

PERIODIC MARKETS IN THE
SOUTHWEST REGION OF SAUDI ARABIA:
A STUDY IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*"In the name of Allah,
the Beneficent,
the Merciful "*

ABSTRACT

PERIODIC MARKETS IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION OF SAUDI ARABIA: A STUDY IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

by

Mohsin Ahmed Mansory

The Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia is the most rural-oriented region in the country. This predominantly rural nature has contributed to the development of a comprehensive system of periodic markets. The focus of this study was a description of such a system as well as a determination of the distribution of markets within the system, in the Southwest Region in general and Asīr Province in particular.

Because there are no studies geographical or otherwise, about periodic markets in Saudi Arabia, this researcher was compelled in his fieldwork to utilize interviews and oral history as a source of data on seller and market characteristics. These interviews involved 1,105 sellers and consumers; oral history was taken from sheiks and heads of

tribes, knowledgeable elderly tribal members, and government officials. Both interviews and oral history were conducted at 20 selected markets in the Southwest Region.

As a result of the fieldwork, 140 markets were identified, 113 of which were plotted on market distribution map. In addition, the organization, morphology, and classification of periodic markets in the study area were described. Also, characteristics of periodic market place activity were studied.

Study findings included the fact that periodic markets serve to articulate the rural economic structure of the Southwest Region. They perform a vital role in that they provide the main source of foodstuffs, non-foodstuffs, and cash for the rural and nomad community.

A second study finding was that the periodic market has great social significance for the rural inhabitants in that it provides them an ideal location for recreation and communication exchange. It also serves a religious function and is a place for government announcements.

Yet another study finding revealed that there is a temporal synchronization of market days which creates a pattern of seller movement referred to as market rings.

Finally, discriminant analysis was the method utilized to test whether or not seller characteristics vary across markets surveyed. It was found that, although a great deal of similarity does exist in seller characteristics in the markets surveyed for the variables tested, certain differences do arise when market sellers are categorized into two groups: mountain markets and Tihama markets. This fact would suggest that future studies examine these groups separately.

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Mohsin Ahmed Mansory

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DEDICATION

*To my father and mother,
who taught me
to love knowledge.*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Focus of the Study

Periodic markets--where people converge to buy and sell at regular intervals--are considered important features of the human geography of developing countries. Yet geographical study of these significant characteristics of the social and economic landscape has started only recently. Instead, according to Bromley,¹ geographers and economists have devoted a great deal of attention to the agricultural and industrial production of underdeveloped countries. In the meantime, however, they have neglected their local and inter-regional trade which is often carried on in the periodic market by a far greater proportion of the population than that engaged in the export sector. Hodder has suggested that:

¹R. J. Bromley, "Markets in the Developing Countries: A Review," Geography, 56 (1971): 124.

[the] chief reason for this is undoubtedly the lack of basic data about market distributions. Geographical research into markets, in most under-developed countries, has to begin with laborious, time-consuming and often difficult field surveys aimed solely at finding out where markets are, locating them on base maps (which may have to be constructed for the purpose), and discovering their names and characteristics. Such elementary data are otherwise rarely available, but alone can form the starting point of any geographical inquiry into market institutions. Only after this point is reached can the data be classified and mapped, and attempts made to answer the host of questions they raise.²

Most of the people in the developing countries of the third world depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Saudi Arabia is among those countries whose population is largely rural and, to a large degree, self-sufficient, a fact which stands in contrast to the rapid, oil-financed, development in the cities and selected areas. This rural populace can supply many of its own needs and can, on occasion, produce some surplus which in turn is sold to acquire cash for articles that are produced elsewhere or by others. Yet because of the low cash supply, the low population density, and the uncomplex life style of the population, the level of demand is insufficient to support a full-time market system. Thus, few of the rural settlements in Saudi

²B. W. Hodder, "Distribution of Markets in Yorubaland," Scottish Geographical Magazine, 81 (1965): 48.

Arabia have permanent markets; rather, the chief institution for the exchange of goods is the periodic market, or Sūq.

The Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia is the most rural-oriented region in the country: 89% of the population is rural or nomadic. This predominantly rural nature has contributed to the development of a system of periodic markets on a larger scale here than in any other region in Saudi Arabia. The periodic markets in this region have a long history in that for hundreds of years they have served rural communities as a place for economic exchange, social, and other activities.³

There are no studies, geographical or otherwise, about periodic markets in Saudi Arabia, some of which, in the face of recent economic development within the region, have already disappeared. Indeed, one may assume that as development continues, other markets will also cease to function. A study of the existing periodic markets thus appears warranted before they are further reduced in number or changed in character.

³A feeling for the antiquity of the periodic market may be derived from the replies of some older tribal people who were asked when their market began. They replied in astonishment, "From the beginning of life!" or "From before Islam!"

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the distribution of and to describe the periodic marketing system in the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia in general, and in Asīr Province in particular. The study had as its objectives the following:

- 1) To locate and classify the markets in the region.
- 2) To examine the functional role of the periodic markets in the economic system of the Southwest Region:
 - a) as a focus for exchange within the region,
 - b) as a mechanism of distribution of goods, both national and international, from outside the region to the various regional units within the Southwest Region.
- 3) To discuss and evaluate the non-economic aspects of periodic markets.
- 4) To contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the periodic market in developing regions of the world.

Study Methodology

During the spring and summer of 1976 field work for this study was conducted in the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia.

An initial problem facing geographical investigation of market systems in this region is the lack of basic data on market distribution. There are no district or province reports, statistical abstracts, or maps in which this primary information can be found. Thus, it was the task of the field work to provide these data. After obtaining the necessary letters from the Government Emirates⁴ to approve this research, and after being assigned a guide by the Asīr Emirate for the period of this field work, the researcher visited nearly all tribal areas or districts in the region. It was then possible to map the market names and locations based on information from the inhabitants. In this manner 140 markets were identified, of which 12 no longer were functioning. There were undoubtedly some small markets which were either not known or not remembered by informants. To plot the distribution of the identified markets on the

⁴Saudi Arabia is divided into provinces called Emirates. Each Emirate is headed by an Emir. This study is concerned with the Emirates of Asīr, Najrān, Jizān, and Bāḥah.

base map, it was necessary to use the only village index available⁵ (which included 4,555 villages of the Southwest Region). But even in this index there were some markets for which the names of the market villages or the names of the nearest villages could not be found. In this case markets were plotted by their approximate locations. From the 140 markets 113 were located on the map in Figure 11 (See Chapter III).

