhly families supported the republic, while large parts of the tribes they headed supported the Imam (Dresch, 1993b, p.248).

In the first decades of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imamate, the tribes, individually and collectively, formed the backbone of the Imam's armed strength (Peterson, 1982, p.51). This began to

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[55] Despite a mythology of constancy, individuals, sub-tribes and occasionally larger units can change affiliation (Peterson, 1982, p.50; Gingrich and Heiss, 1986, p.17; Dresch, 1984). On tribal structure in general see: Dresch, 1993b, pp.24–25; Meissner, 1987.

change when Imam Yaḥiyā developed a regular standing army, the *jaysh al-niẓāmī,* and a trained tribal reserve, the *jaysh al-difāʿī.* To a lesser extent, however, the Imams continued to rely on the armed strength of the highland tribes. The *niẓāmī* and *difāʿī* armies continued to be supplemented by the *jaysh al-barānī* – tribal fighters under command of their shaykhs. *Barānī* troops attached themselves to officials and tax collectors and the forcible billeting of *barānī* troops, known as *tanfīdh, w*as a major source of resentment against the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imams, especially in the Tihāma and lower Yemen (Douglas, 1987, pp.13, 66; Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.60; Nājī, 1988, p.124; Weir, 2007, p.47). Ad-hoc levies of tribal fighters played an important role in defeating the 1948 coup against Imam Yaḥiyā (Johnsen, 2017, pp.56–63) and in containing a mutiny within the regular army in 1959, explored further in Section 3.4 below.

While still armed, organised and politically relevant, as the 1960s dawned in Yemen, tribes were less central to Yemeni politics than in previous decades. Tribal leaders played virtually no role in formal politics, the regular army and divide and rule strategies had defeated tribal rebellions, and the Imam cut off tribal leaders from Ottoman-era stipends – they now received money only in exchange for giving up tribal hostages (see 3.2.3 below). Although, as Imam Yaḥiyā developed the "strongest and most centralised state Yemen had hitherto known," he created state structures largely congruous with the tribal order in Upper Yemen, in aggregate centralisation slowly stripped away tribal autonomy. Making use of local interests and divisions, the tribal system proved prone to subversion where it experienced a sustained challenge and the Imam was able to manage tribal discontent by promising lesser shaykhs advancement against the incumbent leaders (Dresch, 2000, pp.71, 84; Bin Daghar, 2005, pp.96-97). Increasingly, tribal leaders were negotiating local power with centrally-appointed governors, commanders, and other officials.

In the absence of more granular general histories, studies of specific areas illustrate this dynamic. For instance, in her study of Jabal Rāziḥ, Shelagh Weir describes how the land of the Khawlān bin ʿĀmir tribes became the governorate of Ṣaʿda and the al-Nāẓir sub tribe became the administrative unit of Jabal Rāziḥ. Tribally-chosen shaykhs, notables, and tribesmen staffed the lower levels of administration and tribal leaders kept responsibility for handling most transgressions in their domain and those by members of their tribe according to tribal law (Weir, 2007, pp.269–270, 275). Yet, at the same time, over the course of the 1930s, the Imam began appointing the governor and judges, installed treasury officials in the provincial capital, and commissioned a census of the Khawlān bin ʿĀmir tribes. The al-Nāẓir tribe began to allow government police into their territory and government judges handled a growing number of disputes instead of tribal mediators (Weir, 2007, pp.269–270, 275–276). The Imam collected tax in Jabal Rāziḥ, a portion of the taxes went to the Imam's court, and the Imam

received the proceeds from auctioning off rights to collect import duties from trade with neighbouring Saudi Arabia. The share of locally collected taxes the Imam paid to tribal leaders was less than half of what they had received when Jabal Rāziḥ was ruled by al-ʾIdrīsī (Weir, 2007, pp.278, 279).

3.1.4 Peripheries of the Settlement: Sectarian divisions, Military Men, and Merchants

On the margins of the settlement were merchants from the Shāfiʿī lowlands, who were gaining in influence as the Yemeni economy became more cash-based and more integrated into the global economy; and military officers, who sat atop a military that gradually gained in power vis-à-vis the tribes. These groups require at least brief mention, not least because they were to play an important role in the overthrow of the Imam in 1962 and the ensuing civil war.

The role of these groups is intimately bound up with the sectarian dimension of the Imamate political settlement, an issue that remains politically sensitive, particularly in light of the sectarianisation of the current war (Philbrick-Yadav, 2017). One important and enduring line of division in Yemen was that between Zaydīs, a strain of Shiʿi Islam with significant doctrinal overlap with the Sunna, and followers of the Shāfiʿī school of Sunni Islam.

The doctrinal difference between the two schools is relatively minor and it was (and still is) common for believers of one or the other school to pray in the other's mosques. Moreover, the ideal of Muslim unity formed a common reference point for Shāfiʿīs and Zaydīs and hence protesting the irrelevance of this distinction was central to Yemeni politics of the time. Indeed, the creation of sectarian tension was a common slur directed against political enemies. Prominent Shāfiʿī *quḍāa* in the Free Yemeni Movement like ʾAḥmad Muḥammad Nuʿmān claimed the Imam was sowing such tension, just as the Imam himself accused *ṣawt al-ʿarab* and particularly the broadcasts of ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Bayḍānī of encouraging sectarian discord.

Irrespective of the niceties of doctrinal debate, political and economic factors lent the distinction between Zaydīs and Shāfiʿīs important weight in practice. It structured Yemeni politics under the Imams and was central to the way both outsiders and Yemenis made sense of the politics of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom and the Yemen Arab Republic (Douglas, 1987, p.8). Ottoman governing knowledge had depended on the Shāfiʿī-Zaydī distinction (Wedeen, 2008, p.32) and the Imam maintained separate Zaydī and Shāfiʿī legal systems and judges. Under the Ḥamīd al-Dīn, Shāfiʿī shaykhs and ʿulamaʾ were increasingly displaced by Zaydī governors and lower-level officials (Douglas, 1987, p.13).

The Shāfiʿī-Zaydī split also coincided, in general terms, with regional differences in social organisation. The highlands, where the ideal, if not always the reality, of social organisation was that of autonomous tribes as social, military, and economic units composed of formally equal small-holding farmers, were largely Zaydī. Landholdings there rarely exceeded several hectares. By contrast, the Tihāma, which was majority Shāfiʿī, displayed far more unequal land-holdings. In the spate irrigated Wādī Mawr region, for instance, two landowners each owned more than 150 ha of prime irrigated farmland and more than 1,300 ha of rain irrigated land (Escher, 1976, p.85). In the Tihāma overall, tenant farming and landless labourers were a significant part of the agricultural economy (Nugent, 2003, pp.263–266). The parts of Yemen with the highest rainfall around Taʿiz and ʾIbb, had more equal landholding patterns and were also majority Shāfiʿī. However, tribal organisation in these areas, to the extent it mattered, was far more small scale and village orientated than in the highlands (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.36; see also: Chaudhry, 1997, p.106; Kopp, 1981, pp.130–134).

Regional differences in custom and accent closely mapped onto the sectarian distinction and some have argued it was "akin to ethnic difference" (Dresch, 2000, p.47). This seems too strong given that, though an important marker of identity, it was also one that was relatively fluid.[56] Nonetheless, the distinction between Shāfiʿī and Zaydī was a structuring horizontal inequality in the Imamic political settlement (Stewart, 2008). Shāfiʿī areas in the spate-irrigated Tihāma valleys and the famously green terraces of ʾIbb and Taʿiz were "expected to provide the bulk of tax income" of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom (Chaudhry 1997, 103) and Shāfiʿīs were under-represented in civil and military positions of power (Stookey, 1978, p.173). High taxation was a significant factor in migration from lower Yemen and, alongside the use of corvée labour and the practice of billeting troops, fed discontent in the Shāfiʿī lowlands (See 3.2.1 and: Chaudhry, 1997, pp.103, 109; Peterson, 1982, p.77).

Merchants

In the Yemeni status order, traders were subordinate to the *sāda*, *quḍāa*, and tribes (Lackner, 2017, pp.195–196) and in Zaydī doctrine in particular, trade was considered a profession

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[56] For instance, Zaydī families that settled in ʾIbb as governors and administrators adopted local pronunciation and Shāfiʿī practice and became locally understood as Shāfiʿī within a generation (Messick, 1978, pp.60–61, 361–362).

without honour.[57] As a result – and because the coastal towns were largely Shāfiʿī – historically most traders were Shāfiʿī. Yet, as the profits available from trade outpaced those available through land-ownership, this picture began to shift slightly over the first half of the 20th century. In the course of the 1930s and 1940s, Imam Yaḥiyā created a series of trading monopolies and monopsonies, in the process creating a northern commercial class (Chaudhry, 1997, p.111). This encompassed the Ṣanaʿāʾ-based commercial houses of al-ʿAmrī, al-Thawr, al-Withārī, and al-Zubayrī from among Zaydī *qāḍī* families, al-ʿAdhbān, a leading tribal family and al-Ghamdān, a *sayyid* family. However, the most important trading families were based in Aden, were disproportionally Shāfiʿī, and largely hailed from lower Yemen. The Thābit family and Hāʾil Saʿīd ʾAnʿam, for instance, both operated from Aden and originally hailed from lower Yemen, building large trading empires without significant patronage. By contrast, the al-Jabālī family, originally from the Tihāma, proved the most adept at building relations with the Imam, and ʾAḥmad al-Jabālī came to dominate the external trade of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom, building a cotton ginning factory and an oil press in al-Ḥudayda – investments other traders feared to make (El Attar, 1964, pp.202–204).

Thus, although some Ṣanaʿāʾ based trading families existed, the bulk of traders hailed from lower Yemen and Taʿiz in particular and until the early 1980s, they played a dominant role in North Yemen's commerce (vom Bruck, 1998, pp.279–282). Traders formed the bulk of the Shāfiʿī urban elite and controlled most commerce above the retail level. With the exception of al-Jabālī, they were without strong ties to the Imam's court, resentful of Imamic taxation, and lacked security for their investments. Many of the main trading families either made their fortunes in Aden or moved there as the Imams tightened control of trade in the decades before the revolution. Yet, they remained deeply invested in the goings-on in the North and remained the main source of foreign currency for the government. For this reason, most of the new government-licensed trading organisations and monopolies created in the 1940s and 50s included merchants as minority partners (Stookey, 1978, pp.182, 201–202).

Lowland merchants played an important role in informal banking, remittances, and transport, thanks to their cross-border ties (Chaudhry, 1997, p.114) and their capital and connections provided important resources to the Free Yemeni Movement and its nascent newspapers and magazines opposing the Imam (Chaudhry, 1997, p.123; Stookey, 1978, p.197). At least one Aden-based Shāfiʿī trader, known as Saʿīd ʾIblīs, used his trading networks and warehouses to

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[57] This changed during the war. See: Tutwiler, 1987, p.407.

purchase, stockpile, and smuggle arms and ammunition to overthrow the Imam (Douglas, 1987, pp.224–228). Overall, there were about one million North Yemenis living outside the Mutawakkilite Kingdom at the beginning of the 1960s, equivalent to 20-25% of the population, largely in Aden and Saudi Arabia (Stookey, 1978, pp.195–196).

Military Officers

Military officers played an important role at the periphery of the political settlement – and were to forcefully impose themselves in the course of the 1960s. The growth of the military under Imams Yaḥiyā and ʾAḥmad is explored in Section 3.2.2, yet one important aspect not readily legible in terms of the military as an institution is its composition and relationship to other power centres – the focus of this section.

The Imam created the regular standing army (*al-jaysh al-niẓāmī)* in the 1920s to modernise the armed forces and balance the coercive power of the tribes. Following defeat in the 1934 war with Saudi Arabia, in which better trained and equipped Saudi regulars routed the Yemeni forces, the Imam oversaw additional innovations. Greater emphasis on drill and some changes to pay scales increased the distinctions between soldiers and officers (Nājī, 1988, p.121). In 1935, the Imam sent the first cohort of officers abroad for military training in Iraq and established a military intelligence branch.[58] In a break from established practice, the officers sent to Iraq were almost exclusively non-*sayyid* and without connection to major tribal families (Douglas, 1987, pp.25–29; Burrowes, 2005), since the Imams considered officers without tribal ties more politically reliable in case of a tribal challenge. Similarly, although it recruited from both Zaydīs and Shāfiʿīs, the *niẓāmī* army had few Shāfiʿī officers and none at the highest ranks, as their devotion to the Imamate was suspect. Many of the officers sent abroad for training were orphans, aiding the creation of an officer corps with a measure of collective identity (Nājī, 1988, p.111; Stookey, 1978, p.211).

This officer corps, of no more than 400 trained officers in the *niẓāmī* army at the time of the 1962 coup, sat atop a military that was gradually gaining an edge – in terms of equipment,

[58] Officer training abroad continued under the Imams in Iraq between 1936-1948, in Egypt between 1948-1962, and the USSR between 1957-1962 (Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.56). Among those sent to Iraq were al-Sallāl, who led the 1962 revolution and ʾAḥmad Yaḥiyā al-Thulāyā, the leader of the failed 1955 coup. On military educational missions in general see: Bin Daghar, 2005, pp.107-109 and Juzaylān, 1977, pp.30-31, 33-38.

training and doctrine – over tribal units, but that had relatively low social status and no clear ties to other power centres within the Imamate settlement. This was part of Imam ʾAḥmad's careful balancing of rival power centres: Ḥāshid and Bakīl had proven decisive in 1948 to reverse the coup against Imam Yaḥiyā and Ḥāshid had seen off the threat of a military mutiny in 1959, but the regular military had put down a succession of tribal revolts in the final years before the revolution.

3.2 Imamate government institutions

This Imamic political settlement was incarnated in and administered by an array of government institutions. They have generally been cast as backwards and ineffective, including in more recent scholarship (Jones, 2004, p.19), reproducing revolution-era propaganda that claimed an absence of administration prior to the overthrow of the Imam.[59] Other, particularly more recent, scholarship has insisted on the Imamate's administrative innovations and the way it adapted and expanded on Ottoman models that themselves represented attempts to modernise the Empire (Kuehn, 2011; Willis, 2012; Farah, 2002). Beyond expanding taxation, re-casting administrative divisions, and setting-out procedural codes during the 1920s and 30s (Peterson, 1982, pp.51–52), these reforms included military innovations and the extension of the telegraph network to allow direct communication between the Imam and local officials in all governorates (Willis, 2012, pp.107–108, 125–126). Together, these new practices centralised decision making and expanded the Imams' rule outside of the highland towns to areas that had only intermittently come under the influence of previous Imams (Peterson, 1982, p.59). These revisionist accounts accord with ethnographic studies of the immediate post-war years, covering different areas of the country, that tend to stress effective administration under the Imam, high levels of central control, and the importance of the circulation of zakat taxes for the local political economy (e.g. Messick, 1978; Weir, 2007).

North Yemen's political institutions during the first half of the twentieth century were defined by an extensive, effective, and widely resented bureaucracy for collecting and

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[59] This view also defined official reports of the immediate post-war era. For instance, the IBRD notes that "the system of public finances inherited from the Imam was essentially medieval in character and totally unsuited to the needs of an economy attempting to modernize," calling it "at best archaic" (IBRD, 1970, p.27).

administering taxes; a growing central military that increasingly limited tribal influence in politics; and growing administrative centralisation in a context of minimal delegation of authority and limited institutionalisation and functional differentiation. These features are further explored with a focus on taxation and fiscal institutions (3.2.1), the military and security institutions (3.2.2), and the organisation of central and local administration (3.2.3) in the years leading up to September 1962.

3.2.1   Fiscal institutions under the Imam

By most accounts, Imamic taxation functioned with significant central control and oversight, often involving the Imam personally. The Imams kept careful tallies of income and Imam ʾAḥmad allegedly personally telegraphed al-Ḥudayda, the most important port, every day to find out how much customs duty had been collected (Burrowes, 2009, "revenue and taxes"). Most of the perhaps 2,000 officials employed in the central administration in the late 1950s were directly involved in taxation and "the extractive agencies of the Imam were highly developed" (Chaudhry, 1997, p.106; see also: Dresch, 2000, p.124). The treasury had an extensive local presence in most towns and central assessors sought to ensure the Imam received all he was due. At the same time, administration at the centre rested with the Imam alone and the German embassy noted, for instance, that the finance ministry before the revolution was a "farce" that existed in name only. District-level directors of finance insisted on direct relationships with the Imam and refused to communicate with the 'ministry' (PAAA, B12 1060, Annual Report 1961). No matter was too small to warrant a decision by the Imam and no payment too trifling to require personal sign-off (Burrowes, 1987, p.18; see also: Carapico, 1998, p.29).

In a book adapted from his PhD thesis, a later YAR finance minister estimated the government budget for 1961, before the overthrow of the Imam (El Attar, 1964, pp.213–214). His figures, summarised in Table 4 below, give a glimpse into the fiscal basis of the Imamate state. They sketch the picture of a government that relied for the overwhelming majority of its income on direct taxation, had minimal access to domestic credit, and was being offered external funding for development projects beyond its fiscal means. It spent about 30% of its recurrent budget on the security services and the remainder on civilian administration and payments to tribes. Total domestic government income in 1961 came to 25 million Maria

Theresa Thaler (MT),[60] largely from direct taxes. Recurrent expenditure was equal to income from domestic sources, with approximately 8 million MT going to 'military and security' expenses and 17 million MT to 'civilian expenses.' Without offering further details, El Attar estimated that 'payments to *sāda*' – which appears to be a tendentious rendering of payments to local administrators – and subsidies to the tribes made up the most important costs under the civilian budget line.

Table 4: Estimated Yemeni government income and expenditure in 1961
(MT millions)

Income	38.2
From domestic sources	25
of which taxes	21
of which customs duty	4
From foreign aid and loans	13.2[61]
Expenditure	38.2
Recurrent expenditure	25
of which military expenses	3.8
of which other security expenses	4.1
of which 'civilian expenses'	17.1
Investment	13.2

Table adapted from El Attar, 1964, pp.213-216

Direct Taxation

Taxation and specifically zakat was the biggest source of revenue for the Imamate state. Taking their cue from the complaints of the Free Yemenis and other opponents to the Imam, scholars have generally stressed the high levels of taxation under the Imamate, especially in the lowlands and the Tihāma (Dresch, 2000, p.47; Stookey, 1978, p.201).[62] These ubiquitous

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[60] The German and Italian embassies estimated government income to be 20 million MT in 1961 (PAAA B12 1060, Annual Report 1961). The Maria Theresa Thaler, a silver coin first minted in Austria in the 18th century, was a popular trading currency in the Arabian Peninsula, the Horn of Africa, and the Indian Ocean and the dominant currency in Yemen until the paper Riyal was introduced in 1964. Prior to 1964, the terms Yemeni Riyal and Maria Theresa Thaler denote the same currency. It was also sometimes known as the riyāl fransī (French Riyal).

[61] El Attar (1964, pp.215–217) estimates foreign aid was $15 million in 1957, $16 million in 1958 and $15 million in 1960, respectively; a five-year annual average of $9.2 million (13.2 million MT) for the 1957-1961 period.

[62] Occasional claims that Zaydīs were not taxed appear false. Taxation of Zaydī tribes was the norm (e.g. Weir, 2007, pp.277–278), though sāda appear to have been exempt (compare 3.1.1 above).

complaints about taxes may be as much a reflection of the novelty of successful taxation under the Imam and its perceived illegitimacy, as of a particularly high tax burden – if we distinguish between the taxes accruing to the Imam or his agents and the overall burden of expenses farmers and particularly sharecroppers in different parts of Yemen faced.

Taxation theoretically was everywhere the same and followed the canonical regulations on zakat, amounting to 10% of the yield on rain-fed agriculture and 5% on irrigated land (El Attar, 1964, pp.209–210). Unlike the Ottomans, who struggled to collect zakat outside of towns and had reverted to local shaykhs assessing and collecting contributions of their own tribes – rendering taxation uneven, quasi-voluntary, and largely ineffective – the Imams were more successful in taxing the countryside (Messick, 1978, p.170). Most of the Imam's civil servants were engaged in one form or another in collecting taxes and, according to the IBRD, "under the old regime the administration of zakat taxation, although not uniform, was more effective" than after the revolution (IBRD, 1970, Annex II, p.3).

Nonetheless, farmers in different areas faced significantly different expense burdens. In practice, taxes could be far higher than stipulated, as the Imams relied on tax farming for certain types of taxes, resulting in "arbitrary taxation levels" set by the tax farmers themselves (Peterson, 1982, p.54; El Attar, 1964, p.211).[63] Moreover, while official representatives of the Imam assessed and collected taxes in the lowlands (Messick, 1978, pp.221–223), in the highlands, taxation was collected by a locally appointed representative (ʾamīn). Because he was locally appointed, the ʾamīn had incentives to limit exactions, held in check by pay by commission, while centrally-appointed directors of finance in lower Yemen did not (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.3). Payments to landowners could also vary significantly and could be cripplingly high in the lowlands, with sharecroppers responsible for all seeds, labour, and other inputs and routinely paying half of the crop to the landowner and/or the owner of the water in certain types of irrigated agriculture (Escher, 1976, pp.91–92; Dequin, 1976, p.47; Kopp, 1981, pp.142–149). In the tribal highlands, land ownership was much more egalitarian and multiple mechanisms limited the ability of outsiders to acquire land and of tribesmen with large landholdings to exploit their theoretically equal fellow tribesmen. As a result, smallholdings predominated (Kopp, 1981, pp.136–137; Dostal, 1974, p.8).

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[63] Halliday claims that taxation routinely amounted to 25% of total yield (Halliday, 1974, p.88).

Combined with taxes, bribes to assessors, fees to tax farmers, and the upkeep of billeted troops, expenses for sharecroppers in the Tihāma and lower Yemen were high enough to deter production. In ʾIbb, many farmers avoided planting winter crops because they were, in practice, more heavily taxed. Livestock ownership and coffee and hide production, two of Yemen's few exports, all declined in the late 1950s and early 1960s because a combination of droughts and taxes made them unprofitable (Stookey, 1978, p.195).[64] High taxation – or rather high payments to landowners combined with taxation – also played an important role in migration from lower Yemen to Aden (Douglas, 1987, pp.13–14).[65]

Fiscal innovations: customs duty and foreign aid

Beyond zakat and other canonical Islamic taxes, the Imams developed ways to raise additional revenue from trade through customs duties and foreign loans. After taxes, customs duties were the second most important source of income, levied at border crossings with British South Arabia and Saudi Arabia and at the Mutawakkilite Kingdom's Red Sea ports of al-Mukhā and al-Ḥudayda. The most important source of customs duties by far was al-Ḥudayda port, which, after a Soviet-financed expansion in 1960, handled the majority of the country's foreign trade (Peterson, 1982, p.54). Customs duty was levied on imports and export taxes were levied on all Yemeni exports of significance (El Attar, 1964, p.212).[66] As discussed in 3.1.2 above, the Imam also became increasingly involved in trade directly.

Foreign aid and loans also began to factor in government calculations from the mid-1950s onwards, when Imam ʾAḥmad accepted the first large-scale projects proposed by the USSR, the United States, and China, to expand al-Ḥudayda port and connect the main cities of Ṣanaʿāʾ, Taʿiz, and al-Ḥudayda by road. Foreign spending on large infrastructure projects accounted for more than a third of government income over the 5 years leading up to the revolution and it is important to acknowledge the extent to which the Imamate relied for

[64] Cotton production, however, increased significantly under Imam ʾAḥmad (El Attar, 1964, pp.177–179).

[65] The political economy of the Imamate calls into question the recently popularised idea that states cannot climb hills (Scott, 2009). The political and fiscal problems of the Imamate revolved around highland control of lowland agriculture.

[66] The Mutawakkilite Kingdom ran a persistent trade deficit. It was ca. $8 million in 1961 (El Attar, 1964, pp.177–178, 194–201; see also: Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.50).

investment on outside aid. However, it is also easy to overstate the Imamate's dependence on such loans and grants. Foreign funding provided one-off investments in infrastructure. Government current expenditure did not depend on external aid. Moreover, although El Attar points out that Yemen would have faced a large balance of payments deficit without foreign aid as early as 1959 (El Attar, 1964, p.217), since the vast majority of inputs for road building and harbour expansion were imported, the deficit may not have been structural, but a result of foreign loans and grants.

3.2.2   Military and security institutions under the Imam

When Ottoman troops withdrew from Yemen in 1918, they left the Imam "almost without military or police organisation" (Wenner, 1967, p.55). Realising the need for a military force against rebelling tribes, for collecting taxes, and to keep in check external enemies, including an expanding Saudi Kingdom to the north and the British to the south, Imam Yaḥiyā succeeded in retaining approximately 300 Ottoman officers and soldiers for a new Yemeni military modelled on the Ottoman Jandarma. For the next three decades, military orders and drill were in Turkish as Imam Yaḥiyā embarked on an ambitious campaign of conquest. Successful campaigns against Muḥammad al-ʾIdrīsī, who ruled over large parts of the Tihāma and ʿAsīr after Ottoman withdrawal (Bang, 1996), and less successful battles against the Al Saʿud and the British ended in a series of treaties and agreements throughout the 1930s that defined the international borders of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen to the North and South (Nājī, 1988, pp.107, 110, 122; Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.51; see also: Fattah, 2010).

The Jandarma-based force mustered for these battles was called the 'organised' or 'systematic' army (*jaysh al-niẓāmī)*. It was initially composed of the rump Ottoman forces and approximately 2,000 recruits drawn from the tribal fighters who had supported Imam Yaḥiyā against the Ottomans, former soldiers in the Ottoman military, and new recruits, particularly from the small tribes around Ṣanaʿāʾ (Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.54). As the *niẓāmī* forces grew, recruitment became based on the conscription of set quotas from different areas or tribes.[67] Soldiers served in mixed units: soldiers from different tribes served side by side, commanded by officers trained in a newly-created war college. Soldiers served, at least nominally, for life, and received weapons, uniforms and ammunition from the Imam. Shaykhs or local notables acted as guarantors for recruits. Pay, at 5 MT a month and 4 loaves of bread a day during the

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[67] Conscription was enforced if insufficient numbers 'volunteered.' This occurred especially in the Shāfiʿī lowlands and the tribal areas of the far North and North-East (Wenner, 1967, p.57).

1930s, was low, but competitive with farming (Nājī, 1988, pp.109–110; Messick, 1978, p.209).[68]

The creation of this standing army was a significant innovation. Contemporary European accounts stressing the *niẓāmī* army's makeshift appearance, with its barefoot soldiers in mismatched uniforms, threaten to miss what a radical departure a standing army was – particularly one conducting drills, using armoured vehicles and artillery, and engaging in weekly military displays overseen by the Imam (Willis, 2012, pp.123–124). The creation of the *niẓāmī* army and its use against tribal uprisings in the late 1950s and early 1960s marked a high point in the importance of the regular military and a low point for tribal influence in Yemeni politics (Wenner, 1967, p.59). Moreover, the creation of the *niẓāmī* army had extensive linkages to other areas of the economy and society, since equipping and training a 'modern' army required contact with the outside world for training and materiel. In the 1930s and 40s, the bulk of Yemen's imports were destined for the military (Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.58; Bin Daghar, 2005, pp.109-110). The new army's needs also prompted the construction of the first factories in Yemen. From the 1930s until the 1960s, Yemen's only industrial facilities of note were two factories producing ammunition, casings, and machined parts for the Yemeni military and a textile mill producing cloth largely for the uniforms of the armed forces (Stookey, 1978, p.183; Peterson, 1982, p.70; Willis, 2012, pp.122–123).

By the end of the 1930s, the *niẓāmī* army reportedly reached a size of 15,000-20,000 soldiers,[69] composed mostly of infantry stationed in Ṣanaʿāʾ, Taʿiz, al-Ḥudayda and Ḥajja. Beyond these troop concentrations in major towns, in every governorate, the governor had a small company of *niẓāmī* troops (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.115; Jones, 2004, pp.20–21). Additional

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[68] According to Fattah (2010, p.27), poverty drove many to join the army because it secured daily food rations. According to other sources, an enlisted man earned 6 YR per month in the infantry and 7 YR per month in the artillery corps alongside 3 loaves of bread in the early 1950s (Bin Daghar, 2015, p.113).

[69] As Imamate era administration was highly personalised and records were poor, there is significant uncertainty about the size and structure of the military. Estimates for the *niẓāmī* army range from 12,000 (Peterson, 1982, p.53) over 20,000 (Nājī, 1988, p.111) to 30,000 soldiers (ʾAḥmad, 1981, p.194; Juzaylān, 1995, p.60). Bin Daghar (2005, p.114) provides the most detailed breakdown of the *niẓāmī* army in the late 1950s, implying a size of 19,200 soldiers. There is similar uncertainty about the size of the *jaysh al-difāʿī* and the *jaysh al-barānī* discussed below.

special guards for the Imam, princes, and governors numbered another 5,000 soldiers and included two elite battalions commanded by close deputies of the Imam that enjoyed access to better weapons (Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.60; ʾAḥmad, 1981, p.194; Nājī, 1988, pp.107–129; 255).[70] During the 1940s and 50s, the *niẓāmī* army put down tribal revolts, managed border crossings and customs duty, protected and delivered mail, manned telegraph relay stations, maintained infrastructure, and supported local officials in tax collection (Willis, 2012, pp.122–123; Peterson, 1982, p.53; Nājī, 1988, p.126). In this, it was largely successful. Travellers in the 1950s marvelled at the security they enjoyed in the Mutawakkilite Kingdom when compared to neighbouring, British administered, South Arabia or the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Ingrams, 1963, p.32) – although at the same time, abuses by security forces and especially the forcible quartering of soldiers known as *tanfīdh* were a rallying point for the Imam's opponents (Willis, 2012, p.110).

Besides the niẓāmī army, the Imam created a new force in the 1930s, the army of defence (*jaysh al-difāʿī*) of about 15,000 troops. A reserve force tasked with many of the same functions as the *niẓāmī* army, the *jaysh al-difāʿī* has been described as an attempt at balancing against the possibility of a coup (Fattah, 2010, p.27). It also, according to one of the foremost scholars of Yemen's military, served to keep the tribes occupied and in the Imam's pay, as well as serving as a trained reserve to dissuade foreign attackers. At 4 MT a month, soldiers in the *jaysh al-difāʿī* received less pay than their *niẓāmī* counterparts and since pay was channelled through tribal leaders, who could pay a fee to the Imam to receive an officers' commission, their salaries were less still in practice (Nājī, 1988, pp.112–113). According to several accounts, the *difāʿī* army drafted one quarter of able-bodied men in each governorate at a time for 6 months, with the cycle restarting every two years (Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.59; Nājī, 1988, p.112; Wenner, 1967, pp.56–57).[71]

Imam Yaḥiyā also created a third military force, the *jaysh al-barānī*, composed of tribal fighters recruited from northern tribes and organised in tribal units. Under the command of their shaykh, soldiers were recruited by quota from each family or sub-tribe. The, reportedly,

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[70] Cited figures range from 3,000 soldiers in several special guard units, the largest of which was the *fawj al-badr* (Nājī, 1988, p.124) to 10,000 in the *fawj al-badr* alone (ʾAḥmad, 1981, p.194; Ḥajjāj, 2014, p.59).

[71] Although it has generally been reported as fact, it may be more appropriate to read this account of recruitment as a declaration of aspiration.

50,000 soldiers in the *jaysh al-barānī* provided their own supplies and weapons and received wages of 3.75 MT a month, of which they had to pay 1MT to the shaykh (Nājī, 1988, pp.114–115; Fattah, 2010, p.28). Like the other formations, *barānī* troops at various times played an important role in putting down rebellions against the Imam and were notorious for their role in collecting taxes, as discussed in 3.1.3.

As the duplication of similar functions across these different forces highlights, balancing and fragmentation loomed large as strategies for maintaining political control over the military under the Imams. Loyalty followed different logics in different forces: The Imam selected *niẓāmī* officers of low birth outside of existing networks of power and sent them abroad for training, or directly recruited foreign officers from Turkey, Syria, and elsewhere (Nājī, 1988, p.120; Burrowes, 2005). By contrast, the *barānī* military reproduced tribal hierarchies and relied for political control on balancing networks of tribal allies. When one system failed, the other provided an alternative. The 1948 assassination of Imam Yaḥiyā and an attempted military coup against Imam ʾAḥmad in 1955 both had the backing of leading *niẓāmī* officers. Both were successfully reversed with tribal fighters rallied by ʾAḥmad when he was Crown Prince in 1948 and by Crown Prince al-Badr in 1955 (Nājī, 1988, p.194). In the short term, the relative importance of the *niẓāmī* and *barānī* forces thus waxed and waned in inverse-proportion, but in the longer term, the Imams developed a growing reliance on *niẓāmī* troops.

On the eve of the Imam's overthrow, the military had about 400 officers with formal military training. Being a soldier was not a high-status occupation and previous Imams' growing reliance on outsiders and cadets from low-status families as officers meant that the officer corps, which had previously been dominated by *sāda*, lost status. Much of the army was spread across the country in small units engaged in tax-collection and policing, but important concentration of troops existed in Yemen's main cities. Military salaries remained low compared to most other occupations and although distinctions, including in salary, between officers and enlisted men had increased in the 1930s, they remained relatively muted. According to Sulṭān Nājī (1988, p.121), the most widely-cited source, officer salaries ranged from 12 to 80 MT and officers who studied abroad started on a salary of 20 MT a month.[72]

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[72] El Attar (1964, pp.118–119) claims ʿaskarī regulars received 8-10 MT per month on the eve of the revolution, while officers received 100-120 MT. Bin Daghar (2005, p.113) suggests the figures were 6-7 YR and 60-70 YR, respectively.

3.2.3   Central and Local government under the Imam

Beyond the administration of taxation and the armed forces, there was little of a central state to speak of under the Imams. The treasury and the security forces ensured control of capital and coercion. Most other governance occurred at the local level and central 'ministries' created under Imam ʾAḥmad consisted of little more than a minister and one or two assistants.

Outside the Imam and the royal family, formal power rested with governors and officials at the district level. Governors (sing. ʾamīr) were drawn primarily from leading *sayyid* families and, increasingly over the 1940s and 50s, from the ranks of the ruling Ḥamīd al-Dīn. The Imam appointed them to head the top-level administrative units, the ʾalwiya (sing. liwāʾ) of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom: Ṣanaʿāʾ, Ṣaʿda, al-Ḥudayda, Ḥajja, ʾIbb, and Taʿiz.[73] Although charging the Imam with corruption was a common revolutionary trope and local officials did collect much of their income by charging for services, in ʾIbb under the Imamic government, "gross misappropriation of government funds and exactions upon private individuals appear to have been rare" (Messick, 1978, pp.213–214).[74]

Below the *liwāʾ*, at the district (*qaḍāʾ*) level, the civil service consisted of *sāda*, *quḍāa*, tribal leaders, and local notables who collected zakat and local market taxes, heard and adjudicated disputes, and were involved in the management of the *ʾawqāf* or the delivery of associated services, such as preaching, charity, and schooling. Most formal justice was dispensed at the *qaḍāʾ* level and the centrally-appointed district judges increasingly challenged tribal leaders role as mediators (Dresch, 1984, p.164). The *qaḍāʾ* was also the level at which taxes in kind were collected and the lowest level at which officials had formal command over police or military units. Although the heads of the *qaḍāʾ* theoretically reported to the ʾamīr of their *liwāʾ*, most maintained direct relationships with the Imam (El Attar, 1964, pp.79–80; Peterson, 1982, p.55).

Reversing far-reaching autonomy at the *qaḍāʾ* and especially *nāḥiya* and *ʿuzla* levels below it under the Ottomans, the royal court made direct appointments even to petty positions during the Imamate (Messick, 1978, pp.61, 206). This was even true, albeit unevenly, in the

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[73] The number and division of governorates changed several times between 1918 and 1962. See: Matsumoto, 2003.

[74] For a dissenting view, see: El Attar, 1964, p.81.

tribal North where the Imamate increasingly succeeded in asserting its right to select tribal leaders and engaged in a long-term push to establish shariʿa as the sole legal framework against tribal customary law (ʿurf) (Wenner, 1967, pp.65, 67–70). As central taxation expanded, local positions became more and more desirable sinecures, with the result that the Imam's power of appointment gained increasing leverage over local decisions (Wenner, 1967, p.66). Nonetheless, municipal, tribal, neighbourhood, associational, and philanthropic networks wielded power and material resources rivalling those of the central state and initiatives rooted in tribal and/or religious mechanisms supplied most schooling, water supplies, and other services (Carapico, 1998, p.63).

The hostage system (niẓām al-rahāʾin) has generally been credited with playing a key part in this gradual assertion of central control over tribal areas. By 1955, the Imam's court hosted some 2,000 tribal hostages (Seager, 1955, p.218; c.f. Douglas, 1987, p.14). Hostages from leading tribal families served as leverage against tribal leaders, but the system also had allocative and educational functions: it tied the tribes to the Imam's court through stipends to the hostages' families and by providing education to future tribal leaders. Hostage stipends were generous and became an increasingly important source of income for tribal leaders during the 1940s and 1950s to the point where tribal conflicts sometimes centred on leading families' discontent that others' children were taken as hostages rather than their own (Weir, 2007, pp.273–275; Peterson, 1982, p.77).

3.3 Ideas of the state and Imamate era legitimacy

Underlying the political settlement and structuring expectations of institutions, were the ideas of the Imamate state and associated rhetorical commonplaces. Domestically, Imams historically appealed to established religious doctrine to justify their rule, while adopting an anti-colonial posture internationally focused on the commonplace of independence. Yet, over the decades leading up to the 1962 revolution, the new rhetorical commonplaces of 'modernity,' and 'the people' became central to political rhetoric in the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen, as a series of coups and political upheavals rocked Yemen and the Arab world.

3.3.1   Domestic legitimacy

When it was abolished in 1962, the Imamate had existed in Yemen, with occasional interruptions, for more than a millennium. Though hardly static, the dominant rhetorical commonplaces throughout this time were religious, drawing on the Zaydī doctrine of Imamic rule, shot through in practice with tribal custom, and in dialogue and competition with Sunni

jurisprudence. Rule was justified to other Zaydīs by conforming to established conditions for the Imamate, applying shariʿa law, and by virtue of the personal relationship between the Imam and his subjects.

An Imam was expected to be a scholar, an administrator and a fighter – master of both pen and sword. The formal conditions for becoming Imam centred on being a male descendant of the Prophet Muhammad 'sound in body and mind.' In addition, an Imam needed to have a righteous and pious character and be a religious scholar capable of ʾijtihād, independent religious interpretation (Messick, 1993, p.38). This is because, according to *sayyid* supporters of the Imamate, it was "through the virtue of the Imam" that "this country of ours is a land of right, justice, faith, honesty, and loyalty" (Stookey, 1978, p.169); that is, the quality of governance depended on the personal virtue of the Imam. In theory, anyone meeting the conditions could claim to be Imam and throughout long stretches of northern Yemeni history, there was more than one claimant (vom Bruck, 2010; Madelung, 2012).[75]

The territorial expansion of Imam Yaḥiyā's state after 1918 was framed in terms of an expansion of the 'domain of obedience' to shariʿa, a space of order and justice, as against the (tribal and other) areas outside of the Imam's control, imagined as spaces of corruption, dissension (*fitna*) and chaos (*fawḍā*) (Willis, 2012, p.118). Conformity to shariʿa is, of course, as longstanding a criterion for just rule in Muslim societies, as it is the site of intense contestation over what constitutes 'true' shariʿa. Thus, Yaḥiyā framed his revolt against the Ottoman Sultan in terms of Ottoman deviation from shariʿa, while the Ottomans responded with the same charge against the Imam. In the first half of the twentieth century "shariʿa constructs provided the principal language of statecraft" (Messick, 1993, pp.4, 50–51).

While professing support for shariʿa, both Shāfiʿī and Zaydi areas contested the Imam's legitimacy. Historically, an important and recurrent Shāfiʿī trope was the idea that the Zaydī Imams were external tyrants and their tribal supporters ignorant and ruthless barbarians (Messick, 1993, p.41). Certainly, Shāfiʿī areas contended with higher taxation and, under the Ḥamīd al-Dīn were frequently ruled, administered, and judged by Zaydī northerners appointed by the Imam. Shāfiʿīs did not recognise the Imam's claim to head the religious

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[75] Rival claims were encouraged by the fact that, unlike other Shiʿi *madhāhib*, Zaydī traditions do not ascribe quasi-divine attributes such as infallibility or special access to divine guidance to the Imam. On the Zaydī conception of the Imamate see: Crone, 2004, pp.104–105; on its evolution see: Haykel, 2003, pp.210–212.

community in the same way as Zaydīs did, even though the Imams' temporal authority was, by most metrics, more extensive in lower Yemen (Stookey, 1978, p.183). As a result, Imamic legitimacy was more clearly in question in lower Yemen (Carapico, 1998, p.77). Nonetheless, the Imam's claims to legitimacy by virtue of just rule were intelligible in Shāfiʿī terms and, drawing on Muḥammad al-Shawkānī, an eighteenth and nineteenth century Zaydī jurist who brought many Sunni tenets into Zaydī thought, as well as pan-Islamist arguments, the Imam consistently denied the relevance of differences between Shāfiʿīs and Zaydis (Willis, 2012, pp.141–142; Haykel, 2003).

In highland areas with strong traditions of tribal self-government, the Imams' powers were more spiritual than temporal, even as the Ḥamīd al-Dīn succeeded in far-reaching centralisation towards the middle of the 20th century. Although in official rhetoric tribes were the recalcitrant matter the Imams formed to establish the 'domain of obedience,' tribal customary law was just as routinely decried as un-Islamic by state judges and officials, as it was accommodated in practice. So long as the tribes in question accepted the Imam's sovereignty – that is, submitted to other features of Imamic rule like the hostage system, tax collection, and accepted the presence of central officials – tribal ʿurf could be accommodated (Willis, 2012, pp.146–147; Dresch, 1990, pp.164–165, 271). Indeed it defined practice in such fundamental matters as irrigation and inheritance (Mundy, 1989, 1979) and shaped the Imam's arbitration of tribal disputes (Dresch, 1989).

While the idea of legitimate and extensive domination remained an Imamic monopoly in Yemen well into the 20th century, since no shaykh could claim to rule over people who were not members of his tribe (Dresch, 1990, p.268), the parameters of legitimacy in the Zaydī north were heavily coloured by tribal customs and codes of honour (Adra, 1982, pp.142–144; Serjeant, 1982, esp. p.36). Although 'un-Islamic' local customs were gradually marginalised during the 1940s and 50s (Dresch, 2000, p.65), other 'tribal' codes and expectations continued to matter tremendously: It was Imam ʾAḥmad's violation of the rules of tribal honour and mediation that provided the impetus for growing numbers of tribal leaders to turn against him in the late 1950s, as we will see in Section 3.4, just as it was the Egyptians' refusal to observe tribal claims of sovereignty and conventions on warfare that turned large numbers of tribal fighters against them and the Republic.

In addition, the Imamate was founded, at least in theory, on a personal relationship between the Imam and his subjects. As Messick notes, "direct accessibility, based on a public presence that enabled personal encounters and personal solutions to problems, was a fundamental value of the old administrative style" (Messick, 1993, p.168). The oath of loyalty to the person

of the Imam was complemented by a mythology – and far-reaching practice – of direct availability. Foreign visitors to Yaḥiyā or ʾAḥmad's courts inevitably commented on the centrality of written petitions to the Imams and marvelled at the speed and efficiency with which the Imam and other officials dealt with petitioners who appeared in person (Wenner, 1967, p.61; see also: Messick, 1993, pp.169, 172; El Attar, 1964, p.71).

3.3.2   International legitimacy

In addition to religious claims to legitimacy, the British presence in South Arabia, the Mutawakkilite Kingdom's emergence out of Ottoman occupation, and rivalry between European imperial powers for control of the Horn of Africa and the Bāb al-Mandab, lent an international dimension to the parameters of legitimacy during the Imamate: the way the Imams and Yemeni elites more broadly imagined Yemen's place within an international order.

Much writing about Yemen's role in the globalising international politics of the inter-war period stresses Imam Yaḥiyā's policy of isolation, to the point where it can seem that international issues and foreign states' and rulers' attitudes and recognition mattered little (Burrowes, 2005, p.81, 1987, p.16). Yet, Imam Yaḥiyā closely followed international events and had his secretaries present him with daily summaries of a range of newspapers, signed treaties with Yemen's neighbours, and sought diplomatic recognition (Willis, 2012, p.152; Messick, 1993). Under Yaḥiyā, Yemen joined the Arab League less than two months after its creation in 1945 and the newly-formed United Nations two years after it was established in 1947 (Wenner, 1967, pp.164–171). In 1948, when ʿAbd Allah al-Wazīr and his co-conspirators assassinated Imam Yaḥiyā to create a 'constitutional Imamate,' both contenders for the position of Imam, Crown Prince ʾAḥmad and *Sayyid* ʿAbd Allah al-Wazīr, felt the need to appeal to an international audience to defend their right to rule. Shortly after announcing his *daʿwa*, al-Wazīr sent a high-ranking delegation to Riyadh to petition King ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Al-Saʿud, to recognize him as Imam. ʾAḥmad sent a similar delegation. Both also appealed to the Arab League (Johnsen, 2017, pp.52–53). International recognition clearly mattered for both sides and diplomacy, alliances, and the politics of recognition shaped the way Yemen's political elite evaluated the justice and legality of claims to rule.

The legitimacy derived from international interactions was centred on nationalist and anti-colonialist registers. Imam Yaḥiyā's father, Muḥammad al-Manṣūr Ḥamīd al-Dīn, as well as Yaḥiyā himself rose to prominence by leading an armed struggle against the Ottomans. Both Yaḥiyā and ʾAḥmad opposed British rule over Aden and southern Arabia and vocally expressed this opposition to both internal and external audiences. A real fear over British encroachment from Aden underpinned this posture. Imam ʾAḥmad was an enthusiastic

supporter of the 1956 Jeddah Pact between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, and joined with the Egyptian-Syrian United Arab Republic (UAR) to form the United Arab States in 1958 in part over fears of the British. These measures also had a symbolic dimension: standing up for Arab and Yemeni independence in the face of the waning colonial power in a context where first pan-Islamism and then pan-Arabism had developed a potent critique of European colonialism.[76]

A number of, possibly apocryphal, stories that circulated in Yemen about the Imam's distrust of foreigners, usually related in a positive register, highlight this tendency. For instance, Imam Yaḥiyā is said to have refused an offer of $2 million for oil exploration rights in Yemen, arguing that it would cost far more to get rid of foreign interests at a later date (Burrowes, 1987, p.16).[77] Even sharp critics of isolation and the Imamate did not question the values of independence and anti-colonialism that underpinned it rhetorically. El Attar, a leading republican official after the revolution, for example, describes Yaḥiyā as being motivated by a genuine and laudable desire for independence and religious purity (El Attar, 1964, pp.72–73).[78]

3.3.3   New commonplaces: modernity, Arab nationalism, and 'the people'

Haltingly at first, from the 1930s onwards, the religious and anti-colonial commonplaces that had defined the Imams' claims to just rule were supplemented and displaced by other concerns, which the Imamate struggled to accommodate. Large-scale emigration to Aden, emigrants' experiences in its active labour movement, and increasing numbers of Yemeni students studying abroad in Cairo were catalysts for the emergence of a nascent nationalist discourse and initial reform demands during the 1930s and 40s. During the 1950s, as Jamal ʿAbd al-Nasir rose to regional prominence and the concerns of Arab nationalism, socialism, and development came to define the regional political field, the discourse in Yemen shifted further.

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[76] The union with Egypt and Syria was also an attempt to defuse Egyptian propaganda against the Imam and remain non-aligned in the 'Arab Cold War' (James, 2006; Kerr, 1967).

[77] The Imam's instincts were right: oil exploration was a CIA front (Orkaby, 2014, p.76).

[78] Interestingly, El Attar (1964, p.73) disagrees with most analysis, which has suggested isolationism was a strategy for rule maintenance. He argues it was not. The Imam could more readily have maintained power through development, international security guarantees, personal enrichment, and the opportunities for patronage this would have provided.

