The text is a report written by the Ṣanʿānī secretary of Hermann Burchardt, a German traveller and photographer. Burchardt was murdered by bandits in December 1909 near Ibb in the Yemen (Mittwoch 1926), along with the Italian consular official Benzoni (Farah 2002, 238–39). Perhaps in response to a request for details of the journey and the murder, al-Jarādī (henceforth J) produced this report for the German and Italian authorities in Ottoman Yemen in early 1910. The text below is that edited by Eugen Mittwoch in 1926 from two manuscripts which, he states, are in Berlin and the Ambrosiana in Milan and which appear to have been written at different times and without connection one with the other (Mittwoch 1926, 6–7). The MSS are so far untraced and the text below is an exact copy of Mittwoch’s edition. The

1 He had undertaken several expeditions in Ethiopia and Yemen, some authorised, others not. When the Italian authorities insisted that the Sublime Porte find and punish the murderers, the Ottomans branded Benzoni a spy.
language is clearly Literary Mixed Arabic (LMA) and is dealt with in some depth below.

Transcription

Mittwoch (1926, 16.3–18.5)

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2 Đamār is a town some 50 miles due south of Şanʿā; al-Hamdānī (1884–1891, 55, 80, 104, etc.), Yāqūt (1979, III:7). Interestingly, it has the faʿāli pattern, along with other place names in the Arabian Peninsula, like Zafār, the medieval town on the southern coast of Oman, now the name of the whole southern province of Oman; Smith (2004, 264–80, 276–77).

3 A town about 35 miles due east of Đamār; Hamdānī (1884–1891, 55, 93 etc.); Smith (1974–1978, II:193), with full references. It may also be in the faʿāli pattern.

4 5 Đū al-Qaʿda = 18 November 1909.

5 This must refer to the government building.
[16] After we had taken our rest there for three days, we left, accompanied by five Ḍamāris as guards. We set off with the intention of getting to know Radāʿ. We journeyed feeling safe and sound. We made our way through plains in which all day long we could see numerous baboons and wolves. We travelled in the direction of the village of Sanbān.⁷ We entered and stayed the night in the house of a Jew called Simon, since there were no innkeepers in Sanbān. This Jew showed us into a room in which there were two hundred untreated hides with the hair still on them which he tans; they were full of lice. These lice attacked us and we just could not sleep. The next day, Thursday, 5 [Ḍū] al-Qaʿda, we left Sanbān and made our way through Bayt al-Miṣrī and entered a plain full of baboons. We passed through the villages of Milḥ and al-Muṣallā, coming across at the village gate

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⁶ Al-Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, third Tahirid sultan, 883–894/1478–1489; see Smith, (1988, 129–39, 137, 139). J is wrong here! The ʿĀmiriyya mosque and madrasa were built in 910/1504 by the first Tahirid sultan, al-Zāhir ʿĀmir (reg. 858–864/1454–1460); on the mosque’s architecture mosque, see Porter (1992; 2017); Al-Radi (1997).

⁷ We vocalise thus, although we can find no reference to the village in the geographical sources at our disposal.
someone working on Radāʿī rugs, he and three of his daughters. The gentleman took photographs of the workman and his daughters and gave them four piastres. We left them and en route met fifty camels laden with salt. The gentleman took a photograph of the camels with the consent of the cameleers and gave them some money. We pressed on and came to the town of Radāʿ. We went in feeling safe and sound and made our way to the large caravan-serai situated in the middle of the town market of Radāʿ. But it was not to the liking of the gentleman and we then took all the animals to the government building, where they remained. Now Shaykh Ṣāliḥ b. Ṣāliḥ al-Ṭayrī was in town, so the gentleman and his secretary went to greet him, since he was governor. He gave them a meal of a goat, them and the guards. The gentleman and his secretary climbed up to the citadel, the highest building in Radāʿ. The next day [18] the gentleman, his secretary, and al-Nabhānī went and the gentleman took photographs of the ʿĀmiriyah from all sides, it being the greatest wonder because of the beauty of its construction, having been built by Sultan ʿAbd al-Wahhāb. The gentleman photographed all the mosques and he and soldiers left for a nearby village called al-Jirāf. He took photographs of it. Its inhabitants are Jews, who make clay pots of all kinds. Above this village is a mountain which the gentleman photographed. Then he noticed five kilns where they were burning lime and where there were ten Jewish women who were beating

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8 Earlier in the text (Mittwoch 1926, 10), J identifies Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Nabhānī as a gendarme of the Zaydī tribe of Arḥab, appointed from the start of the expedition as Burchardt's escort.
limestone with wooden mallets. The gentleman took their photograph and gave them money.

**Commentary**

Line 1


*tawakkal* ‘alā Allāh ‘set off, out’; often reduced to *tawakkal* in the Yemen (Piamenta 1990–1991, II:531).

Line 2


‘*absar*/*absar* ‘see’; SA, and indeed Yemeni Arabic (YA) in general, allow both forms (Piamenta 1990–1991, I:32).

Line 3

*tabt, tibt* (or *ṭabt*) ‘in the direction of’ (Rossi 1939, 245; Serjeant and Lewcock 1983, 562); perhaps < *tabb, tubūb* ‘row, line’ (Landberg 1901, 264).

Line 4
sufra ‘hide, untreated and with the hair still on it’ (Rossi 1939, 226; Piamenta 1990–1991, II:224).

Line 6

Line 8

Line 9

Line 10

qāriša, plural qirāš, ‘animals’ in general, but often used of cattle. Here we take it to mean Burchardt’s riding animals, perhaps donkeys or mules, or both (Landberg 1920–1942, III:2474; Piamenta 1990–1991, II:393).


Line 11
qāyimaqām, ‘governor’ (Redhouse 1890, 1429).