Another phase of the study involved the selection of markets to be surveyed to serve as a framework and provide a focus for observing the spatial organization and socio-economic features of market activity. Twenty-two markets were chosen for intensive survey, for the purpose of obtaining a comprehensive coverage of the market system of Asīr Province specifically, and the other provinces and tribal areas in general. Except for one province in the northern part of this region, one or more markets were chosen for each province or tribal group. Eight additional markets were visited but not surveyed formally. The choice of markets to be surveyed was made randomly, subject to

⁵Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Communications, Feeder Roads Master Plan--Area III, Vol. 2, Village Index (Rome: Italconsult, 1971).

limitations due to the following factors: transportation was often difficult; a limited amount of time was available for field work; and the market schedules created conflicts and inconveniences in travel and time.

The research conducted at the 22 markets shown on the map in Figure 20 (see Chapter IV) consisted of interviews of sellers and consumers as well as interviews with various government officials, including sheiks and heads of tribes and knowledgeable elderly tribal members.

Two sets of questionnaires were designed. One set was administered to sellers to obtain information about:

- 1) Type and name of community in which the seller resided.
- 2) Number of years as a seller.
- 3) Mode of transportation to the market.
- 4) Frequency of seller's trips to the market.
- 5) Names of other markets visited by the seller.
- 6) Individuals assisting the seller.
- 7) Work engaged in besides selling.
- 8) Origin of the items sold.
- 9) Kind of goods sold.

The other questionnaire was administered to the consumers to obtain information about:

- 1) Type and name of community in which the consumer resided.
- 2) Time spent enroute to the market.
- 3) Mode of transportation.
- 4) Purpose of attending the market, whether to sell or buy, or both.
- 5) People accompanying the respondent to the market.
- 6) Name of other markets visited by the consumer.
- 7) Measurement of the social functions of the market.

In each of the 22 markets surveyed, a certain number of sellers and consumers were interviewed according to the questionnaire. These numbers differed from market to market, according to the size of the market, and ranged from 15 to 55 sellers and 15 to 55 consumers in each market. Two of the markets surveyed were excluded from the study because incomplete information was obtained. The total number of questionnaires completed was 560 for sellers and 545 for consumers.

The procedure used to choose sellers and consumers for interviews was flexible since most of the people had never been interviewed before and some of them did not want to be interviewed. Sellers were stratified by activity during the initial observation of the market; within these groups individuals were then chosen randomly. All

- 1) Type and name of community in which the consumer resided.
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interviews of the sellers were conducted by the researcher. Consumers were also selected randomly and with an attempt to secure full area coverage of the market site. Some of the interviews with consumers were carried out by assistants.⁶

Three markets of the 20 surveyed have recently become daily markets. These are in the larger centers: Abha, Khamīs Mushait, and Najrān. Interviews in these markets were conducted on the original day of the market and in the older core of the market area because the original day is the day of greatest attendance, even though the market is open every day.

The data derived from the 1105 buyer and seller interviews were arranged and analyzed with the assistance of Michigan State University's CDC 6500 computer.

Organization of the Study

The report of the study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter II describes the landscapes and peoples

⁶In a few markets a teacher from the school nearest the market was asked to assist in filling out the questionnaires of consumers. These persons were trained by the researcher.

of the study area, the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia, by providing an overview of the physical geography and climate of the region and a discussion of population, employment, and agriculture. Chapter III delineates the organization, morphology, and classification of periodic markets in the study area as well as indicating factors which influence market location. This third chapter also presents, as an example of a typical periodic market, a description of the Sabt Şalab Market.

Characteristics of periodic market sellers are outlined in Chapter IV along with a consideration of the principal spatial and socio-economic features of market place activity. The chapter also reviews the types of products sold in the markets and defines the pattern of seller movement from market to market--the market ring. In contrast to the fourth chapter, Chapter V deals with the consumer rather than the seller at the market and analyzes patterns of consumer behavior. Market hinterlands as the origin of the consumers and non-economic activities pursued by consumers in the market are also considered.

Chapter VI presents the results of discriminant analysis of the market data in order to test the assumption

that seller characteristics vary across the markets surveyed. Chapter VII offers the study's conclusions.

CHAPTER II
LANDSCAPES AND PEOPLES OF SOUTHWESTERN
SAUDI ARABIA

Introduction

The Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia includes the provinces of Asīr, Bahāh, Najārān, and Jizān,¹ between the approximate latitude of N22°44' S15°15' and between the longitude of W40°45' E44°00' (see the map in Figure 1). After a long history of struggle against foreign intruders, the region was annexed in 1920 by King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, but it did not become part of Saudi Arabia until 1932. The region is still considered the least developed area in the country even though a great part of it has rich agricultural land and claims a sizeable amount of the country's population. In fact, prior to the inception of several development plans, the Southwest Region was the most isolated area in Saudi Arabia.

¹In some studies the districts of Al-Birk, Qunfudah, and Allith are included in this region. In this study, these districts are not included.