These changes in rhetorical commonplaces also become visible in changing patterns of opposition and especially the attempts to overthrow the Imam of 1948, 1955, and 1962: whereas the first two sought to change ruling personnel because the Imams had abandoned received values, the conspirators of 1962 demanded a reorganisation of Yemeni society in an entirely new terminology (Stookey, 1978, p.213). If, at the time of al-Wazīr's 1948 coup, there was no "general language in which a popular uprising could be encouraged" (Dresch, 2000, p.57), by the late-1950s such a vocabulary had taken shape. A new political order became thinkable under the watchword of 'modernity' (Peterson, 1982, p.83); contributing to a growing crisis of legitimacy that called into question not only rule by the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family but the Imamate itself.

As Yemen's international isolation eased during the 1940s and especially during the reign of Imam ʾAḥmad, growing numbers of Yemenis went to study abroad or to work in the booming port of Aden. Many of them might relate stories similar to the experience recorded by Muḥsin al-ʿAynī in his memoirs: Aden's blazing electric lights, automobiles, and bustling port stood in dramatic contrast to the northern capital Ṣanaʿāʾ, with its unlit streets, locked city gates, and much smaller population. Travellers were left with an abiding and shocked sense of Yemen's 'backwardness' "as something totally unbelievable" (Alaini, 2004, pp.33, 22). The idea that the Imams were holding Yemen back and blocking access to economic development became a formidable charge against the Imams and formed a central plank of the critique developed by the Free Yemeni Movement (ḥarakat al-yamaniyyin al-aḥrār).[79]

Educational emigrants, whether they completed officer training in Iraq or Egypt, studied in Cairo or Beirut, or pursued higher degrees in Europe, the Soviet Union, or the United States, all got to know political systems different to the Imamate first hand, were influenced by the aspirations of their foreign peers, and often chafed at the limited opportunities available to them upon their return – indeed, many were imprisoned in the aftermath of the 1948 coup (Carapico, 1998, p.99; Peterson, 1982, p.85). By 1961 there were 300-400 Yemenis in Egyptian secondary schools, more than 100 at Cairo University, 70-80 pursuing higher degrees in Western Europe or the United States, about 300 training in the Communist Bloc, and 500 or more studying in Aden (Rahmy, 1983, p.81 note 3). Almost all returned to Yemen after their studies and came to identify as members of a special group, which largely transcended existing religious, regional, and status distinctions (Burrowes, 2005, pp.87–90;

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[79] On the Free Yemeni Movement see: Douglas, 1987, 1984.

Rosser, 1998).[80] Moreover, foreign influences and reference points also began encroaching on domestic Yemeni education. Like elsewhere in the Arab world, Egyptian teachers made up the bulk of teachers at the new ʾAḥmadiyya high school in Taʿiz and the small handful of other schools pursuing a 'modern' curriculum (Tsourapas, 2016). Many of the teachers who were not foreigners, were Yemenis educated abroad. Disaffected graduates shunted into teaching jobs had the opportunity to reproduce the very subversive foreign values the Imam feared (Stookey, 1978, p.208).

In addition to educational migrants, tens of thousands of Yemenis, largely from lower Yemen, flocked to Aden in search of livelihoods. Like educational migrants, they confronted the sharp contrast between the bustling global port city and the towns and villages they hailed from. They were exposed to debates about Arab nationalism, non-alignment, and other issues of the day. Many were politicised in Aden's flourishing union movement (Carapico, 1998, pp.87–99; Douglas, 1987). In addition to regional and religious reasons for disaffection in lower Yemen, briefly explored in terms of Shāfiʿī attitudes towards the Imamate in 3.1.4 above, greater mobility and exposure to ideas that challenged the established order contributed to growing opposition to the Imam in lower Yemen. When *ṣawt al-ʿarab*, the Egyptian radio station, stepped up incitement against the Imam after the break-up of the United Arab States at the end of 1961, it was in lower Yemen that calls for revolt seemed to resonate most. The Māwiyya district of Taʿiz revolted against Imamic taxation in May 1962. In June, Shāfiʿī labourers working on a US-funded road went on strike. In August, student demonstrations in Taʿiz, inspired by protests in Ṣanaʿāʾ, involved tens or hundreds of students, who, carrying posters of ʿAbd al-Nasir, smashed the windows of government buildings, and tore up pictures of the Imam (Stookey, 1978, p.206; Douglas, 1987, p.237).[81]

The idea that Yemen was backward and needed economic development had traction beyond educational and economic migrants and their students and families in Yemen. These ideas were picked up too, to a limited extent, by Imam ʾAḥmad, who briefly flirted with the young reformers of the Free Yemeni Movement in the early 1940s (Douglas, 1987, pp.61–62). Imam ʾAḥmad also renewed a friendship pact with the USSR in 1955, which promised development

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[80] In the late 1940s, educational migrants were predominantly Zaydī, but by the mid 1950s two-thirds were Shāfiʿī (Burrowes, 2005, p.84).

[81] Douglas (1987, p.237 note 90) comments that though contemporary reports refer to 'hundreds,' "there weren't 'hundreds' of students in Imamic Yemen."

of al-Ḥudayda port, the provision of industrial plant and equipment, and technical and economic assistance in exchange for Yemeni agricultural goods (Boals, 1970, p.103). He also signed agreements with China, the Soviet Union, and the United States to build roads connecting the main cities. And if ʾAḥmad's modernisation attempts can seem defensive and reluctant, Crown Prince al-Badr was certainly a believer in the blessings of development. An admirer of ʿAbd al-Nasir and the Soviet Union, Prince al-Badr used his regency in 1959 and his week as Imam in 1962 to push-through a host of reforms. In his speech at the opening of the new al-Ḥudayda port, he celebrated the fulfillment of Yemenis' "dream of development" and, perhaps in part for the benefit of its Soviet sponsors, heralded the port as a step towards a new and more socialist Yemeni society (Orkaby, 2014, pp.64–65). This accords with observations by the American Chargé d'Affaires in the Yemen at the time, Harlan Clark, who noted that between the mid-1940s and late 1950s there was a marked change in the official rhetoric of the Imams, with far less emphasis on religious formulas and far more on economic development (Stookey, 1978, p.206).

Beyond ideas of economic development, appeals to 'the people' marked a new, proto-nationalist register. In the 1948 coup, the new constitution, the Sacred National Charter, had appealed to "the people," while simultaneously drawing on traditional Zaydī formulas, forming "a striking link between two concepts of how a state might be organised" (Dresch, 1993b, p.238). It stressed obedience to learned authority and God's laws on the one hand, while invoking rule in the name of the people and the importance of consultation, on the other. Coup conspirators wanted and expected mass support, while remaining deeply suspicious of mass politics (Carvajal, 2011, p.7; but see: Johnsen, 2017, pp.42, 50).

Throughout the 1950s, the idea of a singular 'Yemeni people' ranked against other like units, grew steadily in popularity (Dresch, 2000, p.69, 1993b, p.274). In non-*sayyid* Zaydī writing, the tribes, imagined as the locus of authentic Yemeni identity, came to play a more important role. Muḥsin al-ʿAynī, for instance, used the Qurʾanic story of the Queen of Sheba to appeal for republican government, pointing out that the Queen would not decide a matter without consultation of all (tribal) chiefs. Elsewhere, he argued that rulers derive their authority from the consent of "the tribes and other parts of the nation" (al-ʿAynī, 1957, pp.60, 143). In Muḥammad al-Zubayrī's novel, *Maʾasāt Wāq al-Wāq* (The Tragedy of Wāq al-Wāq), as in his

poetry,[82] the Imams come in for scathing critique and tribes represent the Yemeni people (al-Zubayrī, 2015; Dresch, 1993b, pp.240–242; Wagner, 2017, p.487). On a similar note, Martha Mundy recounts a story remembered in Wādī Ẓahr, according to which the Imam summoned the shaykh and asked him, disdainfully: "who made you shaykh," seeking to contrast his own legitimacy through learning and descent with that bestowed on the shaykh by a rough crowd of villagers. The shaykh answers: "those who made you Imam," countering with a notion of legitimacy rooted in the people (Mundy, 1995, p.28). Yet, it is, again, a tribal notion of the people, reminding the Imam that his rule depends on tribal oaths of allegiance and the role of tribal fighters in enforcing his claims against rivals.

By contrast, Shāfiʿī writing at the time was influenced by the reference points of Arab nationalism, particularly in its Nasirist guise, although the Shāfiʿī critics of the Imam were by no means all Nasirists.[83] Arab nationalism, on the face of it, was but a small step away from the anti-colonialism, Arabism, and pan-Islamism that formed an element of the Imams' claims to legitimacy. But in practice, the nationalist re-imagining of the 'the people' and the elective affinity of Arab nationalism in the 1950s and 60s with revolutionary socialism, its attacks on 'Arab reaction,' and identification with 'modernity' (Halliday, 2013, pp.441–443), meant that it was a powerful language of opposition, all the more powerful thanks to its resonance with ideas the Imams themselves appealed to (Boals, 1970, p.141). By the 1962 revolution, a truck driver could explain to the French journalists Marie-Claude Deffarge and Gordian Troeller that the revolution meant he no longer had to pay road tolls: The shaykhs or governors (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.22):

> prélevaient d'abord un impôt sur les paysans pour la construction de la route. Ensuite, ils réquisitionnaient ces paysans pour construire la route. Et nous, nous devions encore payer pour passer dessus. Et ils faisaient payer un impôt d'entretien. Maintenant, cést fini, les routes appartiennent au *peuple* [emphasis added].

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[82] For a translation and annotation of one of al-Zubayrī's most famous critiques of the Imam see: Serjeant, 1979.

[83] Many of them were initially attracted to the ideas of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic modernism of Jamāl al-Dīn al-ʾAfghānī and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī (Al-Ahnaf, 1999; Burrowes, 2005, pp.88–89; Douglas, 1987, p.33; Kurzman, 2002).

The class-based opposition between shaykhs and peasants and the idea that assets should be owned collectively mark this articulation of the rhetorical commonplace 'the people' out as one defined by Arab nationalism.

Coups against King Faruq in Egypt in 1952, King Faysal II of Iraq, a Hashemite like the Imam, in 1958, and Muḥammad VIII of Tunisia, also in 1958, were changing ideas about what government looked like and how change could be achieved. Whereas the Free Yemeni Movement had started off with petitions for better education, health care, and roads, by the 1940s this had morphed into calls for constitutional limits to Imamic powers, and by the late 1950s into a platform advocating the creation of a republic (Douglas, 1987, p.xv). Inside the Movement, Egyptian financial support and the provision of a powerful platform on *ṣawt al-ʿarab* radio helped the progressive, Arab nationalist faction gain influence and become dominant in the early 1960s (Douglas, 1987, p.205). By early 1961, the break-up of the short-lived union between Egypt, Syria, and Yemen and souring relations between Imam ʾAḥmad and ʾAbd al-Nasir, marked the "beginning of 'open season' on the Imam in the Egyptian press" (Ferris, 2012, p.34; Johnsen, 2017, pp.79–81) and the Egyptian intelligence services made it clear in contact with young officers in Ṣanaʿāʾ that they expected a revolution to happen soon (Alaini, 2004, pp.29, 50–51). By this time, the overthrow of the Imamate, which had "previously been unimaginable," seemed "almost expected" both within Yemen and without (Johnsen, 2017, p.103).[84]

3.4 In lieu of a conclusion: the al-Badr regency and aftermath 1959-60

The shifts in the political settlement and changing parameters of legitimacy became especially visible in 1959, when Imam ʾAḥmad left Yemen for medical treatment, leaving power in the hands of Crown Prince al-Badr. Al-Badr seized the opportunity to prove himself as a moderniser – with disastrous results.

Though the details remain murky (Dresch, 1993b, p.240), it appears that al-Badr pursued a number of reforms during his months of regency in April to August 1959. He expanded Egyptian training of the armed forces, created health, commercial, and agricultural schools with Egyptian staff (Juzaylān, 1977, p.57), and set up a proto-consultative body for supervision of administrative affairs. He also announced a 25% pay increase for soldiers and

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[84] This was, for instance, the view of the Kennedy administration (Orkaby, 2014, p.298; Perra, 2017, Ch 5).

officers and replaced the head of the *niẓāmī* army ʿAlī bin ʾIbrāhīm, with ʿAbd al-Qādir ʾAbū Ṭālib, a younger, more progressive figure (Nājī, 1988, p.202). However, the treasury could not deliver on the promised salaries, resulting in military unrest in Taʿiz, al-Ḥudayda, al-Luḥaya, and Dhamār. Al-Badr feared an all-out mutiny and requested help from the Egyptian military mission to disarm Yemeni soldiers and arrest officers he believed were plotting against him (Johnsen, 2017, pp.92–93). Ultimately, al-Badr called on the Ḥāshid tribal confederation for help – and was forced to pay them handsomely for their support, further exacerbating his financial difficulties (Douglas, 1987, pp.222–223, Juzaylān, 1977, p.58). When Imam ʾAḥmad, informed of the mounting crisis, returned precipitously from his treatment abroad, he sought to re-claim the money al-Badr had paid to Ḥāshid, dispatching troops and prompting the paramount shaykh of Ḥāshid to call for a tribal revolt. Ultimately, ʾAḥmad executed both the paramount shaykh, Ḥusayn al-ʾAḥmar, and his eldest son, Ḥamīd, by most accounts under the pretext of peace talks. Their executions earned the Imam the enduring enmity of the al-ʾAḥmar family, of Ḥāshid, of the Khawlān tribes who had heeded calls for revolt, and of the tribes in al-Jawf, who had promised Ḥusayn al-ʾAḥmar safe passage (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.61).

Modernisers were aggrieved by the aborted reforms, military officers balked at the loss of their promised raise and foreign training, tribal leaders were shocked by the Imam's flouting of tribal norms, and traditionalists were concerned by what they saw as al-Badr's rash reforms.[85] The episode placed additional strain on the fraying alliance between the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family, their allies among leading *sāda* and *quḍāa*, and shaykhly tribal families (Wenner, 1967, pp.123–128; Johnsen, 2017, pp.95–96).

The episode is also deeply revealing about changing ideas of the state and the difficulties involved in squaring the circle of competing expectations. On the one hand, it highlights the way significant portions of the Yemeni elite, and al-Badr himself, had bought into the promise of modernity. His reforms closely followed the demands of the Free Yemeni Movement and echoed the practice of modernising regimes across the global South in pursuit of 'modernity' and 'development.' He brought in foreign experts, opened new schools, replaced key officials with committed modernisers and sought to strengthen the niẓāmī army. He also put in place a proto legislature in line with ideas of consultation and accountability to 'the people.' Yet,

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[85] Reacting to this episode, David Holden, a correspondent for the Guardian, described al-Badr as "naïve" in judging both people and policies. He was "sincerely anxious to reform his country without much idea of how to set about it or what passions reform might release" (Holden, 1966, p.89).

the episode also highlights the enduring centrality of religious legitimacy and tribal notions of honour. ʾAḥmad's 'modern' disregard for proper conduct in war alienated the Ḥāshid confederation, with important effects for the civil war. Likewise, al-Badr's embrace of 'modern' reforms alienated more traditional ʿulamaʾ and also likely contributed to the lukewarm support for al-Badr even among tribes opposed to the republic in the first weeks of the war.

4 THE CIVIL WAR AND THE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT

The civil war in Yemen transformed the political settlement. The son of a blacksmith became head of state, military officers without shaykhly or sayyid pedigree became revolutionary heroes, tribal leaders became ministers and governors, and sayyid dominance crumbled. Using the model developed in Section 2.2 as an analytical lens reveals fundamental transformations in the political role of tribal leaders and officers directly linked to wartime mobilisation and external intervention. It also explains the sāda's loss of influence and why merchants remained at the margins of the settlement – all developments that have received insufficient attention. The examination also provides empirical grounds to confirm some aspects of the model and to nuance and modify others: the case underscores the utility of focusing on different patterns of wartime mobilisation, highlights the importance of the unintended effects of external intervention, and reveals the need to pay close attention to the politics of faction and alliance formation in political settlement analysis.

The starting point for the chapter is the Imamate-era political settlement described in Section 3.1 in terms of a fraying alliance of spiritual and temporal authority between influential *sayyid* and *qāḍī* families and the highland tribes. From this starting point, the pathways of the model structure the investigation. Section 4.1 explores how the war reflected a crisis in the dominant coalition and led to rapid shifts in its composition. In particular, it traces how the *sāda* lost their commanding position in the state administration and their status atop the social pyramid. It also considers the role of Egyptian intervention in narrowing the dominant coalition. Sections 4.2 and 4.3 explore how different mobilising strategies shaped the political settlement. 4.2 focuses on the mobilisation of existing local violence specialists. It explores how Egyptian financial support, Saudi Arabian funds, and the developing web of relationships between Saudi officials and many of Yemen's tribal leaders provided additional resources to these leaders as they bargained with other power brokers in Yemen. 4.3 considers attempts to create a new military and the ways in which external intervention and the growing power of the tribes inflected this process. Finally, the shifting role of traders and merchants in the settlement is the subject of Section 4.4, which reveals how the bonanza of spending on consumer goods associated with the civil war, the withering of government taxation, and the influx of Egyptian and Saudi stipends, salaries, bribes, and inducements, both enabled a process of rapid accumulation for the holders of domestic capital and entrenched their political marginalisation.

4.1 The crisis of the settlement: the fall of the *sāda* and external intervention

Chapter 2 posited that civil war, by revealing the existence of rivals to the dominant coalition, both results from and leads to further elite conflict, bargaining, and defection, generating rapid shifts in the political settlement. Certainly, as Chapter 3 suggested, the Imamate-era political settlement was in a state of acute crisis at the beginning of the 1960s, marked by significant intra-elite conflict and repeated instances of defection, not least the al-Wazīr coup in 1948, military mutinies in 1955 and 1959, and tribal revolts in 1959-61. Centralisation of power and the dynastic ambitions of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn had alienated other powerful *sayyid* families. Lesser *sāda* saw their autonomy and influence threatened at the local level by central encroachment onto control over zakat, the *ʾawqāf*, and education. The Ḥamīd al-Dīn alliance with the highland tribes was likewise in crisis. In the aftermath of Crown Prince al-Badr's regency, there were tribal uprisings in Ḥāshid and influential families within Bakīl came out against the Imam. On the margins of the settlement, Shāfiʿī traders and newly-professionalised military officers chafed at their lack of influence and played increasingly important roles in opposition politics from the mid-1950s onwards.

It was in the context of this significant elite conflict that the Free Officers and their allies overthrew the Imam and the civil war began. In fact, when the coup occurred in late 1962, there were also significant divisions within the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family itself. As Imam ʾAḥmad's health deteriorated in the late 1950s, the prospect of imminent succession paralysed the court. Imam ʾAḥmad and Crown Prince al-Badr disagreed on many issues and ʾAḥmad's court in Taʿiz and al-Badr's in Ṣanaʿāʾ increasingly worked at cross-purposes. Moreover, the family was divided over al-Badr's suitability as Imam, with some favouring Imam ʾAḥmad's brother, Prince Ḥassan bin Yaḥiyā (Stookey, 1978, p.205). This is not to suggest that the end of Ḥamīd al-Dīn rule was inevitable, let alone that the changes to the settlement that occurred through the civil war could be derived from these initial conditions. Yet, as the model suggests, the outbreak of the civil war coincided with and reflected a moment of acute fragility and crisis of the political settlement.

4.1.1   The fall of the sāda

Besides reflecting a moment of crisis in the political settlement, the model suggests that civil wars themselves exacerbate elite tensions, resulting in rapid shifts in the composition of the dominant coalition. This is something of an overarching point that recurs, leitmotif-like, throughout the chapter. Yet the most rapid and enduring such shift in Yemen was the fall of the *sayyid* families from the apex of the social pyramid. The following explores why and how the *sāda* experienced a "clear loss" of influence over the course of the 1960s (Peterson, 1982,

pp.127–128). Hitherto dominant families like the Ḥamīd al-Dīn, al-Wazīr, or al-Kibsī, ceased playing a defining role in Yemeni politics and at all levels *sāda* were displaced from positions of influence. Though some of this loss of influence was reversed in the later war years and during the royalist-republican reconciliation, *sāda* were ultimately relegated to secondary and tertiary positions and the ideology of *sayyid* rule did not survive the war. As the model developed in Chapter 2 suggests, rivalries within the dominant coalition account for a large part of this loss of influence. Competitors for local or national influence displaced *sāda* to pursue their individual advancement, making use of a rhetoric of revolution with significant currency in contemporary pan-Arab debates and backed by Egyptian military support.

Supporters of the revolution singled out *sāda* at all levels during the first weeks after the overthrow of the Imam. Egyptian broadcasts and radio Ṣanaʿāʾ rejected *sayyid* influence and identified their political and social standing with the Imamate's alleged crimes. At the national level, the Free Officers executed most of the *sāda* who held ministerial posts or governorships, killing about 50,[86] three of them members of the royal family. This occurred even though, by some accounts, 17 of the original Free Officers that launched the coup against the Imam were Hashemites, albeit ones that opposed traditional status distinctions (Interview with Qāsim al-Wazīr, 2017). By contrast to the violence against *sāda*, only two of the *quḍāa* in Imam ʾAḥmad's cabinet were executed (vom Bruck, 2005, pp.57–58). Members of influential *sayyid* families were imprisoned or kept under close surveillance, and *sāda* like ʾIbrāhīm and Qāsim al-Wazīr, who had been leading reformists and critics of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn before the revolution, lost influence and were ultimately forced into exile. Despite their historical role in opposition and their role in the coup, with only one exception, no *sāda* were included at the top of the new regime (Stookey, 1978, p.232).

At a more local level, likewise, "the majority of the elite of the Imamate who suffered atrocities in the revolution were *sāda*" (Haykel, 1997, p.280) and the Free Officers imagined the *sāda*, in their role as local notables and gatekeepers for news and knowledge in the countryside, as the embodiment of the old regime and the drivers of a potential counter-

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[86] According to Brown (1963, p.352), about 30 prominent sāda were publicly executed and many more were killed. The German embassy mentions 23 executions and provides a partial list: PAAA, B12 1059, 5 Oct. 1962; 1 Oct. 1962. Royalist accounts insist there were 105 executions, citing unattributed documents available here: https://www.facebook.com/Yemen-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%86-September-26-1962-344256595666669/.

revolution.[87] In the crude class analysis that defined much revolutionary rhetoric during this period, the *sāda* were reactionary feudal lords.[88]

Gabriele vom Bruck's collection of *sayyid* life histories provides a catalogue of the remembered persecutions of this time. Several of her interlocutors remember being told as children growing up in the 1960s that the purpose of the revolution was to "finish the *sāda*" and in at least some areas, the honorific *sayyid* became a curse, casually used to scold servants (vom Bruck, 2005, pp.58–61). Others reported ridicule, chants, and stone-throwing children, who considered anyone wearing the distinctive headgear of the *sāda*, the *ʿimāma*, fair game. Departures from endogamous *sayyid* marriage likewise reveal shifts in the social hierarchy, as men who took up prominent posts in the revolutionary government asked for Hashemite brides. *Sayyid* women were sometimes forced into such marriages in the hope of gaining freedom for relatives, preventing their execution, or to gain protection (vom Bruck, 2005, pp.146–147, 153–154).

Besides the executions in Ṣanaʿāʾ, *sāda* in several locations were killed for being 'historical oppressors' and recast as non-indigenous outsiders during the first weeks of the revolution (see 6.1.2). Some of these executions were the result of local initiatives; others were directly overseen by the new republican government and Egyptian troops. For instance, shortly after the overthrow of the Imam, Egyptian expeditionary forces in Ḥabūr, a village in ʿAmrān, rounded up the mayor, a *sayyid*, and shot him (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, pp.182, 193). On the other hand, the new government shied away from land reform, beyond confiscating the lands of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn and those *sāda* executed as enemies of the revolution (El-Azzazi, 1978, pp.23, 26). There was no wholesale expropriation of the *sāda* and in those villages in lower Yemen where peasant councils formed and sought to arrest landlords or resist payments, the new government stepped in to protect landed property (Dresch, 2000, pp.122–123). Evidence from individual locations in Upper Yemen, like Martha Mundy's study of Wādī Ẓahr in Hamdān (1995, p.47) shows that after the revolution mean land holdings of

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[87] Concern over *sayyid* loyalty was not without foundation. When royalist forces under Prince Muḥammad bin Ḥusayn approached Ṣanaʿāʾ in 1967, the Prince regularly received prominent visitors from the city who came to pay their respects and pledge loyalty (Interview with ʿAbd Allah al-Kibsī, 2016).

[88] The equation is crude because large landholdings were rare and *sayyid* status was primarily defined by learning and descent. See 3.1.1.

sayyid families were comparable to those of tribesmen – as they likely had been before 1962 – and remained larger than those of other groups.

In terms of administrative changes, *sāda* were displaced from positions of power, though they continued to play an important role in lower level administration. All governors formally lost their positions, while administrative changes at lower levels were more selective and depended on the initiative of local rivals and thus varied from village to village. In some towns of the south and villages of the West, traditional patterns of deference prevailed. In others, local rivals ensured *sāda* lost their jobs and faced social sanction (see 6.1.2). More systematically, *sayyid* loss of influence was attenuated in royalist areas and some of the contested tribal highlands. In 1970, these areas were integrated into the new republic with minimal change to their governing arrangements, leaving *sāda* in charge (Dresch, 2000, p.124).[89] After 1970 large numbers of *sāda* also returned to areas from which they had fled and houses and lands were returned to their previous owners, who reassumed positions of prominence. Nonetheless, the war shook the traditional status order and displaced *sāda* from the top of the social pyramid.

In Jabal Rayma, for instance, Swagman notes that whereas the *sāda* had previously been governors, directors of finance, or the head judges, after the civil war they could be found only at lower rungs of the civil service: the local assistant judge, the assistant district director, and the secretary to the district director were all *sāda*. In their place, tribal leaders held far more extensive formal power, with the brother of a paramount shaykh becoming the local director of security, for example. Many *sāda*, disproportionally literate and well-educated, thus found places in the middle reaches of the newly expanded government bureaucracy (Stookey, 1978, p.233; vom Bruck, 2005, p.170) but were barred from the top reaches of government (Burrowes, 1987, p.29).[90]

Insisting, as the model does, on the general language of flux and change, amounts to a recognition that winners and losers in civil war are contingent. The stakes are high; changes are chaotic and defined by fundamental uncertainty, rather than risk susceptible to

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[89] For instance, *Sayyid* al-Marwanī remained director of ʾArḥab district throughout the civil war (Interviews with ʾAḥmad al-Sayyānī and ʿAbbās al-Mukhtafī, 2016).

[90] Some have gone so far as to suggest that though the sāda lost political influence, their social position was untouched (Chelhod et al., 1985, pp.16, 27). This appears to be too neat a distinction.

(probability) modelling. Had Egyptian support focused on other personalities, ended earlier or continued later, had Saudi support for the royalists been greater, had the alienation of key tribes from the Ḥamīd al-Dīn been less pronounced, had things been slightly different, in other words, different outcomes would have ensued.

Yet, while outcomes are contingent, there are generalisable logics at play. There are likely to be general benefits to new rulers in removing the top echelons of the existing administration and particularly any with political loyalty to the deposed ruler. Similarly, promoting officials and social groups relegated to the 'second tier' of political position and social status under the old order can strengthen a constituency for the coup by generating selective benefits and creating new networks of patronage. Moreover, such changes appear path dependent. Moves to unseat established elites are liable to develop a strong logic of their own as they come to define the framing of the overall conflict. Had an outside power supported disgruntled *sāda* seeking a constitutional Imamate, as the conspirators of 1948 had, rather than military officers pursuing an Egyptian-style revolution, there would have been little scope for coalitions of *quḍāa*, peasants, and occasionally tribal leaders, to come together to break *sayyid* power. For the composition of the Yemeni political settlement and its changes over the course of the civil war, the fact that the war began with a military coup that appealed to ideas of social revolution, defined the sort of changes that were possible. How local coalitions used ideas of social revolution and the propaganda and concerns of the Egyptian interveners, is explored further in Section 6.1.2 below.

4.1.2   *The Egyptians and the crisis of the settlement*

The impact of Egyptian intervention on the political settlement is an overarching concern of this chapter. The resources it provided fundamentally shaped the trajectories of mobilisation examined in sections 4.2 and 4.3 below and played an important role in circumscribing the role of Yemen's lowland traders in the emerging political settlement, explored in Section 4.4. The discussion here centres on its overall size and character as well as one issue not well captured in these later discussions: the preference leading Egyptian politicians showed for specific people and policies. These idiosyncratic preferences contributed to the enduring crisis of the political settlement throughout the war and to a narrowing of the dominant coalition; particularly in a context where, as we saw in 3.3, independence from foreign interference was a widely-shared ideal of legitimate rule.

The model suggests that while external intervention per se does not create unsustainable dominant coalitions, it can supply resources independent of the domestic political economy, allowing dominant coalitions to form that are dependent on continuing external support for

their survival. Indeed, it may incentivise narrow and unsustainable coalitions if interveners prefer dependent local leaders over whom they have leverage. This causal story is borne-out in the YAR. The Egyptian intervention supplied significant resources for a series of narrowly based governments under their control. Yet, these governments remained unstable and the Egyptian command was repeatedly forced to make deals with other groups and to accept ministerial appointments and whole governments it judged hostile in order to avoid outright insurrection and a loss of control, despite its overwhelming military and financial leverage. The Egyptians rarely got their way, suggesting much of the literature continues to underestimate the limits of external intervention and the extent to which its possibilities are shaped by the domestic balance of power.

Within little more than a week of the overthrow of the Imam, there were 3,000 Egyptian soldiers in Yemen; after three months, there were 15,000; after six months, 30,000. The Egyptian military presence continued to grow to reach 70,000 soldiers, supported by an extensive intelligence apparatus by the summer of 1965. Though numbers decreased briefly in early 1966, they likely hovered around 50,000 for most of the remaining period until Egyptian withdrawal in winter 1967 (DWQ, 0078-044111, 29 Aug. 1968).[91] The total cost of the Yemen deployment remains unclear, yet the limited figures available suggest that, even excluding Soviet contributions, it probably exceeded $500 million over the five years between October 1962 and December 1967 (Ferris, 2012, p.195-196).

The Egyptian President, Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nasir, the President of the National Council, Anwar al-Sadat, and the Chief of Staff, ʿAbd al-Hakim ʿAmir hand-picked the first YAR government and appointed ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Bayḍānī's as Vice President. Al-Bayḍānī, who had grown up in Egypt to Egyptian-Yemeni parents without having set foot in Yemen, was close enough to ʾAnwar al-Sadat to still be denying rumours he was his brother in law 40 years later (Manṣūr, 2001).[92] Sadat had 'rescued' al-Bayḍānī from exile in Sudan and ensured he received airtime on *ṣawt al-ʿarab*, column inches in *rūz al-yūsuf* magazine, and was elevated to lead the Cairo-based Yemeni opposition before the revolution (Douglas, 1987, p.235-237). Thanks to Egyptian support, al-Bayḍānī was on the first plane to Ṣanaʿāʾ after the revolution and held an impressive array of portfolios in the first YAR government, including as Vice President and Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces (ʾAḥmad, 1992, pp.331, 335; Dresch, 1993b, p.244).

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[91] See also: O'Ballance, 1971, p.66; Jones, 2004, p.65; Nājī, 1988, pp. 192–193, 221–223, 226, 232, 235.

[92] These may have originated in part from: Halliday, 1974, p.104.

Al-Bayḍānī proved to be a highly divisive figure. Having grown up abroad, he lacked both a power base in Yemen and a fine-grained understanding of its politics. His virulently anti-Zaydī politics and sectarian vision of Yemen's revolution flew in the face of early attempts to mobilise tribal support for the new government and risked provoking general opposition in the highlands and among traditional power-brokers in the lowlands. Within the government's inner circle, key policy decisions, particularly his acquiescence to transferring Yemen's currency reserves to Cairo, likewise proved divisive. After approximately six months, during which he wielded substantial power, the remaining members of the revolutionary government stripped al-Bayḍānī of his offices while he was away on a visit to Cairo in February 1963 and later, in August 1963, revoked his Yemeni citizenship. Faced with such hostility, the Egyptian command refrained from imposing his return (O'Ballance, 1971, pp.116–117).

A similar, though more nuanced story can be told about the Egyptian command's insistence on maintaining President al-Sallāl in office and avoiding the appointment of ministers deemed Baʿathist, communist, reactionary, aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood, or otherwise not to its liking. Egyptian experts protected the office of the Presidency from attempts by the former Free Yemeni leadership to create a more parliamentary system, over which the Egyptians feared losing control (PAAA, B36 115, 2 May 1964). Egyptian troops likewise physically protected President al-Sallāl, guarding the Presidential Palace from October 1962 (PAAA, B12 1060, 29 Oct. 1962). They remained an important part of the President's security retinue until the Egyptian retreat and the presidential guard, which became central to al-Sallāl's ability to weather discontent in the army, could grow to some 3,000 elite soldiers largely thanks to Egyptian support (Nājī, 1988, pp.222–243). So invested was President al-Sallāl at the end of his tenure in the Egyptian presence, he did everything he could after the 1967 Jeddah accords set the parameters for Egyptian withdrawal, to sabotage its implementation (DWQ, 0078-044109, 3 Oct. 1967; 4 Oct. 1967).[93]

Yet, despite their strong presence in Yemen, reaching 70,000 combat troops and hundreds of civilian advisers, the Egyptians proved repeatedly unable to maintain their chosen narrow coalition and durably exclude other power brokers. This becomes clear, for instance, around

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[93] Al-Sallāl and other pro-Egyptian republicans may also have sought deliberately to sabotage the Ḥaraḍ conference against the wishes of their Egyptian patrons (Zabarah, 1982, p.99; but see: Ferris, 2012, p.268).

the ʿAmrān conference in September 1963. Organised as a Yemeni peace conference by Maḥmūd al-Zubayrī, a prominent poet and member of the Free Yemeni Movement, it attracted participation from a wide range of shaykhs and ʿulamaʾ (see 6.2.1). The Egyptian command strongly opposed the conference and initially sought to arrest al-Zubayrī. Yet, after the conference demanded Egyptian withdrawal in its final resolution, the Egyptians abandoned their attempts to arrest al-Zubayrī. Ultimately, the Egyptian command recognised many of the conference demands and agreed to make *Qāḍī* ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-ʾIryānī, a political ally of al-Zubayrī, Vice President and Prime Minister (PAAA, B36 45, 9 Oct. 1963), even as it backed efforts to organise rival, pro-Egyptian conferences elsewhere (PAAA B36 45, 2 Dec. 1963). Similarly, after al-Zubayrī's assassination in April 1965, for which some blamed the Egyptians, the Egyptian command, fearing a general tribal revolt, recalled the increasingly unpopular President al-Sallāl for 'consultations' to Cairo and agreed to a government under ʾAḥmad Nuʿmān that demanded phased Egyptian withdrawal and sought to chart a more independent course (Schmidt, 1968, p.228).

Although unable to prevent the Nuʿmān government from coming to power, Egypt's extensive presence in Yemen did mean that its advisors and commanders were able to sabotage its every move and those of its successors. ʿAbd al-Nasir blocked Prime Minister Ḥassan al-ʿAmrī's attempts in late 1965 to negotiate with the Soviet Union to directly receive weapons shipments without Egyptian mediation (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.119). In the summer of 1965, after the Nuʿmān government demanded a phased Egyptian withdrawal from Yemen, Egypt cut off aid and ʿAbd al-Nasir intervened to halt a Kuwaiti loan that would have made up for the shortfall (Alaini, 2004, p.113). In the summer of 1966, an Egyptian plane flew al-Sallāl back to Ṣanaʿāʾ and Egyptian troops imposed his return when Yemeni units sought to stop him at the airport (Nājī, 1988, p.234). In disarray, a large delegation of leading government officials travelled to Cairo to protest, but they were placed under house arrest when they arrived.[94] Mass arrests within the officer corps, explored in more detail in Section 4.3, followed. Briefed on these developments by a UAR official, an East German report celebrated the "cleansing of the apparatus of state from reactionary elements" (PAAA, MfAA C740-73, May 1967). Yet, this state faced increasingly open unrest in the cities and deepening

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[94] According to one recent account, Nasser treated his erstwhile allies poorly during their de-facto imprisonment in Cairo. Officials were kept incommunicado, some were tortured, and some family homes were demolished (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.120). See also ʾAḥmad Nuʿmān's description of his own ordeal (Zayd, 2004, pp.115-121).

opposition from nominally republican-aligned tribes. At the beginning of November 1967, even before the last Egyptian troops left Yemen, a broad-based republican coalition deposed al-Sallāl. Despite its overwhelming military presence, Egypt had been forced to bargain and negotiate with nationalist politicians and saw its influence evaporate the moment the last Egyptian soldier left Yemen.

4.2 Empowering local violence specialists: the renaissance of tribes

When the Free Officers proclaimed the overthrow of the Imam, the paramount shaykh of Ḥāshid, ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar, was a prisoner of the Imam in Taʿiz (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.79). His imprisonment reflects the low ebb of tribal influence on the eve of the revolution. Imam Yaḥiyā and Imam ʾAḥmad had gradually brought the predominance of armed power to the centre. The Imam had successfully put down tribal uprisings in 1959, 1960, and 1961 and the leaders of these uprisings were in prison or exile. Tribal leaders remained politically relevant and tribal revolts were a recurrent threat to Imamic rule, yet tribal leaders held no formal office, were cut off from Ottoman-era stipends, and were negotiating local power with centrally-appointed governors, commanders, and other officials. Tribal levies' aging rifles were increasingly outmatched by the automatic weapons, armoured vehicles, and artillery of the niẓāmī army.

Yet, during the civil war, tribes quickly became central to the calculations of all sides. Given Yemen's mountainous terrain and low rates of urbanisation, tribal support was essential to keeping supply and communication lines open and for access to water, supplies, and local knowledge. Moreover, the tribes maintained an important role in Yemen's oligopoly of violence and larger tribes could mobilise several hundred or even several thousand fighters. Although the niẓāmī army had repeatedly defeated tribal uprisings, when it fractured in the immediate aftermath of the coup (see 4.3 below), the tribes found themselves ascendant. This was particularly true, since, by the 1960s, rallying the tribes was the standard script for an Imam facing a coup or uprising. As a result, not only did the Imam immediately seek to rally tribal support, but impeding the Imam's efforts to rally the tribes became a central concern of the Free Officers. Though liable to over-play the importance of the Ḥāshid tribal fighters he was commanding, it is probably no exaggeration when ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar states that a large majority of troops involved in the first civil war battles for Shahāra, Ṣaʿda, and Ḥajja were tribal fighters (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.86-87).

A word on the identification of tribes with the 'local violence specialists' of the model: There is a long and problematic tendency in writing about Yemen in Arabic and in European languages to portray tribes as "backwards, ignorant […] uncivilized and violent" (Corstange,

2009, p.14; see also: Lackner, 2016, p.1). Analysing them in terms of their function during the war as local violence specialists may raise associations with such literature, but the purpose is expressly not to equate tribes with backward, chaotic, violence. Rather the starting point, as 3.1.3 highlighted, is that tribes in northern Yemen provided a broad range of local governance and as such are institutions designed to tame, manage, and regularise violence. Their ability to do so, however, was and is based on a local predominance of violence: on the myth and reality of tribal control over territory and responsibility for the security of all of the people within that territory – sometimes independent from, sometimes shared with, and sometimes subordinate to, the central military (Brandt, 2017, p.71; Lackner, 2017, p.196). Bearing arms and responding to tribal summons is but one part of what it means to be a tribesman, but it is an element of tribal identity and collective violence is part of the tribes' expected role. It is in this sense (only) that tribes were local violence specialists and it is from this feature of tribal organisation in Yemen that their prominence during the civil war largely derived.

How were these tribal fighters mobilised and to what effect? The model developed in Chapter 2 suggests that building alliances with existing local violence specialists is likely to decentralise power over coercion, since it usually involves giving up large amounts of central oversight and implies the transfer of rights and resources to local violence specialists. The model also suggested that, since violence and brinkmanship can serve local violence specialists as tools to increase their leverage vis-à-vis the centre, mobilising strategies that rely on them render attempts to build coalitions for centralising violence more difficult in the longer term.

Yemen bears out these dynamics and this section highlights the key role of mobilising strategies for the resurgence of tribal influence, closely probing this element of the model. 4.2.1 traces the strategies employed by royalists, republicans, and their regional backers to secure tribal support and highlights that the most important mobilising strategy consisted of direct payments to tribal leaders, made possible by the resources external interveners provided. 4.2.2 explores the impact of these strategies on tribal leaders' place in the evolving political settlement during and after the civil war. Next to the decentralising outcomes the model suggests, which the investigation amply bears out, this sub-section highlights how rival politicians at the centre courted tribes as a distinct political constituency to balance the Yemeni left and how tribal leaders made use of central resources in internal power struggles, adding a missing element to the model's story.

4.2.1 Mobilising the tribes

Most discussions of the war gloss over issues of tribal allegiances and mobilisation, explaining only that most of Ḥāshid backed the republic and most of Bakīl supported the royalists, although they tend to stress that tribes focused on their own interests and that many tribal leaders successfully played both sides (e.g. Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.242; O'Ballance, 1971, p.112). However, allegiances were not only shifting and unstable, but also fragmented and nested and while royalists and republicans competed for the support of tribal leaders, tribal leaders competed for ascendancy in tribal politics. Consequently, when describing the tribes supporting the Republic, ʿAbd Allah Al-ʾAḥmar provides the name of only a small number of tribes (notably Dhū Muḥammad, Siḥār, Āl al-Shāʾif, al-Thawāba, Āl Juzaylān, Āl ʾAbū ʾAsbaʿ, al-Fāḍil and ʾIbn ʿAwfān) without qualification, listing other supporters as consisting of 'parts of' Nihm under Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm, 'parts of' al-Bayḍāʾ under ʾAḥmad Nāṣir al-Dhahab and 'most of' the Ḥāshid tribal confederation. The remainder of his list of supporters consists largely of prominent families (*buyut*) and individual shaykhs, rather than larger units (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, pp.91–93, 95). Despite the tendency to see tribes as more or less unitary actors, which remains stubbornly persistent in contemporary scholarship, royalists and republicans could and did appeal to heads of houses and sub-tribes when negotiations with tribal leaders failed and royalist shaykhs headed republican tribes and vice versa (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 21 Sep. 1965).

Attempts to mobilise tribal support took place against the backdrop of this complex and fragmented map of allegiances, with important effects for logics of mobilisation and their political outcomes. In such a context, rights to local autonomy and even national office did little to help tribal leaders against local competitors, so that direct payments and the transfer of weapons became central for mobilising tribal support. Foreign interveners seeking local allies, with short time horizons and unconcerned by the growing predominance of tribes, provided vast resources to tribal leaders. Individual shaykhs used these outside resources to advance their position within the tribe and to gain a place in the political settlement.[95] Ultimately, far-reaching decentralisation was less a means to win tribal support and more the

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[95] These dynamics are reminiscent of how the rivalry between Imam Yahiya and Muḥammad al-ʾIdrīsī fifty years earlier briefly empowered local elites able to play them off against one another (Blumi, 2003, p.66).

outcome of shifts in the balance of power between tribal leaders, the military, and administrative elites.

Exchanging rights for fighters?

The new government almost immediately announced it was abolishing the tribal hostage system and that taxation would henceforth be local and voluntary (Peterson, 1982, pp.138–139). The first measure was aimed squarely at the tribes, while the second was a broader play for support. Both decisions had significant knock-on effects, since the hostage system and associated stipends, which taxation paid for, had been the Imams' main instrument for controlling the tribes. In October 1963, the German embassy noted that without hostages and money, the republican government had few choices but to offer tribal leaders further participation in government to secure support (PAAA, B36 45, 18 Oct. 1963; see also Peterson 1982, 105).

Apparently following this strategy, the government included more than 130 shaykhs, who had been guarantors for tax collection in their areas under the Imam, in the High Council for National Defence in October 1962, granting each the salary of a government minister. Similarly, nearly half of the April 1963 Presidency Council was composed of tribal shaykhs (al-Ẓāhirī, 1996, p.139). The government also created a High Council for Tribal Affairs in December 1962 (SWB ME/W194/A/5) and a Committee for Tribal Affairs in November 1963 under ʿAbd al-Salām Ṣabra, Shaykh ʿAlī bin Nājī al-Ruwayshān, ʿAbd Allah al-Jayfī, and *Sayyid* Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Kibsī. The committee formed an important part of the new republican government, tasked with political education and mobilising tribes (PAAA, B36 45, 23 Nov. 1963). Al-Ẓāhirī, who stresses an initial honeymoon period in which the new government sought to integrate tribal leaders in republican politics, sets much store by these and other early decisions, such as the creation of governorate level tribal councils (*majālis shuyūkh*) in April 1963 (al-Ẓāhirī, 1996, pp.139–140). Yet we know about these measures primarily because they were decreed and it is unclear to what extent they were implemented.

Direct payments and repression

Alongside and eclipsing such transfers of rights and political opportunities, mobilisation depended on direct payments to tribal leaders as the predominant strategy. On the royalist side, between 1962 and the first months of 1965, the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Princes distributed at least 80,000 rifles to tribal fighters and spent between £100,000-200,000 per month on payments to tribal leaders (Jones, 2004, p.101). Daily rates for tribesmen fighting for the Imam shortly after the coup were 3 Saudi Riyals per soldier per day, or about double the wages of a regular soldier in the niẓāmī army before the coup (PAAA, B36 46, 19 May 1963;

Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.115). With no domestic source of income to finance these payments, the Ḥamīd al-Dīn relied almost exclusively on Saudi Arabian weapons and financing. Saudi support totalled £25 million (ca. 56 million MT) in the first two and a half years of the war – more than double the entire annual government budget of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom before 1962 (Jones, 2004, p.194; see also: Aboul-Enein, 2004).[96] Most of this money made its way directly to the tribes in payments and stipends. Much of the remainder made its way to them indirectly in the form of weapons purchased via British or French intermediaries and distributed to the tribes.

In addition to this support via the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family, Saudi Arabia also established direct relationships with tribal leaders. Prince Sulṭān, the Minister of Defence and Aviation, directed Saudi policy and his relative Muḥammad al-Sudayrī, the governor of the Saudi border province of Jāzān, began making direct payments to tribal leaders in the border regions in 1964 (Jones, 2004, p.48; Stookey, 1978, p.260), a role taken over by the shadowy "Special Committee" in the final war years, which also administered the supply of lucrative trading licenses to Yemen's tribal leaders (Gause, 1990, pp.71, 73; Weir, 2007, p.283).[97]

Direct payments were also central to republican and Egyptian efforts to generate and maintain tribal support. Yet, at first, the new republican government only provided limited arms to tribal fighters. Direct payments did not play an important role in the first months after the revolution. Shaykh al-ʾAḥmar asserts in his memoirs, for instance, that Ḥāshid fighters fought "without salaries" from the government "using their personal weapons" during the first months of the war and financed the campaign through contributions by villagers in the areas of operation (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.93). Indeed, the Egyptian command was initially hostile to the tribes. Part of the rationale for intervention in Yemen was freeing the country from 'backwards' tribalism, a point explored in 6.1.2 below.

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[96] Besides the Saudi Arabian royal family, which supported the Imam from the outset (Jones, 2004, p.46; Interview with ʿAbd Allah al-Kibsī, 2016; but see: Badeeb, 1986, pp.51–53), Jordan was an initial staunch supporter of the royalist cause, as were Iran and the UK. France and Israel also supplied and air-dropped weapons (Jones, 2004; Orkaby, 2015, pp.128–133; Smiley, 1975).

[97] According to information relayed to the UK government, these payments reflected the Saudi goal of ruling Yemen through the tribal shuyūkh without the Hamid al-Din (UKNA, DEFE 13/570 77705, 19 Jul. 1964).

