CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
This study is the first to investigate how certain Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) policies were formulated and implemented. It is intended to be both a contribution to Yemeni studies and an addition to the cumulative knowledge of comparative foreign policy-making. Its significance in these areas is demonstrated in two ways. Firstly, YAR policy-making during the period under consideration took place in conditions of a protracted conflict between the Republican government and the externally-backed Royalist insurgents. This situation may be presumed to have affected the decisional process in many ways and thus to have given such a case study a particular significance. Secondly, the policy-making process took place within newly established Republican institutions. Indeed, the 1960s represented a formative period for YAR foreign policy-making in both conceptual and institutional respects. In this context, the study could provide students of Yemeni politics with some insight into a crucial stage in the evolution of YAR foreign policy-making. To students of comparative foreign policy-making, it represents another instance of third world policy-making under conditions of political and social transformation.

Despite the fact that Yemen has recently been assuming an increasingly important role in regional politics, it remains probably the least studied country in the Arab world. This fact is no more evident than in the almost total absence of works pertaining to its foreign policy. Until very recently, there was an apparent lack of interest on the part of the Arab and Western institutions in Yemen's foreign policy. Due to the country's continued reliance on external aid, its foreign policy was generally presumed to be more of a product of external pressures than an outcome of internal needs. Perhaps for that reason, YAR foreign policy was not studied except in general works on regional
politics. Only during the 1980s is one able to locate literature that deals with the external relations of the YAR. These works are academic studies prepared in Arab universities by Yemeni students. Although such studies contribute greatly to promoting the study of the country's external behaviour, they essentially belong to the tradition of diplomatic history and deal with the YAR relations with individual countries.¹ Only one study has been devoted to a systematic analysis of the country's foreign policy. This study entitled Al-Siyasah al-Khardijiyyah al-Yamaniyyah fil Ahd al-Djumhuri was prepared by Dr. Muhammad al-Hilweh exclusively for academic use. It deals with the internal and external determinants of the country's foreign policy. It is, however, brief and, like the other works on the subject, was unable to consult the available primary sources, written or oral, necessary for such undertakings. How the YAR foreign policy was formulated remained completely unexplored territory. It is the main objective of this study partially to fill this gap by providing, as far as is possible, a systematic analysis of Yemen's foreign policymaking based mainly on primary sources, and in particular on interview material.

The lack of sufficient literature highlights the contribution of this study, but at the same time constituted a severe constraint on the conduct of the project. Much of the required primary information was unrecorded. Minutes of the cabinets meetings were not recorded during the 1960s. Large parts of the state's documents are still scattered and many of those pertaining to the 1960s are lost. What is available is out of the public reach. Even the archives of Radio Sana'a are only partially organised and require special permission before use. The newspapers of the 1960s, on the other hand, were focused mainly on the development of the war.
Unable to rely on analysis of the few available documents, the writer interviewed a number of officials who contributed to the formulation of the country's foreign policies at that time, including the foreign ministers Muhsin al-Ayni, Hasan Makki, Yahya Djangman, Muhammad Sallam, Mustafa Yakub and Ahmad Barakat. These interviews yielded only limited results, either because some of the interviewees were reluctant to answer questions or because they knew only part of the story. Until very recently, decision making in Yemen was conducted by individuals who did not tend to keep records of what really happened.

Due to the time span, many events were understandably beyond the recall of these individuals. This posed a difficult problem for the researcher. Except for Abd al-Rahman al-Baydani and General Abdallah Djuzyalan, none of the principal political figures have published memoirs - a useful reference for such a study. The writer was not able to meet with the two heads of state, President al-Sallal and Chairman al-Iryani, in order to ascertain their involvement in the decision-making process relevant to the decisions under consideration. It is in fact doubtful whether they would have responded positively to such an enquiry. Both sent written replies to the writer's enquiry but responded only to selected questions.

The value of these interviews were reduced by the fact that some of those who responded tended to present the facts so as to show their role in the best possible light. Nevertheless, the writer benefited from the information provided and interpretation given. In the case of contrasting information, the writer used only those on which there was general agreement and in most cases the various interpretations were included.
The problem encountered with this research could be summarised by the fact that the decision making approach taken, which usually requires abundant information of the internal politics of government, was applied to a case lacking the most basic literature. At one point, the writer contemplated abandoning the project altogether. Failure to secure sufficient information to the complex questions entailed in the study threatened the continued viability of the research. However, the sense of being able to contribute in some degree to the understanding of the foreign policy-making of largely obscure polity prevailed and led to the presentation of this study.

Methodology

This study analyses YAR foreign policy-making during the Republican-Royalist war of 1962-1970. It seeks to explain how certain foreign-policy decisions were made, under what circumstances, who the decision makers were and what were the influences, internal as well as external, which bore on the policy-making process.