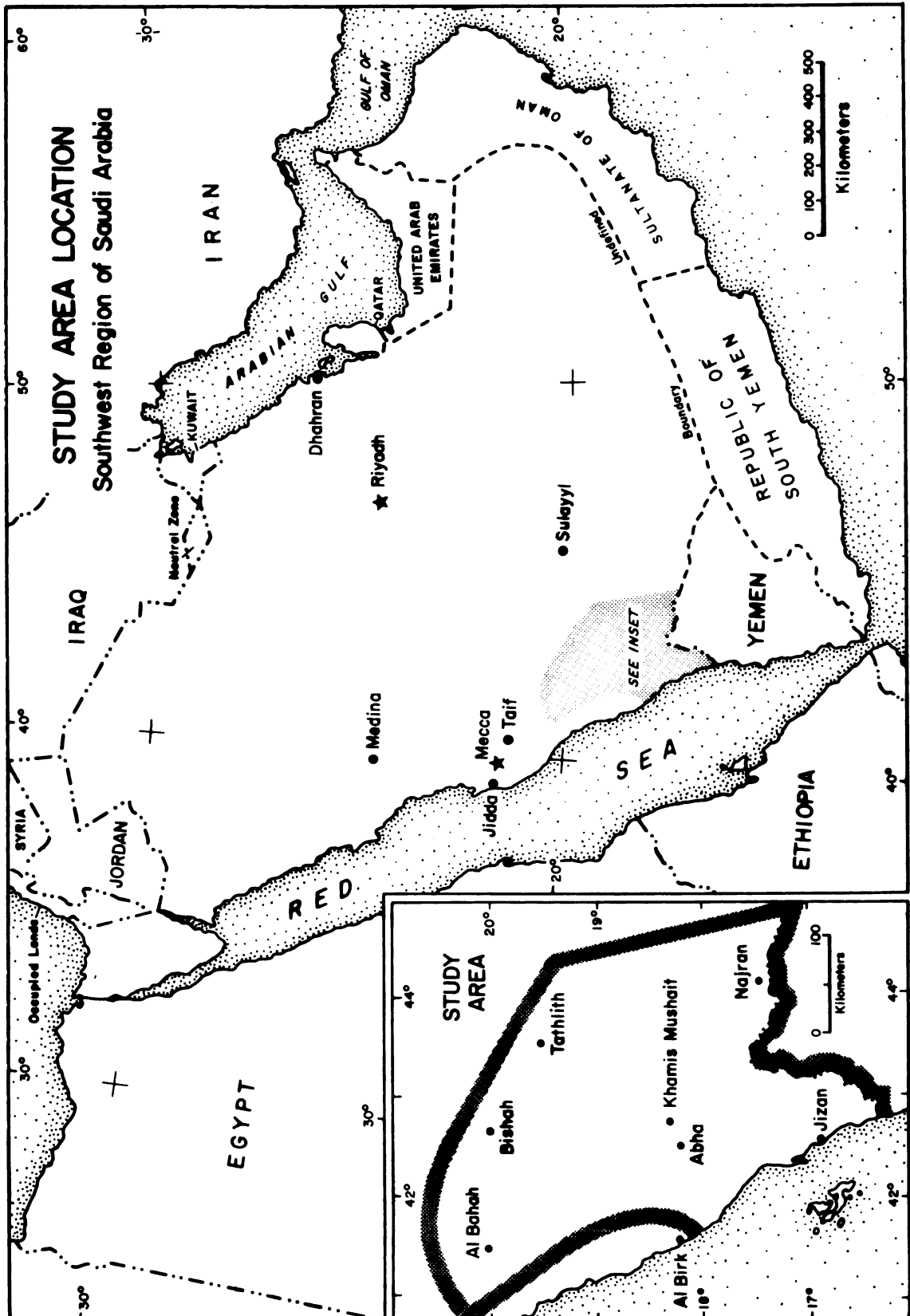


FIG. 1

Though marked by tribal affiliations, the region has seen a loss of the influence wielded by tribal structure since the establishment of the central government which has promoted law and order in areas previously torn by tribal warfare. Despite the fact that this loss of influence will continue in the future, however, it is clear that tribal organization has not completely disappeared.

Physical Geography

Topography and Physiographic Aspects

This region is characterized by variation in topography. The altitude varies from sea level to peaks over 2,000 meters. The region can be divided into four topographical areas which differ from one another in relief, structure, and climate. These areas, illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 3, are:

The coastal plain

The Asīr escarpment

The Asīr mountain range

The upland plateau.

PHYSIOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS of the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia

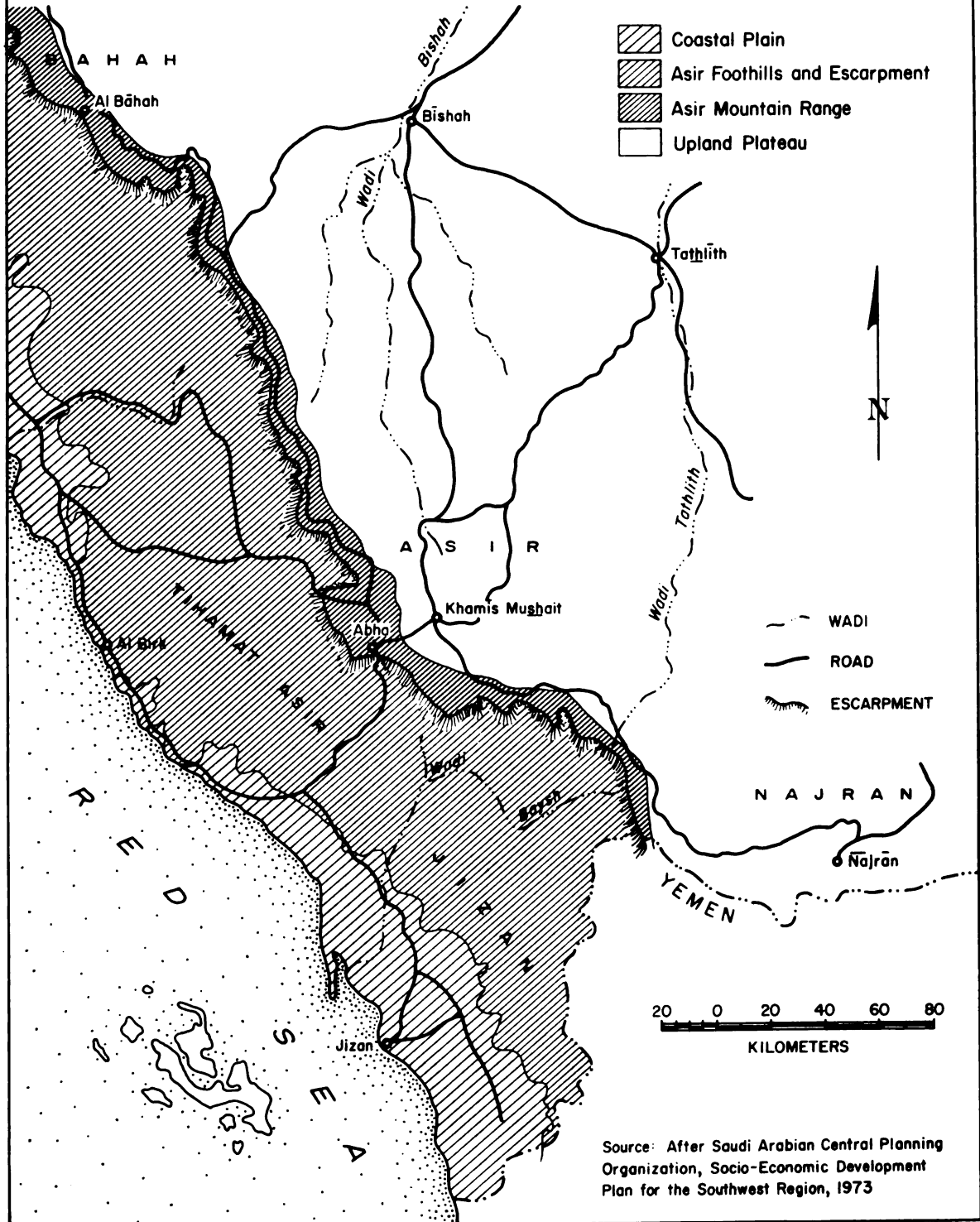


FIG. 2

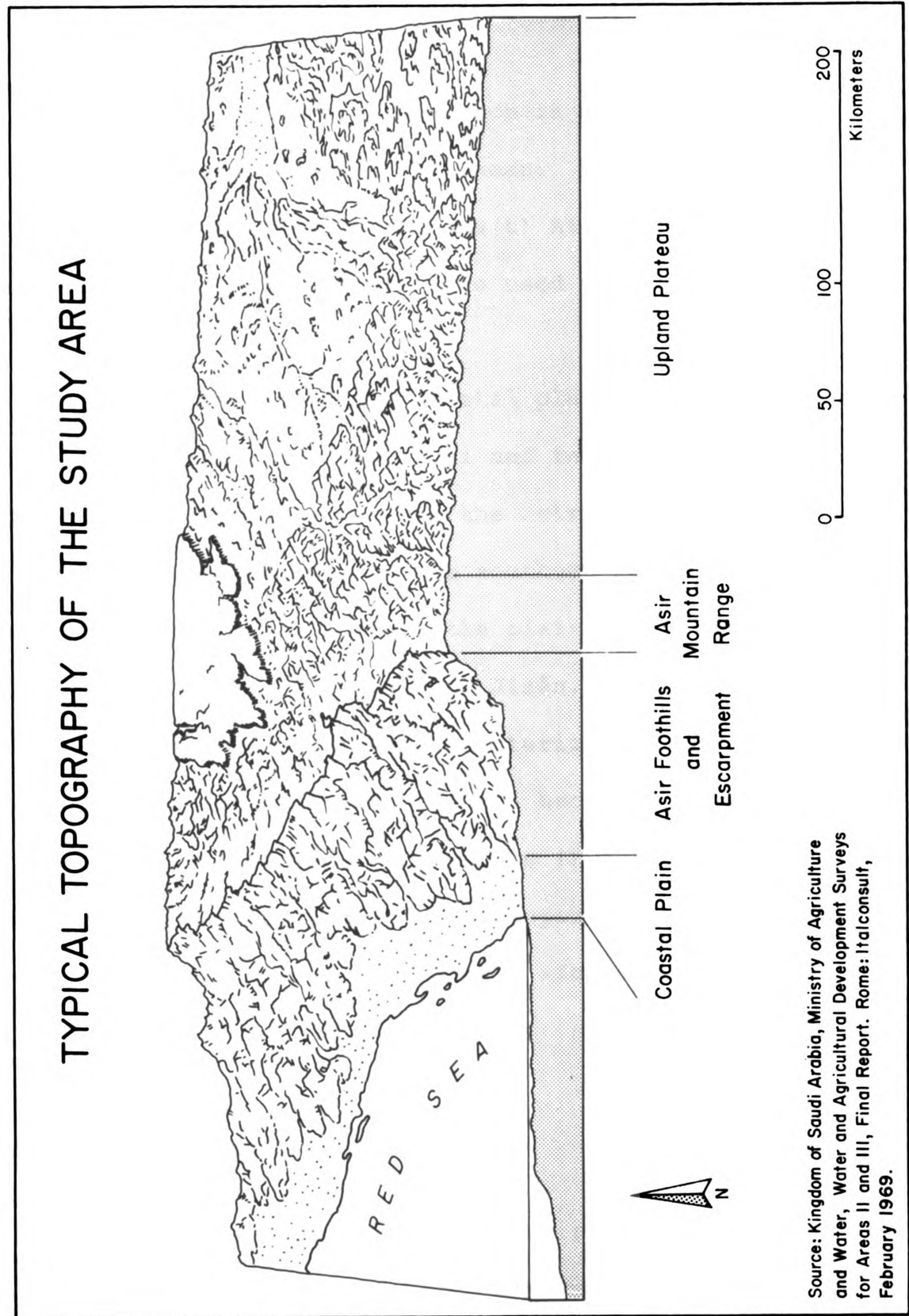


FIG. 3

The Coastal Plain

Known as "Tihama," this area is divided between Tihama(t) Asīr and Tihama(t) Al-Yaman. The former is between Tihama(t) Al-Sham and Tihama(t) Al-Yaman. The terms Sham (north) and Yaman (south) are used throughout the region.

The elevation of the coastal plain ranges from a few to 100 meters above sea level and in places is about 30km in width. At other points the Asīr escarpment comes very close to the shore. In the southern part of the Tihama, near the Yemen border, the plain widens to about 50km; this is called the Plain of Jizān.

The coastal plain is characterized in the south by a concentration of farms, several hectares in extent, around the basins of wādīs; crops are irrigated by the distribution of flood water or are dependent on rainfall. In the north small farms are located around scattered wells.

The Asīr Escarpment

The region between the coastal plain and the Asīr Mountains is a highly articulated and rugged escarpment.

This western slope of the Asīr Mountains is steep and highly eroded.

On the escarpment cultivation takes place on small sized farms, with an average area of two hectares, located in the wādis; crops are irrigated in a haphazard fashion by diversion of flood or run-off water² (see Figure 4).

The escarpment is isolated from other areas of the region in that there are only a few access routes over it and these are difficult to travel over. However, a paved road is under construction.

The Asīr Mountain Range

Though the western highland of Saudi Arabia is called Hijaz, most of the mountain range in this region is known by the name Asīr. Both names may be used interchangeably. These mountains, with very rugged topography, reach heights exceeding 2,000 meters in the northern part, near Taif, and over 3,000m to the south, toward Abha. This is a region of great relief and deep-cut valleys wherein the rock structure is composed of granite and crystalline rock

²Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Agriculture and Water, Water and Agricultural Development Studies, Area VI, Final Report, Part 3 (n.p.: Sogreah-Societe Grenoblois d'Etudes et d'Applications Hydrauliques, 1969), p. 177.