Within several months of the initial Egyptian deployment, however, de facto military practice was at odds with the declared political aim of removing tribal influence, as the Egyptian command began to view payments to tribes as a central element of its counterinsurgency campaign. Paradoxically, from 1963 onwards, the Egyptians played an important role in expanding the armed power of the tribes at the expense of the central military. From the Egyptian perspective, what was in short supply was not firepower or effective fighters – the Egyptian military could provide these – rather, it was local information and a friendly or neutral operating environment for Egyptian troops. To this end, gaining the support of strategically-placed tribes was more important than growing a central military that could at best duplicate and replace what Egyptian forces were already doing. While they did invest in the creation of a central military, far more Egyptian support flowed to tribes; and tribal militias operated alongside Egyptian troops in joint operations more actively than the new Yemeni military.

Such joint operations were only possible because, like Saudi Arabia, Egypt established its own direct relationships with tribal leaders. It created a Tribal Affairs Office in late 1962 and by early 1963 instituted its own tribal subsidies of up to £20,000 per month, establishing direct relations between the Egyptian command and tribal leaders.[98] At the same time, republican military commanders also began granting shaykhs sympathetic to the republic funds as recruiters and commanders of the auxiliary Popular Forces (*al-jaysh al-shaʿabī*). These payments, of up to 30 YR per person per mission, approximated those of the royalists. In fact, tribal leaders offering loyalty to the Republic explicitly demanded payment equivalent to the royalist rates (PAAA, B36 46, 19 May 1963).[99]

The Egyptians further increased the financial resources devoted to these efforts after 1964, when the Egyptian command adopted a new model of operations in which Egyptian troops provided air and artillery support to ground offensives by Yemeni tribes (ʾAḥmad, 1992,

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[98] These payments were introduced after Egyptian expeditionary forces suffered heavy losses in initial fighting, including at least one instance in which a supposedly allied tribe turned on the Egyptian commandos operating alongside them (Ferris, 2012, pp.186–188; al-Ḥadīdī, 1984, pp.70–72).

[99] However, seeing them purely in terms of a 'political marketplace' (De Waal, 2015a) underestimates non-monetary motivations. The market may have set the price of allegiance, but non-market factors determined which allegiances were possible.

pp.315–316).[100] Eventually, payments to individual shaykhs reached the 'fantastic' level of up to 200,000 YR, according to the Egyptian ambassador to Yemen (DWQ 0078-044109, 8 Oct. 1967; 0078-044111, 29 Aug. 1968).[101] Financial inducements accompanied major Egyptian offensives (Jones, 2004, p.156) and German records refer frequently to Egyptian payments to buy tribal support, including a payment to President al-Sallāl of 1 million YR to purchase tribal support during the intra-republican splits of summer 1965, a stepping up of tribal subsidies in the triangle between al-Ḥudayda, Ṣanaʿāʾ, and Taʿiz to minimise the risk of unrest during the implementation of their "long breath" strategy in 1966, and additional one-off payments to cover Egyptian withdrawal in late 1967 (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 25 Jun. 1965, 11 Nov. 1965, 13 Nov. 1966, 21 Mar. 1967).[102] Once introduced, tribal stipends proved very difficult to drop and after the Egyptian retreat in 1967, the republican government was soon spending 1.6 million YR in direct monthly payments to the tribes (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.47).[103]

Where the carrot proved unsuccessful, the Egyptian military sought to influence tribal leaders through repression. Throughout the war, the royalists lacked effective anti-air weapons and the Egyptians – and later the republicans – made extensive use of their air superiority. Taking a page from the imperial playbook of the British, the Egyptian command bombed and strafed villages to punish tribes who joined the royalists. From contemporary sources, it is clear that aerial bombardment and shelling were the stock response to attacks on Egyptian troops (e.g. PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 22 Feb 1966, clippings of NZZ from 22 Feb. 1966; B36 45, 8 Jun.

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[100] Studies disagree whether the Egyptians and their republican allies only gradually granted "grudging acceptance" to "tribal reality" (Ferris, 2012, pp.182–183) or whether they sought at first to woo the tribes and then turned gradually against them (al-Ẓāhirī, 1996). This disagreement may derive from distinct levels of analysis: While the political leadership sought to side-line tribal shuyūkh in the mid-60s, operational practice meant growing resources for tribal leaders.

[101] According to Nājī (1988, p.244) overall Egyptian payments reached £ 60 million. See also: Ferris, 2012, p.197; Jones, 2004, p.155.

[102] Over the course of the war, Egyptian payments became more targeted and selective as the Egyptian forces developed "political offices" embedded with individual tribes, charged with incremental dispensation of aid in return for specific services. See: ʾAḥmad, 1992, pp.530–532; Ferris, 2012, pp.182, 188–189; Dresch, 1995, p.43.

[103] See also 5.1.3 below.

1963).[104] Egyptian bombing was sufficiently regular and intense that whole villages were abandoned. Egyptian tactics included the use of chemical weapons (Smiley, 1975, p.181; Dresch, 2000, p.106), destroying wells, bombing and burning crops, and strafing herds of livestock (Schmidt, 1968, p.120; O'Ballance, 1971, pp.91, 117). Such indiscriminate violence, in line with evidence from other conflicts (Kalyvas, 2006), was rarely successful in dissuading violence against Egyptian and republican troops. Retaliatory air strikes reliably drove whole villages, and sometimes the tribes they belonged to, to join the royalist cause (PAAA, B36 45, 10 Nov. 1963; see also: Schmidt, 1968, p.175; Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.122).

The Sisyphean task of tribal mobilisation

Nājī al-Ghādir's wartime and post-war trajectory summarises and illustrates many of the points discussed so far: al-Ghādir was, in 1962, shaykh of the al-ʿArūsh (sub)-tribe of Khawlān al-Ṭiyāl, a member of the Bakīl confederation. He initially wavered between supporting the revolution and fidelity to the Imamate, but the opportunities presented by royalist payments and the excesses of Egyptian intervention pushed him into the royalist camp. The war, its resources, and the divisions in tribal politics it engendered allowed al-Ghādir to become, first, shaykh of Khawlān and then to challenge the paramount shaykh of Bakīl, ʾAmīn ʾAbū Rās, who had sided with the republic, to become the rival 'royalist' paramount shaykh of the confederation (Brandt, forthcoming, pp.7–9). He went from being a minor shaykh commanding 120 men to having thousands of fighters under his command (Halliday, 1974, pp.117–118, 128–129).

Al-Ghādir also crystallises the crucial flaws of direct payments as a mobilisation strategy: they were expensive and worked only in the short term. Tribal leaders were able throughout the war to play off both sides. According to an Egyptian officer (Khalīl, 1990, p.63), for example, during his first meeting with al-Ghādir, he gave the shaykh 5,000 MT. Halliday reports that al-Ghādir received 800,000 MT from the republican General al-ʿAmrī, while making promises to both sides (Halliday, 1974, p.117). Ultimately, al-Ghādir joined the republic only after the siege of Ṣanaʿāʾ, when its victory seemed certain.

Tribal autonomy and direct payments ensured that gathering tribal support was a Sisyphean task of perpetual mobilisation. Every raid or assault needed an ad-hoc alliance and the assembled coalition would fall apart after – and sometimes before – its objectives were

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[104] See also: Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.234; Ferris, 2012, p.189; O'Ballance, 1971, p.180.

reached. One of the Septembrist officers, who served as a republican commander during the civil war, described the relationship between the military and the tribes in the following terms (Interview with Ḥamūd Baydar, 2016):

> During the war, we relied on the tribes a great deal. We gave them weapons and equipment in exchange for cooperation on specific missions. […] We would meet with tribal leaders we knew were sympathetic to the revolution and ask them for fighters. They would send a specific number under the command of a mid-level shaykh. In exchange, we would give them weapons and equipment. The tribesmen would fulfil the mission and then return to their home [*balad*]. If we wanted to conduct another joint operation, we would go back and negotiate with the shaykh.

Egyptian military documents and British mercenaries' assessments capture the same dynamics rather less graciously (Smiley, 1975, p.176; Orkaby, 2014, pp.141–142). Even tribal leaders like Shaykh al-ʾAḥmar describe instances where they waited for weeks for fighters to arrive, and that despite payment in money, weapons, or supplies, they not always showed up (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, pp.135, 159, 162).[105]

4.2.2 Outcomes

The model suggested a causal story according to which central elites, in order to build alliances with existing local violence specialists, must reallocate rights over violence and revenue. Additional rights and a growing role in keeping the dominant coalition in power may empower local power brokers within the dominant coalition, lead to greater local autonomy, and erode coalitions for central control and oversight. The outcomes in Yemen and the mechanisms by which they were reached closely fit this model. It explains well why tribal leaders gained significant local autonomy and influence in central decision making during the al-Sallāl government, a period few existing studies acknowledge as witnessing an expansion of their role. It can also account neatly for why the influence of tribal leaders expanded sharply after Egyptian withdrawal, when tribal support became central to the survival of the republican regime.

Next to this general story, two points stand out that the model has little to say about, though it pointed us in the right direction to notice these developments. As power fragmented at higher levels, tribal leaders centralised and consolidated their role inside the tribe. They

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[105] This fits with the established evidence on the tendency of side-payments to create loose associations that fall apart under pressure (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2008, p.6; see also: Cramer, 2002; Weinstein, 2007).

gained power vis-à-vis other members of the tribe and the war changed how tribes functioned and the relations within them. Moreover, there remains the question under what circumstances contending elites seek to mobilise local violence specialists and which tribal leaders, specifically, benefited from the opportunities war offered. After describing how the transfer of rights and resources elevated tribal leaders in the political settlement and touching on dynamics of centralisation within tribes, this sub-section therefore explores the politics of tribal influence, arguing that the war opened an opportunity for a system of notable politics that played to the strengths of the second tier of traditional elites swept into power by the revolution.

Government insiders and new local powers

Writing on the political history of Yemen has long stressed that tribal leaders gained important positions in government and access to attendant rents after the civil war. Yet, most neglect the dramatic rise of tribal leaders during and because of the civil war, attributing their rise to President ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-ʾIryānī's (r1968-1974) attempts to side-line leftist rivals and his policies during reconciliation with the royalists (Stookey, 1978, pp.32, 255–260; 1974b, p.410; Burrowes, 2009, "al-ʾIryānī and al-Ḥamdī regimes and transition period").[106] Such an account is not without merits and, as we will see, elements of this political story help make sense of developments in Yemen. However, tribal leaders' growing influence was less new in the late 1960s and early 1970s than it has appeared to observers. It accompanied republican politics almost from the outset and began under President al-Sallāl, although it was held in check by the Egyptian presence, which for a time appeared able to secure Nasirist political dominance, even as tribal leaders gained increasing resources and important government portfolios.

The discussion above already highlighted how republican governments from 1962 onwards offered formal office to mobilise tribal supporters; establishing, for instance, a Committee for Tribal Affairs and appointing leading shaykhs to lucrative ministerial-level advisory posts. As these measures continued during the war, they became less attempts to woo tribal leaders and more capitulations to their growing power. When the government gave responsibility for distributing a large gift of wheat from the United States to a committee composed of Shaykh Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm, Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAlī al-ʾAswadī, and the prominent Shāfiʿī notable

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[106] Two exceptions to this tendency are: al-Ẓāhirī, 1996, p.140 and Halliday, 1974, p.115.

Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAlī ʿUthmān, it was probably dispensing patronage (PAAA B36 45, 23 Nov. 1963). Yet, later making Shaykh ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar governor of Ḥajja likely simply reflected his de facto importance. It would have been difficult for anyone else to claim to be governing Ḥajja. In late 1966, when President al-Sallāl purged his government, he nonetheless appointed ʿAbd Allah al ʾAḥmar, ʾAmīn ʾAbū Rās, Ṣāliḥ bin Nājī al-Ruwayshān, Muṭiʿ Damāj and ʾAḥmad ʿAbd Rabbuh al-ʿAwāḍī as advisors on tribal affairs with the rank and salary of ministers (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 20 Sep. 1966). In doing so, he was recognising the influence of political enemies who during the intra-republican stand-off of that summer had largely supported his opponents.

The institutionalisation of tribal power accelerated under President al-ʾIryānī. After Egyptian withdrawal, shaykhs made up more than two-fifths of the new governmental council (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.268). By 1969, the power of tribal leaders was institutionalised in the YAR legislature, the *Majlis al-Shūra* (Consultative Council) (al-Ẓāhirī, 1996, p.129). Tellingly, the *Majlis al-Shūra* grew out of a body called the *Majlis al-Shuyūkh* (Council of Shaykhs), formed immediately after the siege of Ṣanaʿāʾ, and was headed by Shaykh al-ʾAḥmar (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, pp.186–187). Tribal leaders also became entrenched in the military, police, and civil service, especially large ministries, providing them with significant scope for patronage (Burrowes, 1987, pp.50–51; see also 4.3.2 below). By the end of the civil war, "the lowest shaykhs and officers considered themselves more powerful than the Prime Minister or any other Minister" (Alaini, 2004, p.204). As a result of the flood of guns and money to tribal leaders, many previously impecunious and weak shaykhs found themselves "quite affluent" and in command of large and well-armed tribal armies (Burrowes, 1987, p.23).

While politically inexperienced and initially deferring in matters of high politics to others more comfortable on the national and international stage (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.245), tribal leaders adroitly pursued their sectional interests and ensured direct payments to tribes remained, at about 20% of government expenditure, one of the main items on the YAR budget (Nyrop, 1977, p.197). When other government actors attempted to end payments, this repeatedly precipitated crises of government and threats of tribal insurrection forced successive prime ministers to back down (Alaini, 2004, p.208; El-Azzazi, 1978, p.175). Post-war bargaining saw a further extension of tribal influence. By the end of the al-ʾIryānī Presidency in 1974, tribal leaders held six of ten provincial governorships, including Mujāhid ʾAbū Shawārib as governor of Ḥajja, ʾAḥmad ʿAbd Rabbuh al-ʿAwāḍī as governor of Taʿiz, and Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm as governor of al-Ḥudayda (Burrowes, 1987, p.50).

In addition to gaining access to high-level positions within the state apparatus, tribal leaders also gained far-reaching rights to rule in their local areas. Side payments, the more circumscribed strategy of giving increased control over local taxation and justice to tribal leaders, and disruption of Imamate era governance mechanisms during the civil war, resulted in far-reaching decentralisation. Effective political functioning became the near-exclusive domain of the village or tribe and the new balance of power fell to local shaykhs. In areas controlled by the royalists, the war hardly changed local administrative arrangements, but it severed links to the Imam's court. Central appointments, oversight, and taxation virtually ceased. According to a royalist commander:

> Wherever the royalists held sway, the courts, governors and other institutions of state continued to function as they had under Imam ʾAḥmad and the important people remained the same. But there were few new appointments. When the Princes or others passed through these villages, the officials would renew their allegiance, but they focused on their own region and their own men, whereas the focus of the Imam and the Princes was on military activity and there was no capacity for anything else' (Interview with ʿAbbās al-Mukhtafī, 2016).[107]

Republican areas converged on the same practice, although legally the central government had extensive powers over the localities (see 5.2). German embassy reporting insisted that real authority was in the hands of local shaykhs and the heads of tribal confederations and discusses, for instance, the case of the former governor of Taʿiz, who, as President al-Sallāl was seeking his arrest in 1966, was able to hold court unmolested less than 50km from Taʿiz, deep in nominally republican territory. Similarly, tribes in Bayḍāʾ forced the republican government to withdraw troops from their area, days after they were deployed. A list of such examples could be extended almost indefinitely (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 20 Jul. 1966, 16 Dec. 1966).

Formal decentralisation eventually followed the de facto leaching away of central influence. In 1967, President al-Sallāl guaranteed autonomy to tribes (O'Ballance, 1971, p.180) in an attempt to shore up tribal support by belatedly acknowledging an altered balance of power. President al-ʾIryānī further enshrined tribal self-administration in law and the wartime, decentralised, system of political bargaining and brokerage became the regular and accepted pattern of post-war governance (Burrowes, 1987, p.49). Tribal control of appointments in

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[107] David Smiley (1975, pp.148–149), possibly seeking to rally public opinion, claimed more coherence for the royalist administration.

their areas became accepted practice, and tribal 'taxation' of travellers passing through their territories increased in the late 1960s. Studies of the 1970s consistently stress the absence of central influence on the selection of government officials up to and including the position of governor in many areas. These had all been positions dominated by centrally-appointed and usually non-tribal officials before the war (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.175; Swagman, 1988b).

The post-war state also retreated from claiming a monopoly over the legitimate use of force in tribal areas. In mid-July 1970, Prime Minister al-ʿAmrī faced an uprising by Bakīl when he sought to station a new military commander in the territory of the formerly royalist Banū Ḥushaysh, against objections by their shaykh. By mid-1971, the government restricted the presence of security forces to urban centres, leaving law enforcement elsewhere officially in the hands of tribal leaders and in 1973 delegated formal authority for public order to tribes and formally promised not to send armed forces into tribal areas without the agreement of the shaykh (Stookey, 1978, pp.258–259; Nyrop, 1977, p.237). At the same time, ever-increasing proportions of locally collected taxes went to local projects and the local development associations that began to emerge during the war and grew rapidly in the 1970s (see 5.2.3). Local self-administration became enshrined in law during the late 1960s and early 1970s as a de jure capitulation to the fact that paying and arming the tribes had elevated them to decisive veto-players. Much of the tribal autonomy of the 1970s was a result of the war.

Centralisation within tribes

A lower-level process of centralisation accompanied this decentralisation at the national level, as tribal leaders consolidated their role inside the tribe. Despite the fragmented tribal politics of allegiance, and the way outside resources initially provided resources for local challenges to established shaykhs, payments to tribal leaders, their growing political role, and the devastation of the war in the longer term centralised power within tribes and elevated the tribal leaders able to leverage the resources the war offered in intra-tribal politics. In this way, the war changed not just the standing of tribes in the state, but also directly affected the tribal system.

Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm, for instance, was the shaykh of a sub-tribe of Nihm when the civil war broke out. A clear commitment to the Republic, adroit political manoeuvring, the ability of other members of *bayt* ʾAbū Luḥūm to gain command of several regular military units, and links with leading politicians, such as Muḥsin al-ʿAynī, allowed Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm to first become governor of al-Ḥudayda and ultimately, thanks to his power as governor of the YAR's most important port and his connections in the military, to become paramount shaykh of

Bakīl after the war (ʾAbū Luḥūm, 2002). He is emblematic of the way the war allowed actors who were initially subordinate in tribal hierarchies to challenge established tribal leaders and then to consolidate and centralise their power to unprecedented levels thanks to new opportunities for patronage and the devastation of war. For even as war benefited tribal leaders, it undermined the livelihoods of ordinary tribesmen and their families. Fighting disrupted agriculture and Egyptian bombing raids destroyed crops and wells and drove people out of their villages (O'Ballance, 1971, pp.157–158). Many of the frontline areas suffered food shortages and by the summer of 1965, famine was becoming a real possibility east of Khawlān (Jones, 2004, pp.156, 196). Poor rains exacerbated the disruptions of war, as Yemen experienced a series of droughts between 1965 and 1967. Even in areas that largely escaped fighting, such as Manākha, Egyptian requisitions of livestock decimated local stocks and villagers remembered the "twin calamities" of the 1960s as the "presence of the Egyptians and the absence of rains" (Gerholm, 1977, p.57).

As the war destroyed their independent incomes, patronage and payment for fighting dispensed through the shaykh became central to the livelihoods of most tribesmen. The food and money royalists and republicans gave freely to tribal leaders to buy loyalty were, perhaps, more successful in buying tribesmen's loyalty to the shaykh, than the tribes' loyalty to either side.[108] In the fluid politics of the immediate post war period, growing centralisation within tribes further reinforced the power of tribal shaykhs, especially those who learned to "pyramid their power and influence:" new access to resources at the centre provided the shaykhs with the means to expand and reinforce patronage networks within their tribes, while their growing influence within their tribes strengthened their influence at the centre (Burrowes, 1987, p.32).[109] Yet for all their power, there was, Martha Mundy notes, "a pall over the legitimacy" of the shaykhs who became prominent at the national level: their wealth was too new and too egregious and the system of patronage and favours that made them important intermediaries for tribesmen was in its infancy (Mundy, 1995, p.55).

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[108] However, tribesmen could and did make claims on leaders when they felt they were not given their due and observers in the 1970s remarked on the democratic and egalitarian features of tribal organization (Dostal, 1974).

[109] After the mid-1970s, large-scale emigration to Saudi Arabia attenuated this dynamic and reconstituted independent incomes for tribesmen. However, the patterns of the late war years returned with the oil price shocks in the 1980s and the expulsion of Yemeni workers from Saudi Arabia in 1990.

Tribes as a political constituency

Secure standing within the tribe also provided a strong electoral and political base for tribal leaders and the specific politics of the situation add analytical leverage, confirming an argument developed out of a different case (Colombia) that perhaps the "effort to build a political economy of war without politics is finding its limits" (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2008, p.3). This is not to advocate falling back into the categories of contemporary political and journalistic analysis and hence to seek to situate and explain the politics of tribal influence primarily in terms of an ideological struggle between Nasirists, Baʿathists, Communists, Maoists, Arab Nationalists, "moderates," and "technocrats." Instead, it requires enquiring into the specific alliances and affinities between groups. Ideology mattered, if only in terms of who stood to benefit under what label.

In this sense, tribal influence opened an opportunity to create a system of notable politics that played to the strengths of the second tier of traditional elites, swept into power by the revolution: the *quḍāa*, notable families of lower Yemen, large landowners of the Tihāma, and tribal leaders of the highlands. This was not quite a case of the bourgeoisie siding with the tribes against the revolution (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.268), but certainly an alliance of urban and rural traditional elites seeking to create a mode of politics that rewarded their cultural capital and networks against the threat of broader social change and political displacement. This alliance included many military officers. As Dresch (1993b, p.362) reminds us, army officers and shaykhs were often from the same families (see also 4.3.2).

Of course, not all tribal leaders pursued similar aims or sought an alliance with the republican ʿulamaʾ. But those that benefited most from the war and achieved lasting political power did. Shaykhs like Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm, ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar, ʾAmīn ʾAbū Rās or ʾAḥmad ʿAlī al-Maṭarī were of a similar age and outlook and more or less shared the politics of *quḍāa* like President al-ʾIryānī and ʾAḥmad Nuʿmān.[110] They had all been republican from the outset and saw themselves as progressive modernisers but were sceptical of the Egyptian presence and President al-Sallāl and opposed calls for radical change and mass mobilisation. Those that had adhered to the 'third force' led by the al-Wazīr family, pursuing similar aims in a different alliance, also did well.

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[110] Many of them, at least initially, also backed al-Ḥamdī's 'correctional movement' against al-ʾIryānī in 1974.

Two of the most prominent 'royalist' shaykhs, Qāsim Munāṣir of Khawlān bin ʿĀmir and Nājī al-Ghādir of Khawlān al-Ṭiyāl, though they benefited handsomely from the war itself, did far less well in the post-war period and were soon making overtures to the south for support against Ṣanaʿāʾ (Brandt, forthcoming; Dresch, 1993b, pp.261–262, 274). Men from tribal families who sought to build alliances with radical military officers or were attracted by the Movement of Arab Nationalists likewise lost out. Ultimately, as Fred Halliday argued looking back at the civil war in the early 1970s, the most powerful elements in the emerging YAR dominant coalition had reason to prevent the development of any non-tribal and non-confessional organisations. It was politics conducted in terms of tribes and religion that they knew and were good at (Halliday, 1974, p.132; see also: Burrowes, 1987, p.33; Dresch, 1990, p.276).[111]

From the September 1963 ʿAmrān conference, over smaller conferences in al-Rawḍa, Dhayfān, and Manākha, to the large conference at Khamr in May 1965, traditional ʿulamaʾ and tribal leaders demanded Egyptian withdrawal, a tribal military, more collegiate leadership, and a president with more traditional credentials (PAAA, B36 45, 23 Nov. 1963).[112] These demands were at odds with the more urban and mass-based visions of social transformation pursued by the Egyptian command, important parts of the Yemeni officer corps, and elements of the internationally-educated technocrats recruited into the new YAR government bodies. Beyond conference demands, tribal fighters were central to defeating an attempted military coup led by the resurgent Arab Nationalist Movement and other left-wing forces in 1968 (Burrowes, 1987, pp.31–32) and in 1970 thousands of Bakīl and Ḥāshid fighters threatened to march on Ṣanaʿāʾ, unless leftists ministers were removed from government (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12333, 3 Jun. 1970). External actors read the situation in the same terms. According to most interpretations, Saudi Arabia's decision to continue direct stipends to select shaykhs after the end of the war sought to strengthen conservative elements in the government and to avoid an alliance between the 'moderate republicans' and the left (Stookey, 1978, p.260).

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[111] They were helped by the Egyptians' nervousness about mass organisations, further explored in Section 4.4.

[112] For a detailed documentation of the Khamr Conference outcomes see: al-Wazīr, n.d.b.

4.3 Mobilising new violence specialists: The embattled rise of officer-politicians

Next to the mobilisation of tribal leaders, the civil war in Yemen prompted mass conscription and significant investment in the military. Yet, military growth was slow and uneven. Republican efforts to organise new constituencies for violence quickly stalled and rival factions dissolved new organisations, purged their leadership, and new units found themselves in pitched battles with one another. Except for rapid mobilisation at two specific junctures, reliance on external interveners and local violence specialists trumped attempts at creating new violence organisations during the war.

A first sub-section examines this mobilisation. We will see that the regular military expanded slowly, mass militias were rapidly disbanded, and the royalist armies remained small and weakly institutionalised. We would therefore expect few of the outcomes the model associates with creating new organisations for violence to play an important role. Yet, as 4.3.2 highlights, mobilisation occurred at a sufficient scale to draw military officers into the dominant coalition. However, the mismatch between expectations and outcomes, as well as the presence of deep divisions within the officer corps, calls into question the model's implicit assumption of homogeneity. While military officers generally benefitted from the war, officers with tribal ties did particularly well and, once again, the issue of politics in terms of alliances within and between elites looms large. In an extended confrontation, an alliance between tribal and military leaders on the one hand faced off against other elements of the officer corps, party militias, and the southern independence movement. Ultimately, and to no small degree because of the growing power of certain tribal leaders explored in Section 4.2 above, their alliance won out, contributing to a growing intertwining of tribal and military power in the last years of the civil war.

4.3.1   New institutions for violence

The republican military

Growing the military was an early concern of the new republican regime, but its attempts went into abeyance as Egyptian military involvement deepened, since Egyptian support appeared to secure the survival of the Republic irrespective of its military strength. As a result, the growth of the military was slow and uneven throughout the 1960s and leading Egyptian-backed politicians were more concerned with political loyalty in the armed forces and avoiding rival concentrations of power, than they were with creating an effective fighting force. As the model suggests, large-scale external military support provided the resources for a narrow, externally-dependent coalition; with the paradoxical result that significant

resources flowed to the officer corps and the war boosted their social standing and political aspirations, while the military as a whole experienced a much more ambivalent trajectory and few new constituencies were mobilised. The military remained small, and military service became a specialised niche for low status Zaydīs and tribesmen to access positions otherwise closed to them.

Contradictory and almost certainly inaccurate figures for the size of the military make it difficult to evaluate its development, particularly as it shaded into tribal units and paramilitaries with different degrees of formalisation. Moreover, there is no clear baseline, since the Imam's military split between republicans and royalists after the 1962 coup.[113] The elite *Fawj al-Badr* largely joined the royalists, while the *Fawj Ḥassan*, *Fawj ʿAbbās* and the tribal reserves of the *jaysh al-barānī* and the *jaysh al-difāʿī* largely dissolved (ʾAḥmad, 1992, pp.298–299; Nājī, 1988, pp.221, 248–255). Small units of the *niẓāmī* army stationed far from Ṣanaʿāʾ also largely joined the royalists or simply disbanded, while many stationed in or near larger cities rallied to the republic. All units experienced mass desertion and splits between officers.[114] These splits and dissolutions mean it is difficult to gauge the effective size of the republican military in the weeks after the overthrow of the Imam in September and October 1962. Estimates range between four and seven thousand soldiers, with real figures likely to be at the lower end.

One of the first measures of the new government after the overthrow of the Imam was a large increase in soldiers' salaries, at least doubling basic pay, as well as other improvements in enlisted men's standard of living (Schmidt, 1968, p.80). A further early measure, which like many of the grandiloquent decrees of the first months of the revolution was observed highly unevenly in practice, was the introduction of mandatory military service in January 1963. At the very least, the law suggests a desire to increase recruitment, even if the "casual method of compulsorily enrolling men into the Yemeni army as they were needed went on as before" (O'Ballance, 1971, p.107; see also: Nyrop, 1977, p.231). The impact of these measures is unclear, though it appears the republican military grew to about 7,000 soldiers by the

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[113] This account, like most others of the early YAR military, is heavily dependent on Sulṭān Nājī's (1988) study. According to former YAR officials and military commanders I spoke to, it is the most accurate.

[114] On the role of location and territorial control for defining political alignment generally see: Kalyvas, 2006.

beginning of 1965 and to approximately 10,000 by late 1967, when the Egyptian military withdrew from Yemen (Nājī, 1988, pp.237, 241).[115]

Ostensibly, the Egyptian command also invested heavily in building the Yemeni military. Egyptian archival sources suggest it provided some YR 100 million in direct support to Yemeni military procurement and wages between 1962 and 1967 (DWQ, 0078-044109, no date [Oct. 1967]). Based on likely estimates for the YAR budget, this accounts for about half of all Yemeni government expenditure over this period (IBRD, 1970, p.31) and for well over 90% of the defence budget.[116] In addition, Soviet weapons and funds were supplied via Egypt and up to 75 Soviet military experts worked directly with YAR troops (Orkaby, 2014, p.108).

These measures were not without effect, although fears of losing political control to an army too powerful or independent to manage effectively continuously limited Egyptian training efforts and investment. Initially deployed only in guard duties, the Yemeni military increasingly participated in combat and received Egyptian air support and weapons (Nājī, 1988, p.249). According to the German embassy in Taʿiz, republican troops were involved in fighting from summer 1964 onwards (PAAA, B130 2205A, 8 Jul. 1964; see also ʾAḥmad, 1992, p.301). Moreover, it noted:

> The republican military is making noticeable gains in its composition as well as its training and numbers. The units that have now returned from training in Egypt are elite troops and, in combination with some of the units trained in Yemen, promise to form the backbone of the army (PAAA, B130 2205A, 8 Jul. 1964).

In subsequent and previous years, German reporting made much the same point. As far as the German embassy could tell, between 1963 and 1966 the training and equipment of Yemeni troops had improved every year, year on year (PAAA, PAAA B36 45, 9 Oct. 1963; AV Neues Amt 1719, 1 Oct. 1965; 8 Oct. 1966).

However, these years also witnessed continuous efforts to limit the capabilities and independence of the Yemeni military. By some accounts, the Egyptians had "little interest in training the ragtag republicans" and saw the Yemeni army as "little more than a political

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[115] But compare different figures elsewhere in Nājī's own account (1988, p.227). Other claims range from an unlikely 3,000 soldiers (Knights, 2013, p.269) to 100,000 (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, pp.249, 60). See also: Jones, 2004, pp.20–21; O'Ballance, 1971, pp.171, 198–199.

[116] The annual budget available to the chief of staff in 1965 was approximately YR 6 million (Interview with Ḥamūd Baydar, 2016).

screen for the activities of the Egyptian military" (McGregor, 2006, p.260). This likely underestimates Egyptian training activities but captures the politics of the situation. When ʾAḥmad Nuʿmān's appointment as Prime Minister in April 1965 raised the spectre of greater republican independence, for instance, the Egyptian command refused to disburse funds that had been earmarked for the expansion of the Yemeni army and turned down a joint Soviet– East German offer to train and supply the Yemeni military and increase its strength to 18,000 (Nājī, 1988, pp.232–233; Porter, 1986, p.77).[117] Officers sent for training abroad were given desk jobs on their return (Halliday, 1974, p.115) and newly-trained Yemeni forces more generally were kept far from the front lines and the Egyptians did not allow (Soviet-trained) Yemeni pilots to fly combat missions. Many Yemenis blamed Egyptian decisions for the YAR's military weakness and believed them responsible for the military's enduring problem with desertions (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, clipping of the NZZ from 15 Feb. 1966).[118]

To the extent that they operated with Yemenis at all, the Egyptian military relied more on tribal fighters than the regular military. The Egyptian command rarely consulted with Yemeni commanders about planned operations (Juzaylān, 1977, p.153) and Egyptian staff officers in charge of Yemeni units limited the amounts and types of weapons they distributed to their troops (PAAA, B36 45, 18 Oct. 1963; see also: O'Ballance, 1971; Burrowes, 1987, 2010, pp.334–336). After the Khamr conference of 1965 and during the Egyptian withdrawal in 1967, Egyptian forces also took away heavy weapons from Yemeni troops and retreated from positions without notifying their republican allies, so that Yemeni units awoke to find that Egyptian garrisons had disappeared and previously defended positions were now vulnerable (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 29 Sep. 1967; 17 Jun. 1967; Alaini, 2004, pp.109–11).

Despite some growth and significant investment, the military throughout the war was in a sad state. "Equipment was poor, pay was in arrears, and men routinely sold their weapons" (Dresch 2000, 96). As the Egyptians prepared to leave Yemen, the Egyptian ambassador ʿAbd al-Raḥman ʾAḥmad Ṣalāḥ, noted morosely that "after 5 years […] we did not succeed in making the Yemenis able to defend themselves" (DWQ, 0078-044109, 08 Oct. 1962).

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[117] al-ʾIryānī refers to a Soviet offer to train and equip a 15,000 strong Yemeni army blocked by Nasser (al-ʾIryānī, 2013, pp.128-136).

[118] The Egyptians noted the same problem, but had a different diagnosis, blaming difficult living conditions and sectarian divisions for the fact that many units were only at half strength (ʾAḥmad, 1992, p.300).

Paradoxically, while the military thus remained relatively weak, officers did well out of the war. The new republican government, under Egyptian instruction, rapidly introduced a new system of ranks and training that differentiated much more sharply than previously between enlisted men and officers and between different functions. Attempts by a military-led regime in Egypt to remake the Yemeni military in its image, meant wage differentials between officers and enlisted men increased (Nājī, 1988, pp.254, 112–120) and officers found much greater attention lavished on their training. Three months after the overthrow of the Imam, the first Yemeni military academy was founded and for at least a decade remained the "largest and most exclusive building in Ṣanaʿāʾ" (El-Azzazi 1978, 115). Five cohorts completed the one-year training by the time of Egyptian withdrawal in 1967 and hundreds more trained in Egypt's own military academies (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.115; Interview with Talaʿat Musallam, 2017). In addition to an emphasis on technical skills, this was a political education, with a strong emphasis on officers' role as the vanguard of Arab nationalism and modernisation. Officers gained new prestige, skills, status, and political aspirations. (O'Ballance, 1971, pp.86, 199; Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.60; Douglas, 1987, pp.222–223, 233; El Attar, 1964, pp.81–82).

Underscoring the growing political importance of the officer corps and the relative irrelevance of the military's fighting strength, President al-Sallāl, with Egyptian support, spearheaded major purges of the officer corps, particularly after a tense stand-off with the government of Ḥassan al-ʿAmrī over the summer of 1966. The dismissal of more than 40 officers on 6 October 1966 marked the opening gambit in a month of mass arrests, dismissals, and executions (PAAA, B36 244, 16 Oct. 1966). In the last week of October 1966 alone, al-Sallāl's supporters and the Egyptian command made more than 2,000 arrests and suspended as many as 200 officers, including the chief of staff, the military commanders of Taʿiz, ʾIbb, Ṣaʿda, and al-Bayḍāʾ, and the commanders of the paratroopers, the armoured corps, the artillery, and parts of the infantry (Schmidt, 1968, pp.283–284; Nājī, 1988, pp.234–235; PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 16 Oct. 1966). The Egyptian command also fretted over Baʿathists and NLF sympathisers in the officer corps, worried about royalist infiltration and the presence of officer-shaykhs hostile to the Egyptian presence (DWQ 0078-044109, 08 Oct.1968; Nājī, 1988, p.224; Ferris, 2012, p.175), and generally kept a close watch on the officer corps (DWQ, 0078-044111, 29 Aug. 1968). Egyptian advisors also agitated for Yemeni officers to oppose political decisions the Egyptian government disagreed with, with a former Prime Minister alleging that Egyptian advisers were inciting a coup after the Khamr conference, for instance (Alaini, 2004, p.114).

The divisions in the officer corps revealed by and exacerbated by these purges meant that after Egyptian withdrawal, agreement in theory that the military needed strengthening was not easily translated into practice. Pitched battles between different units and between tribal fighters and the regular military over resources and especially weapons highlight that the question of which commanders would benefit from more troops and new weapons was sufficiently contentious that the military itself came to block moves for military expansion. Splits between 'radicals' and 'moderates' rent the armed forces, as officers feared troop increases and better equipment would benefit internal rivals (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12333, 17 Jul. 1970). "The army remained extremely fragmented and virtually at war with itself, less a unified and hierarchical instrument of the state than a collection of nearly autonomous and mutually suspicious units each with primary loyalty to some tribal grouping, locality or powerful personality" (Burrowes, 1987, p.51).

Mass militias: The National Guard and the Popular Resistance Forces

Next to the slow and conflicted growth of the regular military, the civil war was marked by two periods of rapid, almost panicked mass mobilisation in response to existential threats to the new YAR. The very different process of mobilisation during these two brief instances in 1962-1963 and 1967-1968, when external support was not available on a comparable scale, underscores the decisive role of external, specifically Egyptian, intervention in shaping the slow growth of the military and the political role of the officer corps.

The model suggests that pressures of civil war and the need to increase selective violence can in some cases put a check on recruitment and organising strategies in the armed forces that exclusively prioritise political loyalty, creating incentives that favour institutionalisation and professionalization. Indeed, when external troops were not available, the need for organised violence trumped concerns over its political control, resulting in the recruitment of mass militias and a muting of army purges and factional fighting. As suggested in the model, this dynamic *can* be operational in civil war and the experience of Yemen suggests how powerfully transformative even short instances of this dynamic can be, as the mass militias and new military units built in three-month bursts of forward panic, twice cast long shadows. Only through years of purges, selective dissolutions, confrontations, and institutional tinkering were these bodies neutralised.

The first round of such mobilisation saw the creation of a National Guard, disproportionally recruited from Shāfiʿī areas. With the regular army melting away and the Egyptian deployment in its early stages, the new government made a plea for volunteers for a National Guard (*al-ḥāris al-waṭanī*), designed to take on the functions of the *jaysh al-barānī* and *jaysh*

al-difāʿī, which had been the hardest-hit by desertions. Unlike the regular military and the tribal forces it replaced, the National Guard recruited predominantly from lower Yemen and from among exiles and immigrants to Aden, thousands of whom rushed from south to north to join (Lackner, 1984, p.37). They "vaguely came under military command and took on a loose military form" (O'Ballance, 1971, p.76).[119]

The National Guard served in guard duties, as a border patrol, and played an important role in early fighting against royalist tribal levies. According to one of the only available published accounts that explicitly discusses the National Guard, it was armed largely with rifles and mortars, although some units also had access to artillery and armoured cars. National Guard units were stationed, amongst others, in Ṣanaʿāʾ and Taʿiz, the towns of Ḥarīb and Māʾrib, and in the territory of the Banū Ḥushaysh and Banū Ḥārith (Nājī, 1988, p.258). Much of the details of the formation and size of the National Guard, as well as its dissolution in 1964 or 1965 remain in the dark, as do the details of its role and leadership. In the telling of royalist and third-way supporters, it was a highly politicised force, remembered in Northern Yemen for stealing and looting and crackdowns on suspected royalists (Interview with Qāsim al-Wazīr, 2017; Interviews with ʿAbbās al-Mukhtafī and ʾAḥmad al-Sayyānī, 2016).

Despite its initial widespread use, there is a common trope that the fighting strength of the National Guard was highly circumscribed. National Guard troops were sent to the front with minimal training, and, at least according to several of my interviewees, they there faced vastly superior tribal enemies. However, the story goes, royalist tribal fighters had mercy on the hapless National Guard members, confiscating their weapons and sending them back to their units unharmed (Interview with Qāsim al-Wazīr, 2017, Interviews with ʾAḥmad al-Sayyānī and ʿAbbās al-Mukhtafī, 2016). Similarly, the German embassy noted: "The Republic has not had much success in creating a modern army. In particular, the fighting ability of the army is low, largely because recruitment has, for political reasons, focused on the southern part of the country" (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 26 Apr. 1965).[120]

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[119] They also gained employment and the National Guard may have been an attempt to create a mass constituency for the revolution by providing immediate benefits to young men from the lowlands (Interview with ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, 2015; O'Ballance, 1971, p.76).

[120] The nomenclature of the militaries is confused and inconsistent. Since the regular military was more Zaydī dominated and recruited from the highlands, it is likely that the embassy meant the National Guard.

The second instance of mass Shāfiʿī mobilisation occurred in late 1967 and early 1968 when Egyptian withdrawal appeared to put the future of the Republic in question, particularly around the 70 day siege of Ṣanaʿāʾ, when royalists seemed on the cusp of winning the civil war. During this period, the republican leadership ceased political purges of the army, relied on (ideologically) suspect commanders, mobilised thousands of volunteers, and formed popular militias in Ṣanaʿāʾ, Taʿiz, and al-Ḥudayda. These measures were critical for defending the capital but set the scene for new divisions in the officer corps, as an alliance of rising military and militia officers sought political change once the siege had been weathered.

During the siege, General Ḥassan al-ʿAmrī led a 'war government' and played a significant role in organising the population of Ṣanaʿāʾ into a militia, creating a Popular Resistance Force (PRF) of approximately 10,000 from among Ṣanaʿāʾ 's 56,000 inhabitants, issued with Soviet-supplied weapons (Halliday, 1974, pp.121–122; O'Ballance, 1971, pp.192–193).[121] The PRF was considered a force of the radical left politically, and Deffarge and Troeller report that PRF fighters in Ṣanaʿāʾ represented a new group of urban poor, whose ties to village or tribe had weakened due to migration (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.263). The Movement of Arab Nationalists (MAN - *ḥarakat al-qawmiyyin al-ʿarab*) became the dominant force within the Ṣanaʿāʾ PRF politically, especially as veterans of the southern independence struggle reinforced it during the siege. At least 600 members of the southern National Liberation Front (NLF), which was affiliated with the all-Yemen MAN, were airlifted into the besieged city and on 22 January 1968 the South Yemen Army and the NLF also attacked royalist positions and supply lines in Bayḥān, at the border between North and South (O'Ballance, 1971, p.195).[122] The NLF and the MAN also took the lead in organising PRFs in al-Ḥudayda, Taʿiz and other towns and gained popularity among the commando and paratrooper brigades of the regular army (Burrowes 1987, 29-30). By the end of the siege, the MAN led a significant political movement opposed to compromise with the royalists, demanding a stronger regular army, the expansion and regularisation of the PRFs, and greater representation of Shāfiʿīs in the military. The MAN may also have been involved in peasant organising around Taʿiz, ʾIbb, and Radāʿ, where sharecroppers arrested several landlords (Halliday, 1974, pp.121–122). After

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[121] Ṣanaʿāʾ population figures from: Troin, 1995.

[122] On the relationship between NLF and MAN see: Brehony, 2017, pp. 15-18 and Lackner, 1984, p.55. According to Dresch (1993, p.274 note 25), southern fighters in the PRF were predominantly former FLOSY fighters who had fled from the south when the NLF consolidated power.

the end of the siege, al-ʿAmrī, al-ʾIryānī and other centrists in the government became increasingly concerned about the loyalty of the PRFs and the influence of the MAN and NLF.

The royalist military

Like the initiatives that gave rise to the National Guard and Popular Resistance Forces, there is one more effort at organising violence specialists that has been largely written-out of the story of the civil war in Yemen: the creation of royalist armies.

Initially the royalist armies resembled large bodyguards for their commanders, each several hundred strong, with shifting composition as fighters drifted in and out of service. Military action by the royalists therefore required building coalitions of tribesmen for each operation. In the course of the war, however, the armies around the Princes became both larger and more organised (O'Ballance, 1971, pp.110, 141). Increasingly, there was a distinction between royalist soldiers and royalist tribesmen: soldiers received regular monthly pay of 15 MT from the Imam through their local commander, were equipped with elements of a uniform, received training, including in the use of the royalists' limited stock of heavy weapons, left their home village to serve, and, at least in the most organised of the royalist armies, had to commit for a full year of service (Jones, 2004, p.197). By contrast, tribesmen were much more territorially rooted, generally remained in their village and were called up only for specific operations, especially when their village was threatened (Smiley, 1975, p.147). Mercenaries played an important role in training this emerging royalist military. French mercenaries conducted most of the training of royalist regulars and British mercenaries aided communication, coordination, and the use of artillery and mines (Hart-Davis, 2011).

Although it is unlikely that the royalist armies reached the 50,000 regulars claimed by some sources (e.g. Smiley, 1975, p.181), the royalists were able to mobilise several thousand 'regulars' in the battle of Ṣanaʿāʾ, in addition to a much larger contingent of tribesmen (O'Ballance 1971, 191). Thus, by 1968, the royalist military constituted a significant armed force directly under Princes' command and reduced the royalists' reliance on coalitions of tribal leaders to conduct operations. Yet, this military infrastructure rapidly fell apart after the siege of Ṣanaʿāʾ failed, when Saudi Arabian aid ceased. The armies dwindled rapidly as the prospect of victory faded and the salaries from the Imam dried up (O'Ballance 1971, 200). Integration of royalist fighters into the republican military was not a demand during reconciliation and although leading royalists became governors and district level officials, potentially offering former fighters opportunities to receive stipends, these were not organised along the lines of the royalist regulars.

4.3.2   Outcomes

Given the generally slow and fitful growth of the regular military, the much more marked consolidation of an officer corps, and the aborted instances of mass mobilisation, how did the role of officers in the political settlement develop? The model suggests that military expansion extends access to government rents to new groups, but it clearly did so unevenly. Officers, granted privileges and pay raises, were partially drawn into the dominant coalition. Yet, those officers purged from the military or in charge of National Guard or PRF units clearly benefited far less.

Who, specifically, was mobilised in new organisations mattered a great deal, calling into question the implicit assumption of a homogenous officer corps – or the homogenising impact of being a member of the officer corps – of the model and the literature it draws on. Instead, divisions within the officer corps and alliances between some officers and other centres of power loomed large, pointing towards the importance of political alliances in shaping the impact of this sort of mobilisation on state formation.

Officers' rise and inclusion in the settlement

The German embassy concluded in 1965 that it was "officers and tribal leaders" who held real power in the Yemen Arab Republic (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 26 Apr. 1965) and later that every Yemeni government needs the support of the army (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12333, 26 Jul 1971). Such an assessment of officers' standing and military support under the Imamate is almost unthinkable. The officer corps gained significant political influence and even became a central pillar of the dominant coalition during the civil war.

At the outset of the war there were some 400 officers in the regular military. Some of these officers were among the immediate beneficiaries of the Imam's overthrow, as they gained political office and collected significant riches from the homes and palaces of the Imam, the Ḥamīd al-Dīn, and other leading *sayyid* families in the first weeks of the revolution (Interview with ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, 2015). As we saw above, officers also benefited from increased salaries, Egyptian training, and new unit and rank structures that differentiated more clearly between officers and enlisted men.

Officers also benefited from the general increase in military budgets during the civil war and after 1970. Government statistics are spotty at best during the 1960s, but for the years for which information is available between 1966 and 1970, the military budget increased as a share of total expenditure from 44% in fiscal year 1966/67 to 49% in 1969/70. Although the military budget line included "substantial but undetermined payments to tribes" (IBRD, 1970,

p.32),[123] the military was still by some margin the largest recipient of government funds. After briefly falling after the reconciliation that ended the war, spending on the military rapidly rebounded to 45% of the total government budget in 1973/74 and 50% in 1974/75 (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.181). Moreover, during the war military salaries were prioritised throughout a series of fiscal crises, generating growing divisions between military officers, who were paid regularly, and civilian bureaucrats, who were not (Nājī, 1988, pp.221–222).