As the study will attempt to explain the interaction of the internal and external factors within the YAR decision making system, the research will use the foreign policy system approach. Advocates of this approach hold that foreign policy is, in essence, a series of decisions made by a group of people who operate within a system consisting of three components: inputs, processes and outputs. Like any other system, the foreign policy system comprises stimuli at one end, a process which responds to such inputs by transferring them or reacting to them, and an end product of some description which constitutes the performance of the system. As applied in this
particular case, the inputs are the operational and psychological environment; the process comprises the formulation and implementation of policies; and the decisions represent the output of the system.

YAR policy-making will be illustrated by the examination of four major decisions. These decisions were taken towards the latter part of the war, between 1967 and 1970. Coming as they did at the point where Egyptian influence was diminishing, they reflect the emergence of autonomous YAR decision-making institutions. In the preceding period (October 1962 to June 1967) YAR foreign policy was, for a variety of reasons, influenced by that of the United Arab Republics (UAR), so much so it was hard to disengage the former's policies from those of the latter.

The study is divided into nine chapters. Chapters 2 to 4 examine the general setting of the decision-making system of the entire period. These are: The Antecedents of the Security Situation, the Decision Makers, and the Foreign Policy Objectives. In the second chapter, the main developments during the first three years of the YAR (September 1962 - December 1965) will be reviewed under three headings, namely: Saudi-Egyptian intervention; the implications of the Arab and superpower rivalry; and internal differences. These influenced the decisional situation in the four cases examined as they formed antecedents of many of the post-1965 events. The decisional context identifies the decision makers and examines their role and significance within the legal and political framework as well as the general socio-political setting. The focus of the examination is on the way war pressures and political imperatives gave the two heads of state, al-Sallal and al-Iryani (1962-1967, 1967-1970 respectively), an added authority over the decision-making process.
Concerning foreign policy objectives, the focus is on the evolution of policies in response to the changing patterns of the Royalist military and political challenge. The persistent challenge to the Republic throughout the war period resulted in the primacy of security over other objectives. As a result, YAR foreign policy has developed through three distinct phases: the Policy of Confrontation (1962-1967); the Prelude to Reconciliation (1967-1968); and the Policy of Reconciliation (1968-1970).

Chapters 5 to 8 examine the four major decisions adopted in the later half of the war period in some detail. With the exception of the initial decision to request UAR assistance in September 1962, these were the most important foreign policy decisions of the entire war era. It must be noted that in the initial period of the war (1962-1965), most of the YAR foreign policy activities focused on the developments of the war and the UAR-Saudi attempts to obtain a peaceful settlement. In addition, UAR intervention in some of the YAR’s foreign policy decisions make it less meaningful to talk about completely independent Yemeni actions. The decisions analysed are those relating to:

- The rejection of the Khartoum Agreement on Yemen concluded by Egyptian President Nasir and King Faysal of Saudi Arabia on 31 August, 1967.

- The recognition of the independence of the People’s Republic of South Yemen (FRSY) on 30 November, 1967.

- The resumption of ruptured diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) on 15 July, 1969.
The acceptance of the reconciliation deal with Saudi Arabia on 31 March, 1970.

In analysing these decisions, the research will be guided by the various frameworks devised for the study of policy-making using the system approach, but will not attempt to apply any particular model. The peculiar characteristics of the Yemeni decision-making and the war conditions under which these decisions were made called for a much simpler framework. Therefore, the analysis simply proceeds along the basic sequence of systemic action as used by foreign policy system theorists. These are: the operational and psychological environment (the input); the formulation and implementation of decisions (the process); the decisional outcome (the output); and the decisional consequences (feedback). It should be noted that due to the limited scope of this study, the decisions, which represent the main output of the system will, by necessity, be included but not treated separately. With this in mind, the analysis will proceed along the following lines.

First: **the Operational Environment** will be investigated in terms of the various acts and/or situations which had a bearing on the decisional outcomes. The emphasis here will be on the degree of relevance to the decision under consideration. In this context, these components fall into two categories; the influences and the stimuli:

a) Influences: Throughout the war, political action was motivated primarily by defence and security imperatives. As such, the development of the fighting formed a permanent component of the operational environment. On the one hand, there were events which only influenced the setting of the respective decisions and
obviously varied from one situation to another. Economic conditions and the restricted nature of YAR foreign relations, for instance, had a profound effect on the government's decision in 1969 to seek resumption of severed diplomatic relations with West Germany. On the other hand, the inability of the Republican forces to fill the military vacuum left by the withdrawing of Egyptian forces was behind al-Sallal's fierce opposition to the Khartoum Agreement of August 1967.

b) Stimuli: the second step is to identify the situation or act which constituted the stimulus for the decision under consideration. These by definition vary from one case to another but have the same effect in the sense that they provide the raison d'être of the subsequent political action. While, for example, the Saudi-Egyptian accord in August 1967 triggered the YAR response, the dialogue between the Republican and the Royalist side during the Djedda Islamic foreign ministers' conference (March 1970) constituted the stimulus for the subsequent decision on YAR-Saudi reconciliation.