FIG. 4.--Asīr Escarpment: Three Villages with their Terraces. In Tihama(t) Rijal Almá

capped by young eruptive rock.³ In the valleys (which wind between the mountains) there are sandy deposits, sometimes of considerable thickness, which are generally coarse-grained and were probably carried there by wind and water.

In certain places, when it has been possible to level the ground or find soil to fill terraces formerly constructed by the inhabitants' ancestors, the land has been brought into cultivation through considerable effort (see Figure 5). Such intensely cultivated man-made terraces, some quite large, are a distinctive feature of these highlands.

The Upland Plateau

This fourth and final area to be discussed here extends to the interior of the region eastward from the Asīr Mountain range and is characterized by a rolling topography with average elevations of 1,200 meters, though elevations of 2,000m are common in the vicinity of Abha. The plateau slopes to the east and around Tathlīth the topography is more level and the mean elevation is 1,000m.

³ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Deputy Ministry for Town Planning Affairs, Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, Southern Region Project Study, Volume I (n.p.: Kenzo Tange and Urtec, April 1, 1976), p. 39.

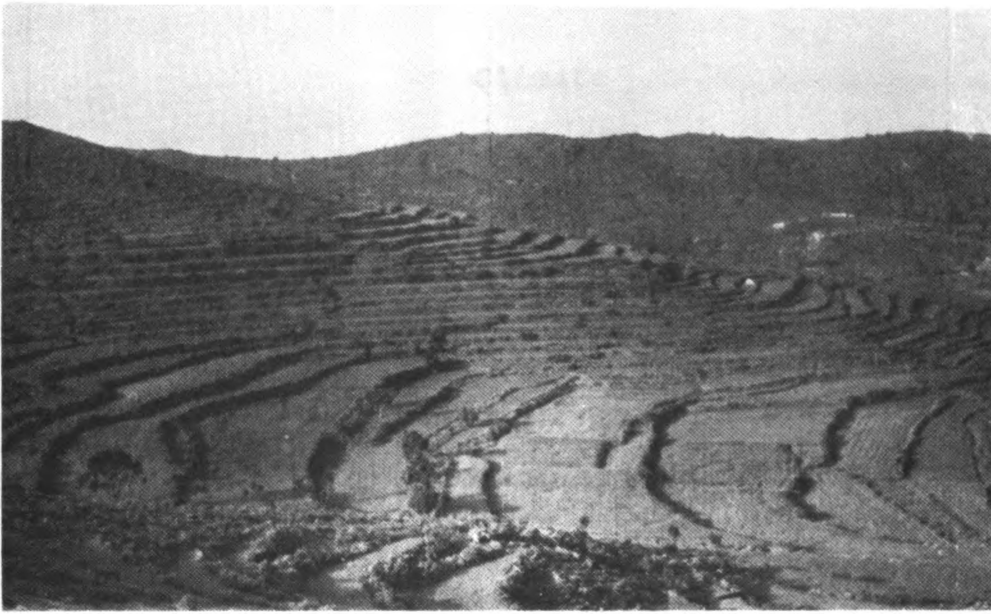


FIG. 5.--The Asīr Mountain Range: Terraced Fields of Wheat and Barley Ascend the Highlands

The area is marked by numerous valleys among the uplands, and the wādī bottoms, sometimes extending to a few km in width, are the sites for agriculture (see Figures 6 and 7). These valleys are oases wherein human activities are supported by tapping the ground water.

Climate

The Southwestern Region of Saudi Arabia is characterized by a variation in climate which parallels its varied topography. The Tihama coast region is very warm, with a mean annual temperature of over 30°C, while the climate is more temperate in the Asīr uplands, where the mean temperature reaches only 16.8°C. Further to the east on the plateau the mean annual temperature is about 26°C.⁴

Due to varied relief and geomorphological conditions of the area, the major control of climate is relief. Until recently, there were no climatological recording stations in the region. Because of the resultant scarcity of data, then, the following discussion is based on average values for several recent years as they appear in a single study. A summary of data from this study appears in Table 1.

⁴Ibid., p. 39.



FIG. 6.--A Large Village in a Broad Valley on the Plateau, Northwest of Najrān



FIG. 7.--Agriculture in the Wider Valley Bottoms of the Plateau Region

TABLE 1
CLIMATIC FACTORS IN SELECTED REGIONS

	Asīr Range	Upland Plateau Wādī Quadrangle			Tihama	
Major Meteorological Station	Abha 1,900m	Bishah 1,040m	Al-Heifa 1,090m	Najrān 1,156m	Malaki 178m	Sabiya 40m
<u>Temperature</u>						
annual mean	16.8	24.8	24.2	23.2	26.3	30.8
annual range	9.8	12.8	19.0	14.3	20.1	8.3
monthly range	12.2	18.3	18.9	17.8	18.6	12.8
maximum	SEP	OCT	OCT	OCT	JULY	APRIL
<u>Relative Humidity</u>						
range min %	55	37	34	43	27	65
range max %	54 (OCT)	44 (JAN)		48 (JAN)	44 (JAN)	57 (OCT)
annual mean %	45 (MAY)	20 (SEP)		26 (OCT)	4 (JUL)	44 (JUL)
<u>Pan-evaporation</u>						
annual mm	1,7636	3,355	4,209	4,744	5,233	3,784
max monthly mm	301 (JUN)	387 (JUL)	886 (AUG)	555 (JUL)	598 (MAY)	426 (JUL)
<u>Wind Speed</u>						
annual mean km/hr	8.7		7.1	8.4	11.8	8.3
max. monthly km/hr	9.7 (FEB)		10.4 (JUL)	10.3 (AUG)	14.7 (MAR)	11.2 (JUL)
<u>Annual Rainfall</u>						
average mm	382	108	109	58	28	112
wettest month	August	May	May	May	April	Nov

Source: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Deputy Ministry for Town Planning Affairs, Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, Southern Region Project Study, Vol. 1 (n.p.: Kenzo Tange and Urtec, April, 1976), p. 49.

Temperature

The chief features of the temperature of this region are the high summer temperatures and the wide range in temperature, both annually and diurnally, which is closely associated with altitude. In general, temperature is more affected by altitude than by changes in latitude. Table 1 shows annual mean, annual range, monthly range, and the maximum monthly temperatures (also, see the map in Figure 8).