Officers were being drawn into the political settlement as beneficiaries of the new status quo and had almost complete discretion to dispense these large sums as they saw fit, since the armed forces enjoyed an "almost autonomous status" within the state apparatus (Alaini, 2004, p.203). While limited budgeting and accountability mechanisms were in place for civilian ministries, the ministry of defence received block grants for which it owed no reckoning. Civilian control of the military was tenuous under President al-ʾIryānī and disappeared under President Ḥamdī, himself a military officer. In fact, the rise of military officers as Presidents of the new republic, from al-Sallāl, over al-Ḥamdī, ʾAḥmad bin Ḥusayn al-Ghashmī, ʿAbd al-Karīm ʿAbd Allah al-ʿArashī, and ʿAlī ʿAbd Allah Ṣāliḥ itself underscores the rising military role – as does the fact that officers were well-represented in cabinet roles throughout the war. Military officers also gained political representation at lower levels of the state as wartime changes to local administration paved the way for the promotion of officers to positions of civilian responsibility and the privileging of military skills in wartime strengthened their hand vis-à-vis civilian politicians (Interview with Muḥsin al-ʿAynī, 2016; El-Azzazi, 1978, p.148). In addition, officers were able to leverage their position near the apex of formal power to tap extra-legal sources of income: the civil war period witnessed the beginning of officers' role in smuggling and cemented their ability to demand bribes (Swagman, 1988a, p.48).

Alliances and the long shadow of mass mobilisation

Commanders of the mass militias, who were first integrated into and then purged from the regular army, had a markedly different experience of the war than did military officers who allied with tribal leaders and found themselves increasingly at the pinnacle of state power. This suggests that officers' integration into the political settlement was more partial, uneven,

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[123] Payments to tribes accounted for around 20% of total expenditure in later figures (Nyrop, 1977, p.197)

and political than the model readily captures. Deep internal divisions, framed at the time in terms of leftist and 'moderate' interests, and which overlapped to a significant extent with divisions between upper and lower Yemen and between Shāfiʿīs and Zaydīs, structured the integration of military officers into the political settlement in ways not foreseen by the model. It is, perhaps, not so much targeted violence that is in short supply in internal conflicts, as the model – based on insights from the existing literature – would have it, but violence reliably deployable by specific powerful actors.

It was thus of central importance who the new actors were that were being brought into the settlement: their family links, villages of origin, tribal connections, and personal politics. As a result of the continued salience of such divisions, alliances within the officer corps and between officers and other violence specialists loomed large in determining which officers gained entry into the dominant coalition – and what that coalition itself looked like. Given the large increase in the power of tribal leaders traced in Section 4.2, it was, unsurprisingly, officers able to build alliances with tribal leaders who eventually won out as tribal and military power intertwined. In addition, tribal leaders who had fought for the republic received honorary military commissions during President al-ʾIryānī's tenure (Burrowes, 1987, p.84). Many of the most powerful officers at the end of the war came from tribal families and some headed military units composed of members of their tribe, sometimes stationed within the territory of their tribe as well.

Based on individual trajectories related in interviews, it appears that many of the officers who served in the National Guard became officers in the regular military after further training (Interview with ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, 2015). The mass recruitment of Shāfiʿīs into the National Guard changed the composition of the officer corps, as Shāfiʿī officers moved through the ranks and came to control important units, in particular, the elite paratroopers and special forces (al-ṣāʿiqa) in which clientelist recruitment was weak and political dismissals rare (Alaini, 2004, pp.141–142).[124] Yet, Shāfiʿī officers came up against a glass-ceiling in an officer corps dominated by Zaydīs, and Shāfiʿī officers were disproportionally represented among those

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[124] Shāfiʿī officers in these units were also important actors in plans for the coup against absent President al-Sallāl in November 1967. Planned at the house of Shaykh ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar, the coup went ahead once planners were assured of the support of the paratrooper and special forces units and elements of the presidential guards – a rare moment of alliance between leftist and tribally-aligned officers (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, pp.145–147).

purged, killed, or exiled in the course of the intra-republican power struggle after the siege of Ṣanaʿāʾ. Branded as 'radicals,' who sought ties to the new socialist regime in Aden, they challenged plans for reconciliation with the royalists and the growing ascendancy of the 'moderate' tribal-military alliance. Contestation of power within the officer corps led to pitched battles in al-Ḥudayda in March 1968 and in Ṣanaʿāʾ in August 1968.

Fighting in Ḥudayda erupted over a Soviet weapons shipment. Described by those hostile to the left as a "narrowly foiled NLF plot" to seize Soviet weapons at al-Ḥudayda (O'Ballance, 1971, p.198), it appears to have been a plan the Soviets were in on. While the Soviets sought to deliver weapons to the al-Ḥudayda Popular Resistance Forces, regular military forces under the orders of the governor of al-Ḥudayda, Shaykh Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm, and a Ḥāshid tribal militia under the command of Mujāhid ʾAbū Shawārib, wrested control of the shipment from the al-Ḥudayda PRF. Ḥāshid tribal forces ultimately made-off with the heavy weapons, including anti-tank rockets, apparently with the blessing of the Prime Minister, Ḥassan al-ʿAmrī (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.164). Fighting in al-Ḥudayda was followed by a purge of the army and Popular Resistance Forces, in which many officers suspected of sympathies with the NLF and other left-wing movements were arrested. Virtually all of those arrested were Shāfiʿīs (Burrowes, 1987, p.30; O'Ballance, 1971, p.198; Stookey, 1978, p.253).

During the summer, tensions simmered as the MAN formed a new (illegal) political party and groups close to the southern NLF expanded their activities around Taʿiz. At the same time, conservative politicians and tribal leaders met to draw up lists of leftists to remove from the military command in July and deployed additional tribal fighters to Ṣanaʿāʾ from al-ʿUṣaymāt, Baraṭ, Sufyān, ʿAmrān, ʿAyāl Surayḥ, as well as Hamdān and Banū Ḥārith (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.161).

The conflict again came to a head in August 1968. After several commanders with leftist sympathies in the army publicly questioned the policies of Prime Minister Ḥassan al-ʿAmrī, al-ʿAmrī launched a new round of purges, arresting opponents including the popular Chief of Staff (ʾarkān al-jaysh), ʿAbd al-Raqīb ʿAbd al-Wahāb Nuʿmān, who was also the commanding officer of the ṣāʿiqa special forces. In response, the special forces mutinied, joined by paratroopers, the artillery, and parts of the infantry and supported at the highest levels of the military command by Major General Ḥamūd al-Jayfī. Fighting raged for more than two days in Ṣanaʿāʾ, but was interrupted mid-way to face-off an attempted royalist advance. Nonetheless, it eclipsed in intensity most of the battles during the civil war and, according to contemporary accounts, almost 2,000 people were killed over the two days of fighting and many buildings were heavily damaged or completely destroyed, including a mosque that buried 72 people

when it collapsed under artillery fire. Shells also hit the houses of Shaykh Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm, Shaykh al-ʾAḥmar and other tribal leaders. The mutiny was ultimately defeated when tribal fighters from Nihm, Banū Maṭar, and the core Ḥāshid territories joined the battle.[125]

The 'August events,' as they are known, were followed by a new wave of arrests and dismissals in the armed forces, a banning of trade unions, and a crackdown on political parties. Yet, because the losing officers were almost all Shāfiʿī and the al-ʿAmrī government worried about fuelling opposition to the republican regime in lower Yemen, ultimately all officers directly involved in the fighting, 24 in total, were exiled to Algeria. Other leftists fled to Aden and the government dissolved the Popular Resistance Forces (Burrowes, 1987, pp.30–31; Peterson, 1982, pp.102–103, 130; al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.176).[126]

The political alliance between tribal leaders, the ʿulamaʾ of the Free Yemeni movement, and military officers drawn from similar backgrounds thus secured their ascendancy as the war came to a close. The above discussion highlights, on the one hand, the long shadow of mass-mobilisation. The two instances of rapid and mass-based military mobilisation at the beginning of the civil war and in late 1967 and early 1968 left a powerful and long-lasting institutional legacy that threatened to break the near-monopoly of Zaydī and especially tribal fighters in the armed forces and took nearly a year of pitched military and political battles to begin undoing. Similar divisions continued to structure the officer corps into the 1970s. At the same time, the deep divisions within the officer corps highlight the central importance of political loyalty for leaders seeking to mobilise new violence specialists, calling into question the idea of a homogenous officer corps or a strongly homogenising impact of becoming an officer. Instead, tribal connections and loyalties defined, in important measure, divisions in the military and the officer corps.

This did not amount to a tribal takeover of the armed forces, as has sometimes been suggested (e.g. Burrowes, 1987, p.51). Close observers of Yemen's tribes have argued that to see tribal leaders as being in control of the military is to get things mostly backwards: tribal

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[125] For accounts sympathetic to the moderates see: Stookey, 1978, p.253; Alaini, 2004, p.150; al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.174. For accounts closer to the radical perspective see: Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.267 and Muṭahar, 1984, pp.201-205.

[126] ʿAbd al-Raqīb ʿAbd al-Wahāb returned to Ṣanaʿāʾ in January 1969 demanding the release of imprisoned members of his former unit and of labour leaders remaining in prison. He was killed in armed clashes, prompting several days of further violence (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, pp.269–270).

figures who rose to prominence during the civil war like Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm, ʾAḥmad al-Ghashmī, or whole tribes who did well out of the war like Hamdān and Sanḥān, derived their growing importance in tribal affairs from their preponderance within the military, rather than vice versa (Dresch, 2000, p.149).[127] Military positions could boost individuals' standing in their tribe and many high-ranking officers, even where they had a tribal background, were not from leading families within their tribes.

In this way, the civil war not only changed the role of tribes in the dominant coalition but militarised the tribes and ensured the military remained tribalized, recasting the foundations of coercive power. In light of the growing resources at the disposal of tribal shaykhs as the war wore on, alliances with tribal leaders and their militias became indispensable for officers. Yet, tribal leaders without strong linkages into the military sought to keep it small, opposing, for instance, plans to increase the size of the republican military to 12,000 in line with the demands of the Khamr conference, which they had helped to pass (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 10 Jul. 1965). Not all tribal leaders sought alliances with officers, nor did all officers seek to work with tribal leaders – as we saw, both the tribes and the officer corps were riven by divisions. But officers with tribal connections became indispensable for the functioning of the military and tribal leaders with military connections gained an advantage in tribal politics. Both benefited handsomely from this arrangement and became central to the dominant coalition of the YAR.[128]

4.4 Just no good at violence? The rise and fall of traders

Prominent traders were among the thousands who returned to North Yemen from Aden and diaspora communities further afield after 26 September 1962. Other joined them when the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was established in 1967, fearing socialist reforms.[129] Arriving in the North with significant physical and cultural capital, and sometimes with ties to the Free Officers or such pivotal republican politicians as al-Zubayrī, Nuʿmān, and al-ʾIryānī through the Free Yemeni Movement, they appeared poised to play a decisive role in

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[127] See also: Burrowes, 2009, "Abu Luhum, Sinan."

[128] This reflects a broader intertwining of old and new sources of social power, explored further in 5.2.

[129] They were joined between 1970 and 1972 by further Yemeni diaspora groups fleeing political unrest and xenophobia in Djibouti and Addis Ababa (Chaudhry, 1997, p.128).

YAR politics. Yet, though they rose rapidly in prominence initially and were well-represented in the first several revolutionary cabinets, traders' influence waned as the war wore on.

A first sub-section, 4.4.1 traces the initial rise to prominence and subsequent loss of influence of commercial elites from lower Yemen in the YAR. 4.4.2 explores these developments through the lens of the model, whose emphasis on external intervention points us in the right direction. The Egyptian presence can convincingly account for much of the decline in merchants' influence. However, the model leaves unexplored the way commercial elites may be well placed to disproportionally benefit from the economic opportunities provided by large-scale foreign intervention, even as it may tend to reduce their political influence, as well as the way in which interveners' specific economic and political agendas shaped the effects of intervention on commercial elites.

4.4.1   The rise and fall of traders

Traders began the war on the margins of the political settlement. Concerns over the security of their investments, heavy restrictions on trade, and royal monopolies limited opportunities for commerce under the Imam. As a result, a large majority of Yemen's commercial elite, largely Shāfiʿīs hailing from lower Yemen, became what Kiren Aziz Chaudhry has called an 'absentee bourgeoisie.' They moved their business beyond the Imam's writ to Aden and other hubs of the Indian Ocean trade, from where they played an important role in fomenting opposition to the Imam (see 3.1.4). Many of them returned after the September revolution in 1962 and more followed after the NLF takeover of Aden in 1967. Initially, during the first half of the 1960s, they played a central role in republican politics.

The first republican government included two merchants from Taʿiz, ʿAbd al-Ghanī Muṭahar and ʿAlī Muḥammad Saʿūd and a third, ʿAbd al-Qawī Ḥāmīm, became a member of the nominal executive, the Revolutionary Council (Stookey, 1978, p.227). This government also abolished trading monopolies and, in an initial burst of enthusiasm, the first months of the war witnessed a large influx of migrants and capital from Aden, to the extent that the new YAR government began, on 16 October 1962, to appeal to Yemenis in Aden originally hailing from the North not to return home (O'Ballance, 1971, p.72). This initial influx included many of the wealthiest trading families, like Hāʾil Saʿīd, al-Thābit, and al-Shaybānī, who all opened offices in al-Ḥudayda and sometimes Taʿiz and Ṣanaʿāʾ, and invested in industry, storage and transportation (Chaudhry, 1997, pp.127–129). Called upon to contribute to military mobilisation for the new republic, traders recruited and paid for the supply of several of the newly mobilised National Guard units (al-Shamīrī, n.d.).

Repatriated capital and the growing Egyptian deployment sparked an economic boom in lower Yemen. According to contemporary journalists (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.269), the war:

> a ouvert le Yémen au monde extérieur, développé les ports et les voies de communication, chassé l'Imam qui avait monopolisé le commerce, et déversé des sommes fabuleuses sur ce pays, totalement privé de biens de consommation extérieurs.

Trade through Ḥudayda port picked up sharply after 1962. Besides increased demand for armaments and supplies for the war effort, tens of thousands of Egyptian soldiers, with their campaign bonuses, and tribesmen brought into the cash economy through wartime stipends, increased demand for consumer goods. In addition, most building supplies were imported, as Şanaʿāʾ, Taʿiz, and al-Ḥudayda experienced an aid and investment-fuelled building boom (Dresch, 2000, p.94). Returnees pushed older Şanaʿāʾ i wholesalers out of business and a Shāfiʿī commercial class centred on Taʿiz took shape in the first months of the war (Dresch, 2000, p.123).

Returnees, or rather the capital they brought with them, also gained a dominant position in Yemen's nascent banking sector, with many active as money changers and in processing remittances. Moreover, the large trading families dominated the private capital invested in the newly formed Yemen Bank for Reconstruction and Development (YBRD). The YBRD had a mixed capital and ownership structure, with 49% of investment from private investors. Long the only bank in Yemen, it combined some central bank functions with investment in business and infrastructure. While relatively few returning businessmen, with the notable exception of Hāʾil Saʿīd ʾAnʿam and the Thābit brothers, invested in manufacturing or industry, by the end of the civil war there were nonetheless 351 'industrial' firms with 5 or more employees, together employing 6,706 workers (Chaudhry, 1997, p.129).

Despite this expansion in influence in the first months of the war, Shāfiʿīs in general and trading interests in particular were gradually side-lined in formal politics. While in the first cabinets of the YAR, the overall balance of Shāfiʿīs and Zaydīs was about even, by late 1963 Shāfiʿīs held a minority of one-third of the posts in the cabinet, many of them less sensitive or peripheral (Stookey, 1978, p.234). By late 1963, several authors identified "rising Shāfiʿī discontent" in the face of a return to Zaydī dominance in government, growing financial resources devoted to paying for tribal support, and perceived neglect of Shāfiʿī areas and interests (O'Ballance, 1971, p.115). The political influence of lowland traders waned further due to the dissolution of the National Guard in the mid-60s, the splits within the military during the 'August events' discussed above, and the cementing of Northern and Zaydī

preponderance in formal government, brought about by the inclusion of leading royalists during reconciliation.

4.4.2   Explaining the fall: violence and external rents

The mechanisms the model associated with external intervention account for the gradual side-lining of commercial elites over the course of the war. After an initial period in which the new revolutionary government actively courted returnees and their investments, domestic capital became irrelevant for the civil war because Egyptian support obviated the need for domestic investment and taxation. Unlike officers, with whom the Egyptian command built alliances and on whom it lavished resources despite a sometimes difficult relationship, Egyptian planning actively sought to undermine traders. However, even as it actively undermined their political influence, Egyptian intervention offered economic opportunities from which commercial elites benefited disproportionally. Paradoxically, Egyptian troops stationed in Yemen were an important market and leading traders made fortunes catering to their needs.

Deep and persistent budget deficits covered by foreign funds characterised the political economy of the republican state from its inception (compare Chapter 5). Egypt channelled significant revenue to Yemen from the beginning of its intervention. In addition to the direct support to Yemeni military procurement and wages discussed above, the Egyptian government invested in development projects and spent perhaps $500 million on wages, supplies, and equipment for the up to 70,000 Egyptian soldiers stationed in Yemen. The Soviet Union, which provided military equipment as well as infrastructure development also provided substantial aid, as did the People's Republic of China, the United States, and, to a lesser extent, smaller members of the rival Cold War blocks and the non-aligned states (O'Ballance, 1971, p.176; Badeeb, 1986, p.63).[130] After the war, Saudi Arabia took on the role of the YAR's main external patron. In this context, the generation of government revenues became primarily about tapping into external flows of rent. Taxing companies or trade, and hence making bargains with domestic capital, played almost no role.[131]

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[130] East and West Germany, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia also provided significant development projects and Kuwait invested heavily in school and hospital building. Algeria and Syria supported the Republican military after Egyptian withdrawal (Stookey, 1978, p.248).

[131] Nationalisation in South Yemen and the collapse of trade through Aden Port after 1967 also hurt traders.

At the same time, as Egyptian policy-makers came to grips with the idea that the intervention in Yemen was going to last some time, they sought to use the captive Yemeni market to shore up import-substitution attempts back home and minimise the economic fallout of the increasingly expensive intervention in Yemen. This meant pushing private Yemeni businesses out of sectors of interest to Egyptian state enterprises and coordinating carefully, since "Yemen is a new market that needs care in entering" (DWQ, 0078-044113, 7 Aug. 1965).

In 1964 and 1965, several large joint companies were created, each with 49% Egyptian (government) capital and 51% Yemeni capital.[132] By early 1965, these companies were the main players in steel, cement, pharmaceuticals, petroleum products, cotton processing, and cigarettes (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 26 Apr. 1965). The pharmaceutical company distributed Egyptian-made medicine in Yemen, the petroleum company exported and re-exported petroleum products from Egypt to Yemen, and a company for 'cigarettes and matches' imported Egyptian-made tobacco products (DWQ 0078-044109, 18 Oct 1967). They enjoyed monopolies or near-monopolies in lucrative parts of the consumer market and the joint salt company, founded to exploit deposits at al-Ṣalīf, was long the only commercially viable Yemeni firm producing for export (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, n.d. [Jan. 1970]).

These companies were, for the most part, highly profitable, with Egyptian records revealing a profit margin of 40% for the pharmaceutical company, for instance. They were also firmly under Egyptian control, despite the Egyptian government nominally being the minority shareholder. The founding document for the joint petroleum company, for instance, specified that the director general, the technical director and the main technical experts were to be Egyptian (DWQ 0078-044110, no date [Memorandum by Ḥasan Bulbul on joint companies in Yemen]). These joint companies were also, as a rare glimpse into the order books of the Egyptian 'Arab Company for External Trade' highlights, major customers for Egyptian cement and steel as well as industrial equipment either produced in, or purchased from, Egypt (DWQ 0078-044109, 18 Oct. 1967). Hence, they were in important measure responsible for Egyptian exports to Yemen growing thirty-fold between 1963 and 1967 to a total value of E£ 3 million

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[132] These joint Yemeni-Egyptian companies were the Yemen Foreign Trade Company, Yemen Petroleum Company, Yemen National Tobacco and Matches Company, Yemen Pharmaceutical Company and the Yemen Bank for Reconstruction and Development (DWQ, 0078-044110, 18 Sep. 1969; no date [Memorandum by Ḥasan Bulbul on joint companies in Yemen]; and 0078-044111, 29 Sep. 1968; see also: Burrowes, 1987, p.25; PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 26 Apr. 1965.

per year (DWQ, 0078-044109, 8 Oct. 1967).[133] The joint companies deepened YAR dependence on goods, credit, and support flowing from the UAR (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 26 Apr. 1965).

This economic policy had the effect of marginalising the lowland traders. According to German analysis, it was not the war that caused low investment by Yemeni businesses in manufacturing, agriculture, and commercial infrastructure, since it was not directly affecting life in the commercial centres of al-Ḥudayda, Taʿiz, Mukhā, or ʾIbb. Instead, Egyptian-inspired state socialism and particularly the public companies that were being strengthened at the expense of domestic capital accounted for Yemeni businesses' reluctance to invest (PAAA, AV Neues 1719, 26 Apr. 1965). Egyptian development aid was likewise channelled through Egyptian contractors – for instance, to asphalt Ṣanaʿāʾ's streets, the Egyptian command brought in the Nile Company and Egyptian workers (PAAA, B36 45, 9 Oct. 1963).

Although Yemeni traders were thus pushed out of important parts of the domestic market and the Egyptian command ensured that Yemeni enterprises were built to rely on Egyptian products, the Egyptian intervention also opened up new and lucrative opportunities. Egyptian soldiers received a campaign bonus at least equal to their base salary, paid in Yemeni Riyal. The fact that the Riyal was maintained at an artificially low exchange rate to the Egyptian Pound to help offset Egyptian costs, created strong incentives for soldiers to spend the campaign bonus in situ. This was all the more true as the Egyptian government provided soldiers with tax-free allowances to import luxury and consumer goods at a time of acute shortages in Egypt. This "created a system tantamount to state-sanctioned smuggling, complete with special port facilities for the handling of duty-free goods brought home aboard military transports at government expense" (Ferris, 2012, p.203). The markets of al-Ḥudayda, Taʿiz and Ṣanaʿāʾ came to be flooded with consumer goods that were heavily rationed or unavailable in Egypt, including transistor radios, televisions, wrist watches, cameras, refrigerators, washing machines, gas stoves, thermos bottles, pumps, and generators. Few of

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[133] Egyptian exports to the YAR increased from next to nothing in 1963 to $ 3.8 million in 1966 and to $8 million in 1967. This made the UAR the largest trading partner for the YAR in both years for which data is available (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1970). However, the Egyptian embassy estimated that Egyptian profits from trade with Yemen had reached only approximately £ 150,000 per year by mid-1967 and dismissed its value as, "equivalent to the expenses of a couple of days [of military operations]" (DWQ, 0078-044109, 8 Oct. 1967).

these items had a large Yemeni market (Burrowes, 1987, p.24; Ferris, 2012, p.173). For instance, the German embassy notes that television sets were widely on sale in Ṣanaʿāʾ and Taʿiz, even though there was no television broadcasting in the YAR. They were evidently intended for Egyptian buyers (PAAA B36 244, 14 Feb. 1966; compare also PAAA, 1719, 21 Sep. 1965). The YAR became a luxury good entrepôt for Egyptian troops and a centre of black-market import-export, to the great economic benefit of Yemeni traders with the capital and networks to sell to this vastly expanded market (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.29).

Although external intervention was instrumental to pushing traders out of positions of formal influence, it also generated significant additional income for commercial elites and many trading families sat atop unprecedented fortunes as the war came to a close. Had external involvement ended there, this would likely have put them in a powerful bargaining position after the war. Yet, because Saudi Arabia and the rival Cold War power blocs continued to provide vast external rents into the 1980s, traders' position outside of the dominant coalition became further entrenched in the post-war years.

4.5 Conclusion to Chapter 4

The events of September 1962 were both a reflection of a political settlement in crisis and a direct challenge to the traditional dominance of the *sāda*. The overthrow of the Imam and the civil war, in turn, gave rise to further far-reaching changes in the political settlement, as mobilisation for the war and extensive external intervention provided new resources to tribal leaders and military officers, while ensuring commercial elites remained at the margins of the settlement.

Using the model as an analytical lens reveals dynamics and processes that have been neglected in the study of the civil war and its aftermath. Although the growing power of tribes during the war is well-established (Burrowes, 1987, p.23; Dresch, 1984, p.169; El-Azzazi, 1978, p.113; Halliday, 1974, pp.114–115; Peterson, 1982, p.49), the sheer scale of the flow of resources to tribal leaders, the fundamental transformative effects of the war on the political settlement, and the long-term impacts arising from this have rarely been fully acknowledged; nor has the central role of external intervention in making this tremendous transfer of wealth possible. Moreover, much of the more recent literature, in particular, has tended to take tribes as given features of the Yemeni political landscape, treated their prominence during the 1980s and 1990s as unremarkable, and naturalised the limited reach of central institutions and their reliance on tribal allies (e.g. Phillips, 2008; Seitz, 2014).

The chapter revealed the wartime origins of these features. The war increased the prominence and importance of tribal leaders in YAR politics and reshaped intra-tribal relations. It changed the tribal system, precisely because it brought tribal leaders into the dominant coalition, prompting a centralisation of power within tribes and enabling the rise of specific tribal leaders, sometimes from relative obscurity, who excelled at the specific politics of mobilisation, fighting, and patronage made possible by the war and the resources it brought. The chapter also showed how thinking about military alongside tribal mobilisation helps explain the intertwining of military and tribal power that defined YAR politics long after the war. Finally, the chapter also revealed the way in which Egyptian intervention shaped the paradoxical position of lowland traders in the evolving political settlement, creating the conditions for rapid capital accumulation while entrenching their political marginalisation. Through the lens of the model, and drawing in important measure on hitherto untapped sources, the chapter revealed how central features of the YAR political settlement, ones often viewed as characteristic of Yemeni specificity, took shape during the civil war.

Overall, the chapter thus found strong support for selected pathways of the model. At the same time, the examination also provided empirical grounds to modify and nuance the model and thereby call into question some widespread assumptions about the relationship of civil war and the political settlement.

First, it underscored the central importance of external intervention while highlighting that most of its impact operated via unintended effects. In the civil war, Saudi Arabia and especially Egypt drove reliance on local violence specialists and transferred very large amounts of weapons and resources to tribal leaders. Contrary to the dominant literature on warlordism and the politics of fragmentation (e.g. Chabal and Daloz, 1999; Reno, 2002), it was external interveners, not 'rulers,' driving these dynamics. Yet, despite its overwhelming military and financial leverage, the Egyptian command was repeatedly forced to make deals with domestic actors and accept ministerial appointments and whole governments it judged hostile in order to avoid outright insurrection. Viewed in terms of the purported role of external intervention for defining government insiders and outsiders in the model, this suggests that literatures on intervention and state building may continue to underestimate the limits of external intervention and the extent to which its possibilities are shaped by the domestic balance of power.

Second, the discussion highlights the limits of constructing a political economy of conflict that abstracts from the specific politics of domestic alliances. During the civil war, political rivals sought to empower groups and individuals that would support them – tribal leaders were a

political constituency for central elites rooted in notable politics. Specific alliances within and between elites also loom large in the context of military mobilisation and divisions within the officer corps. In an extended confrontation, an alliance between tribal and military leaders faced off against elements of the officer corps, party militias, and the southern independence movement. Ultimately, the tribal-military alliance won out. This specific alliance and their associated values and world-views further contributed to the growing intertwining of tribal and military power in the last years of the civil war. The chapter thus highlights the need to bring politics in the sense of networks and alliances into the model and by extension back into the literature on civil wars and the political settlement.

5 THE CIVIL WAR AND GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

"State building? What state building? We were struggling merely to save, not build, the state in those days"[134]

Writing about North Yemen tends to locate the emergence of the YAR's institutions and practices of local and central governance in the 1970s. It was not until then, many have argued, that the state was made: The few institutions created during the war existed in name only and conflict froze state formation (e.g. Burrowes, 1991, 1987). This view has roots going back to the immediate post-war period, when, in 1970, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) concluded in its first fact-finding mission to Yemen, that the revolution sought to create "a central government administration and civil service system […] from virtually nothing" (IBRD, 1970, Annex I p.1).[135]

Certainly, new institutions did not function as advertised, and many of the IBRD's assessments ring true, as when it concludes that the YAR (IBRD, 1970, Annex I p.1):

> has grafted a centralised system of national government onto a traditional decentralised system of local administration […] has created the façade of a professional civil service without the qualified staff, the salaries or the training facilities to make it function well, and […] has built institutions from models which often had little relevance to Yemeni reality.

However, more than empty forms were created during the civil war and the institutions that emerged did not do so 'from virtually nothing,' but grew from, replaced, and interacted with the Imamate-era institutions discussed in 3.3. As we will see, the civil war caused fundamental changes in the organisation of government institutions and their underlying functions and logics. These changes transformed the fiscal basis of the state (5.1), and partially reshaped central and local military and civilian institutions (5.2).

The model developed in Chapter 2 offers analytical leverage to understand the how and why of rapid institutional change in north Yemen during this time. It suggests that civil war precipitates a crisis in the dominant coalition, likely to multiply competing local institutions

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[134] Ḥusayn al-Ḥubayshī, Legal Advisor to the President, in conversation with Robert Burrowes in Ṣanaʿāʾ in 1978 (Burrowes, 1987, p.34).

[135] The idea that post-war reconstruction begins from 'virtually nothing,' a blank slate, is a common trope (e.g. Cramer, 2006, p.256).

and fragment central control over violence. Such tendencies are strengthened where mobilising strategies focus on existing local violence specialists. Closely following this causal story, the chapter reveals how ceding control over coercion to the tribes was connected to decentralising control over taxation, which in turn implied far-reaching decentralisation of appointments, oversight, and decision-making. The model's multiple pathways and contradictory outcomes, moreover, help make sense of the way in which the fragmenting of the dominant coalition and external funding created pressures for dismantling existing institutions at the local level, at the same time as it provided the resources and blueprints for creating large central ministries in the capital and other large cities. The civil war gave rise to a dozen new ministries, a larger, better paid and better-equipped military, and prompted rapid increases in government expenditure and the government's role in the economy, even as the central government lost control over local governance, appointments, and taxation. Distinct and rival pathways active simultaneously generated otherwise unintelligible combinations of centralising and decentralising dynamics and an intertwining of institutional forms. In-line with the conceptualisation of formal institutions as reflecting and being dependent on the political settlement, the relative and evolving bargaining position inside and outside government of groups seeking to transform and re-make government institutions, seeking to guard and maintain institutional legacies of the Imamate, or to keep central institutions at bay and carve out new spaces of autonomy, helped determine the institutional changes wrought by the war. Throughout this discussion, the caveats from Section 2.1 need to be kept in mind: quoted figures are often only informed guesses and economic and social statistics were in short supply, indeed the very emergence of statistics in the middle of the 1960s tells an interesting story about the changing nature of central institutions, as we will see.

5.1 The fiscal basis of the state: taxation and allocation

Following the dictum that "the history of state revenue production is the history of the evolution of the state" (Levi, 1988, p.1), an initial exploration of taxation and expenditure provides the framework for the subsequent discussion of specific institutions. Contrary to the assertions of a number of authors, who, usually in passing, have claimed that taxation expanded under the republic (e.g. Orkaby, 2014, pp.10–11), the opposite is true: all serious attempts to explore the fiscal trajectory of the YAR have concluded that direct taxation under the republic was only a fraction of what was collected under the Imamate, while at the same time expenditure increased dramatically, funded by foreign and domestic loans.

Table 5 presents estimates of YAR government income between 1962 and 1970. Although these estimates are inaccurate and published figures sometimes vary significantly (Nyrop, 1977, p.186), the table provides an important guide to the fiscal changes of the civil war. It highlights that the republican government's sources of income differed markedly from those of the Imamate: direct taxation declined, borrowing grew, and indirect taxes increased.

Table 5: YAR government income by source 1961-1970 in nominal YR (millions)						
	1961	**1962-65**	**1966/67**	**1967/68**	**1968/69**	**1969/70**
direct taxes	21		7.6	8.2	13.4	15.8
indirect taxes	4		15.5	18.1	27.1	32.9
other sources			3.1	3.0	5.5	10.8
foreign loans			18.0	0	0	44.0
domestic borrowing	0		3.2	21.6	63.6	57.0
			[10.8]	[35.1]	[66.7]	

Source: 1961 figures: El Attar 1964 213-214; 1964-1970 figures: IBRD, 1970, pp.28, 31 and Annex II. Figures in [parentheses] are actual deficit figures IBRD 1970, 30. Empty cells represent missing values.

Between 1961 and the 1969/70 fiscal year, receipts from direct taxation declined even in nominal terms.[136] Controlling for inflation, income from direct taxes in 1970 was less than 20% of the pre-war take.[137] Despite droughts and declining agricultural production, this decline reflects, above all, changes to the way in which taxes were administered, introduced

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[136] The YAR fiscal year ran from 1 July to 30 June. The following does not discuss income and spending relative to GDP, since no YAR GDP figures are available until the mid-1970s. However, based on contemporary guesses (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, n.d. [Jan. 1970]; Gause, 1990, p.25), central government income was probably somewhere between 5-10% of GDP.

[137] Taking exchange rates to the US Dollar as a proxy for purchasing power and using estimates of de-facto exchange rates from a number of archival sources, provides the following deflator figures:

Year	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Purchasing power	1	1.25	-	0.8	0.66	0.51	0.4	0.29	0.24	0.19
Annual inflation	-	-20%	-	-	21%	29%	28%	39%	20%	25%

Some data points are more robust than others. There is agreement that the YR-USD exchange rate was somewhere near parity until ca. 1964. By 1966 most sources refer to a de-facto exchange rate of about 2 YR per USD. 1970 is the next point with broad agreement of exchange rates of around 5 YR per USD. See: PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, no date [Jan. 1970]; 14 Feb. 1966; DWQ, 0078-044111, no date [Sep. 1968]; 9 Aug. 1967; Nyrop, 1977, p.199; IBRD, 1970, inside cover. For official exchange rates see: Treasury Department, n.d.

almost immediately after the overthrow of the Imam.[138] By contrast, nominal income from indirect taxes increased 8-fold over the period, equivalent to a doubling in inflation adjusted terms. On a small scale, the YAR also tapped new, 'other' revenues, such as profits from joint Egyptian-Yemeni companies and proceeds from the land confiscated from the Ḥamīd al-Dīn and leading *sāda*. More significantly, foreign loans and deficit financing came to play a far more important role in the budget. Although Imam ʾAḥmad had begun to borrow to finance infrastructure investment, foreign loans to finance running expenditure had not been part of the Imamate budget. By contrast, the Egyptian archives suggest that UAR aid provided nearly 40% of total running expenses and was the largest single source of income for the YAR government between 1962-67 (DWQ, 0078-044109, no date [Oct. 1967]; IBRD 1970, 27). After Egyptian withdrawal, the YAR operated with a yawning deficit that grew to more than half its outlays before Saudi Arabian budget support began to fill the gap during the 1969/70 budget year.

Figure 1: Sources of YAR income in inflation-adjusted YR (millions, base-year 1961)*
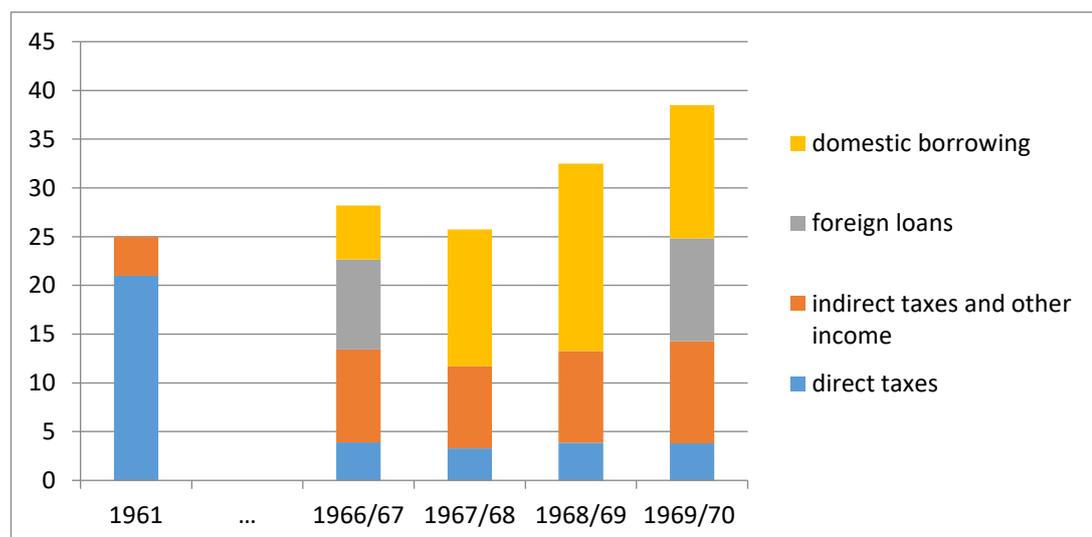
* Sources for 1961: El Attar 1964, pp.213-214; for 1966-1970: IBRD, 1970, pp.28, 30-31, Annex II.

Figure 1 summarises changes in government income during the civil war: from a state heavily reliant on direct taxation and particularly agricultural taxation, the YAR became, first, a gatekeeper state reliant on customs duty and foreign aid, then a state almost wholly reliant

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[138] Drought affected cereal production from 1965 to 1967 (e.g. Boals, 1970, pp.254–255). As a result of drought, the war, and import liberalisation, cereal production dropped from an average of 1.1 million tons per year in 1960-65 to 900,000 tons in 1969 (IBRD, 1970, p.37).

on borrowing from foreign creditors, domestic capital, and its own central bank.[139] After reconciliation in 1970 ended the civil war and opened the door to Saudi support, this became the new fiscal status quo.

On the expenditure side, Table 6 chronicles large increases in nominal government spending counteracted by high inflation. In inflation-adjusted terms, expenditure grew unevenly, though much remains uncertain, since there is no government budget information between 1962 and 1964. Given well-documented increases in military and civilian salaries, payments to tribal leaders, and new investment, it is likely that 1962/1963 and 1963/1964 figures would show a real-term increase in government expenditure from Imamate levels, which were then likely eroded by inflation, particularly after the introduction of the paper Riyal in 1964. Yet, the figures during the Egyptian intervention are also unreliable, as significant expenditure went through Egyptian systems and is only partially included in these figures. The first halfway-reliable data point comes with the budget for 1967/68. After UAR funding fell away in late 1967, government expenditure reached the lowest level that decade. In the next two years, despite high inflation, real term expenditure nearly doubled.

Combining the above information yields four periods defined by different sources of funding and patterns of expenditure. The YAR government pursued, in relatively distinct succession, each of the revenue-raising strategies the model associates with distinct outcomes, providing an opportunity to assess its claims by exploring the distinct dynamics of each. An initial period between 1962 and 1963, during which the YAR increased spending and reduced taxation, burning through the limited reserves of the Imamate and initial Egyptian support, forms the focus of 5.1.1. Between 1963 and 1967, the Egyptian role in Yemen increased steadily and Egyptian loans and customs duty became the most important sources of government income, while expenditure likely languished (5.1.2). Egyptian withdrawal at the end of 1967 prompted a deep fiscal crisis, leading to a scramble for new domestic sources of funding. Paradoxically, government expenditure steadily increased during this time (5.1.3). Finally, reconciliation in early 1970 and the renewed access to foreign funding this afforded meant that 'gatekeeper state' habits and institutions from the period of Egyptian support became entrenched and defined the fiscal basis of the YAR (5.1.4).

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[139] This is true even using the conservative official estimates from the government budget. Actual funding from the central bank was consistently, sometimes dramatically, higher (IBRD, 1970, p.30).

Table 6: nominal and inflation adjusted YAR government expenditure 1961 and 1965-1970							
	1961	**1962-64**	**1965/66**	**1966/67**	**1967/68**	**1968/69**	**1969/70**
nominal YR	25		(32.9)	47.4	50.96	109.54	160.49
constant 1961 YR	25		21.8	24.3	20.4	31.6	38.5

All figures in millions of Yemeni Riyals. Sources: 1961 figures: El Attar, 1964, pp.213-214; 1964-1970 figures: IBRD, 1970, pp.28, 31 and Annex II. Figures marked with (parentheses) from: Statistisches Bundesamt, 1970, p15. Empty cells are missing values.

Overall, the model accounts well for fiscal dynamics. In particular, it highlights that decentralising control over coercion coincided with a decentralisation of revenue collection and that external aid, despite nominally being dedicated to state building, was a driving force in the un-making of the fiscal basis of a viable state. At the same time, the discussion adds detail and nuance to the model: First, it highlights how strategies of allocation must be examined in conjunction with extraction and can generate their own forms of bureaucratic penetration. Although taxation slowed, spending increased and bargaining over expenditure created relationships between central institutions and local leaders. Second, it highlights that abandoning Imamate-era taxation was a largely one way path: after an initial period in which the new government pointedly left the tax administration to fall apart; it failed to put it back together. It had lost the requisite expertise and the absence of taxation had become part of the emerging republican political settlement.

5.1.1 1962-1963: the anti-Imamate

During the first months after the overthrow of the Imam, between September 1962 and mid-1963, the new republican government granted higher salaries to soldiers and civil servants in an attempt to secure loyalty, declared taxation to be voluntary,[140] and burned through the limited reserves the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imams had collected.[141] By early 1963, it faced a financial crisis. No longer able to pay civil service salaries, it requested direct cash payments from potential donors (PAAA, B36 46, 21 Jan. 1963).

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[140] According to Johnsen (2017, p.106), it was al-Badr who announced voluntary taxation immediately before the revolution.

[141] According to O'Ballance (1971, p.77), the Free Officers found 8 million MT in the Imam's treasury. Ḥamūd Baydar, one of the Free Officers, stated it was 40 million YR (Interview with Ḥamūd Baydar, 2016).

Information on salary increases is anecdotal, but a number of sources suggest that one of the new government's first measures was increasing salaries in the security forces. According to the French journalists Marie-Claude Deffarge and Gordian Troeller, police officers in lower Yemen who had been paid 20 MT a month before the overthrow of the Imam, saw their salaries increase to more than 60 MT by late 1962 and a young military officer who had earned 25 MT per month then made 50 MT. On another occasion they report that President al-Sallāl raised military salaries to two and a half times their previous levels in mid-October 1962, when it became public knowledge that Imam al-Badr had survived the coup (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, pp.28, 42, 94). Their account leaves the details of salary increases hazy – but they are unlikely to have been uniform or universally implemented in any case.

In 1962, the YAR government also declared taxation, which had been notoriously high under the Imam (see 3.2.1 above), to be voluntary. In doing so, the new government consciously set out to pursue the 'negation' of the Imamate's fiscal policy and hence later trumpeted the reduction of its income from property and agricultural taxes as a 'success' of the revolution (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, 9 Apr. 1967). By rendering taxation voluntary, the new government addressed the main grievances of merchants and peasants (Stookey, 1978, pp.201–205) and met a central demand of the Free Yemeni movement, which had framed excessive and unjust taxation as part of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn's "conspiracy" against Yemen (al-ʿAynī, 1957). Whereas under the Imam, zakat on agricultural output had been assessed and collected by Treasury officials or local representatives responsible to them, during the first weeks of October 1962, the YAR government turned tax collection over to officials at the local level (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, 14 Mar. 1969). According to Deffarge and Troeller, the effect was rapidly noticeable in lower Yemen: people who had lived in fear of exactions by the police and the Imam's armed men found the forcible billeting of troops, a common and hated method of enforcing tax claims, disappeared. They became 'free' (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.29).

Yet while voluntary taxation reduced grievances towards the political centre, it also rapidly eroded government income. As the IBRD notes, overcautiously, "there is reason to believe that returns from zakat dropped sharply after 1962" (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.3). Indeed, it appears that tax income collapsed and the new system was "wide open to abuse" (Gerholm, 1977, p.77). There were almost no penalties for evasion and by the end of the civil war as

little as 5% of agricultural tax, the mainstay of Imamate era government income, was actually being collected (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.31; Chaudhry, 1997, p.200).[142]

In his pioneering study of ʾIbb, conducted shortly after the end of the civil war, Brinkley Messick documented how changes to taxation visibly and immediately changed the role and perception of local government: Until 1962, (local) government operated with a surplus, visible in full government grain stores, and this surplus was available for a range of public assistance. Since the revolution, local administration became unable to cover its own expenses, much less operate with a surplus (Messick, 1978, pp.217–218). Government deficit spending and a growing shift to a cash economy would have been visible locally in empty grain stores, filled only occasionally with imported wheat from the ports.

As tax income decreased, the tax bureaucracy languished. Although in overall terms public-sector employment increased rapidly during this first period,[143] the Treasury in general and its taxation branches in particular, stagnated. Messick mentions how, over the course of the 1960s, the *māliya* (Treasury) in ʾIbb was stripped of personnel and influence and lost its previous centrality in the administration and networks of power in the town. Whereas it used to dominate local government, kept the accounts for all other offices, and paid all public functionaries, it became just one office among many by the end of the 1960s (Messick, 1978, pp.185, 220–221).

This development was not limited to ʾIbb: few new civil servants joined the *māliya* and the IBRD noted at the end of the civil war that the Treasury suffered from lack of funds, training, and attention and had particularly few graduates. The Treasury, including its new department for 'modern taxes' was "clearly unequal to the administrative task of effective [tax] enforcement" (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.9). The anti-*sāda* measures adopted in the initial months of the revolution (see 4.1.1) likely accelerated the hollowing out of the tax bureaucracy. Leading officials in the *māliya* were *sāda* and particularly in lower Yemen, their marginalisation amounted to an active removal of expertise in taxation from the YAR bureaucracy. To the extent that the Treasury recruited new officials, they were channelled

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[142] However, in some areas, the fact that zakāa was collected in kind, an expectation that tax payments would be similar year on year, and the local circulation of taxes, helped stem the decline (Messick, 1978, p.204).

[143] See 5.2.2 on the development of the civil service.

into new sections for 'modern' taxes and customs duty (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.1). By the end of the war, "the Treasury ministry had surprisingly little to do even with the day-to-day financial operations of the government; indeed, it was virtually closed down for months with no apparent ill effects during a political dispute in 1969" (Burrowes, 1987, p.41).

In areas under control of the royalists, a similar dynamic was at play. Tax revenues were collected and distributed locally and the royalist war effort was funded from Saudi aid and occasionally by local commanders' personal fortunes, not taxation (Interviews with ʿAbbās al-Mukhtafī and ʾAḥmad al-Sayyānī, 2016). Royalist governance did not involve central control, let alone taxation (Peterson, 1982, p.89).[144]

All of this suggests it was not merely, or even primarily, a matter of the conflict getting in the way of taxation, a lack of qualified personnel, or rapid changes in government that impeded fiscal reorganisation, as works in the decades after the war tend to claim (e.g. Nyrop, 1977, p.196). Falling income and increased expenditure were initially the direct result of new government policies intended to buy political support: The new government dropped taxes targeted at farmers and landowners and simultaneously embarked on deficit spending, concentrating benefits in the security sector, where wages increased most. Unlike the emphasis in the model on exchanging rights to local taxation for mobilisation, the central government abandoned taxation before it made serious attempts to mobilise tribes. Giving up taxation appears to have been a strategy to buy support, but it centred on forestalling mobilisation against the coup, rather than seeking directly to rally support. Elite decisions to abandon taxation were not directly caused by the war, but the conflict did shift the balance of power to make re-introducing taxes very difficult. The loss of central control over coercion contributed to further administrative and fiscal decentralisation down the line.