Second, The Perception of the Decision Makers: The emphasis is on the perceptions of these individuals and how these perceptions were related to the relevant political behaviour. In the Yemeni case, foreign policy decision-makers were located at the top of the governing élite's hierarchy. Theoretically, the prime minister, the foreign minister and members of the Republican Council (after November 1967) constituted the decision-making forum during the various stages of policy-making relating to the issues under investigation. Practically, however, the two presidents were the real and sometimes sole decision makers. As a result, their individual perceptions are
particularly relevant. The decision to recognise the PRSY is attributed, partially at least, to the personal predisposition of Chairman al-Iryani.

Third, The Decisional Process: The investigation focuses on the final political choice of members who formed the ultimate decision-making unit responding to the stimulus. The process is traced through three stages: the predecisional activities, the choice selection and the implementation. The emphasis is on the role of the principal decision maker: the way he controlled the flow of information about the event, his style in promoting responses in line with his preferences, and the procedures followed to ensure consensus on the choice made. For example, in the case of the reconciliation decision, al-Iryani withheld information from cabinet members about the controversial aspects of the deal being arrived at in Djedda in March 24-26 and chose to reveal full details only during the joint Republican Council-Cabinet meeting in which the proposed deal was considered and accepted, i.e. on 31 March, 1970.

Fourth, the Feedback: Here the investigation examines the implications of the decision for the decision-making structure and processes, as well as for the internal and external environments. Furthermore, each decision was assessed by its effect on the achievement of the sought objective. If it furthered that objective, the decision makers tended to pursue a similar course of action in the same issue area. Conversely, if the decision did not further the projected result, the decision makers would most probably adopt a different course of action. For instance, the positive economic and political results achieved by the resumption of relations with the FRG
in 1969 enhanced the YAR leadership's convictions of the validity of their approaches to the West.

The Theoretical Context

The foreign policy-making of the YAR posed interesting theoretical questions. First, why did the country's external behaviour throughout the active war period (1962-1968) remain consistent although the decision-making élite in the post-1967 era held views which diverged from and contrasted with those of the pre-1967 élite? Similarly, how can we explain the fact that decisions were made by consensus within the government despite the fact that the decision-making élite was comprised of individuals with different backgrounds and experiences? The answer, in the writer's view, lies in the nature of the environment and the decision-makers' perception of it, including their objectives. It is generally agreed that environmental factors are relevant to foreign policy choices only as far as the decision-maker perceived them as being so. More specifically, a situation becomes an "occasion for decision" only when the decision-maker perceives it as relevant to his foreign policy objectives. This makes the identification of decisional situations a subjective phenomenon.

However, efforts have been made to establish criteria for comparing decisional situations. Charles Hermann has suggested certain characteristics of crisis situations, and has used them as criteria to compare various decisional situations. A crisis is said to exist when a situation possesses the following three characteristics:

1. Threatens the high-priority goals of the decision-making unit.
2. Restricts the amount of time available for response before the situation is transformed.

3. Surprises the members of the decision-making élite when it occurs.

The existence of these three attributes in a situation produce certain effects on the decision-making process and thus distinguish this decisional situation from others. Charles Hermann used these criteria for comparing various decisional situations and formulated hypotheses on the decision-making pattern produced in each of these situations. A set of seven situations were identified, ranging from the typical crisis situation to routinely made decisional situations. In addition to the crisis situation, he identified seven situations.

1. Innovative situations, perceived to contain high threat and surprise but allowing an extended amount of time for response.

2. Inertia situations which involve low threat, extended time, and surprise.

3. Circumstantial situations which involve low threat, short time and anticipation.

4. Reflexive situations, characterised by high threat, short time and anticipation.

5. Deliberative situations, containing high threat, extended time, and anticipation.
6. Routinely made situations, involving low threat, extended
time, and anticipation.