The Asīr highland has the coolest climate with an annual mean temperature of 16.8°C in Abha (altitude 1,900m), while the Tihama region has the hottest climate with an annual mean of 30.8°C in Ṣabiya (40m). In Tihama, which is closer to the sea, the range of relative humidity is greater (65% in Sabiya) than it is in the Asīr mountains (55% in Abha). Yet the annual mean of relative humidity is almost the same at both locations.

The upland plateau, spreading out to the east of the Asīr range in a large quadrangular shape, includes vast wādī basins and average altitudes of 1,000m. It has a hotter and more arid climate when compared with the Asīr range area. The annual mean temperature is 24.8°C in

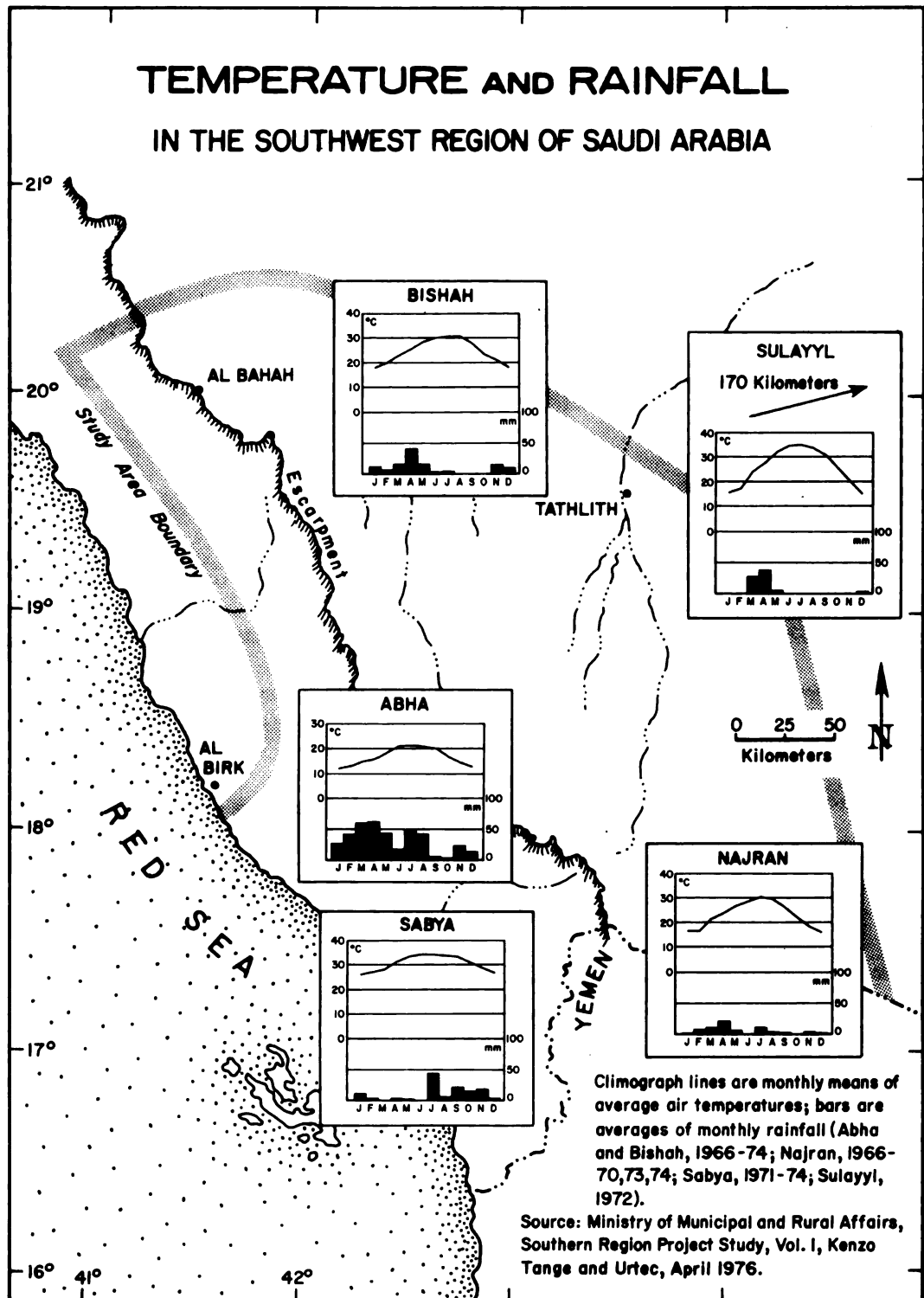


FIG. 8

Bīshah and 23.3°C in Najrān. Further inland, the range of temperature is wider than on the coast, while average humidity is lower (37%, 34%) and the range of relative humidity is smaller, especially in summer and autumn.

In the desert regions absolute maximum temperatures normally reach values between 48°-50°C during the summer months.

Rainfall

The Southwest Region comes mainly under the influence of the movement of the Inter-Tropical Fronts and the monsoon wind system. Rainfall, in turn, is controlled locally.

During summer the Inter-Tropical Front moves northward accompanied by humid air masses from the Indian Ocean propelled by southeast winds. This Front, after crossing the equator, moves from southwest to northeast and it brings rain to the southern part of Saudi Arabia. In the winter the region does not receive much rain because continental air masses, moving from northeast to southwest, predominate, and these are cold and only slightly humid. However, rain-bearing cyclonic depressions, which originate in the

Atlantic or Mediterranean, may move southeastward across the Arabian Peninsula during the cooler months of October to April and bring irregular rainfall on the upland plateau of the eastern slopes of the Asīr Mountains. Despite this description of air masses, the data available cover only short periods (the last several years) and few stations. Consequently, the rainfall pattern cannot be mapped accurately.