5.1.2   1963-1967: The Egyptian republic: the making of a rentier state

Between 1963 and 1967, Egyptian support stabilised YAR expenditure at the new, higher level, although inflation likely eroded spending in real terms. As the UAR increased its troop deployment to Yemen, it also sent civilian experts and increasing amounts of financial aid to shore-up the revolution. Egyptian budget support ultimately supplied half of the YAR's total expenditure over the 1962-1967 period and the Egyptian archives discuss a variety of additional loans, import credits and other forms of financial aid. These include the previously

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[144] Schmidt (1968, p.275) disagrees.

mentioned loans and grants of YR 100 million for the Yemeni military, as well as at least E£ 10 million (YR 30 million at official 1967 exchange rates) for civilian experts, and assorted loans to cover Yemeni imports from Egypt, the printing of Yemeni banknotes in Cairo, development projects, and other expenses (DWQ, 0078-044113, 11 Sep. 1966; 0078-044112, 1 Nov. 1966; 0078-044109, no date [Oct. 1967], 9 Jan 1968). Moreover, Cairo provided large capital injections in the YAR's account with the Egyptian central bank, against which new currency was issued. The YAR's foreign currency reserves more than doubled between 1964 and 1965 from YR 22.4 million to YR 51.1 million thanks to increases in its Egyptian Pound holdings (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1970, p.13).

This extensive financial aid in conjunction with the deployment of civilian experts, placed the Egyptian command in Yemen in a position to direct government policy making at all levels. Egyptian advisors were located in most ministries, often in the office of the minister, and wielded great influence. The newly-formed National Security Council that, at least in theory, directed the republican war effort, included a number of officers from the United Arab Republic, including the commander in chief of the Egyptian forces in Yemen (O'Ballance, 1971, p.122) and the UAR ambassador to Yemen was treated as a de-facto part of the YAR government in German reporting about political developments (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 26 Aug. 1965). Successive Yemeni governments were highly sensitive to Egyptian threats to suspend funding, cut off the supply of paper riyals, which were printed in Egypt, or to freeze Yemen's currency reserves, which had been transferred to Cairo (Alaini, 2004, p.113).[145]

In addition to Egyptian aid, the YAR rapidly loaded up on other foreign debt, and the generation of YAR government revenue became in important measure about securing foreign funds. The German embassy commented that Yemeni politicians "faced with a foreigner now know only the topic of *musāʿadāt*" [aid] (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, 9 Apr. 1967). Unlike Egyptian support, such aid was earmarked for specific projects and investments and could not be used directly to cover running expenses. As a result, they came to define YAR infrastructure investments and priorities. Speeches about government achievements became catalogues of foreign aid projects (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 26 Sep. 1967) and government development plans consisted in the view of the German embassy of little more than the development projects of the USSR, China, USAID, and Kuwait (PAAA, B36 244, 7 Jun. 1966).

[145] The Egyptian government rebuffed repeated requests by the Nuʿmān and later governments to release these reserves (O'Ballance, 1971, p.158).

External debt had stood at $30 million, or approximately 1.5 times annual government income in 1962. By 1970, it reached $170 million, approximately 15 times annual income. Most of it had been contracted in the first years of the revolution and during the Egyptian presence. By the time of Egyptian withdrawal, debt servicing had "already become a major problem for the YAR," and in 1969 arrears reached $25 million (IBRD, 1970, p.iv). Even excluding payments in arrears, the IBRD cautioned that the YAR at the end of the war faced debt repayment obligations equivalent to 90% of the country's total annual foreign exchange earnings (IBRD, 1970, p.42).[146]

External aid kept pressures to raise additional funds at bay and the development of YAR institutions under UAR tutelage, though rapid and extensive in many areas, shows a peculiar disregard for the growing imbalance between government income via direct and indirect taxation and expenditure. During the 1963-67 period, direct taxes likely continued to slip, although no figures are available. Fuelled by demand from Egyptian troops, small initial flows of remittances, and increased domestic demand from the large numbers of traders returned from Aden, customs duty came to partially make up for declining taxation. Yet expenditure far outpaced income from domestic sources. With foreign aid and control of imports and exports eclipsing other sources of funding – they account together for more than 70% of the 1967 budget – the YAR fiscally came to closely resemble a post-colonial 'gatekeeper state' (Cooper, 2002).

Egyptian disinterest in ensuring the basic fiscal viability of the state they were creating is, at first blush, remarkable, coming as it did in the midst of contemporary Egyptian complaints about the cost of operations in Yemen and an ambitious experiment in state building. Yet, as suggested in the model, this may be a broader tendency of external funding and has certainly been an area of neglect in more recent instances of external state building (Bräutigam, 2008; Moore, 2008). Certainly in Yemen, Egyptian state building contributed to the relative neglect of the revenue-raising capabilities of the YAR, despite seeking to create a large bureaucracy, a

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[146] The YAR's largest creditors were the USSR, China, the USA, Egypt, the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, Algeria and Yugoslavia, approximately in that order (IBRD, 1970, p.42).The flipside of aid was a growing contest between donors for 'their men' to win out. In 1968 the al-ʾIryānī government faced three attempted coups, for which the German embassy blamed the USSR and Egypt (PAAA AV Neues Amt 12337, 14 Mar. 1969). However, according to Orkaby's (2014, pp.231–232) research, the Soviet leadership maintained ties with al-ʾIryānī and considered him an asset.

large public sector, and more broadly pursuing an avowedly statist vision on the Egyptian model.[147] This contribution was in part indirect. The availability of foreign funds eliminated pressures for Yemeni politicians to raise revenue, while influence over the military, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Information loomed larger in Egyptian political concerns than did the Treasury. Other priorities got in the way, particularly as taxation did not feature as a developmental concern either. 'Modernisation' efforts of both YAR elites and their Egyptian advisors focused on health and education, not revenue extraction.

Turning taxation over to local authorities and largely eliminating sanctions for non-payment was a popular move that rapidly reduced effective tax rates. As long as external financing enabled successive cabinets to continue down this path, appetite within the Yemeni government to expand taxation was minimal. In the context of souring relations between the Egyptian command and tribal leaders, whole tribes refused to pay even the limited taxes that were still collected. For instance, German sources refer to a tax revolt in Yarīm that was eventually put down by military force in December 1966, while noting that many more areas, including ones deeply in nominally republican territory, did not pay taxes while the government looked on (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, 9 Apr. 1967).

Moreover, as we saw above, purges of the administration had disproportionally affected the *māliya*, while the small number of graduates who were being recruited into the civil service, self-consciously pursuing an agenda of modernisation and state building, were drawn to areas closer to their specialisation or that coincided more obviously with the needs of development: the most highly qualified new recruits flocked to the ministries of health and education, the foreign ministry or the Yemen Bank of Reconstruction and Development. Of the approximately 150 university graduates in the civil service at the end of 1969, almost half served in the ministries of Health and Education. The Treasury employed two (IBRD, 1970, Annex I p.3).

Beyond providing the external funds that allowed successive YAR governments to ignore the growing gap between domestic revenues and expenditure, the Egyptians' own priorities exacerbated this tendency. A listing of 70 experts set to renew their terms on 30 June 1967, provides a partial, but revealing snapshot of the priorities of Egyptian intervention: Egyptian experts were present in the Council of Ministers, in radio programming and played a key role

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[147] For comparison, Egypt increased its domestic tax revenues almost 40% between 1962/3 and 1964/5 and also increased non-tax income (World Bank, 1966, p.37).

in the Ministry of Interior, where twelve experts were seconded for exceptionally long tours to increase capacity in police investigations – and likely domestic intelligence (DWQ, 0078-044112, no date [late May/early June 1967]). Political influence, control of perceptions through propaganda, and control of the security services easily trumped revenue-raising.

This is not to say that the UAR did not pursue developmentalist aims in Yemen: Egyptian experts oversaw the building of some two-dozen ministries and other government agencies, which is explored in more detail in Section 5.2. Yet, there were few experts in the tax administration. These priorities within Egyptian state building, aside from obvious considerations of political control and influence, speak of the Egyptian ambition to bring Yemen "out of the middle ages" (DWQ, 0078-044109, 8 Oct. 1962). As Jesse Ferris argues with regard to the assumptions pervading Egyptian counterinsurgency manuals for operations in Yemen, the Egyptian command viewed Yemenis primarily as "inferior natives in need of conversion to the dogmas of revolutionary socialism" (Ferris, 2012, p.183). A specific vision of modernity and the institutions appropriate to a modern state animated the direction of institutional development. Yemen's existing religiously-based system of agricultural taxation did not fit the model. It was rejected as "at best archaic" and "medieval" not only by the Egyptian command, but by the IBRD as well (IBRD, 1970, p.27).

To the extent that Egypt invested in the YAR's fiscal and monetary underpinnings, it was in 'modern' areas: Egypt printed Yemen's new paper currency and an Egyptian was the Director General of the Yemeni currency board (*lijnat al-naqd*), which had primary responsibility over monetary policy. Other experts were seconded to the customs administration and played an important role in its expansion (DWQ, 0078-044112, n.d.). By the end of the war, indirect taxes became the single most important source of income (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.5). From providing 16% of government income under the Imam, they went to supplying 36% of total income in the 1967/68 fiscal year and indirect taxes as a share of revenues rises to 60% when borrowing and money-creation are stripped out (see Table 5, above). By that time, Egyptian experts had taken full control of customs and the flow of goods in and out of Yemen in the main port of al-Ḥudayda and at the main overland crossing from South Yemen at al-Rāhida (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 15 Jan 1967). Perhaps because Egyptian experts played an outsize role in this expansion, the customs administration was hit hard by Egyptian withdrawal. The IBRD documented a "lack of trained staff, both valuers and inspectors," in the customs administration immediately after the war, noting that "smuggling, under-invoicing and evasion of duties are widespread" (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.7).

Yet, at several junctures, the neglect of domestic revenue-raising in Egyptian state building in Yemen appears to be more than an unintended consequence or a matter of other priorities getting in the way. From the Egyptian perspective, reliance on Egyptian funding, though a fiscal drain, was a powerful tool of control. Confiscating Yemeni foreign currency reserves (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, 9 Apr. 1967, 14 Mar. 1969, no date [Jan. 1970]), stopping East German aid shipments (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 8 Mar. 1967), blocking Kuwaiti funding (Alaini, 2004, p.113), and freezing its programme of loans to "all Yemeni ministries, associations, bodies and companies" in 1967 (DWQ, 0078-044109, 5 Oct 1967), suggests that the Egyptian command was more concerned to maintain a monopoly on aid than it was to offset the costs of intervention. If it is true that "Nasser envisioned a Yemeni state that would be controlled from Cairo and would mirror the United Arab Republic in many aspects, from its constitution to the format of its postal stamps" (Orkaby, 2014, p.11), one central plank of that strategy of control was financial dependence, even as operations in Yemen became a serious drain on Egyptian resources.[148]

German analysis, coming as it did during the German Middle-East crisis,[149] took on a particular anti-Egyptian edge in the mid-60s. Nonetheless, the observation that the consolidation of Egyptian influence in Yemen during the second half of 1966 was accompanied by intimidation of Yemeni civil servants (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 15 Jan. 1967), attempts to systematically "paralyze local competencies," and "cynical, but effective terror," including show trials, arrests, and threats of trials against local officials, highlights the very real tensions between political control and the creation of a functioning independent administrative apparatus in Egyptian state building (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 8 Mar. 1967). The fact that "in some areas of Yemen Egyptian officers acted as virtual governors" underscores this point (Vassiliev, 2012, p.291), as does the fact that, during the last year of the Egyptian presence in the YAR (and the only one we have data for), two-thirds of Yemeni government spending was channelled through Egyptian systems (IBRD, 1970, p.28).

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[148] Conversely, Yemeni attempts to escape the Egyptian bear-hug had a fiscal dimension. The government of Ḥasan al-ʿAmrī, for instance, supported the export of qāt to earn foreign exchange and sought to curb smuggling and increase customs income (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, 9 Apr. 1967).

[149] In early 1965, West Germany's exchange of ambassadors with Israel led to a crisis in relations between the Federal Republic and the members of the League of Arab States. See: Perthes, 2002a, pp.129–131; Büttner and Hünseler, 1981.

The Egyptian leadership did eventually come to see its expenditure in Yemen as a problem and sought to recoup its costs. Yet, it sought to earn money from access to the Yemeni market and by control of the exchange rate – both sources of income that did not strengthen the YAR's own revenue-generation. Egypt maintained an artificially low exchange rate between Yemeni Riyals and Egyptian Pounds, which allowed the Egyptian government to recoup expenses from the republican state through its ability to issue Yemeni Riyals on the YAR's behalf (Ferris, 2012, p.199; PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 8 Mar. 1967). The Egyptians also formed a number of Egyptian-Yemeni joint-stock companies (see 4.4.2 above), which were closely linked to Egyptian state-owned enterprises and were expected to generate a profit for the Egyptian parent company.

The way in which foreign funding in Yemen deepened the shift away from taxation and towards greater spending fits well with the broad outlines of the role of foreign funding developed in the model. During this crucial period of state formation in Yemen, the Egyptian presence eliminated incentives for domestic revenue mobilisation and changed patterns of accountability in ways that made relations to Cairo an important determinant of political fortunes. Yet, the discussion also highlights that these broad outlines are underspecified. The rapid moves to cut taxation and increase expenditure in 1962, before a significant Egyptian presence was established, highlights that foreign funding, at least at first, played predominantly an enabling role. The ideas and aspirations of the putschists against the Imam mattered, as they took up a central demand of the Free Yemeni opposition about the voluntary nature of paying zakat. Similarly, the model does not quite capture the tensions and trade-offs in Egyptian policy between political control and fiscal drain. Aggressive assertions of fiscal control coincided with periods during which Yemeni politics threatened to slip away from the Egyptian leadership, especially between April 1965 and September 1966. It was during this time that Egypt blocked other sources of funding, highlighting the contingent and context-specific nature of the linkages explored.

5.1.3   1967-1970: Fiscal crisis and innovation

Until Egyptian withdrawal, the UAR covered the large imbalance between the YAR's declining income and growing expenditure on military and civil service salaries and tribal subsidies. When Egyptian support ended suddenly, the YAR faced a financial crisis and the government sought to increase income and reduce expenditure. Both proved elusive. The YAR's legitimacy was too intimately bound up with the absence of taxation and the new and higher incomes it was providing to a range of constituencies. Indeed, after an initial dip in the 1967/68 fiscal year, when the government came to grips with the loss of Egyptian funding, inflation-

adjusted expenditure increased rapidly. However, attempts to increase income generated only marginally higher receipts. Spending on tribal subsidies and the military continuously ratcheted upwards and the tax administration, left to atrophy for five years, proved difficult to resuscitate.

When *Qāḍī* ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-ʾIryānī became President in November 1967, he identified the bloated government bureaucracy, tribal subsidies, and military expenditure as the principal drains on public funds. The YAR at this point had some 13,000 civil servants on the payroll, of whom 775 – one out of 17 – held the highest rank and hence received a minister's salary. The YAR was also paying tribal subsidies of YR 40 million a year – roughly equal to all government income from direct and indirect taxes (Dresch, 2000, pp.124–125).[150] Despite this diagnosis of the problem and several attempts to reduce payments and subsidies, government expenditure strayed ever higher and attempts to reign in expenditure brought down successive governments. For instance, when Prime Minister ʿAbd Allah al-Kurshumī formed a government in September 1969, he made the financial crisis a topic of public discussion and a government priority. He succeeded in agreeing significant budget cuts, including to the military. However, he lacked the clout to enforce cuts to tribal subsidies and resigned in February 1970, his budget largely a dead-letter (PAAA, B36 469, 2 Feb. 1970; Burrowes, 1987, pp.35–36). In July 1970, the next government faced crisis, when thousands of armed Bakīl and Ḥāshid tribesmen met north of Ṣanaʿāʾ to demand a larger share of the government's development aid and the removal of Baʿathist ministers from the cabinet (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12333, no date [9 Jul. 1970]).

Table 7 provides an overview of estimates for government income and expenditure between mid-1966 and mid-1970. "Defence" spending, which included the budget of the Tribal Affairs Ministry and hence payments to tribes, increased from 41% to 49% of the total throughout the period after Egyptian withdrawal and nearly quadrupled in nominal terms. Controlling for inflation, expenditure on defence and tribal subsidies nearly doubled from mid-1967 until

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[150] Official government statistics report a more modest 19 ministers, 116 Deputy Ministers, and 184 Directors General in 1971 (al-Jihāz al-markazī lil-takhṭīt, 1973, p.109).

mid-1970,[151] while expenditure on general administration remained constant in real terms and declined as a share of the total budget.

Table 7: Estimated YAR government income and expenditure 1966-1970 (nominal YR million)

	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70
Total Income	**55.0**	**64.4**	**112.7**	**160.5**
Direct taxes	7.6	8.2	13.4	15.8
Indirect taxes	15.5	18.1	27.1	32.9
Non-tax income	3.1	3.0	5.5	10.8
Structural Deficit	28.8	35.1	66.7	101
of which international borrowing	18.0	0	0	44.0
of which domestic borrowing	10.8	35.1	66.7	57.0
Total Expenditure	**47.4**	**51.0**	**109.5**	**160.4**
General Administration	21.8	25.1	36.6	54.5
Agriculture	0.3	0.3	1.5	0.9
Education	2.6	2.8	3.6	6.9
Defence (incl. tribal affairs)	20.8	21	53.3	78.8
Transport & Communications	1.9	1.8	6.2	4.3
Development (central investment to local projects)	0	0	0	15
Debt retirement	0	0	8.3	0

All figures in millions of Yemeni Riyals. Source: IBRD, 1970, pp.28, 30-31 and Annex II. Conventionally, income should equal expenditure in this form of accounting. The discrepancies reflect the poor quality of the data and the use of a mix of estimates and actual figures.

Persistently high and increasing government expenditure was not matched by income. Despite a proliferation of new taxes, income from all domestic sources, measured in constant 1961 Yemeni Riyals, increased only from YR 11.7 million to YR 14.3 million between 1967/68 and 1969/70. Most new taxes remained unimplemented and previous moves to decentralise and de-institutionalise taxation proved difficult to reverse. In nominal terms, the gap between income, including international loans and grants, and expenditure grew from YR 10.8 million in the last year of the Egyptian presence (1966/67), to YR 35.1 million the next

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[151] From 1971 onward, disaggregated figures for military expenditure and tribal stipends become available. In 1971/72, 37% of the total budget was earmarked for the military and 17% for tribal subsidies (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.31).

year, to more than YR 66 million in 1968/69 (IBRD, 1970, p.30). Despite a large foreign loan in the 1969/70 financial year, the deficit still stood at YR 57 million. By this point, government revenue from domestic sources covered less than 40% of expenditure (Burrowes, 1987, p.35). In addition, foreign exchange was in very short supply: exports by value were only 7% of imports.

These gaps persisted and widened despite government efforts to increase customs income. The YAR banned all overland goods transport from Aden and closed all small ports to facilitate customs control (IBRD, 1970, p.24).[152] Yet without the Egyptian presence, the customs service consisted of fewer assessors more prone to influence by local power brokers, raising revenue off a smaller total volume of trade.[153] The period was also marked by a "rapid but unplanned growth of the tax system" (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.1). It witnessed the first attempts to enshrine taxation in secular law in late 1968 (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, n.d. [Jan 1970]) and also saw the introduction of a large number of ad hoc taxes, most of which had very low yields, since they were rarely enforced (IBRD, 1970, p.29).

No attempts were made to return income from agricultural taxes to higher levels, which might have affected tribesmen farmers and landowners more generally. By the time the republican government sought to bring back taxation, at the latest, tribal leaders had become de-facto veto players. Even during the midst of the financial crisis, German analysis highlighted new funds being made available for investment in agriculture through local development associations (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 12337, 14 Mar. 1969) [154] and, as we saw above, the inability to reduce spending on tribal subsidies toppled successive governments in 1969.

What revenue-raising attempts there were targeted traders and state assets. Yet, even taxes that should have been easy to administer and more politically palatable to enforce, failed to raise the hoped-for revenues. A new monopoly tax, levied on the (partially) state owned enterprises established with Egyptian support, proved unsuccessful. A new fuel tax, though

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[152] This may also have been a political move against the South.

[153] Egyptian withdrawal reduced domestic demand as did the slowing of remittance flows, of then about $30 million per year (IBRD, 1970, p.40), as Saudi Arabia blocked remittances to Yemen in 1967 (Dresch, 2000, p.108).

[154] See 5.2 below

more successful, generated less revenue than hoped for, despite the fact that the import of petroleum products was restricted to the state-owned Yemen Petroleum Company (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.4). The government struggled to increase income and was unable to tax organisations it theoretically owned, lacking the power to roll back the low taxation for traders discussed in Section 4.4, as well as the basic administration to monitor compliance, and the authority to enforce it (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.4). It was not just tribesmen and traders that proved difficult to tax: a fragile YAR government needed to manage political constituencies on all fronts. When a new property tax in 1968 sparked widespread opposition, a presidential decree of the same year exempted owner-occupied houses, making the tax far more difficult to administer and ultimately wholly ineffective (IBRD, 1970, Annex II p.4).

During this period of fiscal crisis, the YAR also experimented with compulsory savings schemes, introducing laws forcing traders to surrender 50% of all foreign exchange earnings to the YBRD at a fixed and undervalued exchange rate. Like the new monopoly tax, this measure was often observed in the breach and gave rise to widespread evasion and under-invoicing: the IBRD estimated that actual exports from the YAR in the late sixties were worth $ 8 million per year, as opposed to the $ 2 million officially reported (IBRD, 1970, p.41). While only partially effective as a revenue-raising tool, foreign exchange controls did add to the patronage opportunities available to the government – or more precisely to those in positions to control imports and exports, such as the governor of al-Ḥudayda, Shaykh Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm. Exchange controls meant that the YAR operated a de-facto dual exchange rate. Preferred importers with the requisite licenses accessed foreign currency at the official rate, which overvalued the Riyal and acted as a subsidy, while the bulk of the YAR's trade used de-facto exchange rates (IBRD, 1970, p.42).[155]

Absent new foreign patrons willing to cover current expenditure, the YAR leadership turned to borrowing from domestic constituencies and outright money printing. As ʾAḥmad ʾAbū Saʿīd, a former minister, confided to Robert Burrowes, in the final years of the civil war the government reasoned that "about the only thing we could afford was paper, so we had money printed just as fast as we could" (Burrowes, 1987, p.35). In the 1968/69 financial year, the YAR financed more than 60% of its budget by borrowing against treasury bills and printing

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[155] Import licenses were originally introduced in 1964, but until 1967 they were almost automatically issued (IBRD, 1970, p.42).

new money. Of the YR 66.7 million raised in this way, nearly YR 59 million came from currency issue, producing a strong inflationary effect (IBRD, 1970, p.30).

Currency in circulation increased from YR 30 million in February 1964, when the new paper Riyal was introduced, to ca. YR 94 million in late 1967 – that is an increase of YR 64 million over approximately four years. This initial currency was issued against silver riyals that the YAR was taking out of circulation and an Egyptian deposit of E£ 29.5 million in the Yemen currency board's accounts with the Egyptian Central Bank. Although this account was never formally frozen, it appears to have been inaccessible to the government after Egyptian withdrawal. New currency issue of a further YR 91 million in 1968 and 1969 therefore needed to be financed by domestic borrowing, not foreign exchange. Treasury bills made up the bulk of this, at YR 88 million, although it is not clear that all or most found buyers. The rest was loaned outright from the YBRD (IBRD, 1970, pp.33–35). The Egyptian embassy in Ṣanaʿāʾ noted in August 1968 that its latest shipment of 16 million Yemeni Riyals fresh from the printing presses was being issued without collateral with an immediate inflationary effect (DWQ, 0078-044111, 29 Aug. 1968). The US Dollar to Yemeni Riyal exchange rate provides one of the few available rough proxies for inflation. The price of the Dollar in Riyal increased 25% between 1961 and late 1964, or about 8% per year. Between the 1964/65 and 1966/67 fiscal years, inflation accelerated. The cost of goods priced in dollars increased by about 20% annually during this time. Finally, during the fiscal crisis of the final war years, the annual cost increase of dollar-denominated goods accelerated further to nearly 40% after Egyptian withdrawal, before slowing to 20% in 1969/70.[156]

In-line with the model, this period of crisis was one where previous dynamics linked to foreign funding stopped operating. The fact that financial difficulties could bring down governments at all points to very different relations of bargaining and, as the model suggests, the half-hearted attempts at increased taxation that were pursued did relate meaningfully to forms of bureaucratic penetration because the fiscal crisis empowered a new generation of technocrats within the government. Their skills became central to keeping the crisis at bay: they were the financial and administrative wizards that could turn paper into currency, move debt around the YBRD's balance sheet, and issue treasury bills (Burrowes, 2005, p.95). This

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[156] The IBRD, using slightly different figures and different timeframes, notes that the cost of foreign exchange in Riyal terms increased by 70% between 1964 and 1968 and by a further 200% between 1968 and 1970 (IBRD, 1970, p.41).

may reflect a more contingent and incidental relationship between fiscal crisis and institutional forms than the model suggests. These 'modernists' were able to provide access to capital while sharing, broadly, a corporate identity in favour of larger, better organised, and more centralised government institutions. Yet, this may be as much a result of their particular educational trajectories and the economic orthodoxy of the time, as a reflection of their structural position within the state. However, all the while, customs duty increased even in real terms, even though the volume of imports declined.

Of course, formal taxation and institutional development were not the only way to raise money. The co-option of holders of capital able to offer lines of credit to the YAR government or buy its treasury bills, often rested on narrower strategies of patronage. While new taxes were unsuccessful as strategies for raising income, they did generate new patronage opportunities in the absence of external rents. The selective granting of import licenses, controlling access to monopolies, or channelling food aid and loans to selected wholesalers who could then sell them on the retail market at a significant mark-up, mostly emerged in the few years after Egyptian withdrawal (IBRD, 1970, p.35). Similar strategies existed at the local level. Being granted the status of *wakīl*, representative, of national-level monopolists or foreign companies, was an important element of merchants' business (Messick, 1978, pp.281–282, 284, 292).

5.1.4   After 1970: Saudi funding and the return of the rentier model

As the civil war drew to a close, Saudi Arabia stepped in to provide external funding, putting an end to three years of crisis, fiscal reorientation, and bargaining and entrenching the absence of taxation and reliance on foreign rents as the new normal. As a corollary of these rents, government spending expanded and became a way to forge connections between new institutions at the centre and relatively independent governance mechanisms at the local level. Such allocation-led strategies to expand central oversight and influence, pioneered during the civil war and particularly the Egyptian intervention, expanded and formed the basis of the institutional developments of the 1970s.

Saudi Arabian financial support put an end to the YAR's fiscal crisis. A $20 million Saudi Arabian grant accompanied reconciliation between royalists and republicans in September 1970 (Gause, 1990, p.82). Prior to reconciliation, Saudi Arabia had already acted as guarantor for a £5 million (ca. $12 million) loan to the YAR in 1969 or 1970, which allowed the YAR to

access commercial credit, despite being effectively in default to its international creditors (AV Neues Amt 12333, 26 Jul. 1971).[157] At approximately the same time, in July 1969, the YAR applied to join the IMF and World Bank, despite concern that membership would limit the cabinet's ability to pay for war by printing money. It was a remarkable move at a time when the YAR relied heavily on money creation to fund its large deficit, but was a gamble that paid off: The YAR was admitted in May 1970 and between the 1970/71 and 1975/76 financial years, foreign aid accounted for roughly 80% of YAR capital expenditure and an unknown amount of its recurrent expenditure (Nyrop, 1977, p.171; Burrowes, 1987, pp.39–40). Saudi Arabia remained the most important donor and covered much of the YAR's regular expenses and military budget, as well as funding individual development projects (Badeeb, 1986; Chaudhry, 1997, pp.124–125). Table 8 reflects the same reality, although the details differ: Between 1971 and 1974 *official* foreign grants and loans – there is reason to believe that significant fractions of Saudi aid were not officially declared – account for nearly half of government income. Foreign funds and customs duty were by far the most important sources of funding, together accounting for nearly 80% of government income.

Table 8: YAR government income by source 1966-1970 in nominal YR (millions)								
	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70	1970/71	1971/72	1972/73	1973/74
direct taxes	7.6	8.2	13.4	15.8	9	13	15	32
indirect taxes	15.5	18.1	27.1	32.9	63	97	135	184
other sources	3.1	3.0	5.5	10.8	24	29	49	61
foreign grants and loans	18.0	0	0	44.0	119	171	117	239
domestic borrowing	[10.8]	[35.1]	[66.7]	57.0				

Source: 1966-1970 figures: IBRD, 1970, pp.28, 31 and Annex II; 1970-1974: Chaudhry, 1997, p.193. Figures in [parentheses] are actual deficit figures from: IBRD 1970, p.30. Empty cells are missing values.

Despite the outside aid, the YAR struggled to match income and expenditure. As the previous section made clear, successive governments tried in vain to contain demands for ever-larger stipends from tribes, popular calls for investment in infrastructure and economic development, and pressure to increase military expenditure from officers who had become part of the dominant coalition. Yet, something more was at work: central government

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[157] Saudi Arabia also covered interest payments for the first two years. Details of the loan differ in: Burrowes, 1987, p.36.

spending in the period after 1970 sought to forge connections between new institutions at the centre and relatively independent mechanisms of governance at the local level.

Several authors have noted the emergence of this model in the 1970s. For example, Robert Burrowes (1987, p.55) argues that the government of Prime Minister Ḥassan Makkī in 1974 sought to achieve a greater presence in the periphery by exchanging services for allegiance. Others have commented on the large jump in public sector employment after the fiscal constraints of the final war years were lifted: from 13,000 civil servants in 1969 to somewhere between 18,480 and as many as 31,300 in the mid-1970s (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.129; Chaudhry, 1997, p.40; Dresch, 2000, pp.124–125). Yet, as examined so far and expanded on in the next Section, 5.2, such an allocation-led approach to expanding central control had earlier roots, including in increases in public sector payrolls, increases to tribal stipends, support to Local Development Associations (LDAs), and the Egyptians' 'hearts and minds' investments of the 1963-1967 period. Never far in abeyance, such investments expanded once Saudi Arabian support became available. Growing government expenditure in tandem with the end of the war slowly shifted a measure of power back to the centre.

This suggests that in addition to mechanisms linking fiscal extraction with forms of state penetration, state expenditure too has an important effect on institutional development. The central government's growing allocation favoured forms of bureaucratic penetration and central control emphasised by a literature on (neo)patrimonialism that has played only a marginal role in discussions of the links between civil wars and state formation.[158] As we will see below, increased expenditure allowed the Republic to gain in substance as vested interests in its preservation came to extend to a growing army, civil service, and additional beneficiaries of its funds.

5.2 The wartime evolution of coercive, central, and local institutions

Besides transforming the fiscal basis of the state, the civil war wrought dramatic changes in administrative and security institutions at the central and local levels during the civil war. An initial sub-section 5.2.1 revisits the significant changes in the structure and composition of the military and its limited growth over the civil war. The model draws attention to how

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[158] The neopatrimonialism literature has been effective in its analysis of how bureaucratic and personal ties and logics combine but has tended to overemphasise the negative aspects of neopatrimonial politics. See: Khan, 2007.

weapons and funds flowing to tribal fighters weakened central control of violence and drained resources away from the military. At the same time, the relationship between the military and other institutions accords partially to the 'crowding out' mechanism of the model, whereby increases in the size of the military at important junctures meant lower investments in other organisations. Finally, we will see that external intervention helps explain why investments in the military as an institution did not significantly bolster central control of violence. Continuing an argument from 4.3.2 and one of the potential pathways of the model, external security guarantees helped concerns over political loyalty of the armed forces trump attempts to centralise control over coercion.

5.2.2 explores the development of central government institutions, while 5.2.3 explores the development of local institutions during the civil war. In keeping with the analysis on the state's fiscal basis, the discussion highlights that, in parallel with ballooning expenditure, central institutions expanded dramatically. The compact administration of the Imam became a set of sprawling institutions that, together with the military and tribal subsidies, soaked up the bulk of government expenditure. Indeed, the civilian bureaucracy overall grew more quickly than the military. This highlights the limits of the 'crowding out' story and, upon investigation, does not accord with the model's rival pathway of a military demonstration effect or 'crowding in.' Instead, it reflects the impact of external intervention. Taking their cue from Egyptian models, new institutions were highly centralised and found themselves largely unconnected to the local level, except as a source of funds. Although weapons and money flowing to tribal fighters entrenched the autonomy of local institutions, central allocation reconstituted, to a limited degree, central influence.

5.2.1 The development of the military as an institution

Section 4.3 traced the growth of the military and the evolving role of officers in the dominant coalition. It foregrounded the question whether mobilisation organised new constituencies for violence and examined the role of the officer corps within the political settlement. Here, we revisit the military from an institutional perspective, foregrounding changes in size, hierarchy, structure, and relations to other formal institutions. The sub-section begins with an exploration of institutional change through the lens of the model, with its emphasis on trade-offs between central and local control of violence, between the military and civilian institutions, and the importance of external intervention for shaping the YAR military. It then returns to the theme of tribal-military alliances and intertwining, which points beyond the heuristics of the model.

An institution taking shape?

The Yemeni military grew over the course of the war, though its expansion was not rapid. Tracking its growth is made more difficult by the dissolution of parts of the Imam's military at the outbreak of the war and different figures for the size of the military throughout.[159] Conflicting figures reflect both the poor state of record keeping and lack of clarity on what is being counted: The military shaded into tribal units and paramilitaries with different degrees of formalisation.

To compensate for defections and spontaneous demobilisation at the beginning of the war, the new YAR government called for volunteers to form a National Guard. As Section 4.3 highlighted, the National Guard was a success in terms of initial mobilisation, though less convincing in retaining soldiers and as a fighting force. In 1964, to replace voluntary recruitment into the National Guard, the YAR formally introduced general conscription, which was observed haphazardly in practice. Around the same time, it integrated most of the National Guard into the regular army, creating four new brigades.

In theory, there was a consensus among republican politicians from 1963 onwards that the YAR needed a far larger military. A recurrent demand during the series of tribal and popular conferences at Khamr and elsewhere was the formation of a strong national military of at least 12,000 soldiers and the consolidation of separate tribal forces into a national militia (e.g. PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 28 Apr. 1965). According to Egyptian accounts, this consensus extended to the UAR command (ʾAḥmad, 1992, p.301).

In-line with the model's suggestion that military spending might crowd-out other expenditure, to the extent that the military did expand, growing expenditure came at the expense of the civilian central administration. The military received a greater share of the government budget and more funds in absolute terms. Expenditure for 'security' under the Imam in 1961 was YR 7.9 million, or 32% of recurrent government expenditure, of which the military received YR 3.8 million (El Attar, 1964, pp.213-214, 217). When government expenditure estimates next become available in the 1966/67 fiscal year, 'defence' spending, including subsidies to tribes, had increased to YR 20.8 million and 41% of the total budget. By 1968/69 the defence budget increased to YR 53.3 million and 49% of total expenditure. Nominal figures, of course, over-state the increase, but in inflation-adjusted terms,

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[159] See 4.3.1 above.

expenditure more than doubled and defence spending, including tribal subsidies, captured more than the entire real-term increase in the government budget between 1961 and 1969.[160]

Crowding out was evident on an everyday level in that military salaries were prioritised over the civil service. During fiscal crises, military officials continued to be paid, while civilian bureaucrats sometimes received no or only partial pay (Nājī, 1988, pp.221–222; PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, clipping of NZZ of 17 Feb. 1966). Similarly, military infrastructure was prioritised over other investment (El Attar, 1964, p.283) and the military budget, as discussed in Chapter 4, gained an increasingly autonomous status. Moreover, although additional military spending probably boosted aggregate demand, since higher salaries circulated in the domestic economy, the Keynesian multiplier of YAR military spending beyond salaries was likely low. Officers purchased imported consumer goods or built or expanded houses, while the military imported weapons, ammunition, and even uniforms and some food items. Linkages to the domestic economy were minimal. During the Egyptian presence, Egyptian construction companies also captured military infrastructure and real-estate spending. They built new military bases and access roads, generally importing cement, other construction materials, and even Egyptian workers (e.g. PAAA, B36 45, 9 Oct. 1963).

Crowding out was not limited to questions of funding and pay. Long-term imbalances in resourcing encouraged broader substitution of civilian institutions by military ones. One of the few aspects of a 1964 local government reform that was more widely implemented was the provision that the military commander of each governorate be a serving officer. Especially where tribal organisation was weak or small-scale, these military commanders often were the most powerful actor in the governorate as the war ended. Where tribal organisation was stronger, the provision contributed to the intertwining of tribal and military power (El-Azzazi, 1978, 148). After Egyptian withdrawal, Yemeni military commanders were partially able to take over the role of Egyptian commanders, who had wielded a great deal of power locally and controlled discretionary spending on 'hearts and minds' projects, such as wells and roads, but also outright gifts of sugar, food, and books (Ferris, 2012, p.185; Somerville-Large, 1967, p.111). Inserting the military directly into administration at the local level was to have significant longer-term effects, since with increased control over local administration, trade

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[160] In addition to the caveats about figures raised elsewhere, this comparison assumes that El Attar's 'security' category is comparable to the 'defence' category of official YAR statistics.

routes, and transport infrastructure, military officers, in alliance with local tribal leaders, gained access to smuggling and independent sources of income.

Yet, crowding out is only part of the story. External intervention conditioned the development of the military and plans to strengthen the military were implemented haphazardly. The central civil service, though it emerged from the war far less powerful than the military, actually grew more quickly in terms of its overall size. As discussed in Chapter 4, the Egyptian command repeatedly blocked efforts to expand and equip the military when this threatened to increase its independence from the UAR chain of command (see 4.3.2 and PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 19 May 1965). Other constituencies likewise stood in the way of rapid military growth. German reporting highlights that tribal leaders, who had enthusiastically endorsed calls for a larger Yemeni army at the Khamr conference, in practice obstructed any increase that might leach funding away from their own militias or create a central military able to dominate their tribal forces (AV Neues Amt 1719, 10 Jul. 1965).[161] As the model highlights and as discussed in Chapter 4, there were clearly trade-offs between mobilising tribal fighters and building the central military.

Nonetheless, the republican military reached a size of about 7,000 soldiers by the beginning of 1965, although plans for a further three new brigades came to nought (ʾAḥmad, 1992, p.299). By the time the Egyptian military withdrew in late 1967, the republican military included approximately 10,000 soldiers (Nājī, 1988, pp.237, 241) and consisted of four large infantry units referred to variously as brigades (ʾalwiya sing. liwāʾ) or regiments (ʾafwāj sing. fawj): the Revolution Brigade stationed in Kawkabān, which was the largest of the units, with more than 1,000 soldiers; the Victory Brigade, which was commanded by Brigadier ʿAbd Rabbuh al-ʿAwāḍī, the brother of the Minister for Tribal Affairs; the Unity Brigade, which primarily guarded the road between Ṣanaʿāʾ and al-Ḥudayda and reached a strength of 1,000 soldiers at the end of 1964; and the Liberation Brigade, a catch-all term for a number of independent units recruited largely from single tribes. At the end of 1964, it consisted of 14 companies (sariyāt) without any higher-level organisation or an effective chain of command. In addition, the YAR military boasted an armoured brigade with companies stationed in Ṣanaʿāʾ, Jabal Rāziḥ, Ṣaʿda, Khawlān, Ḥajja, and Māʾrib, a battalion of ṣāʿiqa special forces and

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[161] On the Khamr conference see also 6.2.1.

a battalion of paratroopers, who according to some reports included Egyptian soldiers (Nājī, 1988, pp.257–258; ʾAḥmad, 1992, pp.299–300).[162]

They were flanked by a range of further military-like organisations. A rump National Guard or "National Army" may have continued to exist, employed in guard duties and border patrols. There were also a range of republican 'tribal armies,' described as the armies (*juyūsh*) of Ḥāshid, of al-Ḥadāʾ, of Siḥār and Dhū Muḥammad, of Jumāʿa, and of Hādī ʿĪsā, for some time the Deputy Chief of Staff (ʾAḥmad, 1992, pp.299–300; Nājī, 1988, pp.257–258).[163] However, in other accounts, Hādī ʿĪsā, who was executed in October 1966, commanded the National Guard (Interview with Qāsim al-Wazīr, 2016; SWB ME/W207/A/3, 11 Apr. 1963) and the list may be incomplete and appears idiosyncratic, not least in listing large tribal confederations and much smaller individual tribes as like units. As we saw in Section 4.3, the Popular Resistance Force militias formed in 1968, about which we also know little, also existed alongside, and in ambiguous relation to, the armed forces.

Tribal military intertwining

As the absence of a central command hierarchy in the 'Liberation Brigade' and the inclusion of lists of 'tribal armies' in the unit structure of the military highlight, the alliances between officers and tribal leaders discussed in Section 4.3 were mirrored on an institutional level in an intertwining between the military hierarchy and tribal structures. This points beyond the heuristics of the model, its opposition between tribal and military influence and straightforward trade-offs between local and central control over violence. Whereas the focus in Chapter 4 was on the political settlement and hence the alliances between high ranking officers and the most influential tribal leaders, the focus here is on the structure of the military as an institution and the way tribal and military forms of organisation combined and influenced each other. This mutual influencing extended to the formal administration as well and not only tribalised the armed forces and the formal administration, but also militarised and 'formalized' the tribes, drawing them into much closer relations with the

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[162] The military continued to grow after the end of the civil war to about 40,000 soldiers by the mid-1970s – thanks to abundant external funds (Chaudhry, 1997, p.131).

[163] al-Ḥadāʾ is a member of the now largely defunct Madhḥaj confederation and one of the few more southern tribes, alongside some in al-Bayḍāʾ, to have played a large role in the civil war.

central state. In this way, the civil war prefigured and put in place elements of what was later described as the tribal-military-commercial complex (Dresch, 1995).

Within one year of the overthrow of the Imam, the republican military command came to include tribal leaders and amended its brief to cover the fighting strength of tribal militias as well as the regular military (PAAA, B36 45, 23 Nov. 1963). Distinctions between 'military' and 'tribe' blurred and the military was an uncertain solvent of tribal ties. Many recruits in the new Yemeni military came from tribes, particularly the minor tribes around Ṣanaʿāʾ, some of them nominally royalist (Dresch, 2000, p.149; Sitte, 1973, pp.23–25). Tribesmen in the military could respond to calls for mobilisation from their tribe, sometimes abandoning their military units to fight in tribal conflicts or opting out of battles that would have pitted them against members of their own tribe (Interview with Ḥamūd Baydar, 2016; Nājī, 1988, p.249; Dresch, 2000, p.149). Moreover, some officers came from shaykhly families and some headed military units composed of members of their tribe stationed in their region of origin. Control of such units from Ṣanaʿāʾ was tenuous and in these instances military organisation simply formalised and reproduced tribal forms of organisation.

As the memoirs of ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar, make clear, operations by officers like Colonel Mujāhid ʾAbū Shawārib were commanded from Khamr in Ḥāshid, rather than Ṣanaʿāʾ (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, e.g. p.122). Similarly, the forces directly commanded by Ḥusayn al-Difāʿī, the Minister of Defence from 1963-1966, consisted largely of members of his Dhū Muḥammad tribe, while the tribal militias of al-Ḥadāʾ and Siḥār tribes were commanded by Major Muḥammad ʿAbd Allah and Colonel ʿAbd Allah Hussaynī. Both were officers in the regular army. Tribal militias could be headed by officers, military units could be commanded by shaykhs, and at times the distinction breaks down altogether. Only in the case of the special forces, the armoured brigade, paratroopers, and the Revolution Brigade (*liwāʾ al-thawra*), which included most of the artillery of the Yemeni military, was tribal allegiance not a major organising factor (Nājī, 1988, pp.256–258).[164]

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[164] However, officers from the ʾAbū Luḥūm family were prominent in the armoured brigade (Interview with Qāsim al-Wazīr, 2017).

Many of these features emerge in the general lament of the state of the Yemeni military in this report by the Egyptian embassy in Taʿiz (DWQ, 0078-044109, 8 Oct. 1968):

> The soldiers do not have the discipline or military precision to implement attacks and the orders of their leaders, and most of them are stationed in their local areas [*bilād*] or tribes. The officers receive the salaries of the soldiers. What is more, they take payment from the tribes [… The soldiers] flee from the units and sell ammunition, equipment, and weapons for their own gain.

This interweaving is also well illustrated by Steven Caton's (2005) study of conflict and mediation in North Yemen in the late 1970s. The disappearance of a tribal shaykh's daughter prompts mediation involving more and more powerful men situated higher in formal government hierarchies *and* in higher positions within the tribal system.

Both of these examples highlight that it was not simply a matter of tribal forms of organisation affecting the military, but also military resources and hierarchies inflecting the tribal system. We saw in Chapter 4 that it was those tribal leaders who recognised the opportunities of new institutional forms, built alliances with officers, and placed relatives into new military and civilian institution, who gained the most during the civil war. A similar, but distinct, story can be told about tribalism and the military as institutions. As Charles Swagman reveals in his comparative study of two rural districts, one of which, ʿAns, had benefited handsomely from funding in the period immediately after the war, while the other, Jabal Rayma, had not, an important difference between the winners and losers of the post-war settlement was the size of potential kin-based action groups. Yet, this by itself was not decisive. It was the presence of tribesmen from ʿAns in formal government that added to the tribe's influence as a collective actor. Tribesmen in the military and other Ṣanaʿāʾ-based institutions increased its ability to access central funds. At the same time, access to such funds increased the influence of these members of the tribe, not all of whom came from families with traditional claims to leadership. Skills and training valued in the civil service and military empowered those local actors with education and technocratic skills, who came to complement the traditional role of shaykhs. In other cases, young shaykhs with technical skill might be able to capture such new sources of power and rise to exceptional prominence. Shaykhs who sought to keep to their traditional roles saw their standing at the local level slowly eclipsed. They maintained respected roles as mediators of disputes, but new opportunities for patronage and regulating access to central government funds and employment fell to local figures able to build alliances with politicians in Ṣanaʿāʾ or to place family members in central administration (Swagman, 1988a, pp.69–81, 109, 126).

5.2.2   The development of central institutions

The YAR civil service grew rapidly during the civil war. New institutions proliferated, yet growth was chaotic and salaries were low. As the model suggests, military crowding out, the takeover of local-level institutions by tribal leaders, and especially external funding help explain what appear at first blush as paradoxes of growth. Together, these factors redrew central institutional structures, ultimately creating central institutions defined by Egyptian administrative blueprints, performing stateness for external donors, and reliant on alliances and control of the purse to influence local governance. Continuing a theme from Section 5.1 that points beyond the model, the sub-section also highlights the role of the civil service as an employer and for allocating and distributing funds – and the ways in which this partially reconstituted central influence in new ways.

The new civil service

Based on the available evidence, it appears that the YAR civil service grew from some 2,000 civil servants under the Imam to approximately 4,000 in 1963, 12,500 in 1967 – the first year for which official statistics are available – and 13,500 in 1970 at the end of the civil war (IBRD, 1970, Annex I pp.3-4; Dresch, 2000, pp.124–125). Growth continued after the end of the war to almost 18,000 employees in 1974, of whom approximately one-third were working in ministries in Ṣanaʿāʾ (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.129).[165] Unfortunately, there are no reliable statistics about the number of people employed at different levels, the structure of the administration, and other basic information. Even overall numbers are suspect and it is often unclear who is included in which counts. For instance, the justice ministry only began registering local judges during the 1970s, even as income from local religious endowments continued to pay for their salaries. Since they had not previously been registered, they could not have been included in earlier counts (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.179). Thus, whether and how they and other local officials are accounted for in statistics is unclear. Disparities in numbers after official statistics are available also cast doubt on earlier figures. For instance, El-Azzazi (1978, p.129) mentions that there were 17,906 employees in "ministries and agencies [in Ministerien und Behörden]" in 1974, but also claims there were 18,480 employees in the public administration [öffentliche Verwaltung] that same year without explaining how the tallies differ.