7. Administrative situations, said to exist when there is low
threat, short time and anticipation.\footnote{5}

Throughout the entire war period (1962-1970), the Royalist military
and political challenge continued to pose a threat to the existence of
the Republic. Due to the predominance of Saudi Arabia and the
Egyptian role in the war, most of the YAR foreign policy actions, in
the pre-1966 era, were a mere reflection of actions taken by the two
intervening powers.\footnote{6} Most of the contacts and negotiations between
these Arab states on a possible settlement of the war were made
without prior knowledge of, or consultation with, the YAR leadership.
As such, the YAR foreign policy actions in this respect were mostly of
a reflexive nature. A combination of a deliberate policy by the post-
November 1967 government aimed at reducing the influence of external
factors in the Republic's policies\footnote{7} and a change in the regional
politics, made it possible for the post-November 1967 leadership to
initiate pre-planned policies. Thus, most of the decisions of that
period were deliberative.

More specifically, the theoretical specifications provided by the
Hermann model are applicable only to two of the four decisions under
consideration. The three characteristics of the prescribed crisis
situation are relevant to the Khartoum agreement while the decision on
the PRSY is typical of the Reflexive Situation. In the other two
cases, the FRG and the Reconciliation, these propositions are less
relevant. In neither case was there a threat to the high value;
instead the situation was perceived by the YAR decision-makers as
providing opportunities for achieving the primary policy objectives defined in terms of ensuring the survival of the Republican régime and the promotion of economic development.

Making decisions is, according to Snyder et al., the selection by the decision makers from a socially defined, limited number of problematical alternative projects, of one project intended to bring about the particular future state of affairs. Much of the efforts being made in the field of comparative foreign policy are directed towards investigating "the influence or influences which affected the decision makers choice." In this respect two models have been developed: the analytical model and the cognitive model. Proponents of the former portray a decision maker as a rational person who obtains and processes information constantly and flexibly, attempting to discover the optimal alternatives. In this respect, the decision maker considers possible courses of action and evaluates the likely consequences of each in terms of costs and benefits. He then selects the course of action most likely to achieve the desired goal. Advocates of the cognitive model, on the other hand, suggest that the explanation lies in the cognitive process of the decision-makers. Any investigation into the decision-making should be directed towards understanding the way the cognitive mechanism is formed, modified, and operated so as to structure perceptions and hence determine behaviour. Most problems in the decision-making process, they suggest, arise when decision-makers misperceive the situation which constitutes a constraint on his rationality. Janis and Mann examine the ramifications for decision-making in cases of effective reactions associated with psychological stress. Their conflict model of decision-making is based on the assumption that the decision-maker's main drive is how to resolve decisional conflict or the simultaneous
opposing tendencies within the individual to accept or reject a given course of action. In this respect, the decision-maker asks himself about the costs, risks, and possibilities arising from responding to the problem. If no serious risks to the current policy are perceived at the outset, the response will be to do nothing (Unconflicted Inertia). If there is a potential risk, an alternative policy is adopted (Unconflicted Change). If no such policy is available, then stress enters the decision-making process directly. This leads to a pattern of "defensive avoidance" which can take any of three forms: procrastination, shifting the burden of responsibility to someone else, or "bolstering".  

The dominant role of personalities in the formulation of foreign policies in third world countries has become a truism in current political theories. It was suggested that to understand foreign-policy-making in the Middle East, it is more useful to analyse the leaders' personalities, perceptions, values and needs than to examine organisational procedures or bureaucratic competition. But this was not specific to the Middle East: there are conditions in both developing and developed countries alike which allow decision makers to reflect their idiosyncratic predispositions on the decisional outcomes. Among these are crisis situations, where time constraints allow only a few individuals to participate in the decision-making. The idiosyncratic input of those who are concerned with making a decision is likely to be highly significant. Furthermore, it is generally agreed that the influence of personal factors on the decision-making process has a negative effect on the political outcome, for they inhibit rationality. But the predominance of personalities in the policy-making, even in crisis situations, at times seems rational. In an influential study, Sidney Verba
identified circumstances which affect the degree to which personality factors affect the behaviour of the decision maker. Among these are conditions in which the values involved are both vital and clear. He concludes that:

"Insofar as one has such a goal or set of goals in mind, the situation itself will be more compelling. Attention will be focused on the choice situation and the effect of unrecognised influences upon the individual will be reduced."

The post-revolutionary élite in Yemen comprised individuals holding divergent value systems, but with one salient common objective defined in terms of the maintenance of the Republican régime. As a reaction to the persisting Royalist challenge, the moderate post-1967 government, like the pre-1967 radical government, put security at the top of their objectives. The first post-November government also followed the same line in its foreign relations to that of al-Sallal's government. It was only when the Royalist threat began to recede in mid-1968 that conflict within the "goal system" of the post-November régime surfaced. Goal inconsistency within the government was eliminated by the ejection of the left in the aftermath of the 1968 intra-Republican clashes. From September 1968 onwards, members of the decision-making élite possessed not only a similar value system but also agreed on the structure of that goal system.
NOTES ON CHAPTER I


7. ibid., p.2