The Asīr highland has relatively abundant rainfall when compared with the entire Southwest Region. Along the range of the Asīr Mountains, the highland covers in part the eastern plateau down to an elevation of about 1,800m. It receives more than 200mm of rather steady annual rainfall; therefore, many terraced farm lands are located there. The western slope of the Asīr range, a scarp mountain, is similar in these respects down to about 600 meters elevation.⁵

Table 1 illustrates the average annual rainfall at the major stations in this area. Abha (382mm) has the largest values of all the stations in the region. The wettest month is August. Rain falls sporadically throughout the year in this area, but it is predominant in spring

⁵Ibid., p. 47.

and summer. During the spring season (March-May) there is a strengthening of the monsoon type of flow which gives rise to widespread rainfall over the greater part of this area; the Asīr Mountains and areas of high relief on the plateau exert a major influence on this rain. During the summer months the southerly monsoon flow predominates, giving rise to thunderstorms in the south and along the main escarpment as far north as Taif.⁶

In the upland plateau the annual average rainfall varies from 108mm in Bīshah and 109mm in Al Heifa to 58mm in Najrān. The rainfall occurs mostly in the spring, and the wettest month at all three major stations in this area is May (Table 1). This area, like the mountain escarpment during the spring season, is affected by the monsoon-type flow. During the coolest months rain may fall here as a result of rain-bearing cyclonic depressions which may move from the Mediterranean southeastward across the Arabian peninsula. These characteristics are similar from north to south in this area in conformity with altitude or distance from the Asīr Mountains.

⁶ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Agriculture and Water, Water and Agricultural Development Survey Areas II and III, Final Report, Climate and Surface Hydrology (Rome: Italconsult, February 1969), p. 31.

In Tihama, rain, mostly of the autumn-winter type, comes on the northwest winds and predominates on the coastal plains and the peaks of the mountains. It usually obeys the general climatic rule of a reduction in rainfall from south to north, but toward the north it becomes increasingly predominant on the coastal plain. The monsoon, which predominates on the coastal plain of Jizān province, brings summer rains from July to September.⁷

Human Geography

Population

According to the official census in Saudi Arabia,⁸ the Southwest Region's 1974 population was 1.4 million. However, this census (see Table 2) provides only general information, i.e., the total population by Emirates (provinces). It does not show population by villages, nor

⁷ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Agriculture and Water, Water and Agricultural Development Studies, Area VI, Final Report, Part I (n.p.: Sogreah-Societe Cor-enoblois d'Etudes et Applications Hydrauliques, 1969), p. 14.

⁸ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Central Department of Statistics, General Population Census for 1394, AH (1976), in Arabic.

TABLE 2

SETTLED AND NOMAD POPULATION IN THE SOUTHWEST
REGION OF SAUDI ARABIA

		SETTLED		Nomads	Total
	Urban CTRS, > 30,000		Rural		
Asīr	Khamīs Mushait	49,581	355,153	246,477	681,361
	Abha	30,150			
Jizān	Jizān	32,812	354,349	15,945	403,106
Bahāh			156,997	28,908	185,905
Najrān	Najrān	47,501	44,054	56,415	147,970
Total		160,044 15%	910,553 85%	347,745	1,418,342
Percent		75.5%		24.5%	100%

does it give information about age and employment. For data on these latter two factors another report was used.⁹

About three-quarters of the people are settled people, nearly 15 percent of whom live in the four major towns of more than 30,000 in this region; the remainder (85 percent) live in rural villages and small villages (hamlets) and on isolated farms. The other one-quarter of

⁹ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Central Planning Organization, Socio-Economic Development Plan for the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia, Main Report (n.p.: Ilaco, 1973).

the people are nomads or "bedouins" who usually follow migration routes according to seasons of the year.

The Southwest Region is the most densely populated in Saudi Arabia, accounting for 20 percent of the total population. There is much out-migration to the urban areas for the sake of employment opportunities. Also, since other regions in the country were developed before this region, it has experienced out-migration of young people from its own urban areas, as well as its rural areas, in search of higher earnings and better amenities in the larger urban centers of the country.

The size of out-migration in this region is not known, but it has been estimated by one socio-economic study that roughly 80,000 male laborers have left the Southwest Region to work in the central urban belt: Jiddah-Mecca-Riyadh-Dahran.¹⁰ Most of the migrants return periodically to vacation with their families, though few actually return to permanently settle in the villages. The majority of them financially assist their families.

As is shown on the map in Figure 9 the real distribution pattern of the regional population seems to be closely related to natural features. In the mountain

¹⁰Ibid., p. 4.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION OF SAUDI ARABIA