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[165] But see much higher figures for 1975 in: Chaudhry, 1997, p.40; also Dresch, 2000, pp.124-25.

In parallel to an increase in the number of people employed in the civil service, new institutions proliferated. One of the first announcements of the new revolutionary government was "the creation of a full suite of modern ministries" (Peterson, 1982, p.138). The new government, with extensive Egyptian support, founded ministries of Foreign Affairs, Education, Health, Tribal Affairs, Interior, Justice, Agriculture, Finance, Economy, Labour, and Information in the early months of 1963 (al-Abiadh, 1984, p.147; Chaudhry, 1997, p.227). It added more administrative bodies later, including an institute for public administration, a technical office that compiled the YAR's first official statistics in 1968, and a currency board and development bank that together fulfilled the functions of a central bank between 1964 and 1971 (Peterson, 1982, pp.139–141). New institutions continued to be created after the end of the war, albeit at a slower pace. North Yemen's Central Bank was established in 1971, its Central Budget Bureau in 1972, and its Central Planning Organisation in 1972 (DWQ, 0078-044113, 11 Sep. 1966; 0078-044111, 29 Aug. 1968; Nyrop, 1977, p.186; El-Azzazi, 1978, p.119). Blueprints, hierarchies, and procedures for many of these institutions, particularly those created during the Egyptian deployment to Yemen, were imported wholesale from Egypt.

The rapid growth of institutions during this time was chaotic. Two nearly contemporary evaluations provide grounded insight into the functioning of new administrative bodies. The first is contained in an Egyptian report dated 5 August 1967, on the current functioning of the Yemeni Foreign Ministry as a preliminary step towards Egyptian plans to reorganise it. According to the report, the ministry in Ṣanaʿāʾ had 45 employees, but significantly fewer desks and chairs. The report notes, with some alarm, that officials do not respect the official hierarchy and all employees can access the minister directly. It complains that the ministry does not keep minutes of meetings, does not receive reports from Yemeni missions abroad, and that the number of employees under each director rarely exceeds two or three, suggesting a top-heavy organisation (DWQ 0078-044111 5.8.67). El-Azzazi conducted the second evaluation. It focuses on the YAR Ministry of Local Administration shortly after the end of the civil war. Officially, the Ministry had 82 officials in Ṣanaʿāʾ, 14 of which, even on paper, had no job title or portfolio – El-Azzazi surmised that their main function was receiving civil service salaries. Moreover, his repeated visits to the Ministry uncovered only 49 officials and 8 messengers actually present in the building, sharing two typewriters, and with little means or interest in communicating with the local administrations, even though liaison with them was theoretically their main task (El-Azzazi, 1978, pp.132–138). Yemeni administration at the end of the civil war was "personal and individual rather than institutional" and characterised by "duplication of functions, overlapping and conflicts of jurisdiction" between

and within institutions (UNDP Yemen Arab Republic Information Paper No 15, 1971, p.35, quoted in El-Azzazi, 1978, p.121). Unsurprisingly, in allocating funds and determining the location of new infrastructure, civil servants did not necessarily follow central procedures and logics. Employees who owed their recruitment to tribe or region were very much representatives of these groups – traditional connections and hierarchies often mattered more than bureaucratic function (El-Azzazi, 1978, pp.165–166).

Given this state of affairs within the public administration, new institutions have generally been characterised as 'weak' and there is a recurrent idea that the 1960s marked a "period of stagnation and even retrogression" in terms of state building: "Despite the façade of capability and vitality presented by the new administrative structures and economic ventures" on paper, they lacked substance in practice (Peterson, 1982, pp.139–140). It was, after all, "far easier to recruit a large bureaucracy […] than to endow it with skill" or get it to do anything effective (Stookey, 1978, p.261). Students of state formation in northern Yemen have diagnosed the institutions created during the 1960s with a long list of problems: serious shortages of trained personnel, lack of capacity to collect taxes, imposed Egyptian bureaucratic structures, procedures, and personnel, and the continued presence of "old groups of people" who brought traditional ideas into new institutions (al-Abiadh, 1984, p.148; see also: Burrowes, 2009, "Yemen Arab Republic (YAR)"; Peterson, 1984).

Accounting for the paradoxes of growth

There is no doubt that such a list captures important weaknesses of the new administrative bodies, which did little effective administering and disappointed on basic metrics of effectiveness and responsiveness.[166] Military crowding-out of investments in the civilian bureaucracy, discussed in 5.2.1 above, and the takeover of local-level institutions by tribal leaders due to the resources involved in mobilising local violence specialists, discussed in 5.2.3 below, help account for obvious weaknesses of the central administration in basic facilities, in salaries, and its ability to influence local level governance. In addition, and in parallel to its influence on the development of the military, foreign intervention decisively shaped new civilian administrative forms and their functioning. On the most immediate level, this is about the way in which institutional modernisation consisted of a straightforward

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[166] E.g. a local administrator under the Imam expected telegrams to be answered on the same day. After the war even urgent queries took five days (Messick, 1978, pp.106–107).

transplantation of Egyptian models to Yemen and the way in which Egyptian strategies of political control over new institutions created highly centralised and externally-orientated institutions with Egyptians in key positions of influence. Both of these dynamics are worth exploring, but a focus on them has generally impeded analysis of the less immediate, but similarly far-reaching way in which the large external role in designing, funding, and implementing institutional changes shaped the incentives and parameters of new civilian institutions, imprinting them with a bias for central and urban administration.

The Egyptian command and Egyptian experts wielded enormous power over institutional design and day to day decisions. Within weeks of the overthrow of the Imam, the new republican government invited an Egyptian mission to oversee fundamental administrative reform and Egyptian experts defined the structure of new Yemeni ministries (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.118-119). This initial burst of institution-building was followed by a formal cooperation agreement between the UAR and the YAR in July 1963. Authorising up to 400 seconded Egyptian civilian experts, the agreement permitted cooperation in a wide range of areas from administration, over agriculture, religious endowments, security, and justice, to education, health and infrastructure and meant that Egyptians held key positions in the newly-created institutions. The UAR committed E£ 3 million annually for projects, additional salaries and expenses for seconded experts until the 1964/65 fiscal year, when the budget was reduced to E£ 2 million per year until Egyptian withdrawal (DWQ, 0078-044113, 11 Sep 1966). Egyptian experts "prepared and issued republican decrees" on the organisation of new Yemeni ministries based on Egyptian models (ʾAḥmad, 1992, p.545).[167]

New administrative forms were, according to an early study of institutional development, unintelligible to the Yemeni population and the officials working in them (Azzazi, 1978, p.121). Many of these officials were recruited at short notice and few had a clear idea of the function of their institution, let alone their role within it, as the bureaucracy doubled or

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[167] The health and education systems also depended almost entirely on Egyptian experts. Schools adopted the Egyptian curriculum after the revolution (Interview with ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, 2015). Egyptian headmasters ran the YAR's three main secondary schools and 180 seconded Egyptian teachers made up the entirety of Yemen's secondary school personnel and the vast majority of teachers in 'modern' primary schools (DWQ 0078-044112, no date [Outcomes of the study on the situation of Arab experts in Yemen in each sector, Annex B]). The Egyptian education ministry also sent significant numbers of educational books to Yemen (DWQ, 0078-044111, 21 Nov. 1967; see also the figures in DWQ, 0078-044112, 1 Nov. 1966; 0078-044113, 11 Sep. 1966; 12 Jun. 1967).

trebled in size within a matter of months (Azzazi, 1978, p.119). The Egyptian leadership, foisting its own institutional forms on a very different administrative landscape, ignored the lack of fit between new institutions and existing structures and practices[168] and blamed the Yemenis for failing to operate the new forms effectively. According to President Jamal ʿAbd al-Nasir, for instance, "half of the ministers [in Ṣanaʿāʾ] never go to their offices and the other half don't know what to do when they get there" (Nutting, 1970, p.350). He does not mention that YAR ministers were being asked to operate Egyptian hierarchies according to Egyptian procedures under Egyptian tutelage, without the staff, equipment, experience, or other prerequisites to do so.

Egyptian influence extended beyond the initial blueprints. Egyptian advisors played a decisive role in drafting the 1964 constitution, ensuring that, contrary to the wishes of those like ʿAḥmad Nuʿmān and ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-ʾIryānī, who sought to enshrine more collegiate forms of leadership, the constitution featured a strong presidency under the Egyptians' preferred leader, ʿAbd Allah al-Sallāl (PAAA, B36 115, 2 May 1964). In this instance, the 1970 Constitution abandoned the strong presidency, but other Egyptian-initiated measures, including the creation of state owned enterprises and the outlawing of political parties, proved enduring. Similarly, Egyptian influence over day to day decision-making within ministries was pervasive. According to German analysis, Egyptian experts were "present and influential in all government bodies and public institutions" (PAAA, B36 196, 8 Feb. 1965), while the former Yemeni Prime Minster, Muḥsin al-ʿAynī, remembers that his colleagues generally deferred to advice provided by Egyptian advisors, the most important of whom sat in the office of the ministers themselves (Alaini, 2004; Interview with Muḥsin al-ʿAynī, 2016).[169] Particularly after they forcibly returned President al-Sallāl to power in the summer of 1966, Egyptian advisors, military commanders, and intelligence became more and more involved in the minutiae of Yemeni politics – down to controlling the appointment of local officials and lower-ranking officers (Nājī, 1988, p.230). The German embassy in Taʿiz

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[168] A revealing, if relatively benign, example: to become a Director General in the new civil service, a candidate needed a PhD or a university degree and five years of civil service experience. However, there were only about 300 university graduates in North Yemen at the time, many of them recent graduates without civil service experience (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.141).

[169] Schmidt (1968, p.82) relates the story of a young Yemeni civil servant who resented the Egyptian presence in Yemen first and foremost because of his dislike of his boss, an Egyptian advisor in his ministry. See also: PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 15 Jan. 1967.

perceived a pervasive fear of purges among Yemeni civil servants (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 13 Nov. 1966) and in the final days of 1966, noted that it seemed as though even President al-Sallāl was "no longer allowed even to breathe without Egyptian permission" (PAAA, B36 245, 10 Dec. 1966).

On this immediate level, a focus on the role of external actors thus reveals the way Egyptian assumptions about 'modern' institutions defined the new administrative bodies created in Yemen, highlights the extensive control the UAR exercised over domestic political processes, and the extent to which it sidelined opponents in formal politics. Political appointments, decisions, even constitutional changes were decided in Cairo and influenced through relations with the Egyptian command, not Yemeni ministers.[170] As such, external intervention determined key parameters of Yemeni politics during the civil war and contributed to the observed 'hollowness' of new institutions. Robert Burrowes is hardly the only observer to conclude that "Yemeni state-building was more hindered than helped by the fact that the new state was largely built and staffed by Egyptians" (Burrowes, 2009, "Yemen Arab Republic (YAR)").

Beyond these visible forms of control and the way in which Egyptian models in general shaped the structure of new institutions, the Egyptian intervention and its role in designing, funding, and implementing institutional changes shaped the incentives and parameters of new civilian institutions, imprinting them with a bias for central and urban administration. Egyptian political control had the effect of both centralizing decision-making and hollowing-out Yemeni politics as decision-making came to reside outside the domestic political process. This created a growing disconnect between central institutions accountable to the Egyptian command and local government that continued to function autonomously, but without being able to influence central decision-making and, due to the predominance of external loans and aid, without mattering for revenue generation. This tendency was cemented by the specific model on offer – advisors created highly centralised ministries on the Egyptian model and the war and the urban biases of donors further exacerbated centralisation. The relative ease of building institutions in the safety of Ṣanaʿāʾ or Taʿiz, or implementing development projects far from the front lines in ʾIbb or al-Mukhā, as opposed to areas with active fighting, helped determine where such projects were built. For instance, all the large Egyptian development

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[170] Similarly, the Egyptian command did not allow other Arab countries, including Algeria, Iraq and Syria, to send experts or provide support (al-Zayd, 2004, pp. 81-82).

projects detailed in the Egyptian archives – hospitals in ʾIbb, Dhamār and Taʿiz, a girls' primary school in Taʿiz, and a birth clinic in al-Mukhā (DWQ, 0078-044109, 15 Sep. 1967) – were in lower Yemen in larger towns far from the front lines. Two of the five projects were in Taʿiz, the location of the Egyptian headquarters.

A second more subtle legacy of externally-led state building lies in the development of government statistics from about 1965 onwards. Local and central records and accounts had of course been kept under the Imam, but these began being aggregated and published in official statistics yearbooks. The birth of government statistics dates to the civil war. Statistics of course have their origin in attempts to make populations and systems legible to the ordering and disciplining power of central administration (e.g. Mitchell, 1988, p.46; Scott, 1998) and have been analysed as contributing to the production of a state effect (Mitchell, 2006). Yet, as researchers in Yemen have noted continuously since YAR statistics began being published, the statistics available remained deeply unreliable, figures obtained from different sources were contradictory or simply counted different things (Messick, 1978, p.17), and donors and International Financial Institutions cared about statistics far more than the YAR government did: at the end of the war, the statistics department consisted of a single Yemeni civil servant and a foreign expert (IBRD, 1970, Annex I p.5). As such, statistics were not primarily about making the population legible to domestic administrators, but a way in which new institutions performed stateness for international audiences. Reflecting this preoccupation, the first statistical yearbooks of 1968 and 1972 are remarkable documents, presented for international audiences in Arabic and English. They include precise counts of everything that can be counted, perhaps in the knowledge that much that probably 'should' be being counted was not. We find, for instance, that in 1971 there were 12 handloom weaving businesses and 22 brickmaking businesses in the YAR, the latter employing 192 of the 6706 workers employed in manufacture overall. Though industry and manufacturing were doubtlessly minimal, such staples of the traditional economy as brickmaking and weaving almost certainly involved numbers of small businesses and labourers orders of magnitudes higher than these estimates (al-Jihāz al-markazī lil-takhṭīt, 1973, p.59). Moreover, while we can look up the number of cinema seats in Taʿiz (al-Jihāz al-markazī lil-takhṭīt, 1973, p.165), there is no estimate of GDP for before 1969.

Beyond the model

The focus on the weaknesses and dysfunctions of the central administration in much of the literature on the YAR reflects, as we have seen, important realities that are well captured by the model. Yet, it may be useful not only to catalogue the ways in which new institutions did

not function, but to explore the ways in which they did. As the rapid increase in the number of employees on government payrolls illustrate, the civil service came to play an important and growing role as an employer, although, due to high inflation and the state's perpetual fiscal crisis, the salaries on offer were modest (Messick, 1978, pp.204–205; Gerholm, 1977, p.72).[171] The civil service also came to play a growing role in the allocation and distribution of funds from the centre. The new administrative apparatus controlled the allocation of external rents through salaries and central budget support and gained influence as a focal point for lobbying and influencing. It determined where, at least some, hospitals, schools, or roads were built (Schmidt, 1968, pp.286–287). Government-sponsored benefits and other payments also increased. In ʾIbb, the state's role in dispensing ṣadaqa (charity) increased rapidly after the revolution. Officials in ʾIbb related to Brinkley Messick that payments of ṣadaqa were "constantly on the increase" after 1962 and became, by the early 1970s, an expected entitlement (Messick, 1978, pp.229–232). Instead of collecting funds from the peripheries, the political centre began to allocate resources, as Section 5.1 highlighted and the discussion in the next section, 5.2.3 develops further. Thus, new ministries meant more than just the continuation of traditional forms in new guises and modern buildings – especially since much of the money available for investment came in the form of foreign loans and aid. Navigating forms, drawing up plans, and accessing central funds became important parts of the political game and the institutions in control of the purse became important fora for bargaining.

5.2.3   The development of local institutions

The development of local government institutions during the civil war was ambiguous. On the one hand, the civil war left local administration relatively untouched and provided far-reaching autonomy to established forms of local self-administration. On the other hand, new flows of money from the centre reconstituted the relationship between central and local government in new ways. Despite some attempts at top-down reforms of local government, in practice the war cut ties of monitoring and accountability, the central government lost

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[171] Brinkley Messick's (1978, pp.204–205) notes on a civil servant's income in ʾIbb provide a useful grounded illustration. A Section Head received 80 MT and about 190 kg of sorghum per month in 1962. After the revolution, the salary increased to 100 MT without payment in kind. Subsequent salary increases lagged inflation. By 1975 the salary had increased by 380% but prices had increased at least 1,600%.

control of appointments, and tax payments to the centre slowed to a trickle, while local institutions continued to function. Locally-raised taxes remained in the local economy and circulated as investments in development initiatives, wages to local officials, and loans to local merchants. This development accords closely to the model's emphasis on the ways in which civil war can reproduce pre-existing local institutions by fragmenting central control. Yet at the same time, increased central government expenditure, albeit on a small scale during the 1960s, created ties of patronage from central to local government. Alliances with central actors partially reconstituted the more hierarchical relations of appointment and accountability under the Imam and in some cases broadened access to power, partially counteracting the centralisation within tribes analysed in 4.2.2.

In theory, Republican Decree 8 of 1964 set forth an amended structure for local government, complemented after the war by Decree 55 of 1973, based on Egyptian plans for 'modern' local administration in Yemen, which envisaged extensive powers of oversight and direct control for the central government.[172] Yet, these decrees served "at best […] as an ideal model" (Cohen and Lewis, 1979, p.10). The provincial councils they envisaged were not formed until after the war and even in the late 1970s existed as stipulated only in the main cities of Ṣanaʿāʾ, Taʿiz and al-Ḥudayda. Below the governorate level, the reforms remained almost entirely a dead letter (El-Azzazi, 1978, p.152). In ʾIbb, their effect was limited to minor changes in bookkeeping and organisation (Messick, 1978, pp.184–185). Instead, anthropological work of the post-war period tends to highlight both the continuity in local government during the war as well as how much local government existed.

In terms of lines of continuity across the war, Jabal Rāziḥ, in the far north of the YAR, is emblematic of many royalist areas in that the Imam's officials stayed in post and continued to collect zakat and administer the ʾawqāf throughout the war. After declaring for the royalists, Rāziḥ cut connections to Ṣanaʿāʾ, but relations with the Ḥamīd al-Dīn princes and royalist

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[172] Local administration in the YAR was organised on the basis of governorates (*muḥāfiẓāt*) restructured from the Imamate system of provinces (*ʾalwiya*, sing. *liwāʾ*). Every *muḥāfiẓa* was divided into several *ʾaqḍiya* (sing. *qaḍāʾ*), which, especially in the central highlands, were often coterminous with tribal territories. Each *qaḍāʾ* was subdivided into *nawāḥī (sing. nāḥiya)* and *ʿuzal (sing. ʿuzla)*. For example, the qaḍāʾ of ʿAns was one of twelve districts in the *muḥāfiẓa* of Dhamār. Qaḍāʾ ʿAns was coterminous with the ʿAns tribe and was composed of 3 *nawāḥī.* Swagman describes ʿAns as belonging to Bakīl, elsewhere it is identified as belonging to Madhḥaj (Swagman, 1988a, pp.97-98, 100; see also: IBRD, 1970, Annex I, pp.3–4).

officials too were weak. Administration became largely autonomous (Weir, 2007, p.281). At the other end of the YAR, in the town of ʾIbb, more representative of republican controlled areas, the structure of local administration and its personnel was likewise marked by continuity, though some of the top positions changed hands and the administrators themselves complained that "the republican government is no government at all – 'everyone governs himself' now." Imamic government had been smaller, tighter, and stronger (Messick, 1978, p.106).

Attempts to conduct more general, but still grounded, research on the YAR's local government confirm this picture: at the lower levels of administration, communities chose representatives according to local conventions. At higher levels, Imamate-era institutions continued to function, and the theoretically centrally-appointed ʿāmil (the head of nāḥiya-level administration) and the ḥākim (director) and mudīr al-māl (director of finances) that headed qaḍāʾ-level administration tended also to be locally-chosen and largely autonomous from Ṣanaʿāʾ well into the 1970s (El-Azzazi, 1978, pp.155–156; Swagman, 1988a, pp.98–100).[173] Local government during much of the civil war enjoyed "local sovereignty" (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 7 Sep. 1966) and locally-administered religious endowments (ʾawqāf) and local forms of taxation, particularly market taxes, provided a real and enduring base for local administration, particularly in larger towns, independent of the central government (Messick, 1978, pp.204–205).

However, though the basic structure and size of local institutions did not change significantly during the war – in contrast to far-reaching changes in central government – those changes in central government and the war itself fundamentally affected the power relations within local institutions and their way of functioning. National-level campaigns against the sāda meant the downfall of many powerful Hashemite families and their replacement by local rivals, while reliance on tribal mobilisation reproduced and strengthened tribal forms of organisation. These changes are familiar from the discussion above. In addition, changes to taxation had their most immediate and tangible effect at the local level and central ideas

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[173] Gerholm's work on Manākha defies this general trend. Yet, it is not always clear that assertions like "government servants […are…] an appendix to the central government in Ṣanaʿāʾ, a means of building a nation out of many independent-minded regions" are statements of fact, rather than aspiration (Gerholm, 1977, p.66).

about modernist, hierarchical, and technocratic governance leaked down to the local level through the central allocation of funds.

By turning taxation over to local officials and sharply reducing the tax burden, central fiscal reforms redrew the relationship between local administration and the centre. Giving up control over taxation quickly brought in its wake an erosion of central control over appointments and other local government decisions. Local proceedings and decisions about taxation and investment stopped impinging on central administration, just as the structures of central government were being fundamentally re-drawn. As a result, central administration became uncoupled from local government. In Jabal Rāziḥ, for instance, Weir notes that the first republican governors after reconciliation held little sway and largely did token work amassing fees and bribes. If they threatened local interests, local shaykhs could complain and get them replaced (Weir, 2007, p.288). This primacy of local power brokers was echoed elsewhere and reflected the changing balance of power created by the flow of resources to tribal leaders, discussed in Section 4.2 above.

Tribal leaders' growing claims on central stipends paradoxically also increased the leverage of central institutions in ways not well captured in the model. Once the war came to an end and tribal mobilisation became less important for regime survival, the fact that local taxation was no longer an important source of government revenues strengthened the bargaining power of central institutions: their reliance on local support and cooperation decreased and their growing importance as a source of funds allowed officials to gain leverage, build patronage networks, and gain influence at the local level.[174] Of course, such officials were themselves members of tribes, village networks, or influential families and it is therefore easy to overstate the extent to which such central control was autonomous from local concerns. The power the YAR government exercised through control of the purse towards the end of the civil war was restricted, particularly as the resources at its disposal remained limited.

The Local Development Associations (LDAs) provide a revealing case study of this dynamic and its ambiguities. Though LDAs really came into their own only in the 1970s, they first emerged during the civil war and the complex local power struggles over their control and government moves to influence LDAs through the provision of central funds, in the late 1960s, reveal the role of allocation in attempts to rebuild central influence.

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[174] Gerholm (1977, pp.112–114) makes a similar point.

Yemenis returning to the areas in and around Taʿiz from Aden in 1962 and early 1963 founded the first LDAs, which thus emerged at the beginning of the civil war as grassroots initiatives for local development, drawing on older traditions of village-level cooperation for building and maintaining public infrastructure (Swagman, 1988a, p.63; Cohen et al., 1981). New laws, patterned on Egyptian models, legalized cooperatives and associations in 1963, formalising these bodies (Carapico, 1998, p.114). Although their number and importance would increase significantly in the mid and late 1970s, by 1972, shortly after the end of the war, there were already 25 recognised LDAs in Taʿiz governorate, 15 in Ṣanaʿāʾ, two in ʾIbb, one in al-Ḥudayda, one in Ḥajja, and two in Radāʿ/al-Bayḍāʾ (al-Jihāz al-markazī lil-takhṭīṭ, 1973, p.165). LDA projects included such development staples as drilling wells and building access roads, schools, and clinics (El-Azzazi 1978, pp.161-164, Swagman 1988, p 67).

Most LDAs were organised at the lowest administrative levels as the result of local initiatives at the hamlet, village, or ʿuzla-level (El-Azzazi 1978, 160-161). Some widened the arena of local politics, providing opportunities for young people and low status traders and craftsmen with the requisite skills or capital to gain a voice in local administration and rise in social status (Gerholm, 1977, p.114; Swagman, 1988a, pp.115–116). Indeed, some LDAs included deliberate provisions to keep shaykhly control at bay (Weir, 2007, p.291). Yet, LDAs could also be power multipliers for local notables (Carapico, 1998, pp.111–112). LDAs might be headquartered in a local shaykh's house and come under his decision-making (Gerholm, 1977, pp.28–29, 41). For instance, the cooperative mentioned in the 1972 statistics in Ḥajja, was likely the large cooperative, active across 6 districts in Ḥāshid territory,[175] set-up, run, and financed by Shaykh ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar to consolidate influence within Ḥāshid (Carapico, 1998, p.111). Depending on the balance of power in LDAs, investments could be concentrated in out-of-the-way villages and local taxes or subscriptions repurposed for LDA investment sometimes found their way into the pockets of leading local officials (El-Azzazi, 1978, pp.164, 170; Gerholm, 1977, p.99; Carapico, 1998, pp.112–113; Swagman, 1988a, p.155).

LDAs were also a tool of central patronage. From 1973 onwards, the central government attempted to exert greater central control, when al-Ḥamdī, who was President of the Confederation of Yemeni Development Associations before he became President of the YAR, sought more top-down influence (Swagman, 1988a, p.63). Later still, manipulating funding to

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[175] ʿAmrān was not a separate governorate at the time.

the LDAs allowed President Ṣāliḥ to "establish a local presence at low cost" (Chaudhry, 1997, p.36). Yet even before the end of the civil war, funding for LDAs gave a measure of information and control to central institutions that were otherwise on the retreat.

Carapico identifies 1968 as a key date in this initial phase. The al-ʾIryānī government established a Department of Youth, Labour, and Social Affairs within the Ministry of Local Administration in 1968 as a concession to the Baʿathist and Qawmiyyin left. It was tasked with promoting LDAs and from early 1969 the YAR government also began providing central funding to the Local Development Associations (AV Neues Amt 12337, 14 Mar. 1969). What little staff the Department had rarely visited, let alone managed, local projects, but governors released funds and set priorities for development in Ḥajja (Shaykh al-ʾAḥmar) and al-Ḥudayda (Shaykh ʾAbū Luḥūm) (Carapico, 1998, pp.107, 114, 127, 132).[176] Though far less organised than during the 1970s and less closely controlled by the centre than during the 1980s, attempts by the central government to use funding to LDAs for influence at the local level began during the civil war as an alternative to direct relations of accountability almost as soon as LDAs themselves were created.

5.3 Conclusion to Chapter 5

During the civil war, thousands of Yemenis found new employment in the civil service, and government investment in infrastructure, virtually unheard of until 1959, grew significantly. At the same time, the new republican treasury lost much of its ability to tax the population, losing revenue not only from the areas under royalist control, but also forfeiting much of the tax income from nominally republican areas. Along with the ability to tax, the political centre lost other prerogatives: central appointments and oversight of local governing arrangements declined and changed shape: whereas the Imams relied on the hostage system and associated stipends, religious legitimacy, and punitive expeditions to regulate local affairs and control appointments, the republican state came to rely to a far greater extent on patronage and inducements. New institutions fulfilled different functions, operated with different logics and incentives, and with different lines of accountability than either the ideal-typical institutions they were modelled on, or the Imamate institutions that they articulated with and partially replaced.

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[176] It is possible that the YAR's 'agriculture' budget line was reserved for LDA support, in which case central funds were YR 1.5 million in 1968/69 and YR 0.9 million in 1969/70.

These are largely new insights for the literature on the Yemen Arab Republic. In particular, the fiscal basis of the state has rarely received much attention. In the rare cases where it has (e.g. Chaudhry, 1997), the profound wartime transformations of this fiscal basis and the way this connected to broader institutional developments and the trajectory of state formation have largely remained unexamined. The YAR's institutional orientation towards external rents, perhaps because it is a recurrent, almost prototypical feature of postcolonial states (Cooper, 2002), has largely been taken for granted. Yet the investigation reveals it to be, in important measure, an outcome of the civil war that operated in ways that closely approximate those suggested by the model.

Beyond drawing attention to this important and long-lasting transformation, the model suggests ways to understand the how and why of rapid institutional change in North Yemen during this time. It reveals how decentralising control over taxation went hand in hand with ceding central control over coercion to local violence specialists, which in turn implied far-reaching de-facto decentralisation of appointments, oversight, and decision-making. However, unlike the story of wartime changes in taxation and the fiscal basis of the YAR, this is a more familiar story from the extant literature, as is the role of external interveners and particularly Egypt for shaping the development of state institutions. Here, the contribution is about nuancing and adding to this established story, revealing wartime origins of enduring features of centre-periphery relations in the YAR. The model highlights the way in which the war and intervention created pressures for dismantling formal institutions at the local level, at the same time as international donors were busy creating large central institutions on the Egyptian model in Taʿiz, Ṣanaʿāʾ, and al-Ḥudayda. These central institutions connected loosely to de facto local authorities through alliances and the allocation of central funds, re-constituting, in significantly modified form, a measure of central oversight and influence.

As in the previous chapter, the investigation of the civil war in Yemen from this perspective also highlights the limitations of and suggests modifications to the model. The chapter returns several times to the ways in which government *spending* can at least partially substitute for direct control in terms of institutions' centralising and aggregating functions in ways that the model does not capture well – and highlights that it was external intervention that made allocation-led strategies of control viable. This is an insight familiar from literatures on neo-patrimonial regimes and rentier states that has started to be applied to the nexus of war making and state making in the Middle East (Schwarz, 2012). However, it has not sufficiently been taken into account in an otherwise highly productive literature about institutions in conflict and war-centred state-formation narratives (e.g. Arjona et al., 2015; Mampilly, 2011).

A second additional theme across the two sections relates to the way in which the messy realities of the war partially collapse the analytical distinctions of the model – echoing the need to 'bring politics back in' identified in Chapter 4: the changing political settlement analysed in the previous chapter, as well as the Imamate-era institutions explored in Section 3.2, decisively influenced changes in institutions. While some actors were seeking to transform and re-make government institutions, others were seeking to guard and maintain institutional legacies of the Imamate, while still others sought to carve out new spaces of autonomy and keep central institutions at bay. Who pursued which strategies had much to do with contingent and historically specific alliances, group beliefs, and educational and political trajectories, and less with structural positions in the state apparatus. Their relative and evolving bargaining position inside and outside government helped determine the institutional changes wrought by the war.

Finally, the investigation highlights the importance not only of path dependency, but of the way some paths are largely one-way. In the civil war, dismantling and redeploying institutions proved far easier than building or re-building them.

6 THE CIVIL WAR AND IDEAS OF THE STATE

Yemenis life stories as well as the historiographical narrative are divided into a period "before the revolution" and "after the revolution."[177] The civil war in North Yemen marks a decisive symbolic break associated with substantial ideational changes. The war even served as a generational marker, as young adults without first-hand memories of life under the Imam became known as ʾawlād al-thawra, children of the revolution, in the 1970s and 80s (Swagman, 1988a, p.134). Arguably, the very language within which Imamic claims to legitimacy were traditionally couched stopped making sense by the end of the war (Dresch, 1993b, pp.274–275 note 27).

This chapter explores the way the war itself shaped these changes and investigates whether they can be attributed to the causal mechanisms proposed in the model. It takes as its point of departure the ideas of the state current in the last years of Imamic rule (3.3), and the mechanisms linking civil war to ideas of the state (2.4). Through the lens of rhetorical commonplaces, it explores changes to the way royalists and different republican factions mobilised support and discredited political enemies. To do so, it draws on little-researched royalist and republican publications, archival material, interviews, and the secondary literature, presenting new royalist propaganda material and existing material in a new light.

The evolution of ideas or imaginings of the state has not been widely examined in the literature on Yemen. Approaching changes in ideas of the state during the war through the lens of the model reveals little-remarked developments; and shows that the war occasioned deeper ideational changes than western scholars have generally given the 'revolution' credit for. The civil war led to a partial convergence of elite discourses around new state-centric rhetorical commonplaces. Their plausibility and importance in people's lives, in turn, rested on the centre's ability grant resources, that is, to spend. The chapter also traces how tribal forms came to define not only the formal structure of state institutions but ideas of national belonging, suggesting that the war played an important role in the emerging imagination of the YAR as 'a nation of tribes.' Contrary to the dynamics suggested by the model and the

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[177] On life histories in ʾIbb see: Messick, 1978, p.73. For sāda families see: vom Bruck, 2005. For examples of the official historiography see: al-Maqāliḥ, 1987; and Markaz al-Dirāsāt wa al-buḥūth al-yamanī, 1987.

literature on which it is based, this privileging of local identities was not antithetical to 'the state' so much as providing a particular vision of state authority.

Section 6.1 introduces the rhetorical commonplaces around which royalists and 'moderate' and 'radical' republicans rallied[178] and explores the processes associated with the emergence of rivals to the dominant coalition presented in 2.4. In line with the model, the war exacerbated political polarisation and it was divisions within the ruling elite and between incumbents and challengers that activated boundaries and defined cleavages. Changing elite framings enabled local action against traditional authorities and particularly the *sāda*. Yet, the exploration also cautions against taking political polarisation as fixed and neatly aligned with an attack on or a defence of the established order. Instead, elite discourses co-evolved: What was being fought for and what was worth preserving changed through contests over the meaning of central rhetorical commonplaces. Similarly, while changing macro cleavages can enable local action against traditional authorities, in Yemen, these authorities themselves at times successfully leveraged such cleavages to re-produce their power.

Section 6.2 traces processes of ideational change linked to different mobilisation strategies. As the model suggests, relying on tribal levies strengthened the tribes and re-enforced their functioning according to logics different from those of the bureaucratic state. However, whereas the model suggests that this should generate political fragmentation and undermine ideas of coherent domination, a close examination of the case suggests something more ambivalent: the increased salience of tribal identities had centripetal as well as centrifugal effects, providing a framework for bridging divides and for (re-)imagining 'Yemeni-ness'. In addition, the war coincided with a surge of nationalism and a militarisation of ideas of the state, as the model suggests civil war tends to. However, it appears that the processes of the model were not active. Foreign intervention prompted these effects vicariously.

The chapter closes by tracing wartime dynamics linking control of capital to ideas of the state (6.3). In contrast to the predictions of the model, reduced central taxation increased the legitimacy of the central state, as it was coupled with increases in central allocation. The decentralisation of rights over taxation coincided with increasing demands being addressed to the state. The section also explores to what extent the war normalised political violence and assassinations in particular.

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[178] Despite being politically loaded and contested terms, these contemporary labels are used without single quotation marks in the following.

6.1 From elite divisions to popular polarisation

The civil war rapidly widened political divisions between royalists and republicans as each side sought to mobilise support and invest rhetorical commonplaces with divergent meanings. The divisions of the civil war sometimes ran through the middle of tribes and families and estranged friends and neighbours, placing individuals of similar backgrounds on opposite sides. The royalist-republican divide was deep, violently inscribed, and underpinned by broader politicisation, at least in the urban centres of a largely rural country. While reconciliation at the end of the war brought some royalists to positions of influence in the YAR state, the vilification of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn remains a foundational myth of Yemeni nationalism and the dominant figures of Yemeni politics into the 2000s were figures who rose to initial prominence on the republican side during the civil war.

Despite internal tensions and varying motivations, royalist supporters were broadly aligned behind the declared goals to reinstate the Imamate and eliminate the Egyptian presence in Yemen, appealing to loyalty, religious legitimacy, and opposition to foreign rule.

Republicans agreed that the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imamate had to end and advocated some form of republican government in its stead. There were also deep intra-republican divisions, expressed as disagreements over the role of the Egyptians, who took sides in the intra-republican divisions; over the concentration of coercive power in military units with differing loyalties and between tribe and military; and over land reform, nationalisation, and the role of existing elites.

Within the terminology of republican politics, the radical republicans comprised President al-Sallāl and his supporters, who generally described themselves as Nasserist and pursued policies that accorded with Egypt's experiments with Arab Socialism. Radical republicans also included some Yemeni Baʿathists and *al-qawmiyyin al-ʿarab* (the Movement of Arab Nationalists – MAN), with their links to the southern National Liberation Front (NLF) and a rising generation of radical officers. Divisions among these groups complicate the picture, as family ties and divisions as well as regional political developments structured internal republican disagreements. Baʿathist Iraq's and Nasserist Egypt's rival claims to regional leadership, the split between the Syrian and Iraqi Baʿath in 1966, and divisions within the southern independence movement between the NLF and the Egyptian-supported Front for

the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY) all found an echo in domestic politics.[179] On the other side of this internal republican divide stood the 'moderate' republicans. They emerged in organised form at the ʿAmrān Conference in 1963, styling themselves the 'national opposition' (*al-muʿāraḍa al-waṭanīyya*). Splits between them and President al-Sallāl deepened in the course of 1964 and came to a head after al-Zubayrī's assassination in April 1965 and particularly in the wave of purges al-Sallāl launched against suspected enemies in autumn 1966 (al-Masʿudī, 2006, p.329).[180] Despite the purge, Egyptian withdrawal set the scene for moderates' increasing dominance. While key figures like ʾAḥmad Nuʿmān, ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-ʾIryānī, and Muḥammad al-ʾAkwaʿ had hardly been at the pinnacle of the Imamic state, they were culturally and educationally products of the Imamate (Haykel, 2003, p.221). Like them, most moderates hailed from well-known tribal or learned families, and drew their support largely from similar circles, their patronage networks, and their positions of prominence in tribes, towns, or villages. They opposed the Imamate, believed in modernisation, and adopted a nationalist register, but largely rejected the language and ideas of Arab socialism. Invested in the status quo, they sought to keep more far-reaching social change at bay, seeking modernisation and improved standards of living within the framework of the traditional social order. As a result, they also couched their criticism of both the Imam and President al-Sallāl in the traditional register of Islamic – and often Zaydī – jurisprudence, rather than ideas of socialism and revolution, and in rhetoric and practice sought to appeal to consultation and respect for tribal norms.

The following sub-sections assesses to what extent the model can account for how the divisions mapped above translated into broader polarisation and politicisation.

6.1.1   Elite divisions and political polarisation

The model outlined in Chapter 2 suggests that elite divisions take on broader social meaning as divided elites activate and police boundaries, generating powerful macro-cleavages that politicise the population. Getting people to buy into and identify with central cleavages, in turn, can challenge accepted notions and undermine state legitimacy or, conversely, produce

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[179] For instance, the Yemeni Baʿath split between a group around Muḥsin al-ʿAynī aligned with the Iraqi Baʿath and the ṭalīʿa radicals around ʿAbd Allah Bādhīb aligned with the Syrian Baʿath.

[180] On republican divisions see also: Johnsen, 2017, p.124; al-Yāzilī, 2002, esp. pp.251-252.

a rally to the established order, not least by making the state more visible and its categories matter more immediately to everyday life worlds.

Polarisation and top-down mobilisation

Indeed, divisions within the ruling elite and between incumbents and challengers drove political polarisation. Elites re-cast public discourse and sought to mobilise followers through propaganda and the use of instruments of mass politics that were entirely novel in the North Yemeni context. This contributed to an erosion of established bonds and alliances. In combination with a re-imagination of traditional forms of popular participation in new terms, this lent the wartime divisions weight and plausibility as the civil war contributed to public polarisation, politicisation, and forms of mass politics.

North Yemen had only witnessed its first demonstrations in the summer of 1962. In August, little more than a month before the overthrow of the Imam, high school students in Ṣanaʿāʾ marched through the streets, chanted slogans demanding reforms, and held up pictures of ʿAbd al-Nasir. When the regime responded with mass arrests, students in Taʿiz protested in solidarity and were locked inside their school without food, water, or electricity. For many young students, this was an important moment of political awakening (Interview with ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, 2015). Aside from this one incident, experimenting with a novel repertoire of contention, demonstrations, strikes, and other forms of mass direct action were virtually unknown in North Yemen when the Free Officers overthrew the Imam; yet by the mid-1960s, demonstrations with thousands of participants backing different republican factions became a regular feature of urban life, largely due to top-down efforts at mobilisation.[181]

Al-Sallāl's declaration of the new Yemen Arab Republic prompted several days of consecutive demonstrations in favour of the new regime in Ṣanaʿāʾ and Taʿiz. The fact that the young men with signs and flags who thronged the streets were accompanied by trucks with mounted loudspeakers and megaphones, suggests official sanction and support, even organisation of these demonstrations (PAAA, B12 1059, 5 Oct. 1962). In November 1962, nearly two months after the overthrow of the Imam, the German embassy noted that the central and local government in Taʿiz still "regularly organised" youth demonstrations (PAAA, B52 1059, 23

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[181] Strikes and demonstrations were common in Aden throughout the 1950s and were an important reference point for both republican leaders and large numbers of migrant workers. See 3.3 above and Carapico, 1998, pp.87–99.

Nov. 1962). During the same period, al-Sallāl was engaged in a cross-country tour to popularise the idea of the republic and denounce the Imam. The German embassy reported on his "huge popularity." Thousands thronged the roads by which he approached Taʿiz, Dhamār, ʾIbb, and the nearby towns of Jibla, Dhī al-Sufāl, and Yarīm, so that his open jeep was slowed to a crawl (PAAA, B12 1059, 5 Dec. 1962). Republican leaders travelled around Yemen giving speeches and were met with poems and plays denouncing the Imam, praising the republic, and explaining the ideas and forms of republican government (Swagman, 1988a, p.78). Egyptian news teams pursued a similar politicising mission: Egyptian radio reporting teams organised demonstrations, taught villagers slogans, and handed out banners in the towns and villages they reported from (Deffarge and Troeller 1969, pp.25-26).[182] In this way, the new leadership sought to generate and mobilise mass support and to signal its popularity to Yemeni and foreign observers.

When divisions within the republican camp came into the open from 1964 onwards, mobilisation in North Yemen's few urban centres reached new heights. Rival factions staged competing protests and conferences to uphold their claims to speak for the Yemeni people. As ʾAḥmad Nuʿmān travelled to Cairo to meet with ʿAbd al-Nasir, seeking to reduce the Egyptian role, 'spontaneous' demonstrations in Ṣanaʿāʾ against al-Sallāl and the Egyptian presence strengthened his hand (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 24 Jun. 1965). After the Egyptians decided to force al-Sallāl's return to Yemen, Taʿiz police rounded up passers-by to participate in pro-Sallāl demonstrations (PAAA, B36 195, 10 Jul. 1965). Similarly, after cracking down on dissent in autumn 1966, al-Sallāl launched a charm offensive. Touring the country, he mixed old and new registers of patronage to gain popular support. According to the German embassy, a typical visit consisted of a government delegation arriving with sheep and cattle that would be slaughtered and handed out, then al-Sallāl would arrive and promise cars, schools, and hospitals (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 16 Dec. 1966). These instances of mobilisation are all notable for seeking to gain and display public popular support, as well as for their heavy-handed orchestration from above, which helped feed Western fears over the

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[182] Egypt was also heavily involved in radio programming and broadcasting. At the time of Egyptian withdrawal, there were approximately 30 Egyptian experts employed in connection to "special broadcast devices including radio broadcast equipment and jamming stations" (DWQ 0078-044109, no date [Sep. 1967]; see also: 0078-044112 no date [late May/early June 1967]; 0078-044113, 30 Jun. 1965; 197 31 Jan. 1963; SWB/ME/W197/C/2; ME/W198/C/1).

role of Egyptian, Chinese, and Soviet agitators (E.g. PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 6 Nov. 1965; FRUS 1964-8, Vol. 11, Doc. 441).

By the end of the war, Yemeni politicians routinely used loudspeaker trucks and paid slogan-chanters, attracted participants with hand-outs, and used Ṣanaʿāʾ radio, student groups, and the labour union to recruit protestors, or called on the police to force passers-by into marches (PAAA, B36 46, 1 Sep. 1963; AV Neues Amt 1719, 13 Feb. 1967). In October 1967, when the Egyptian command was seeking to impose its plans for withdrawal on a Yemeni leadership reluctant to assist in its own overthrow, the beleaguered president and his supporters organised demonstrations, ultimately mobilising thousands with loudspeaker trucks after Egyptian troops opened fire on a smaller earlier demonstration (DWQ, 0078-044109, 3 Oct. 1967; 4 Oct. 1967). Likewise, after the siege of Ṣanaʿāʾ, al-ʿAmrī skilfully played the new register of mass politics, announcing his resignation in August 1968 – in the context of the 'August events' discussed earlier – only to retract it after being 'forced' to remain by large popular protests urging him to stay, just as ʿAbd al-Nasir had in mid-1967. Off the back of this public show of force, he moved against his rivals in the army, arresting ʿAlī Muthannā al-Jibrān, removing him as the head of the artillery, and replacing him with one of his allies (ʾAbū Luḥūm, 2002, p.327).

Nuancing the process: limits to top down control and the coevolution of elite discourses

These forms of politicisation and polarisation along royalist versus republican and radical versus moderate republican lines followed elite divisions and attempts to mobilise public opinion around them. Yet there was also an opposite tendency. While conflict polarisation revolves around, generally elite-led, processes of othering, elite framings are in competition for popular support. In Yemen, this competition led to a partial convergence of elite discourses around a new set of rhetorical commonplaces. This was due to a tendency for mobilisation to escape top-down control, the fact that the ideas in circulation and globally on offer all envisaged a central role for the state, as well as genuine competition between royalists and republicans and within republican circles for support for some of the same constituencies.

During the later years of the civil war, orchestrated and carefully choreographed demonstrations at times escaped control. Ideas of revolution and armed resistance from the independence struggle in the south spread in ways its Egyptian supporters would have liked to avoid, coming to be employed against Egyptians troops. Grenade explosions, shootings, and political assassinations became a recurrent feature of urban politics in Ṣanaʿāʾ, Taʿiz, and other cities from October 1966 onwards (O'Ballance, 1971, p.165; see also 6.3.2 below).

Organisations initially sponsored by the Egyptians in both North and South also turned increasingly against the Egyptian presence in Yemen (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 28 Nov. 1965). The NLF turned against its erstwhile sponsor and carried out attacks in Taʿiz and, in January 1967, a carefully vetted assembly of delegates in Ṣanaʿāʾ abandoned their designated role to cheer for the government, and instead harangued it for its chronic failures (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 13 Feb. 1967). As top-down attempts to mobilise mass support escaped top-down control, there was a multiplying of political ideas and of lines of division.

Yet, at the same time, and in part because of popular politicisation and the need to appeal to groups becoming conscious of their importance in the wartime context, the rival ideas elites appealed to converged. Evolving alliances and rival groups' need to maintain mobilisation, meant that both sides sought to capture opponents' ideas that gained traction and to blunt the charges against them, ultimately contributing to a co-evolution of political discourse that forged new shared elements of common sense as much as providing a framework for polarisation and division. Thus, within two years of the war's beginning, royalists had wholeheartedly adopted the rhetorical commonplaces of the people and modernity, emphasising as their main point of difference with republicans their battle against the Egyptians as external invaders. Moderate republicans adopted in tempered form much of this anti-Egyptian sentiment. Meanwhile radical republicans, after an initial period in which they pursued modernisation as a revolutionary project, came to advance a vision of modernity as development little different from that embraced in royalist propaganda.

To dispute the republican charge that the Imamate was backward, royalist radio and other propaganda stressed Imam al-Badr's reformist credentials. Republicans, they argued, had needlessly plunged Yemen into chaos by overthrowing a reformist Imam, who shared their most reasonable and popular aspirations (Interview with ʿAbd Allah al-Kibsī, 2016). They also tended to avoid describing their goal in terms of reinstating the Imam, instead framing the war as a fight between 'the Yemeni people' and an Egyptian invader. These themes are taken up extensively in a special issue of the royalist *Al-Yaman* magazine from 16 March 1967 (private collection of Yūsuf Ḥamīd al-Dīn). In an article entitled "Who benefits from the war in Yemen," the magazine draws a sharp distinction between a positive past under the Imam and the destruction, horrors, and foreign occupation of war. The description of the Imamic golden age is remarkable: rather than discussing the Imam's justice, the application of God's law, or the appropriate ordering of society, the article describes the Imamate's achievements in terms of modernisation. The Imam had set Yemen on a "natural course" towards the "path of development and building." Thanks to the Imams, Yemen before the revolution had boasted growing numbers of schools and hospitals, a modern port, new roads, and "an automatic

telephone service in all of Ṣanaʿāʾ, Taʿiz, and al-Ḥudayda" (Al-Yaman, 16 Mar. 1967, p.8).