Line 14
istaʿmal ‘make’; this meaning of the verb is not CA, nor does it find a place in the Yemeni lexicographical literature at our disposal, though Dozy (1881, II:157) gives us fabriquer.
Linguistic Notes

The text is written in LMA and contains a mixture of Classical Arabic (CA) and Ṣanʿānī Arabic (SA), also including the use of purely CA features used outside the accepted norms of CA grammatical norms. Before the detailed linguistic observations below, three general features of the grammar of the text may be highlighted here.

1) the masculine plural nominal and adjectival ending in the oblique case -īn in all grammatical environments; e.g., ḥanna al-

2) the complete lack of ‘alif al-tanwin; e.g., ʿasharnā sahar ‘ażīm

3) the complete lack of ‘alif al-wiqāyah; e.g., yastaʿmilū (ln. 15).

Items of lexical interest are dealt with in the Commentary above. The following linguistic observations are presented line by line, as they occur in the Arabic text.

9 For a fuller discussion of LMA and its features, see Bellem and Smith (2014, 9–10).
Line 1
maʿā-nā. SA has maʿā-hā with the 3fs pronominal suffix and maʿā- with all plural pronominal suffixes (Watson 1993, 196).

Lines 1–2
wa-niyyat-nā naʿrif radāʿ literally ‘our intention [was] that we get to know Radāʿ’. No verb ‘to be’ is expressed and the subject noun (niyyat-nā) is linked to the verb (naʿrif) asyndetically.

Line 2
kunnā nubsir al-rubāḥ fī-hā is thus a relative clause whose antecedent is qiʿān.

Line 3
wa-wajjahnā. Form II = CA form V, wa-tawajjahnā.

wa-daḥalnā ‘amsaynā ‘we went in and spent the night’. The two verbs are linked asyndetically.

Line 4
miyatayn sufra ‘200 hides’. The first part of the idāfah construction retains the final nūn of the dual ending.

bi-yadbaḵ-hunn/bi-dbaḵ-hunn ‘which he tans’, i.e., habitually, as a profession. The bi- prefix with the prefix conjugation verb “expresses continuous and habitual aspect” (Watson 1993, 62, 78 ff.); “une valeur de concomitance” (Naîm 2009, 72). The feminine singular antecedent, sufra, is followed in the asyndetic relative clause by the feminine plural pronominal suffix -hunn.

fa-hajjamayn ‘alay-nā ‘they (feminine plural) attacked us’. The feminine plural suffix conjugation is always -ayn in SA (Watson 1993, 56). The collective noun qaml serving as subject following
the plural verb *hajjamayn* is construed as a feminine plural here and in the previous sentence, *wa-l-qaml malān-hunn*.

*ʔasharnā*. Form IV = CA form I, *sahirnā*, followed by a cognate accusative, *sahar ʔaḡīm*.  

Line 5  
*yawm ʔānī*, for *al-yawn al-ʔānī*, is used commonly in the text.  

Line 6  
*bi-yaštaḡil/bi-štaḡil*; see above, ln. 4.  

The plural noun *farīd* is qualified by the feminine plural adjective *radā‘iyyāt*.  

Line 7  
*ḥamsīn ẓamal muḥammalāt miḥ*. The numeral is followed by the singular noun *ẓamal*, which is then qualified by the feminine plural participle *muḥammalāt*.  

Line 9  
*fī waṣṣat al-ṣūq*. The ẓād replaces the CA ẓān in pronunciation because of the following emphatic ʕāt.  

*al-ṣūq ḥaqq madinat radā‘* ‘the market of the town of Radā‘*. An example of the common analytic genitive; ḥaqq is the only possessive linker used in YA (Naïm 2009, 115–16); it can be declined (Behnstedt 1987, 62).  

*wa-lam wāfaqat al-ḥawāḡa* ‘but it [the *samsara*] was not to the gentleman’s liking’. *Lam* with the suffix conjugation negating past time—a common feature in J’s text.
Line 10
šallaynā ‘we took’. For the vernacular suffix conjugation of the doubled verb, see Bellem and Smith (2014, 12). Watson (2009, 114) proposes that the form is due to an ‘-ay-’ infix rather than the common interpretation, that a geminate verb in the vernacular is, as it were, turned into a verb with third radical yāʾ and the gemination retained.

Lines 10–11
fa-saraḥ al-ḥawāğa wa-kātibu-h sallamū ʿalay-h ‘the gentleman and his secretary went and greeted him’. Note that sallamū is plural here and linked asyndetically to the preceding clause.

Line 11
wa-l-ḥawāğa wa-kātibu-h ṭalaʿū ʿilā al-qalʿa ‘the gentleman and his secretary climbed up to the citadel’. The form ṭalaʿū is plural.

Line 12
jamīʿ al-dūr ḥaqq radāʿ ‘all the buildings of Radāʿ’. See above, ln. 9.

Line 13
li-anna-hu ʿamar-hā al-sulṭān ʿabd al-wahhāb ‘because Sultan ʿAbd al-Wahhāb built it’. Note the ḍamīr al-šaʿn, here in bold.

Lines 15–16
ʾabsar ḥamsa maḥāriq allādı yahriqū fi-hinn al-quṣṣ ‘he saw five kilns in which they were burning limestone’. In an interesting example of mixed Arabic, the indefinite antecedent maḥāriq (grammatically feminine singular?) is qualified by the relative clause introduced by allādı followed by the feminine plural pronominal suffix -hinn. The form allī is the usual SA relative pronoun, irrespective of the number and gender of the antecedent
(Naîm 2009, 121); allaḏi is the only relative pronoun used throughout the text.

Line 16

bi-yaḏribayn/bi-ḏribayn. See ln. 4 above.