Concrete reforms accompanied this rhetoric. A little more than two years in to the civil war, after a string of battlefield victories, religious scholars and royalist princes drafted a royalist constitution that guaranteed equal rights for Zaydī and Shāfiʿī citizens, placed limits on royal discretion, included an elected legislature with real powers, and specified a mechanism for electing the Imam. The reforms adopted many of the demands of the 1948 constitution, appealing to 'third way' republicans, while seeking to placate Shāfiʿīs. It was sufficiently popular to prompt ʿAbd al-Nasir to visit Yemen in late April and to sign-off on a cabinet reshuffle that brought the prominent moderate politicians al-ʾIryānī, Nuʿmān, and al-Zubayrī into government, despite their opposition to the Egyptian presence (O'Ballance, 1971, p.124; Stookey, 1978, p.241). Instead of contesting republican claims to deliver modernity and represent the people, the royalists sought instead to invest the same rhetorical commonplaces with their own meanings.

In addition, royalist propaganda centred on the idea that the Imam was leading Yemeni resistance against foreign aggression, developing a rhetorical commonplace that was eventually picked up by republicans demanding Egyptian withdrawal. In the words of ʿAbd Allah al-Kibsī, the former director of the royalist radio station:

> Every day we were broadcasting, attacking the Egyptians because they were invaders and praising our Imam, who was the victim of a conspiracy by the Egyptians. [...] Our main purpose was to show that we are not fighting because we do not like the Egyptians or that we accept Yemenis getting killed but that we are defending ourselves. We were not the aggressor (Interview with ʿAbd Allah al-Kibsī, 2016).

This narrative drew heavily on Egyptian violations of Yemeni norms of warfare: in conversation with journalists, like Deffarge and Troeller, rank and file royalist fighters and sympathisers consistently stressed that they supported the Imam to get foreigners out of Yemen. The main reason, in turn, why this was essential, was the foreigners' contempt for the *hijra*, or sanctuary, status of protected towns and people, the destruction of fields and livestock, and their general disregard for the rules that contained conflict in the tribal highlands (Deffarge and Troeller, 1969, p.155; Johnsen, 2017, p.135). *Al-Yaman* magazine provides revealing examples of this framing, including an interview in which Imam al-Badr declares that "the fight will not stop until the last Egyptian soldier leaves" and describes the Egyptians as imperialists (*mustaʿamirīn*) and their presence as an occupation (*ʾiḥtilāl*) (Al-

Yaman, 16 Mar. 1967, p.2).[183] The magazine makes no mention of the republicans – the conflict is cast as one solely between 'the Yemeni people' and 'the Egyptians.'

Moderate republican leaders like Nuʿmān, al-Zubayrī, and ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar shared many of these critiques of the Egyptians, though they were far more reserved in the way they articulated them, since they were not sure that the Republic could survive without Egyptian support.[184] This did not stop the republican-sponsored ʿAmrān and Khamr conferences from demanding Egyptian withdrawal and an end to foreign intervention in tribal affairs (Dresch, 1993b, p.249). Anti-Egyptian propaganda circulating in Taʿiz, hardly a royalist stronghold, lampooned President al-Sallāl as the Egyptian's High Commissar in Yemen, branded the Egyptians colonialists, and reminded readers that Yemen had driven out the Ottomans while Egypt was still a colony (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 25 Sep. 1966, 19 May 1965). In this way, the royalist critique of the Egyptian presence became increasingly part of the republican mainstream.

At the same time as royalists and moderate republicans converged in their critique of the Egyptian presence, radical republicans reframed their initial revolutionary aims. The new YAR government initially confiscated all lands belonging to the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family and other leading families of the Imamate, imagined as nationalisation and land reform. *Sāda* were identified as feudal lords and the overthrow of the Imam was ostensibly directed against imperialism and reaction (El Attar, 1964, pp.265–266). This project initially received significant Egyptian support, with lessons-learned documents from the war showing that the Egyptian command sought to use radio broadcasts, newsletters, and pamphlets to instil "revolutionary consciousness" in "backwards" Yemen (Ferris, 2012, p.183). Yet, by 1964 at the latest, Yemeni government speeches, commemorations, and parades imagined modernisation in different terms, not far removed from the way royalist propaganda invested the rhetorical commonplace of 'modernity.' Republican leaders like al-ʾIryānī explicitly sought to frame changes in terms of development, arguing that the language of socialism was counterproductive and played into the hands of royalist propaganda (al-ʾIryānī, 2013, p.105).

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[183] Royalist propaganda refers consistently to the Egyptian invasion (al-ghazwa al-maṣrī) and the "colonising [Egyptian] forces" (al-quwāt al-ʾistiʿmāriyya).

[184] Republican anti-Egyptian sentiment (like royalist-Saudi tensions) remains largely invisible and clad in euphemism in more official memorialisation.

The predominant referents became not land reform, class struggle and 'consciousness,' but roads, pumps, hospitals, and schools.

Government claims about the 'success of the revolution' became centred on opening new schools and hospitals, even if they were only half-built, or else on launching new building projects (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 1 Oct. 1965, 8 Oct. 1966, 26 Sep. 1967). In his revolution day speeches, al-Sallāl declared that the revolution continued the tradition of 1948, 1955, and 1961 – uprisings against the Imam with decidedly non-socialist aims – and sought to achieve the commonplace goals of social justice, public participation in government, and economic development (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 1 Oct. 1965). A focus on development rather than revolution is also increasingly apparent in Egyptian technical assistance and commanders' practice. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry's internal correspondence came to describe Egyptian experts' mission as being concerned with "raising the level of administration in Yemen" (DWQ 0078-044113, 19 Aug 1966) and military 'hearts and mind' operations sought to deliver not land reform or revolutionary tracts, but medical services, tractors, water pumps, and seeds (Schmidt, 1968, pp.83–85).

In this way, competition between royalists and republicans and within republican circles for public support, led to a partial convergence of elite discourses around the rhetorical commonplace of 'modernity.' It became a shared positive signifier, albeit with contested meanings, central to both republican and royalist claims to legitimacy. By extension, the fact that 'modernity' and its twin 'development' were, in the 1970s, the central yardsticks "from which the legitimacy of particular governments largely derives" (Dresch, 1993b, p.266; see also: Messick, 1978), might usefully be read as an outcome of the civil war that reflects convergence rather than polarisation. Next to 'modernity,' the rhetorical commonplaces of 'the people' and the idea that the state is the primary addressee of their claims, as well as an ideal of independence from foreign control, came to define elite propaganda. While not adding up to a coherent ideology of rule, these rhetorical commonplaces map out a reconfigured and shared political field, albeit one that was more fragmentary, multiple, and potentially contradictory than under the Imamate.

6.1.2   *Changes in macro cleavages and the re-configuration of power at the local level*

The model also suggests that rapid changes in macro cleavages, often tied to material support from either incumbents or challengers, can provide a legitimating framework for those seeking to alter existing forms of local authority and control, re-casting local allegiances and challenging traditional authorities. Indeed, the model, drawing on a literature on the micro-dynamics of civil wars, suggests that it is primarily the re-configuration of power at the

local level that undermines the established political order. This captures important dynamics of the civil war. The fall of the *sāda*, discussed in terms of changes to the political settlement in Chapter 4 above, can be analysed as an instance of local actors leveraging central cleavages to bring down traditional local authorities. However, the civil war in Yemen also highlights an opposite tendency, not reflected in the model: traditional elites used central cleavages and the material support that went with them to reinforce their power. Indeed, the case suggests that this tendency may often predominate, an idea that is further explored in 6.2 below.

Central cleavages, the fall of the sāda, and attacks on tribal leaders

The specific context of the Yemeni Free Officers' coup in 1962 meant that its organisers imagined their challenge to the ruling dynasty not, as the organisers of the 1948 coup had, in terms of Zaydī traditions of resistance to an unjust Imam, but in terms of the military-led revolutions in Egypt, Iraq, and Syria, which provided an established script for military officers to seize power from kings in the name of the people (Orkaby, 2014, pp.66–67). As one near-contemporary observer remarked, rather too easily: "the Yemeni coup was […] followed by the standard […] political and social changes that had become a common pattern in the Arab revolutionary movements: the establishment of a republic, the removal of the old ruling class, the end of big landlordism, the creation of a public sector, and the transition towards a socialist economy" (Haddad, 1973, p.253). While, as Chapter 4 highlighted, large landholdings in Yemen were limited, the revolution did little to change them, and calling North Yemen a socialist economy is probably inaccurate, destroying the power of a landed upper class was the accepted script for military-led revolution in the Arab world and vilification of the *sāda* thus fit an established frame and associated repertoire of contention.

In this context, attacks on the *sāda* formed a central plank of revolutionary rhetoric and were particularly marked in the speeches of Vice President ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Bayḍānī and the first post-revolution Minister of Education Qāsim Ghālib ʾAḥmad, who "took the lead in the ideological fight against the royalists" (Haykel, 2003, p.218). While al-Bayḍānī drew on many of the critiques of the Imamate the Free Yemenis had developed – that the Imam was a tyrant, that he ruled Yemen as his own property, and sought to keep the population ignorant and undeveloped to maintain his rule – much of his criticism followed a different script, pioneered in Nasirist attacks on King Hussein of Jordan. It focused on the status of the ruling family as Hashemites – descendants of the prophet Muhammad – and in al-Bayḍānī's hands became an assault on the '*sayyid* class' for ruling Yemen in its own interest (al-Shāmī, 1984, pp.17-37; Douglas, 1987, p.236). One of the core claims was that the *sāda* as a whole – and by extension the Ḥamīd al-Dīn ruling family – were alien foreigners. They were ʿ*adnānī*

northern Arabs, the historical oppressors of the 'true' Yemenis, *qaḥṭānī* southern Arabs, and had divided and exploited them for the past millennium. According to al-Bayḍānī, *ʿadnānī* Hashemites divided a naturally united Yemen and exploited Shāfiʿī populations and regions (Haykel, 2003, p.220). The speeches and plays of the revolutionary period that heaped scorn on the *sāda* ensured that "in the eyes of ordinary people the revolution was directed against the *sāda* collectively." Indeed, some believed that the "purpose" of the revolution was to "finish the *sāda*" (vom Bruck, 2005, p.61; see also: Messick, 1978, pp.47–48, 73).

Republican and Egyptian violence against the *sāda* accompanied this rhetorical onslaught. Steven Caton, for instance, describes local memories that *sāda* were "hunted" and "killed" by Egyptian troops (Caton, 2005, p.105). Bottom-up attempts to act on the revolution's professed ideals complemented such top-down violence and constituted an example of the 'co-production' of local action, wherein local actors used and adapted the rhetoric of central elites to advance their agendas to the extent that they could be made to fit the overarching narrative (Kalyvas, 2003). In Lower Yemen, where the particular framing of the *sāda* as *ʿadnānī* foreigners resonated with recent experiences, local notables widely took up the license given to violence against the *sāda*. The Imam had imposed northern outsiders, often *sāda*, as governors and senior administrators on lowland towns and cities. The revolution's anti-*sāda* protests allowed families who had been prominent under the Ottomans, but side-lined by the Ḥamīd al-Dīn, to reclaim positions of local prominence. Participation in anti-*sāda* actions was not limited, however, to rival elites. In ʾIbb after 1962 "street people" pulled *sāda* from their houses (Messick, 1978, p.73). Across lower Yemen, *sāda* were ridiculed in slogans and chants and abused in public. The effectiveness of the re-branding of '*sayyid*' from an honorific to an insult is driven home by a story, related to Gabriele vom Bruck, of a shaykh's son scolding a servant as a "reactionary," a "dog" and a "*sayyid*" (vom Bruck, 2005, p.61, see also: 2004).

A revealing, if comparatively benign, personal story highlights the way local actors made use of the anti-*sayyid* discourse from the centre. One of my interviewees described his memories of a visit to a mosque near the city of ʾIbb, where the preacher delivered a strongly anti-Hashemite sermon. Then, he remembered: "That same afternoon at a qāt chew, a man refused to shake hands with my father [because he was a *sayyid*], but he did shake hands with me, saying, 'I'll shake hands with your son because I know he loves Nasir'" (Interview with ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, 2015). Although his father supported the revolution, he was ostracised and lost his position in the local administration when a subordinate, who wanted his job, denounced him (Interview with ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, 2015).

Co-produced anti-*sayyid* action went beyond removal from formal positions of power. In some areas, preachers and other local notables encouraged sharecroppers to refuse to pay the *sāda* for use of the land – often as part of their own efforts to buy or confiscate this land from the *sāda*. Though there was no wholesale land reform in Yemen,[185] many individual cases of purchase under threat and confiscation of *sayyid* land took place, largely at the instigation and for the benefit of competitors for local leadership (vom Bruck, 2005, p.60). In Taʿiz, one of the main centres of opposition to the Imam, *sāda* or at least their distinctive headgear "completely disappeared" from the city in the first weeks of the revolution, since stones were thrown at people wearing the ʾ*imāma*, the traditional headgear of *sāda* (PAAA, B52 1059, 23 Nov. 1962; vom Bruck, 2005, p.61).

Such co-production is also clearly evident in the way the experience of *sāda* contrasted with that of other Imamate officials. While the new YAR government encouraged violence against *sāda* and engaged in it itself, it disproportionally targeted *sāda* in executions and reprisals against former government officials (see 4.1.) and did not tolerate violence against other local elites. For instance, in al-Nādira, a village near ʾIbb, villagers made a citizen's arrest of the *Ḥākim* of the area shortly after the revolution alongside *sayyid* officials, considering him to be the local face of the royalist administration. He was accused of growing rich on the village's tax proceeds, his palace allegedly named al-Nādira after the village that had paid for its construction. Yet this Ḥākim, a *qāḍī* rather than a *sayyid* and related to ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-ʾIryānī, then Justice Minister and later President of the YAR, was released after intervention from Ṣanaʿāʾ. He kept his formal position, wealth, and status (Interview with ʿAlī Muḥsin Ḥamīd, 2015).

Beyond the model: the resonance of ideas and reinforcing local authority

Despite its undoubted importance in re-shaping local and central politics, this co-produced violence was geographically circumscribed and limited to lower Yemen. In Upper Yemen, it appears that violence against the *sāda* was rare. Instead, the war prompted a "flurry of pact making" between tribes and "their" *sāda*. Indeed, the anti-*sayyid* bent of the early proclamations of the revolution and the speeches of al-Bayḍānī and others were important factors in alienating the northern tribes and pushing them to support the royalists (Weir, 2007, p.281; Dresch, 1993b, p.248). This suggests that the absence of violence against *sāda* in

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[185] See 4.1

Upper Yemen was not only and probably not primarily a consequence of being within the royalist sphere of influence,[186] but rather the opposite: positive attitudes towards *sāda* predicted opposition to anti-*sayyid* rhetoric *and* support for the royalists.[187] The model and the literature on which it is based hence take insufficient account of the elementary, but perhaps too easily neglected, point that central discourses are circumscribed by how they resonate, or fail to resonate, with specific local governing arrangements and associated beliefs. In areas where *sāda* were not powerful quasi-feudal landlords, but rather respected mediators, teachers, and preachers, dependent, at least in local understandings, on tribal protection, there was little scope for local actors to pick-up and act upon central cleavages.

Similarly, although attacks on tribal leaders in initial revolutionary proclamations did not come near the vilification of the *sāda* in prominence or intensity, republican elites inherited from the Imamate a language of state authority opposed to tribal forms, the idea, familiar from the discussion in 3.3.1, that tribes were enemies of central order. This handily combined with ideas, imported from education abroad and the Egyptian interveners, that tribes were backwards and archaic. Given this framing, the Egyptians initially deployed with the intention to side-line the tribes. Although their evolving counterinsurgency practice increasingly made a mockery of this aim, ultimately reinforcing tribal power (see 4.2), rhetorically and in the plans of civilian experts and teachers, this hostility lingered (al-Ẓāhirī, 1996, pp.136–137; Huwaydī, 1982, p.104).

Punitive expeditions, designed to cow tribes into submission, Egyptian officers' humiliation of tribal leaders, and instances of land confiscations from tribal shaykhs in the name of social equality in the last months of 1962 formed part of an initial Egyptian attempt to shore-up the revolution (El Attar, 1964, pp.282–283; Sirrs, 2010, p.77). Later, Egyptian policies vacillated between pragmatic bargains with tribal leaders, driven by short-term military objectives, and attempts to weaken tribes in line with their project of political transformation. At several points, including when they felt as though they were losing tribal support in the mid-1960s, the Egyptian command froze payments to local tribal committees and pushed tribal representatives out of formal and informal decision-making (al-Ẓāhirī, 1996, p.141). Indeed,

[186] Compare Kalyvas, 2006 on collaboration and the logics of territorial control.

[187] Though of course conflicts could and did occur between tribes and 'their' sāda. Steven Caton describes a later instance of such conflict in 1979/80 during which a tribesman declared: the sāda "were dogs…before the revolution kicked them out of power" (Caton, 2005, p.106).

Egyptian writing on the war into the 1990s insisted that the Egyptian mission in Yemen was, in part, about freeing Yemenis from the "prison of tribal custom" (ʾAḥmad, 1992, p.525).

Such propaganda may have contributed to a fear among tribal leaders that the revolution represented a Shāfiʿī power grab against their privileges (El Attar, 1964, p.281), yet it had little success in rousing local opposition, indeed may have increased support for them (al-ʾIryānī, 2013, p.193). In contrast to the anti-*sayyid* master cleavage, which was readily taken up by rival local elites, few local rivals emerged to take up the anti-tribal strains of revolutionary propaganda. As traced in the previous chapters, tribal forms rather emerged strengthened from the war, which provided material support for the reproduction of tribal forms and a context in which tribes' ability to control coercion and thus provide protection played an important role in the everyday experiences of tribesmen and those nominally under their protection.

6.2 Mobilisation for violence and ideas of the state

Previous chapters probed the effects of wartime mobilisation on the political settlement and formal institutions. Wartime mobilisation also had a large impact on ideas of the state. In line with the model, because mobilisation of local violence specialists strengthened social organisations – the tribes – operating according to logics that differed from those of the bureaucratic state, the war shaped ideas about the nature of state authority, so that tribal forms came to define the formal structure of state institutions and it became possible to imagine Yemen as 'a nation of tribes.' However, while the literatures the model drew on suggests that such developments must undermine state forms, we will see that these logics need not be, in fact were not, antithetical to 'the state' so much as providing a particular vision of state authority.

Sub-section 6.2.2 goes on to probe the idea that recruitment for the republican military increased the salience of the central state, while simultaneously militarising ideas of the state. It highlights that while the central state did become more important as an addressee of claims and its functions became imagined in military terms, it is unclear whether wartime mobilisation can convincingly account for these developments. Instead, central allocation of resources and the extensive and heavily militarised Egyptian intervention best account for these changes.

6.2.1   *Local violence specialists*

Previous chapters examined how royalists and republicans and the Egyptian and Saudi Arabian governments, relied on tribal support to wage war. This reliance on tribal

mobilisation contributed to the central state's minimal ability to collect taxes, meant it struggled to attain predominance in the use force, and had to abdicate much responsibility for public order. Mobilisation of the tribes created and cemented a political settlement and institutional structures in which central actors unable to form alliances with tribal leaders had limited reach and influence. In analogous ways, the war reinforced tribes' ability to not only reproduce tribal logics internally, but to structure other institutions in tribal terms, as the model suggests it would. Some of these ways have been highlighted in previous chapters: tribesmen in the military abandoned their units to respond to calls for mobilisation from their tribe, lines of command in the military and of authority in civilian ministries at times followed tribal hierarchies rather than organigrammes, and control of much local government from Ṣanaʿāʾ was tenuous.

In addition, the republican state itself became imagined in tribal terms through the series of republican conferences at the centre of the Yemeni historiography of the war: the ʿAmrān conference of September 1963, the Khamr conference of May 1965, and the Ḥaraḍ conference of November 1965. The decisions of the ʿAmrān conference include, for example, demands to arm the tribes, to establish a committee of shaykhs to resolve inter-tribal disputes, to form a national consultative body composed of tribal leaders, and to create a committee of shaykhs to ensure, by military measures if necessary, an end to foreign intervention in tribal affairs (Dresch, 1993b, p.249; ʾAḥmad, 1992, p.363). The Khamr and Ḥaraḍ conferences reiterated most of these demands. These conference decisions did not demand a greater role of tribes in existing institutions – by increasing the number of tribal recruits to the military, increasing the number of ministerial posts for tribal leaders, or demanding more far-reaching authority for a ministry of tribal affairs. Instead, they demanded a reconfiguration of the republican state in tribal terms: a new tribal army, a parliament conceived as a tribal gathering, and new institutions of self-government.

Though largely a dead letter until Egyptian withdrawal, these conference decisions did provoke Egyptian and radical republican adaptations and shaped institutional blueprints during the al-ʾIryānī presidency. President al-Sallāl defined a "Charter of National Action" broadly in line with the demands of the Khamr conference, while insisting on an Egyptian presence in Yemen (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 19 Jul. 1965). In Egyptian thinking, tribal conferences, like support to tribal leaders, became an alternative to the arduous business of building new institutions. A lessons-learned document from the operations in Yemen, composed by the Egyptian military in 1964, counsels using tribal conferences and working with republican shaykhs to encourage tribes to support the republic (Ferris, 2012, p.183). Wherever possible, radical republicans also organised tribal conferences and 'people's

congresses,' during the 1966 stand-off with moderate republicans, which likewise adopted the form and vernacular of traditional tribal gatherings for the new politics. The Ṭāʾif conference in August 1965 between royalists and dissident republicans, sponsored by Saudi Arabia and associated with the 'third way' politics of Ibrahim al-Wazīr, may have had a similar effect of privileging tribal forms on the royalist side.[188] By some accounts, the Ṭāʾif conference cemented a shift in King Faysal's approach. Thereafter, he reduced funding to the Ḥamīd al-Dīn and reached out to tribes directly (Schmidt, 1968, pp.278–279; ʾAḥmad, 1992, p.372).[189]

The model suggests that this should reinforce divisions, generate political fragmentation, and undermine the idea of the state. By contrast, a close examination of the case highlights the centripetal as well as centrifugal tendencies of this 'tribalisation' of republicanism. In a situation where Imamate-era ideas were in crisis (3.3.3) and the republican ideas formulated and imposed in important measure by external intervention failed to resonate with significant portions of the population and were rejected by large parts of the Northern Yemeni elite (6.1.2), tribal forms provided a framework to contain fragmentation. In addition to its well-documented and undoubted effects tending to aggravate fragmentation and de-centralisation, the increasing and increasingly powerful presence of tribal leaders at the heart of YAR government was, by the end of the war, one of the few things meaningfully connecting local and central governance, shaped imaginings of how they *should* fit together, and what being Yemeni meant after the fall of the Imam.

The tribal conferences provided one of the few frameworks to bridge divides between royalists and republicans and within the republican camp. Participation at the ʿAmrān, Khamr, and Ḥaraḍ conferences did not include the Ḥamīd al-Dīn or other official royalist representatives, but it did include a large number of tribal leaders affiliated with the royalists. Tribal ties and rules of hospitality also allowed republicans opposed to the Egyptians and in open conflict with President al-Sallāl, to sit with the royalist delegation at the Ḥaraḍ conference. These included Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm, ʾAḥmad ʿAlī al-Maṭarī, and Mujāhid ʾAbū Shawārib, who had all been consistently anti-royalist and had actively led troops against royalist forces (see e.g. al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, pp.101-103, 107-109, 112–118). Similarly, tribal agreements crossed republican-royalist divides at a more local level, muting wartime

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[188] For a detailed documentation of the Ṭāʾif conference, see: al-Wazīr, n.d.a.

[189] Gause (1990, p.71) dates the same development later.

polarisation and likely encouraging the coevolution of elite discourses traced in 6.1.1.[190] For instance, in ʿAmrān, when disagreements about how to divide royalist payments between different sections and families in Murhiba tribe threatened to unseat the shaykh, tribal leaders from nearby Banū Ṣuraym, who supported the republicans in the war, were amongst those mediating a solution (Dresch, 1993b, p.258). More broadly, truces between tribes structured dynamics along the front-lines of battle and tribes divided in terms of their allegiance to royalists or republicans could and did come together in other contexts (Dresch, 1993b, pp.258–259). Many of these agreements did not outlaw fighting per se, but regulated it and distinguished between 'tribal' and 'political' logics. For instance, an important truce between Ḥāshid and Bakīl, also negotiated in Murhiba, which put a stop to a confrontation that threatened to turn into an all-out war between these two large tribal confederations, specified that any member of Ḥāshid or Bakīl who wants to "fight for his country (*dawla*)" can "fight in Ṣanaʿā'" (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, pp.138–139). Tribal mediation also sought to resolve and contain entirely non-tribal disputes, as when tribal forms were mobilised to mediate between President al-Sallāl and the Egyptians as their relationship soured with Egyptian withdrawal in autumn 1967 (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, pp.142–143).

Tribal forms also played a central role in the everyday functioning of the republican state and came to colour the imagination of how the central state should relate to the local level. Just as Imamate institutions had sometimes operated through and sometimes alongside tribal institutions, so did the republican state after the war. Personalised alliances with tribal leaders were one of the few ways central government decisions might influence local level governance in Upper Yemen. Of course, this is a form of administrative penetration identified precisely with the absence of state forms in tribal systems – leaders of local patrimonial networks accept central patrimonialism, but reject bureaucratic forms, declaring loyalty to a ruler, but not to a system of government, its logics, or levels of authority (Charrad, 2011, p.59). Yet, this too readily takes an ideal-typical Weberian vision of what the outcome of central-local bargaining should look like for an account of its starting points and the process of bargaining itself. As Sheila Carapico (1998, esp. pp.112-120; see also 5.2.3) has shown in her study of civic participation in the YAR, it was the LDAs that, in the 1970s and 80s ultimately were one of the main instruments for the central state to influence local politics

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[190] Even though such deals and agreements may have appeared as "nothing more than codified treachery" to royalists, republicans, and particularly the Egyptians (Dresch, 1993b, p.258)

and formed the basis for its fragile hegemony. Yet these LDAs began life as non-state spaces, sometimes providing a forum for bottom-up resistance and the formation of new local centres of influence, sometimes captured by established local elites, but not, during the 1960s, functioning according to a central system, its logics, or levels of authority. This observation on the LDAs holds more broadly: the post-war parliament may have come close to being the ʿAmrān conference's envisaged council of shaykhs, but it formed the main institutionalised mechanism connecting local demands with central decisions and spending.

Finally, tribal imaginings formed an important element in the evolving articulation of national identity in Northern Yemen. The identification of tribe and nation had a significant pedigree in Yemeni nationalist writing from the 1950s onwards, highlighted in particular by Paul Dresch, who insists that, from the outset, "the rhetoric of national politics and tribalism were entangled" (1993, p.245, also pp.240-4). This initial 'entanglement' was discussed in 3.1.2, which highlighted the way early nationalists like al-ʿAynī and al-Zubayrī had imagined the 'Yemeni people' as being composed, in important measure, of tribes.[191] During the civil war, both al-ʿAynī and al-Zubayrī rose to positions of political influence, as did others sharing a similar vision of Yemeni nationalism. Al-Zubayrī's assassination ensured he became enshrined as a republican martyr and his writing continued to define nationalist imaginings.

Royalist propaganda stressed many of the same themes. Whereas in power, the Imams had vacillated between celebrating the tribes as the 'wings of the Imamate' and casting them as a barbarian threat to the Imam's domain of order, during the war royalist propaganda came to celebrate tribal poetry, and in rhetoric and pictorial representation tribesmen stood in for 'the Yemeni people' as a whole (e.g. al-Yaman, 16 Mar. 1967, pp.12-13). This further point of republican-royalist convergence coloured what Paul Dresch (1993b, p.263) has called the "new double relation of identity and contrariety" of tribes to the state, whereby tribes imagined themselves to be part of a Yemeni people and hence associated with a state that claimed to represent it; while at the same time guarding against state encroachment onto tribal autonomy.

In these ways, the war laid the foundation for a growing acceptance of tribal forms as institutional blueprints, and their celebration as authentic and particularly Yemeni. They became embedded not only in the political settlement and the institutions of the YAR, but in

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[191] By contrast, nationalist politicians from lower Yemen tended to stress Yemen's ancient greatness and Qurʾānic references without a tribal dimension. See e.g.: Zayd, 2004, p.80.

the very idea of the state, precisely because they offered a framework to potentially contain the growing fragmentation of ideas of the state. There was no fundamental incompatibility between tribal and 'national' identity. As Yemen became imagined as a nation of tribes, those with tribal identities sometimes laid claim to being more 'authentically' Yemeni by virtue of their tribal particularism and what radical potential there was in appeals to 'the people' as (equal) citizens became contained by the mediated vision of the people as also being a collection of tribes (Mundy, 1995, p.7). War made a North Yemeni state in which tribal organisation structured formal institutions and defined national imaginings more strongly than otherwise likely, with far-reaching effects.

6.2.2   Organising new violence specialists

The model links new organisations dealing in violence with the spread of state-centric identities and a militarisation of ideas of the state. Chapter 4 traced the way in which military mobilisation partially extended central patronage networks and meant that officers became a far more important part of the dominant coalition. Yet, it also stressed the partial and abortive nature of military mobilisation during the civil war, highlighting how rival power centres sought to limit and reverse increases in the size and importance of the military and how this contributed to an intertwining of the two mobilisation pathways of the model: the tribes were militarised and the military tribalised. Due to this limited nature of mobilisation; and due to the way in which traditional forms structured new organisations, there is limited evidence of military mobilisation fostering state-centric identities beyond narrow circles in the officer corps. A straightforward modernist narrative, whereby conscription turned peasants and tribesmen-farmers into 'Yemenis' is not convincing. The military remained small and military service, though increasingly attractive as a path of advancement, was not a nationalist rite of passage. Yet, despite this, it does appear that ideas of the state became extensively militarised in North Yemen during the civil war, in that the military came to be imagined as the guardian of national values and the avatar of modernisation. Military officers came to dominate the formal state, the pageantry of the republic revolved around military displays, and its ideology celebrated 'unity' as embodied by the military. In light of the limited nature of military mobilisation, it is most convincing to ascribe this, beyond the framework of the model, to the heavily militarised Egyptian intervention.

After Radio Ṣanaʿāʾ declared the overthrow of the Imam, the new YAR government sent out messages to foreign capitals. Under a letterhead on which 'Mutawakkilite Kingdom' and the crown atop the coat of arms had been carefully crossed out, the message declared (PAAA, B12 1059, 2 Oct. 1962):

> [sic] The revolution of the Arab people of Yemen – undertaken on their behalf by its armed forces against anturies of oppression, feudalism and exploitation caracterized by utter contempt to the elementary principles of the right of men, have culminated on 27th of Rabii Thani 1383 (September 26th 1962) in the proclamation of the Arab Republic of Yemen, unanimously acclaimed throughout Yemen.

The idea that the military carried out the revolution on behalf of the people, was, of course, not a Yemeni invention, but is indicative of the prominence the military assumed in republican discourse and the way the military and imported technologies of violence became identified with ideas of the modern. This was particularly evident in the way the YAR celebrated its revolution. The Imams from Yaḥiyā forward had taken to reviewing their troops, parading long lines of men outside the city gates of Ṣanaʿāʾ and then Taʿiz and al-Ḥudayda to showcase their power. The republican government and its military leaders significantly expanded and redefined these spectacles. While the Imam might have reviewed hundreds of soldiers marching past with rifles, the YAR's revolution-day parades featured thousands of soldiers in identical Egyptian-style uniforms, marching in step, accompanied by tanks and armoured vehicles. Although the pageantry of revolution also included plays and nervous schoolchildren reciting patriotic poetry (Gerholm, 1977, p.24), it was the military parade that was broadcast on Radio Ṣanaʿāʾ and to which foreign dignitaries were invited (e.g. PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 1 Oct. 1965; 8 Oct. 1966). Every year, these parades grew in size and sophistication and foreign observers noted that troops appeared "consistently better trained and better dressed" from 1964 through 1966 (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 8 Oct. 1966; 1 Oct. 1965). Moreover, President al-Sallāl, unlike ʿAbd al-Nasir, never exchanged his uniform for a suit – or a thawb – and much daily news reporting during the civil war revolved around al-Sallāl's visits to the military academy, to frontline positions, and to the Egyptian command (e.g. PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 24 Jun. 1965), highlighting how official government media equated war-fighting and ruling during the civil war.

This re-centring of popular imaginings of political order onto the military is likewise evident in Messick's description of the 'new men' of the 1970s. Describing changing ideals of authority in ʾIbb, in lower Yemen, he highlights that 'great men' in the traditional mould were those who had mastered religious learning and attained high office in the Imamic administration, whereas the 'new men' who conformed to the ideals of the 1970s, were men from learned families who became military officers (Messick, 1978, p.109). This shift was not limited to one of the YAR's geographic regions. In his ethnographic work focused on tribes in Upper Yemen, Dresch diagnosed a change in emphasis away from religious learning for high office, towards a conception of political order in military terms. Since the revolution, "unity is the catchword

of governments" in Yemen and "the idea of the military answers to this most directly" (Dresch, 1993b, pp.265–266).

Yemeni domestic military mobilisation does not account well for militarisation. Instead, Egyptian intervention was decisive. This is encapsulated nicely in the cancellation of the YAR's 1967 revolution-day parade, after Egyptian defeat in June and amidst Egyptian withdrawal. The German embassy speculated whether the YAR would have been able to put on a parade at all, given the rushed repatriation of heavy weapons to Egypt "without regard for ownership" (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 29 Sep. 1967) and the dominance of Egyptian planners, organisers and even troops and musicians in the parades of the previous years (see also: PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 8 Oct. 1966).

Moreover, Egyptian troops were, throughout most of the civil war, the most visible and sometimes the only expression of the new YAR state present at a local level and Egyptian officers made extensive decisions about local government. In some areas they acted as de-facto governors and everywhere decided about the projects of Egyptian combat engineers, offering well-building and pumps in exchange for collaboration (Vassiliev, 2012, p.291; Ferris, 2012, p.185). Visiting the Egyptian garrison in Ṣaʿda, Dana Adams Schmidt, a correspondent for the New York Times, noted that the Egyptians had built a school, distributed tractors to farmers, and installed water pumps. The Egyptian field hospital catered to Yemeni civilians. More broadly, the Egyptian Army in Yemen had a section entirely devoted to civilian development activities (Schmidt, 1968, pp.84, 208). Describing the role of the Egyptian commander, Schmidt noted:

> I felt he was enjoying his role as dispenser of largesse in a primitive community. Dealing with the supplicants at his gate with a mixture of condescension and affection, he may have imagined himself in the role the British played for so many years in his own home in Egypt.

After the commander had given away three pumps and six tractors, "he found himself settling disputes about the distribution of water, the use of the tractors, and a thousand other things" (Schmidt, 1968, pp.84–85, 208). He began, in other words, to rule and administer as the de facto representative of the new order.

The specific military model the Egyptians sought to export to Yemen structured this militarisation. It was not just external intervention, but intervention that sought to create a vanguardist, economically favoured, and politically active officer corps, that underwrote a militarisation of ideas of the state as military officers came to see themselves as the natural leaders of the YAR. In the lead-up to the revolution, Egyptian intelligence and ʾAnwar al-Sadat, who held the Yemen portfolio within the Egyptian leadership, had shifted their support

away from the civilian Yemeni Union to the Free Officers, who consciously modelled themselves on the Egyptian conspirators of 1952 (Douglas, 1984, p.228). The relative side-lining of civilian revolutionaries and reformists in the overthrow of the Imam translated directly into a series of officer-dominated cabinets. It also played an important role in the unwavering Egyptian support for President al-Sallāl, a military officer, long after he had lost domestic support. This combined with the Egyptian decision to remake the Yemeni military in the Egyptian image, discussed in 5.2.3. Many Yemeni officers hence sought to formally take control of state institutions in ways in which tribal leaders did not and civilians, lacking military support, could not. Despite limited mobilisation, the Yemeni military was indispensable for any government by the end of the civil war – and so were its most popular and influential officers (AV Neues Amt 12333, 26 Jul. 1971).

The civil war thus militarised ideas of the state through a sort of vicarious mobilisation. This also reinforced state-centric identities, but primarily among the officer corps, the most privileged group of newly recruited violence specialists. The Egyptian military presence and model, while, as we saw in Chapter 4, playing an ambivalent and often limiting role in the development of the YAR military, did much to politicise its officers and to identify the Republic with military-led modernisation and military rule. Of course, as previous chapters and Section 6.2.1 above highlight, this dynamic was unfolding at the same time as tribal forms experienced an unprecedented boost, intertwining the organisational forms and ideas associated with both the tribes and the military.

6.3 War financing: taxation, allocation, and the idea of the state

The saying that nothing is certain but death and taxes, attributed to Benjamin Franklin, suggests how state revenue production can contribute to the idea of state permanence, coherence, and inevitability. Taxation, allocation, and ideas of the state intertwine closely. In the model, dominant coalitions can choose to either outsource taxation to the local level or expand centrally-administered taxation. In terms of ideas of the state it suggests that outsourcing taxation may either retroactively justify central control, or highlight the power- and meaninglessness of the centre for lived realities at the local level. Expanding centrally administered taxation, on the other hand, can make the state more present, powerful and meaningful in popular imagining but may also serve to escalate grievances against it.

There is a problem of evidence in seeking to evaluate these claims. While triangulating from post-war ethnographies, contemporary foreign service and journalistic reporting, individual interviews, and memoirs has allowed the, often impressionistic, reconstruction of important local level dynamics in other chapters; local imaginings of the state and changes in them

appear particularly difficult to reconstruct. This is all the more true since the Egyptians and, to a lesser extent, the royalists dominated cultural production during the civil war. From them, we have newspapers and transcripts of radio broadcasts. For a sense of how Yemenis made sense of changing patterns of taxation at the local level, we have, at best, a handful of ethnographies and the memoirs of powerful shaykhs writing to establish their legacies long after the events in question.

Yet, this problem of evidence may be less acute than it appears. We know from Chapter 5 that central taxation was on a downwards trend throughout most of the civil war, except during a limited period after Egyptian withdrawal. At the same time, local taxation, which the model identifies with elite predation, also does not appear to have increased, since local leaders had a surfeit of resources accruing to them directly. More broadly, it is not clear that the relationship between tribesmen and tribal leaders would have allowed extensive predation so that the relatively equal balance of power within tribes contributed to the fact that outsourcing taxation led to limited taxes in accordance with locally accepted forms of authority.[192] On its own, this might have reduced the importance and presence of central institutions and could ultimately have eroded the idea of the central state and its relevance for everyday life. However, Chapter 5 also highlighted that the decline of taxation occurred in conjunction with large increases in allocation, a central missing story in the historiography of the civil war to date. As a result, while central control over local taxation, appointments, and dispute settlement decreased, the legitimacy of central government *increased.*

Actors in the civil war pursued neither of the two options the model identifies. Instead, allocation-led state building made the central state a more important addressee of claims as it came to demand less and offer more. Increased central allocation and the concentration of externally provided resources in Ṣanaʿāʾ-based institutions that interfaced with international donors, made the capital the arena for bargaining and disputes over distribution. As a result, the central government became more important. The idea that there was a North Yemeni state, that it determined important features of people's lives, and defined in some measure a

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[192] This is puzzling from the perspective of a literature on elite predation and state capture (see: Di John, 2010b for a summary and review), and unremarkable from a political economy perspective that takes the local political settlement and the checks and balances on the power of tribal leaders seriously.

reference point for political belonging, became more plausible in direct relation not to the centre's ability to tax, but its ability to spend.[193]

An instructive, if perhaps crude, remark from Hugh Leach, a British foreign service official visiting the YAR immediately after the war, drives home the increased expectations many in the YAR came to have of the government and a tendency towards increased claim-making vis-à-vis the central state. In the early 1970s he noted that Yemenis were "constantly" complaining "about the inadequacies of the central government" and measured its shortcomings in comparison "to America or Europe."[194] After the civil war there was an expectation that the government *should* be providing services and opportunities, suggesting an ideal not of (tribal) autonomy, of being left alone, but of expectations and demands for state intervention. These expectations are also evident in the memoirs of Shaykh ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar, who stresses the occasions during the civil war when Ḥāshid fought without salaries, was cut off from stipends, or did not receive the expected investment, such as after Egyptian defeat in the Six-Day War. On these occasions, he highlights that Ḥāshid continued fighting while receiving "not a single riyal" from al-Sallāl or the Egyptian command (al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.138, see also 126). The (new) expected normal was clearly that tribes receive central stipends – and by extension tribes were justified in pressuring the central government to resume such payments when they ceased. If the Imamate ideal was direct access and a personal relationship with the Imam (compare 3.3), this was increasingly replaced by an ideal of direct access to state funds (e.g. Carapico and Myntti, 1991). According to the same logic, in nominally royalist Rāziḥ, the "small minority" of officials who were openly republican sought to sway local public opinion by appealing to the infrastructure the republic would deliver to Rāziḥ (Weir, 2007, p.281). It helped that allocation in the form of road-building reduced obstacles to mobility, facilitating the circulation of people, goods, and ideas. Tribesmen who had never been outside their valleys, or villagers in lower Yemen who had never travelled beyond the nearest market town, were increasingly able to hitch a ride to

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[193] This is not to endorse a simple modernisation story. Academic and journalistic writing on the YAR during the 1960s and 1970s was suffused with arguments that placed much emphasis on the nature of newly-available goods and (too) little on who controlled new resources. On the imagined transformative power of Hollywood movies and Coca Cola see e.g.: Boals, 1970, p.258.

[194] John Shipman Papers: Hugh Leach, "The Lost Tribes of Israel: a survey of the remaining Jews living in the Yemen," 20 Jun. 1971.

Şanʿāʾ or Taʿiz and access shops, cafes, movies, as well as central government (Schmidt, 1968, p.287; Gerholm, 1977, p.36). A second major area of local investment was in school building. Even after Egyptian withdrawal, these schools were manned by Egyptian teachers, pushing a statist and Nasirist narrative (Gerholm, 1977, p.24; see also: Tsourapas, 2016).[195]

6.4 The inscription of violence in ideas of the state

Egyptian destruction of towns and villages, the mutilation of Egyptian soldiers' corpses,[196] local famines, political assassinations, violent protests, and gruesome executions all marked the lived reality of the civil war. Such events, the triggers of the collective and individual trauma of war, also affect conceptions of the state and everyday politics in the sense that violence may become normalised as part of the regular practice of government. During the civil war, political assassinations proliferated, arrests, executions, and other coercive instruments of governance grew in scale, and 'popular violence' in the form of bombing and sabotage entered the repertoire of contentious politics in the YAR. There was a shift in the coercive basis of the state and the forms of political violence rulers and state officials engaged in. The model suggested that this could underwrite a rally to 'normalcy' and legitimate (any) order by comparison to the traumatic violence of war, or undermine legitimacy by reducing faith in the state's ability to afford even the most basic protection to its citizens. Yet, rather than directly legitimating or undermining the status quo, the spread of these forms of violence served rather to change popular expectations of how politics was conducted. Although, as studies of the 1970s and later highlight, on an everyday level, formidable mechanisms for conflict mediation and management could contain conflict, mass arrests and assassinations became a much more 'normal' part of how YAR politics operated during and after the civil war.

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[195] Later, the experience of working in Saudi Arabia and contact with the expanding welfare provisions there likely coloured these views. Both Saudi welfare provision and Yemeni migration to Saudi Arabia was in its earliest stages into the late 1960s and did not take off until after 1970 (Al-Rasheed, 2002, pp.116–124).

[196] Dresch (1993b, p.274 note 24) argues that such mutilations were not an 'ancient tribal custom,' but a disgrace. However, at various points Saudi Arabia offered money for trophies and the Egyptian soldiers' presence "outside the moral universe" of the tribes meant these incentives were repeatedly taken up.

According to German embassy reporting, bombings and assassinations became a regular occurrence during the civil war, particularly from 1965 onwards.[197] A report of 19 August 1965 mentions three bomb attacks in Taʿiz on the evenings of 10 and 11 August targeting the Egyptian headquarters, which were attributed locally to "imperialist subversion" (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 19 Aug. 1965). A report from 1 October 1965 reports the ambassador's worries about sitting near President al-Sallāl during the revolution parade due to the "notorious Yemeni predilection for explosives" and mentions that a young man had died when a bomb he was carrying detonated prematurely earlier the same day in Taʿiz (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 1 Oct. 1965). In February 1966, a particularly large explosion, which the Germans blamed on conflicts over control of the southern independence struggle, killed 10 people (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 8 Feb. 1966). A report from later that year refers to Egyptian efforts to outlaw the carrying of weapons in cities to combat "almost daily" ambushes and attacks on Egyptian troops – and notes the Egyptians used the death penalty to enforce the prohibition (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 21 Oct. 1966). On 15 November of the same year, reporting mentions an attack with explosives on a Taʿiz power plant (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 15 Nov. 1967). The list could be continued: a report from August 1966 calls attacks with explosives "a real plague in this country," mentions a host of recent executions, and reports on the summary justice meted out to suspected bombers (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 1 Aug. 1966).

In addition to events reported as sabotage and terrorism, a host of reports also refer to assassination attempts of high-profile political figures: In addition to the well-known and still unsolved assassination of Muḥammad al-Zubayrī, killed in March/April 1965, other prominent politicians were likewise found dead far from the front lines: ʿAbd al-Qawī Ḥāmīm, a pro-Egyptian former Foreign Minister, who had organised a Taʿiz 'people's congress' in the run up to the Ḥaraḍ conference, was ambushed and killed shortly thereafter (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 26 Aug. 1965; Muṭahar, 1984, pp.216-18). In April 1966, ʿAbd Allah al-ʾIryānī, the prominent brother of ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-ʾIryānī was murdered (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 19 Apr. 1966). Muḥammad Nuʿmān, a close relative of ʾAḥmad Nuʿmān, experienced the same fate in July (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 20 Jul. 1966). Al-ʿAmrī escaped multiple assassination

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[197] In contrast to the increase of such events in German reporting, my interviewees largely denied that bombings and assassinations became a more regular occurrence during the civil war.

attempts (see e.g. PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, n.d.; 21 Jun 1966),[198] while the royalists claimed "officers in Ṣanaʿāʾ" were trying to assassinate shaykh ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar, after a mine destroyed a car traveling in his convoy, killing the passengers (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, News from Yemen No. 4, 15 Oct. 1967).[199] In February 1967, three bombs exploded at a school building shortly before its planned inauguration by President al-Sallāl and the Soviet Minister Muhiedinov (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 13 Feb. 1967).

In addition, the period witnessed new levels of state-led violence: executions, arrests, and reprisals proliferated. Opponents of Imam ʾAḥmad had used the Imam's killing of 32 of the plotters of the 1948 coup to great effect. Particularly the execution of his family members was central to anti Imamic propaganda, underlining that these executions could be leveraged as something shocking and out of the ordinary in terms of popular expectations of just rule. Similarly, when the new republican government executed leading Imamic officials and members of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn family in September and October 1962 (see 4.1.1), this pushed at least some who were vacillating between royalists and republicans towards supporting the Imam (al-Ẓāhirī, 1996, p.136; al-ʾAḥmar, 2008, p.86). These executions long remained a very important reference point for royalist supporters (Interview with ʿAbd Allah al-Kibsī, 2016).

As such killings became more common in the course of the war, their importance in memori-alisation wanes. There is much less interest in the historiography on the process whereby the revolution came to eat its children, notably the executions of Hādī ʿĪsā, Muḥammad al-Ruʿaynī, and four others in October 1966. Al-Ruʿaynī was dragged through the streets and the dead were eventually thrown to the dogs (AV Neues Amt 1719, 27 Oct. 1966). Besides these executions, the German embassy identified show trials, arrests, and threats as constituting, from mid-1966 onwards, a system of "cynical, but effective, terror" (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 8 Mar. 1967), which also included assassinations, executions, and mass arrests of as many as 2,000 tribal leaders, government functionaries, officers, and others. Public buildings were converted into makeshift prisons (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 2 Nov. 1966). When al-Sallāl was deposed in November 1967, one of his allies alleges that the new government

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[198] Several of these reports point fingers at Egyptian intelligence. However, most are silent or nonplussed about the potential culprits and their motivation. The crisis of Egyptian-German relations and the German Middle-East crisis (see 5.1) may have coloured reporting.

[199] *News from Yemen* was an English-language royalist magazine.

gunned down protestors in Taʿiz, killing five, injuring 15, and arresting more than 300 (Muṭahar, 1984, p.183).

Collective punishment and reprisals accompanied these forms of political violence. In addition to punitive bombing raids and the destruction of houses and whole villages,[200] the Egyptian air force's extensive use of poison gas is increasingly well documented. It formed an element of its efforts to depopulate the countryside through a "scorched-earth policy designed to eliminate support for the royalist guerillas" (McGregor, 2006, p.263). Egyptian warplanes used chemical weapons in 13 separate attacks in May 1967 alone and, according to CIA reports, the UAR had been using chemical agents against royalist forces since as early as May 1963. The US repeatedly confirmed the presence of chemical agents, including nerve gas, in villages attacked by Egyptian planes (Orkaby, 2014, pp.247–248).

While reports of executions might have roused popular anger at the outset of the war, according to the German embassy, popular reactions to escalating levels of political violence and massacres in 1966 and 1967 increasingly dismissed individual occurrences. The embassy describes the coping mechanism of the "man on the street" in terms of normalising violence. Asked about Egyptian gas attacks, the typical response was to freely acknowledge that such attacks occurred (something Egyptian propaganda always denied), yet to shrug them off as something that "always happens." In much the same way, the embassy thought most Yemenis accepted the "limitless rule of the secret police" during the mass arrest of thousands of suspected dissidents in late 1966 and early 1967 as something both mundane and inevitable (PAAA, AV Neues Amt 1719, 13 Feb. 1967), even though leading politicians criticised the intelligence services' excesses and their framing of opponents to Egyptian rule for plots they did not commit (al-ʾIryānī, 2013, p.277). Post-war politics continued wartime violence by the same means. The secret police, likely launched by Egyptian intelligence, was significantly expanded under ʾIbrāhīm al-Ḥamdī. Similarly, the political assassinations that proliferated during the civil war and the southern independence struggle would return as an instrument of political competition in the 1970s, as an instrument of repression against the NDF in the 1980s, and as a tool to monopolise power in the 1990s.[201]

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[200] For instance, the *Neue Züricher Zeitung* reports that villages along the Ṣanaʿāʾ-al-Ḥudaydah road were destroyed in retaliation for the killing of Egyptian teachers (PAAA AV Neues Amt 1719, NZZ clipping from 22 Feb. 1966).

[201] Thanks to Martin Jerrett for this observation. See also: Jerrett and al-Haddar, 2017.

6.5 Conclusion to Chapter 6

The evolution of ideas of the Yemeni state have not been widely examined and the evidence, approached in terms of the model's focus on ideas of the state, shows that the war occasioned deeper ideational changes than western scholars have generally given the 'revolution' credit for.

The chapter traced the way elite contests politicised and mobilised the population, creating a new register of mass politics in Yemen's larger cities and contributing to the co-production of 'popular' violence against the *sāda*, which directly challenged *sayyid* privileges and the ideology of *sayyid* rule itself. However, the investigation also highlighted that action against the *sāda* was geographically localised and stressed that central cleavages did not prompt local action against either *sāda* or tribal leaders north of Ṣanaʿāʾ. Conflict not only drives change, but also supplies the means for existing centres of power to reproduce themselves.

Violence against *sāda* and top-down politicisation fundamentally challenged Imamate ideas of just rule, yet proved unable to replace them with a coherent vision of republican government. Instead, elite discourses converged around a set of rhetorical commonplaces – modernity, the people, and development. These commonplaces were sites of significant contestation and the political field they delineated remained fragmentary, with much scope for disagreement and contradiction. Yet, they also all privileged the central state as an actor and as an addressee of claims and hence contributed to the production of a state effect — the idea that a dominant and coherent central organisation exists; or at least that it should.

The specific state effect produced in Yemen was mediated through tribal forms and expectations and the idea that Yemen was a nation of tribes. Tribal mechanisms for conflict resolution, military mobilisation, and self-government became embedded in the formal state. Of course, tribal self-government and jurisprudence had also been accommodated by the Imam. Although Imamic texts tend to vilify tribal custom as un-Islamic, arbitrary, and particularistic, in contrast to the Imam's application of shariʿa coded as Islamic, ordered, and universalist, tribal custom was routinely accommodated and formed a central part of the practice of Imamic government. Yet, tribal forms were under significant pressure as the Ḥamīd al-Dīn consolidated power. The civil war not only gave them a new lease on life, but provided the conditions under which they were institutionalised and formalised in the growing state apparatus and into the ideas of Yemeni nationalism that this apparatus began actively to reproduce through public displays and celebrations, investment decisions, and schooling.

Such tribal logics were not antithetical to 'the state' so much as providing a particular vision of political authority. This point, partially familiar from a literature on hybrid political orders and (neo)patrimonialism, needs to be taken far more seriously in thinking about state formation. There "are many paths to state formation, with each characterized by a distinctive relationship between the central state and local communities" (Charrad, 2011, p.51). The organisation of power at the centre is always shaped by pre-existing logics, rules, and practices, which help define specific institutional structures and by extension their operation and effects.

Continuing one of the main arguments of Chapter 5, the investigation also revealed how increased spending made the central state a more important addressee of claims as it came to demand less and offer more. The idea that there was a North Yemeni state, that it determined important features of people's lives, and defined in some measure a reference point for political belonging became more plausible in direct relation not to the centre's ability to tax, but its ability to spend, reflecting a reality and expectation of public infrastructure and state services. The absence of allocation-led state building from the model reflects a broader neglect of the fiscal underpinnings of state formation in the literature and the need to move on from the important insights of political settlement perspectives on the role of rents in stabilising dominant coalitions, to how the different use of such rents to stabilise rule impacts dynamics of state formation in differential ways. The conclusion returns to this idea.

7 CONCLUSION

Yemen has a long and unhappy history of civil war and conflict. These conflicts were not bracketed periods of crisis, but were productive and transformative in the sense that they determined, for better and often for worse, key features of the post-war political order. War and conflict drove state formation in particular directions and in, North Yemen, wartime violence and the practices associated with its mobilisation, administration, and financing shifted the political settlement, transformed formal institutions, and altered the very idea of political order between 1962 and 1970.

7.1 What the model helped us discover about Yemen

Approaching these wartime transformations from the perspective of a model that specifies mechanisms connecting civil war and state formation, reveals dynamics and processes that have been hitherto neglected in the study of the royalist-republican civil war and its aftermath.

Although the growing power of tribes during the civil war is well established, the sheer scale of the flow of resources to tribal leaders, the fundamental transformative effects of the war on the political settlement, and the long-term impacts arising from this have rarely been fully acknowledged. Much of the more recent literature, in particular, has tended to take tribes as given features of the Yemeni political landscape, has treated their prominence during the 1980s and 1990s as unremarkable, and has naturalised the limited reach of central institutions and their reliance on tribal allies. Yet these are all outcomes of the war; and, as the evidence collected along the model's multiple and contradictory pathways serve to highlight, they are outcomes of this specific war and its particular constellations.

The model, by drawing attention to wartime mobilisation and the recruitment of local violence specialists, accounts well for how tribal influence increased within the new state. It revealed that the civil war made tribal leaders' ability to mobilise armed tribesmen indispensable, while external intervention provided the resources that cemented tribal leaders' power and ensured they could extend wartime gains into the post-war period. Egyptian and Saudi Arabian intervention and their shared hostility to the political and disciplinary challenges of mass mobilisation, were revealed to have played a decisive role in producing and reproducing the armed power of the tribes.

The discussion, building on the framework of the model and the specific dynamics it helped reveal, also moved beyond its immediate categories to explore not only how the tribes

shaped and benefited from the war, but how the war shaped the tribes, driving a process of centralisation by expanding tribal leaders' opportunities for patronage while disrupting the livelihoods of ordinary tribesmen. This effect of the war on the tribes, subsequently institutionalised in the everyday functioning of the YAR, was recently also analysed by Marieke Brandt (2017, p.73), who concluded that over time, this "helped to distort a functioning tribal order" as growing gaps of income and status between the members of tribes and their leaders, compounded by the growing importance of tribal leaders as the interface between tribe and state, bred considerable resentment. Similarly, beyond the general rise of tribal leaders well-captured by the model, the exploration drew attention to the thick politics of personal connections and alliance formation to explain why specific shaykhs rose to particular prominence: these tribal leaders exploited the specific opportunities of war and were particularly well-placed to build an alliance with traditional notables and military officers opposed to both the Imam as well as more far-reaching social change.

The emphasis in the model on different mobilising pathways and their potential impact on the political settlement also revealed how the 'tribal-military-commercial' complex of the YAR took shape during the civil war. Thinking about military mobilisation alongside mobilisation organised along traditional lines of kinship and tribal subscription, in particular, helped explain the observed tribalisation of the military and the militarisation of the tribes, which long defined the power dynamics in the north of the country – and arguably does so to this day. Examining these dynamics in tandem with external intervention, as the model suggests, also highlighted how Egyptian intervention privileged military officers in the dominant coalition, even as intervention, in line with the model, accounts for the slow and repeatedly aborted growth of the Yemeni military. Egyptian intervention fostered the politicisation of the YAR officer corps through training, purges, and growing roles in administration and decision-making, while ensuring they sat atop a weak and divided military. Because of the weakness of the regular military, alliances with tribal leaders became essential for some officers and, especially after Egyptian withdrawal, became the main way for officers to remain functionally operational and politically relevant. In addition, the Egyptian intervention provided opportunities for rapid capital accumulation for trading families, while underwriting their exclusion from the political settlement and their inability to access or control coercion, thus structuring the role of merchants on the margins of the settlement.

A comparison of attempts to seize political power drives home the shifting political settlement between 1962 and 1967. In 1948, a handful of *sayyid* and *qāḍī* conspirators sought to topple the Imam more or less on their own. In 1962, a small contingent of military

officers alongside a loose network of oppositional ʿulamaʾ did so successfully. Thereafter, changes in leadership required both military and tribal support. In 1967, President al-ʾIryānī did not depose President al-Sallāl until he had secured the support of tribal leaders and the officers in charge of the most powerful military units. When President al-Ḥamdī in turn overthrew President al-ʾIryānī, it was at the head of an alliance of military officers and such tribal leaders as Sinān ʾAbū Luḥūm and ʿAbd Allah al-ʾAḥmar, although he later sought to limit their power. By 1967, military officers and tribal leaders were the central players in the dominant coalition.

Similarly, using the emphasis in the model on different strategies of war financing as a lens for approaching the civil war, revealed dramatic and largely untold fiscal transformations of the YAR state. The YAR's institutional orientation towards external rents, perhaps because it is a recurrent, almost prototypical feature of postcolonial states, has largely been taken for granted. Yet, the investigation reveals it to be, in important measure, an outcome of the civil war. Attempts to break decisively with Imamate era taxation provided the initial rationale for abandoning taxation. Egyptian aid, priorities, and the antinomies of external state building then provided the context in which taxation could be left to languish, while external rents and blueprints drove institutional change. During the war, the state in North Yemen went from being organised around taxation and especially the extraction of agricultural surplus from lower Yemen and the Tihāma, to a state built around the central allocation of international rents. The readiness of Saudi Arabia under King Faysal to give direct budget support to the YAR government in exchange for political influence and assurances of hostility to the PDRY after the end of the war, allowed this model to become entrenched in the 1970s.

Such a far-reaching transformation of the political settlement and the fiscal basis of the state could not but have a defining impact on state institutions. The model highlighted tendencies of fragmentation and the challenges to developing effective central institutions likely to arise from abandoning taxation, relying on local violence specialists, and prioritising investment in the military. These tendencies helped frame a discussion of how the war, by ending taxation and heaping arms and funds upon tribal leaders, transformed centre-periphery relations. YAR administration, well into the 1980s at least, was far more decentralised and fragmented than it had been under the Imam. The rival pathways of the model also helped make sense of other developments that appear superficially to contradict this story of decentralisation and framed the discussion of how external rents and the specific models Egyptian experts sought to impose led to a rapid expansion of central institutions. By 1971, top-heavy central ministries employed at least 10,000 civil servants and provided one in ten jobs in Ṣanaʿāʾ. Yet, their growth was haphazard and chaotic. Despite producing statistics, publishing

administrative decrees, and otherwise acting 'as if' they constituted an effective state administration for the benefit of expert advisers and international audiences, these bodies were largely disconnected from the actual practice of governing and were reliant on alliances with local power brokers for local access and to implement their plans and projects – to the extent these were seriously pursued at all. Central allocation fed by international rents underwrote these alliances, though the funds involved during the 1960s were small and the model was new and untested. Yet this wartime development proved an important switch for the subsequent development of the state, with long-term impacts. As analysis of the practical functioning of the YAR and Republic of Yemen has frequently concluded, without necessarily probing its wartime origins, central patronage became the dominant mode of political integration. However, it produced little development and restricted political participation (e.g. Brandt, 2017, p.72).

The war also occasioned deeper ideational changes than western scholars have generally given the 'revolution' credit for. The model helped to structure an exploration of these changes, which have rarely been given appropriate attention.[202] It revealed that the acute competition between royalists and republicans and within republican circles for public support and for mobilising followers under conditions of conflict, prompted a convergence of elite discourses around the rhetorical commonplaces of modernity, development, and the people, defining a changed set of ideas and expectations of what the state should do and how it should be organised. Although not adding up to a coherent ideology of rule in the way that the Zaydī doctrine of the Imamate had, these rhetorical commonplaces constituted a fragmentary, potentially contradictory, and multiple basis for the conflicting claims of Republican politics that all privileged the central state as an actor and addressee of claims. Modernity and development in the 1960s were statist concepts, even if they were articulated in a context in which central institutions were weak and flanked by an imagination of the people heavily inflected by tribal forms. Across the political settlement, institutions, and ideas of the state, the model helped to reveal how specific features of the YAR, ones often viewed as characteristic of Yemen, were decisively influenced by and took shape during the civil war.

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[202] Exceptions are: Wenner, 1967; Dresch, 1993b; and for a later period: Wedeen, 2008.

7.2 The war then and the war now

Of course, state formation did not cease with royalist-republican reconciliation in 1970, nor did the war sweep aside all features of the Imamate. Changes that took place because of the civil war did not determine future developments, nor is it useful to draw direct lines of continuity between, say, the Ḥūthī movement and the royalists, or to suggest that the current conflict is a replay of the civil war of the 1960s. Yet the exploration has value beyond the confines of understanding Yemen during the 1960s and both the exploration of the 1960s as well as the model that structured it, promise to be of relevance for understanding Yemen today, some 56 years after the beginning of the civil war.

On-going conflict in Yemen is, in important ways, about the state formation legacies of earlier wars. That is not to say that the political settlement, the relationship between formal central institutions and local power brokers, or the parameters of legitimacy were set for the foreseeable future during the civil war of the 1960s. They needed to be reproduced to endure and continued to evolve through a series of external and internal shocks, not least the expulsion of Yemeni workers from Saudi Arabia, Yemeni unification and the war between North and South in 1994 (Phillips, 2016, p.58; see also: Schmitz, 2016). Yet, central features set during the civil war defined the politics of the YAR and affect even the current war, ongoing at the time of writing; even as it further upends a status quo already called into question by declining oil rents in the 2000s and the uprisings of 2011.

The breakdown of the long-standing alliance between tribal and military power – whose formation during the civil war formed one important theme of the discussion – was one of the factors precipitating the war. Saudi Arabia's decision to come to the aid of ʿAbd Rabbuh Manṣūr Hādī decisively influenced and exacerbated the current conflict – and, as we saw, Saudi Arabian influence on and direct involvement in Yemeni politics largely dates from the civil war. Some elements of the *sayyid* elite who lost influence in the 1960 civil war – not limited to the al-Ḥūthī family – are at the forefront of the Ḥūthī movement. This has led the Hādī government, the ʾIṣlāḥ Party, and other anti- Ḥūthī forces to charge the Ḥūthī's with seeking to re-fight the 1960s civil war and to re-instate the Imamate. The current war also involves renewed battles over centralisation and control from Ṣanaʿāʾ, in ways that re-enact civil war-era conflicts. History, of course, does not repeat itself, but there is much we might better understand about contemporary developments in Yemen, if we take its history of state formation and particularly the civil war of the 1960s more seriously.

More importantly, having demonstrated its utility for analysing the implications of the 1960s civil war for state formation in the following decades, the model promises to be a useful

starting point for thinking about the likely impacts of the current war, underscoring the need to explore dynamics of mobilisation, war financing, the complex role of external interveners, the unintended consequences of devastating aerial bombardment, and likely shifts in ideas and expectations of political order.

Since oil rents slowed in the 2000s, throughout the Ḥūthī wars, the emergence of the Southern Movement, the 2011 protests, and especially since the beginning of the devastating current war, the longer term political trajectory of Yemen has more frequently been analysed in terms of 'state unmaking,' than state formation (Lackner, 2017; Salisbury, 2016; see e.g. Hill, 2017). Such a view effectively captures dynamics of fragmentation, the devastating impact of the war on livelihoods, and the acute disappointment of many Yemenis in the state. Yet, it may be fruitful to take the ambivalent effects of conflict more seriously and to analyse current dynamics through the lens of a model that provides a way for thinking about such dynamics in conjunction with changing elite bargains, countervailing centralising pressures, and the formation of new local and central institutions.

Understanding the transformations of the war will be central to effective post-war reconstruction, a topic beginning to attract increasing attention (e.g. Brehony and Al-Sarhan, 2015). Reconstruction will not occur on a blank slate, nor will it be able to take as its point of departure the *status quo ante bellum*. Rather, reconstruction will be conditioned by a political order defined in important measure by the transformations of the war, but need not reify these changes or simply provide the resources for the winners of the war to consolidate their power. The 1960s civil war entrenched interests, ideas, and habits of rule that resisted further change and limited possibilities after the war to achieve the developmental outcomes most Yemenis wanted. Yet, as the intra-republican battles of 1968 and 1969 and the continuous negotiation and contestation of power during the 1970s highlight, the state formation outcomes of the war were hardly set in stone and were called into question by the transition to peace.

An appreciation of state formation dynamics during the civil war in the 1960s also highlights that important features of the YAR – features that were subsequently developed, adapted or superseded – were outcomes of the civil war. They are not inherent features of Yemeni society or the political order. We saw how specific conjunctions of structural pressures, interests, ideas, and personalities activated certain combinations of causal pathways that shaped subsequent possibilities. The origins of the current order were deeply contingent. Though the current conflict will condition post-war possibilities, it does not determine the future, or condemn Yemenis to relive the past (see also: Heinze, 2018).

7.3 What Yemen tells us about the model

Taking a step back from Yemen and its history of state formation, what does the discussion suggest about the initial puzzle? What was the relationship between war making and state making during the 1960s and do similar dynamics continue to hold? Where does the exploration of the case leave the model?

The reconceptualization of the key terms in Chapters 1 and 2 and their subsequent investigation in Chapters 4 to 6 made clear that the type of relationship that might exist between war making and state making is not a "whenever x then y" regularity, nor a function of the type y=y(x), or indeed a statement of the kind x ⇒ y. War making is not always state making, stateness is not a function of war, and 'putting in' more war does not mean 'getting out' consistently more (or less) state, nor is war likely to be, strictly speaking, necessary for state formation. At the same time, the evidence that the two are connected is compelling and more detailed explorations of the nexus between war making and state making have consistently been fruitful.

The investigation thus started off by suggesting linkages between war making and state making that captured as much as necessary the underlying diversity of the phenomena in question, the radically different contexts in which they may play out, and the often contradictory pressures they create. This produced the 'model' of Chapter 2. The model structured and gave coherence to an exploration of the state formation effects of civil war in Yemen that accepts that both the state and civil war are complex concepts with fuzzy borders: it was an investigation of how something that looks like and gets called civil war but is not necessarily like all other civil wars, beyond sharing a range of general common features, affects processes related to the formation and development of a particular state – one that may be quite different from other trajectories of state formation in other places at other times. It is an investigation and a conceptualisation that insists on process but also on contingency and one that subscribes to the view that the main motor of history is endogeneity (Prezeworski, 2004, p.168).

Nonetheless, the model survived the encounter with Yemen remarkably intact. The investigation confirmed the importance of the phenomena to which the model drew attention and confirmed several of the postulated causal pathways. The model helped to highlight the way the war caused rapid shifts in the dominant coalition, a renegotiation of the political settlement, created an opening for shifts in the parameters of legitimacy, and served to inscribe violence into 'politics as usual,' thereby drawing attention to changes in ideas of the state wrought by the war. Specifically, the model highlighted the way wartime

mobilisation strategies focused on payments to tribal fighters were linked to increases in the independence of local violence specialists, their growing strength within the dominant coalition, and weakening central control of violence. Many of the pathways linked to external intervention also held in this case: the external provision of coercive and financial capabilities created domestically unviable dominant coalitions, weakened the domestic holders of capital, and ultimately reduced the legitimacy of the dominant coalition. Moreover, external security guarantees allowed the neglect or purposive fragmentation of central institutions in control of violence; and external funding meant that donors defined institutional forms and priorities. The model thus provided a solid foundation for tracing how the transfer of resources and the crisis of the political settlement affected the domestic balance of power and how this in turn drove specific patterns of state formation and caused institutions to form and to operate as they did. Following work on the fiscal basis of states and the importance of fiscal extraction, the model also placed great emphasis on taxation – an insight studies of state building especially must do more to systematically accommodate.[203] This revealed the systematic transformation of the fiscal basis of the YAR during the 1960s.

Yet, the model was hardly a perfect fit. Keeping the caveats about the type of underlying relationship that likely exists between the variables of interest in mind, a consideration of the specific shortcomings of the model's pathways can usefully illuminate – and complicate – the assumptions and generalisations of the broader thematic literature from which the model was constructed.

The examination provides empirical grounds to call into question some widespread assumptions about the relationship between civil war and state formation. In particular, it suggests four points that merit further inquiry and thus four additional sets of questions or relationships that an updated model must accommodate. First, the model was largely blind to the *politics* of the crisis of the political settlement, the formation, consolidation, and breakdown of alliances, and thus the ways in which conflict may partially redraw the very units of political settlement analysis. Second, although the model suggested an important role for external intervention, intervention was both more important than the model suggests and less successful at achieving its goals, suggesting a need to re-think how such intervention is analysed. Third, though the emphasis on taxation proved fruitful, there was a lack of corresponding attention to government spending in dynamics of state formation, yet

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[203] But see: Bräutigam, 2008.

public spending seems to have played a central role in reconstituting connections between different levels of administration and for rebuilding the influence of the central government. Finally, the contradiction that the model posited between state-centric and local identities proved to be far less straightforward than much of the literature assumes, suggesting that the very links made and connections brokered between local particularisms and central 'state' identities help define trajectories of state formation. The discussion below considers each of these points further.

7.3.1   The politics of a settlement in crisis

We saw that for understanding the state formation outcomes of the war, the specific political projects and interests of the protagonists were important and could not be readily abstracted from. The specific alliance between a network of religiously-educated notables, certain tribal leaders, and high-ranking officers sympathetic to their politics, played an important role in the development of the forms of elite (neo)patrimonial politics built on international rents that came to define the YAR.

During the civil war, central elites sought out tribal allies, but not all central elites did so. Tribal leaders were a political constituency and 'fragmentation strategies' centred on their empowerment were pursued primarily by central elites with personal ties to, and similar backgrounds as, specific tribal leaders. In an extended confrontation, this alliance between tribal and military leaders and local notables faced off against other elements of the officer corps, party militias, the southern independence movement, and a small number of tribal leaders in open conflict with the leading republican shaykhs. Ultimately, the 'moderate' tribal-military alliance won out, and it was this specific alliance and their associated values and world-views that entrenched the intertwining of tribal and military power in the last years of the civil war. This specific alliance, which defined the political settlement, also decisively influenced changes in institutions: While some educational emigrants and political radicals sought to build 'modern' technocratic bureaucracies and the royalists and local officials sought to guard and maintain institutional legacies of the Imamate, the most powerful actors that emerged during the war sought both a measure of central institutional development and to carve out new spaces of autonomy and keep central institutions at bay. Their relative and evolving bargaining position inside and outside government helped determine the institutional changes wrought by the war. Who pursued which strategies had less to do with their structural position in the state apparatus than with contingent and historically specific alliances, group beliefs, and educational and political trajectories. The model's competing mobilisation pathways turned out to be intimately linked and intertwined

and one of the central distinctions of the model, between mobilising local violence specialists and creating new security forces, could not readily be upheld in practice.

This suggests that there is much value in recent attempts to bring politics back in to thinking about conflict and its effects (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2008). This has sometimes been framed in terms of taking 'ideology' more seriously (Staniland, 2015). The exploration of the case certainly underscores the importance of bringing ideas seriously back into the mix of explanatory factors we draw on to make sense of the relationship between war making and state making, just as they have been successfully (re)introduced in attempts to understand violent conflict more broadly (Oppenheim et al., 2015; Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood, 2014).

However, it is not clear that the term 'ideology,' with its implications of dogma, coherence, and homogeneity, is the most useful way to do this and party labels in Yemen often proved transient and obscured more than they revealed. Instead, the investigation drew on ideas of rhetorical commonplaces as the sites where contests over the meaning of shared signifiers and attempts to define and dominate ideas take place. This was combined with an interest in co-production (Wood, 2008; Kalyvas, 2003) to highlight the ways in which central cleavages and tropes anchored to such rhetorical commonplaces are utilised in everyday practice. Together, these ideas provide a messier, but more revealing picture of the way armed conflict shaped ideas of the state and vice versa. The case highlights the very inseparability of ideas from interests and from specific experiences and life trajectories in the formation of domestic alliances. That is, for many leading republicans, education abroad and personal experiences of being thrown in jail or seeing family members killed by the Imam or his officials made the nationalist and republican ideas that they adopted and professed to be fighting for plausible and attractive. Ties of family, tribe, or friendship often determined what faction they joined and which ideology they came to defend. The sort of politics that needs bringing-back in to the study of violent conflict, then, is the thick process of alliance formation, not the thinner, but often most visible, labels of ideology.

The idea of political organisation provides an additional avenue to bring politics back in to the discussion – and the case serves to highlight why its relative neglect in the writing used to derive the model is problematic. "Political organisations are groups whose purposeful action is principally directed to achieving positions within the state and shaping its rules or institutions, and basic policy direction" (Putzel and DiJohn, 2012, p.20). The terminology of political organisation serves to draw attention to the fact that the way contending groups organise to take control of the state matters. Loose coalitions function differently from highly institutionalised parties, organisations with mass membership operate differently from elite

cabals, and so on. The case suggests that causality runs both ways: While political organisation shapes the form of the political settlement, the political settlement and the perceived interests and strengths of the dominant coalition conditions the potential forms of political organisation. In north Yemen, the growing strength of regional, rurally-based power brokers through the war, and their growing control of military resources, meant that the dominant coalition would not support the centralisation implicit in building a national political party or to create a strong executive "with the power and resources to discipline defectors and reward those who play by state rules" (Putzel and Di John, 2012, p.20). Both of these developments – and their mixed legacies – would not play a significant role in north Yemen until the central state gained access to oil revenue in the second half of the 1980s. As a result, the stabilising functions some authors have attributed to these features could not come into play and the ad-hoc nature of political organisation in the YAR – in sharp contrast to political organisation in the PDRY – served to reproduce the fragmentation built into the political settlement and institutionalise the personalised, kin- and patronage-based power of the tribal leaders, officers, and notables who formed the key actors within the dominant coalition.

7.3.2   Rethinking external intervention

In addition, the importance of external intervention, even in excess of the substantial role imputed by the model, was a recurrent theme of the investigation. Chapter 4 argued that it was external interveners that drove reliance on local violence specialists and who were responsible for the very large amount of weapons and resources transferred to tribal leaders. At the same time, Chapters 5 and 6 highlighted the limitations of external influence and the inability of external interveners and especially the UAR to achieve its intended objectives. For instance, the state formation outcomes they produced were a far cry from the Egyptian blueprints and the Egyptian command repeatedly had to accept ministerial appointments of people it judged hostile and whole governments it distrusted. Yet, these chapters also underscored just how significant the legacies of foreign spending of multiples of the domestic government budget, extensive institutional engineering, and the stationing of tens of thousands of troops for five years were.

This suggests there is a paradox in the literature: an enduring tendency to *over*estimate the possibilities of intentional social engineering through external intervention; combined with a tendency to *under*estimate the unintended consequences of interveners pursuing their own objectives and the extent to which external intervention shapes the parameters within which domestic actors pursue their strategies. Although thinking about externally-led state building

has largely moved away from the naïve optimism of the 1990s and early 2000s, there is an enduring tendency to see it as being primarily about the policy choices of the interveners – the dilemmas they confront, the parameters they must optimise, the mistakes they should avoid – with far less attention to the way that the 'context' defines their options and how the 'tail' wags the 'dog' (e.g. Caplan, 2008, 2012; Paris and Sisk, 2009). There is, of course, an established critique of this literature, much of it stressing the importance of domestic dynamics and the political settlement (Cramer, 2006; Di John, 2010b; Putzel and Di John, 2012; Goodhand and Mansfield, 2013) and the investigation here amply bears out this criticism.

In this context, it is remarkable that South-South state building by occupation in Yemen during the 1960s – the heyday of statist economic and political ideas – had effects remarkably similar to late 20th and early 21st century North-South state building framed in terms of liberal peace building (e.g. Boyce and O'Donnell, 2007b). State building then created large formal institutions, while eroding the relationships that connected central and local administration, undermined the fiscal basis of the state, and did little to consolidate central control of violence, due to a reliance on foreign troops and local tribal leaders. It may be that these similarities reflect broader structural factors of foreign intervention or a similar configuration of local violence specialists. Both possibilities would merit further investigation.

Yet, acknowledging similarities across time and the central importance of the domestic political settlement should not lead us to underestimate how decisively external intervention can reshape the settlement and the parameters for domestic actors to pursue their agendas, even though much of this impact is indirect, unintended, and chaotic in the sense that small decisions can have outsize effects. There have been some attempts at grappling with such unintended consequences of external state building. These have generally taken their cue from broader debates about the potential for well-meaning (and less well-meaning) international intervention to do harm (Anderson, 1999; Birdsall, 2007) and have concluded that unintentional effects are pervasive, under-explored, and may be the predominant way in which external state building and security assistance influence their intended targets (Schroeder, 2010).[204] Since unintended consequences often predominate even in domestic interventions, where planners and experts have a great deal of information and contextual knowledge (Scott, 1998; Mitchell, 2002), such unintended consequences are likely to loom

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[204] However, Schneckener (2010) suggests such effects might be managed and minimised.

very large indeed. The experience of North Yemen during the 1960s certainly suggests that Egyptian state building was both deeply influential and almost wholly ineffective in achieving its objectives, suggesting a need for further research into the unintended consequences of external intervention that takes as its point of departure the domestic political settlement.

7.3.3   Taking taxation and spending seriously

The discussion also highlighted an ongoing neglect of fiscal institutions, taxation, and allocation in writing about contemporary conflict. The examination found little support for the pathways connected to taxation, possibly because there was little taxation that occurred during this period in north Yemen. Fiscal trajectories also appeared to depend more on changes in the balance of coercive power than the model's emphasis on separate pathways might suggest: Local fiscal autonomy largely came as a result of tribes' growing military power. More importantly, however, the examination drew attention to the way that government spending, not just taxation, was of central importance.

There has been a tendency, criticized at the outset in Chapter 1, to focus on state functions in attempting to assess the influence of conflict on the state. As a result, state institutions and the impact of conflict on them are often evaluated from the perspective of good governance, economic growth, or occasionally in terms of "regime type," and much more rarely from the perspective of their impact on taxation and allocation. There is limited writing that takes taxation really seriously in state formation and reproduction (Gennaioli and Voth, 2015; Thies, 2009, 2005; Lu and Thies, 2013), and less still that seriously grapples with incorporating power, politics, and coercion alongside taxation (but see: Boyce and O'Donnell, 2007a; Di John, 2010a; Levi, 1988). New databases with richer data and more careful approaches to analysing them may offer new insights (van den Boogaard et al., 2018). However, even within this literature, there is a tendency to neglect spending while using fiscal extraction as a straightforward proxy for 'state strength.'

Yet the examination of Yemen during the 1960s, which gave up taxation while expanding central spending, highlights the importance of taking allocation-led state building more seriously across the board. The tendency to neglect government spending in state formation is perhaps least pronounced in the Middle East, a region that gave rise to thinking about rentier states. Yet, since Yemen at the time had no meaningful natural resources or other exports to speak of, in relation to this literature too, the case highlights the importance of continuing work to complicate ideas about rentier state formation and particularly the assumption that rents contribute in straightforward ways to 'weak' states. The process tracing of state formation during the civil war in Yemen revealed how government spending

can at least partially substitute for direct control in terms of institutions' centralising and aggregating functions. Allocation-led state building made the YAR central state a more important addressee of claims as it came to demand less and offer more. The idea that there was a North Yemeni state, that it determined important features of people's lives, and defined in some measure a reference point for political belonging became more plausible in relation not to the centre's ability to tax, but to its ability to spend.

In northern Yemen, well after the civil war, patronage politics shifted as the flow of central rents expanded further and the dominant coalition narrowed during the 1980s and 1990s. Increasingly, students of Yemen described the regime as being almost exclusively based on patronage (Philips, 2008, p.5) or adopted the language of kleptocracy to describe the capture of government rents (Lackner, 2017), suggesting a qualitatively different regime of stabilising rule through allocation. This suggests a need to move beyond an inquiry into the role of rents in stabilising dominant coalitions, to how different bargains underpinning the distribution of rents can have very different effects (Snyder, 2006) and how the use of such rents to stabilise rule in different ways and under different conditions impacts dynamics of state formation through grounded, process-focused research into the ways in which fiscal policies shape state formation. The allocation of rents has long been central to the reproduction of political order (North et al., 2009), but we know too little about the very different trajectories of state formation this may be associated with.

7.3.4   State building and the 'local'

Finally, the examination highlighted a tendency to neglect the way in which local particularisms can be harnessed to state building projects – or rather, the way such central projects must always and everywhere build on and work with 'local' identities. In terms of the model's pathways associated with ideas of the state, the examination revealed that empowering local violence specialists did not in a straightforward way reinforce non-state local logics and reduce the legitimacy of the political order. Not only was the relationship between local and central violence specialists more complex than the model initially posited, but local identities articulated with and ultimately contributed to the formation of a larger imagined community and a YAR national identity. Thus, tribal logics need not be, in fact were not, antithetical to 'the state' in Yemen. Instead, they provided a particular vision of state authority during the civil war. Although the transfer of rights to tribal leaders implied significant decentralisation and weakened central control, tribal institutions were also essential to the (re)construction of central institutions and to ideas of national belonging and state coherence both during and after the war. In a political landscape fragmented by

reliance on tribal fighters and rent by political divisions, tribal forms paradoxically were one of the few effective mechanisms that could bridge wartime divides and connect central institutions with access to foreign funding to local projects and investments. Institutions imagined in terms of tribal logics and established practices came partially to define the formal structure of state institutions and the idea that Yemen was a 'nation of tribes' provided a way to integrate tribal and national identity to the extent that being a member of a tribe became a way to claim more 'authentic' Yemeni-ness.

Paul Dresch (1993b, p.263) has developed a similar idea in terms of the "dual relationship of identity and contrariety" between tribes and the Yemeni state, and much the same point was recently made by John Peterson in terms of two antithetical, yet complementary, prisms to approach the relationship between tribes and the state in Yemen. In his scheme, the first is the role of tribes *in* the state, i.e. how they contribute to the state's authority and provide support or legitimacy to the regime. The other is the tribes *versus* the state, which draws attention to the fact that tribalism in Yemen continues to be, in part, about resisting state encroachment and regulation (Peterson, 2016, p.112). Similar relationships have been suggested for other countries in the Middle East (Mohammed, 2007) and the complex relationships between state building projects, nationalism, and existing ideas of identity and community became a focus for (an admittedly limited) literature on the relationship between tribes and states in the Middle Eastern context in the 1990s and 2000s (Abdul Jabar and Dawod, 2001; Khoury and Kostiner, 1990; Rabi, 2016).

These insights, however, have not made it into thinking about conflict, state building, and state-formation, with the partial exception of a literature on hybrid political orders that has helped to re-cast a discussion about fragility and state failure in more productive ways (Boege et al., 2008, 2009). Yet, these dynamics may benefit from being considered outside the framing of hybridity, since hybridity suggests the (not necessarily viable or stable) combination of non-hybrid things. The many different varieties of tribalism within Yemen, let alone across the Middle East, or in other contexts where the term has been more or less successfully applied as an analytical lens, suggest tribes themselves may be 'hybrid.' As we saw in Chapter 1, the state certainly is not a 'pure' form. A literature on European nationalism that underscores how national and state-centric identities were constructed out of and articulate with existing ideas of community and belonging (e.g. Applegate, 1990, 1999) underscores that this is not a feature peculiar to Yemen, nor of late development. But if all political orders are hybrid, then diagnosing hybridity must take a back seat to a detailed analysis of the historically specific ways new ideas and practices interact with existing social structures and the ideas that legitimate them.

These considerations might be summarised in an updated or revised model as suggested below. Such an updated model should provide a useful starting point for further explorations of the impact of civil war on state formation, provided such explorations acknowledge that thinking seriously about the relationship between war and state formation requires an openness to the multiple and non-determinist ways in which violence is channelled by and shapes existing social forms during processes of state formation than can readily be captured in such summary form.

Table 9: Effect of civil war on the political settlement (revised)

Starting point →	Intervening process →		Effects on the political settlement
Civil war reveals the existence of alternatives to the incumbent	Reflects and provokes crisis in the dominant coalition		Rapid shifts in the dominant coalition and renegotiation of the political settlement. Contending groups are unstable and new political organisations can emerge
Civil war increases the salience of violence for rule maintenance	Contenders pursue a mix of mobilisation strategies, combining elements and outcomes of:	Mobilising local violence specialists	Increases the independence of local violence specialists and strengthens them within the dominant coalition
		Organising new violence specialists& more sophisticated security institutions	Strengthens the leaders of security forces within the dominant coalition
		Gaining outside coercive capabilities	Enables the formation of domestically unviable dominant coalitions; may weaken domestic capital within the dominant coalition
Civil War redraws zones of control, decreasing income derived from territorial control and increasing costs of rule maintenance	Contenders gain external financing		Enables the formation of a domestically unviable dominant coalition; may weaken domestic capital within the dominant coalition and strengthen local and/or central actors in control of coercion
			Provides fiscal resources to broaden the dominant coalition and buy support
	Contenders expand taxation or borrow money domestically		Strengthens domestic capital in the dominant coalition

Table 10: Effect of civil war on institutions (revised)

Starting point →	Intervening process →		Effects on institutions
Civil war reveals the existence of alternatives to the incumbent	Reflects and provokes a crisis in the dominant coalition		Multiplies competing local institutions and weakens central control of violence
Civil war increases the salience of violence for rule maintenance	Contenders pursue a mix of mobilisation strategies, combining elements and outcomes of:	Contenders empower local violence specialists	Multiplies competing local institutions and weakens central control of violence
		Contenders organise new violence specialists, creating more sophisticated security institutions	Strengthens central control of violence
			Weakens non-coercive formal institutions by crowding-out investment and capacity
			Strengthens non-coercive formal institutions through linkages and demonstration effects
		Contenders gain outside coercive capabilities	Security guarantees allow neglect or purposive fragmentation of central institutions in control of violence
			Outside training and equipment strengthen the security forces and central control of violence
Civil War redraws zones of control, decreasing income and increasing costs of rule maintenance	Contenders gain external financing		Donors define institutional forms and priorities; accountability flows to donor
	Contenders decentralise taxation and/or spending		Weakens non-coercive formal institutions through crowding-out
	Contenders expand central taxation and/or spending		Strengthens non-coercive formal institutions through demonstration and emulation

Table 11: Effect of civil war on ideas of the state (revised)

Starting point →	Intervening process →	Effects on ideas of the state
Civil war reveals the existence of alternatives to the incumbent	Reflects and provokes a crisis in the dominant coalition, leading to political polarisation	Creates an opening for shifts in the parameters of legitimacy
		Produces and reinforces state-centric identities
		Inscribes violence into 'politics as usual'
Civil war increases the salience of violence for rule maintenance	Contenders empower local violence specialists	Reinforces local logics. Impact on ideas of state and legitimacy of the political order depends on relationship of local and national identities
	Contenders organise new violence specialists	New, direct relations between central and local actors reinforce state-centric identities
		Larger coercive institutions militarise ideas of the state

	Contenders gain outside coercive capabilities, making them vulnerable to charges of foreign occupation and control	Reduces legitimacy of the dominant coalition
Civil War redraws zones of control, decreasing income derived from territorial control and increasing costs of rule maintenance	Contenders print money, potentially triggering inflation and economic crisis	Reduces legitimacy of the dominant coalition
	Incumbents decentralise taxation. Local power dynamics determine variable effects across different areas:	Increased predation reinforces state-centric identities
		Reinforces local logics. Impact on ideas of state and legitimacy of the political order depends on relationship of local and national identities
	Contenders expand central taxation and/or spending	Increased taxes and/or investment make the state present and visible, reinforcing state-centric identities
		Increased taxes are a grievance, reducing the legitimacy of the political order

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ANNEX 1

Path	Questions	Data/ indicators	Sources[205]
Shared starting points and path-ways	• Was there a crisis in the dominant coalition? How did powerful actors respond? • Who fought? What constituencies were mobilised for war? How? • Did royalists and republicans rely on existing militias or locally-based organisations dealing in violence? • Did they create new military organisations and organise new constituencies? • How did the organisation of the security forces change between 1962-1970? Did Yemen develop more sophisticated security organisations?	• Alliances and divisions between actors influential under the Imamate • Military recruitment and training procedures including information about sources of recruitment of the Yemeni military • Existence, effectiveness and relative importance of tribal militias and new military and paramilitary groups	• Interviews with royalist and republican officials, tribal leaders, army officers, descendants • Existing secondary literature especially anthropological studies on social change and the impact of the war in Yemen (published sources) • Contemporary memoirs • Diplomatic cables (PAAA, if necessary UK and US archives) • Egyptian public statements about war effort (EDK) • Egyptian records of deployment, administration and situation reports (EDW)
	• To what extent did royalists and republicans rely on external support for organising and deploying coercion? What was Egyptian policy and practice with regard to waging war in Yemen?	• Details of Egyptian military deployment, policy, practice and lessons learned from Yemen • Relationship between Egyptian and Yemeni troops and civilians	• Egyptian diplomatic cables (EDW) • Revenue and expenditure information of Yemeni state (YNA if possible) • Yemen Army and Ministry of Defence documents related to war (YMM if possible)
	• How did the royalists and republicans finance the war effort? What was the relative weight of taxation, looting and local predation, borrowing, printing money, and external financing? • Is there evidence of changing taxation practices locally?	• Information on government revenue sources and targets of expenditure • Presence and functioning of state and informal institutions in different parts of country	
Political Settle-ment	• How did power shift within the dominant coalition? Who gained/	• Changes in importance of various power	• Records of government composition and social background of ministers

	lost influence? • Were organisations dealing in violence or in control of capital strengthened relative to others? • Who benefited from war (smuggling, supplying troops, other economic opportunities) and related changes to security organisations and to fiscal policy and practice? Who lost out materially?	brokers over time including through analysis of composition of government • Relative power and changes in the relationship of security forces, tribal leaders, business interests (including as expressed in formal and informal payments) • (Economic) benefits accruing to different groups based on policies (subsidies, import controls, authorisations, monopolies, taxes)	and power-brokers (published sources) • Reports of UN observation mission (online) • Interviews with royalist and republican officials, tribal leaders, army officers, descendants • Diplomatic cables (PAAA, if necessary UK and US archives) • Contemporary memoirs (EDK) • Analysis of republican pact of 1970s (published sources) • Records of Yemeni Ministry of Defence, Interior and Presidency on war effort (YNA) • Records of Yemen Ministry of Tribal Affairs (YNA) • Egyptian diplomatic cables (EDW)
	• What was the relationship between security forces and fiscal authority?	• Assessment of who made spending decisions and relative size of budgets	
	• How did the central government and local military commanders interact with tribal leaders?	• Relative power of tribal leaders and changing roles of local power brokers and officials (sada, shaykhs, qadis)	
	• What was the role of external interveners (Egypt, Saudi Arabia) in determining government composition and winners and losers?	• Degree of Egyptian and Saudi influence and the incentives created by their support	
Institu-tions	• How did formal state institutions change during the civil war? • What effect did changes in the organisation of coercion and capital have on formal state structures? • How did the presence of the formal state change 'on the ground' in different areas?	• Composition/ sources of government income • Size and targets of government expenditure • Changes in the size, composition and functioning of ministries, departments, local government (number of people, budgets, function, location)	• Records from the Yemeni Ministry of Finance: budget, tax receipts, aid, etc. (YNA) • Papers of new government ministries (YNA) • Information on government budget and statistics (World Bank) • Records, official documents and reports of UAR technical advisers (EDW) • Contemporary anthropological studies and journalistic accounts (published) • Interviews with royalist
	• Did new military organisations and/or Egyptian troops crowd-out civilian control or create linkages and	• Assessment of potential linkages • Life histories and trajectories of military officers	

	provide new organisational tools?		and republican officials, tribal leaders, army officers, descendants
	• What elements of control over violence were centralised or decentralised?	• Assessments of who effectively commanded military units and tribal militias	• Contemporary memoirs (EDK) • Diplomatic cables (PAAA, if necessary UK and US archives) • Analysis of Yemeni state institutions by development agencies, scholars (published sources)
	• What elements of control over capital were centralised or decentralised?	• Changes in fiscal policy and taxation (oversight, degree of centralisation, who (else) taxes) • Spending priorities and assessment of who made spending decisions	
	• Did Egyptian state building interventions shape formal institutions and their practices? In what ways?	• Egyptian state building aims and blueprints and evaluation to what extent they were achieved • Degree of reliance of ministries, military and other formal institutions on Egyptian advisers	
Idea of state	• How did notions of legitimate authority and ideas about the state change? • Was there increased politicisation and polarisation? Who did new ideas appeal to? What cleavages were accentuated? • Did local control/ governance mechanisms change? How? How were changes articulated/ justified? • Did politics become more violent? What forms of violence were normalised? • Is there evidence of a militarisation of the state in official rhetoric and representation?	• Ideas republicans and royalists appealed to in propaganda and public pronouncements and implicit and explicit in reforms and policies • Changes in role and importance of mass membership organisations (parties, unions, local development associations, Islamic organisations) • Shifts in roles of traditional power brokers in local government (e.g. role of sada, qadis, tribal leaders) • Interpretation by citizens in different locations of interventions by different 'state' authorities • Forms of state-sanctioned and/or	• newspaper and magazine editorials and official radio broadcasts (EDK, published sources) • Official speeches and statements by royalists and republicans (BBC Summary of World Broadcasts) • Interviews with royalist and republican officials, descendants • Existing secondary literature • Existing anthropological studies on traditional elites and communal and local government • Contemporary memoirs (EDK) • Records of Yemeni trade unions and parties (YNA) • Official stamps, banknotes, building plans (YNA)

| | | publicly justified violence Rhetoric and practice around military and its role in the state Life histories and trajectories of military officers | |