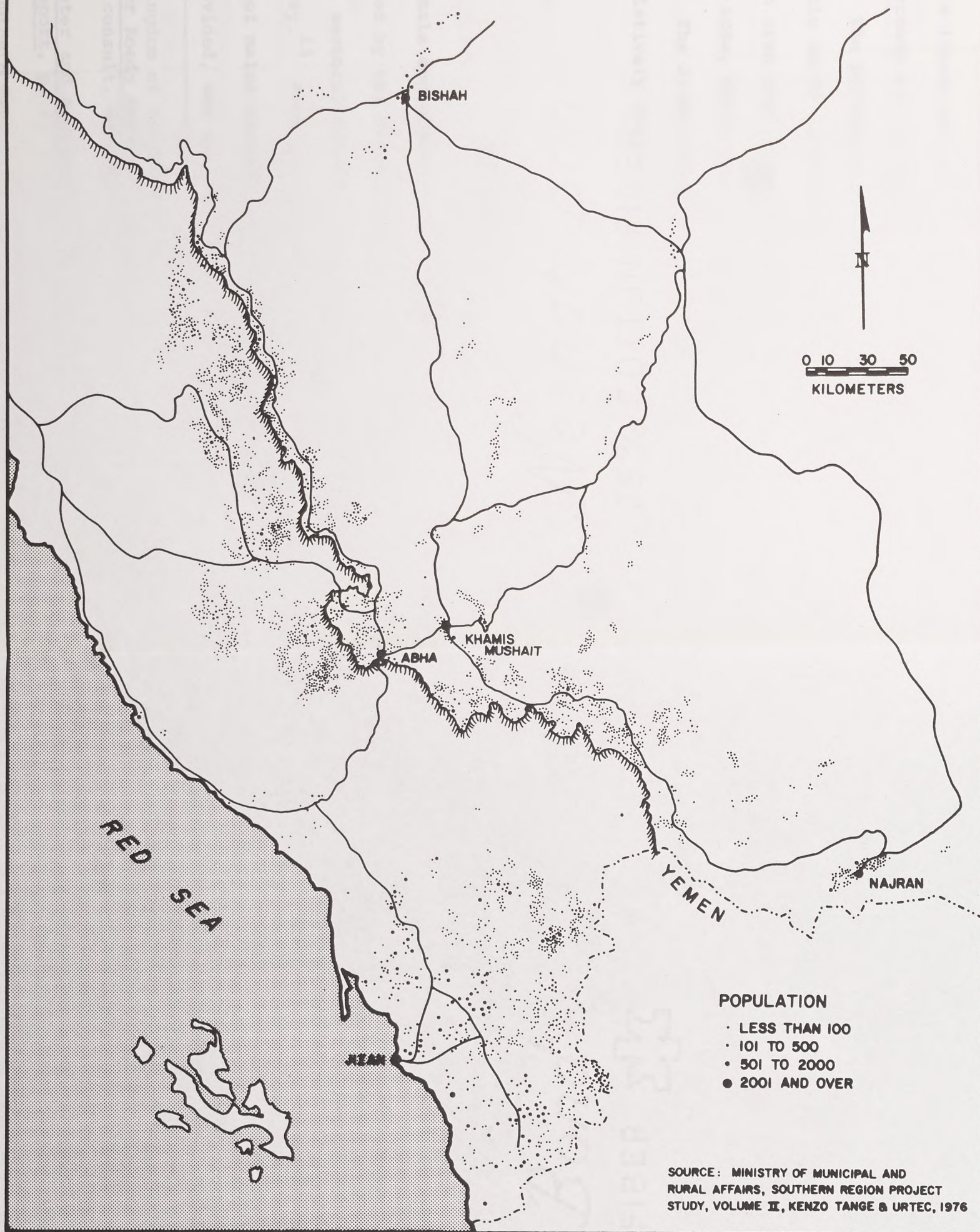


FIG. 9

region population is mainly distributed along the mountainous strip in a linear way, while in the upland plateau the population spreads out in low lying areas where agriculture is possible. The population density in the mountain area reaches roughly 20-30 inhabitants per sq. km.¹¹ In the coastal plain area most of the population is concentrated in the Jizān area, while the northern coastal plain is very unpopulated. The Jizān region is the only one where population is relatively dense: 30 to 50 inhabitants per sq. km.¹²

Employment

The male employment of the Southwest Region has been estimated by the Southern Region Project Study on the basis of the sectoral composition given in the 1966 demographic survey.¹³ From the section in Table 3 in which the numbers of males employed in the years 1966, 1970, and 1975 are provided, one can notice only a slight increase

¹¹ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Communications, Feeder Roads Master Plan--Area III, General Report (Rome: Italconsult, November 1970), p. 10.

¹² Water and Agricultural Development Studies, Area VI, Final Report, p. 6.

¹³ Southern Region Project Study, Volume I, p. 126.

TABLE 3

**ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT (PERSONS 15 YEARS OLD AND OVER) IN
THE SOUTHWEST REGION BY ECONOMIC SECTOR,, 1966-1975**

Type of Activity	Sectoral Share 1966*		Sectoral Share 1970 ⁺		Sectoral Share 1975 ⁺	
	Persons (1,000)	Per- cent	Persons (1,000)	Per- cent	Persons (1,000)	Per- cent
Agriculture, livestock	213.9	74.4	205.1	71.9	196.1	63.7
Mining and quarrying	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.2
Manufacturing	6.8	2.4	6.0	2.1	6.6	2.1
Construction	10.7	3.7	12.6	4.4	20.3	6.6
Public Utilities	2.6	0.9	3.0	1.0	3.7	1.2
Commerce	19.9	6.9	21.2	7.4	29.4	9.5
Transport, Comm., Storage	5.6	1.9	6.7	2.4	8.9	2.9
Services	27.1	9.4	30.0	10.5	42.4	13.8
Other Activities	0.5	0.2	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	287.6	100.0	285.1	100.0	308.0	100.0

*Source: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Central Statistics Department,
Demographic Survey, 1965/66.

⁺ Estimation by Southern Region Project Study, 1976, p. 126.

between 1966 and 1975. More than that, there is a decrease in the number between 1966 and 1970 which may be due mainly to the young male out-migration from this region to other regions, especially the out-migration from this region to other regions, especially the out-migration to the central belt (Jiddah-Mecca-Riyadh-Dahran). It has been estimated that 47 percent of the people working in manufacturing in Riyadh, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region are people from the Southwest Region.

Although there was a decrease in the percentage of the male labor force working in agriculture and livestock from 1966 to 1975, agriculture is still the most important activity in this region, employing about 64 percent of the male labor force. Another 14 percent of the labor force works in services, including finance, real estate, community and social services, health education, and public administration.

Agriculture

Agriculture is the main activity in the region, and economic activities are dominated by it. Out of a regional total of 308,000 male laborers, about 196,000

(64 percent) work in this sector. Out of the region's total land area of approximately 140,000 sq. km, arable land at present is estimated to constitute 285,000 ha. About 40 percent of it is irrigated land (both by well-irrigation and run-off irrigation), and 60 percent of it is rain-fed land.¹⁴

Pastoralism is also an important activity in this region. In fact, about 25 percent of the population is considered nomadic. However, in recent years pastoralism has declined in importance, and only 40,000 sq. km of the total land area is utilized for grazing land.¹⁵

Table 4 provides an assessment of the Southern Region's agricultural production (1975), about 119,000 tons of cereals are annually produced in the region: sorghum (durrah) is the most important single crop, amounting to about 71,000 tons. Durrah and millet are grown primarily in the foothills and coastal plain where they are considered to be the staple foods of many farmers and nomads. Sorghum is predominantly grown during the summer season.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁵ Ibid.

TABLE 4

AN ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR CROP PRODUCTION IN THE SOUTHWEST
REGION (METRIC TONS, ROUND FIGURES*)

	CEREALS				FRUITS		
	Sorghum	Millet	Wheat	Barley	Dates	Others	Vege- table
Coastal Plain	43,000	7,000					
Foothills	19,000	8,400					
Western Scarp Slope	3,000	500	1,500	3,000			
Dissected Highlands	3,500	18,000	500	1,500		600	1,500
Upper Wādī Areas	2,700		4,500	500		200	900
Middle Wādī Areas	400		1,900	500	9,500	700	3,700
TOTAL	71,600	33,900	8,400	5,500	9,500	1,500	6,100

*These figures represent estimations made in the source for this table.

Source: Socio-Economic Development Plan for the Southwest Region of
Saudi Arabia, Agriculture, 1973.

Wheat and barley are grown on the highland terraces of the western scarp slope, and coffee and almonds are sporadically cultivated on the highland terraces. Some oilseeds (sesame seeds) are cultivated in the coastal plain and foothills of the western scarp slope. Date palms grow everywhere, except in the Asīr Mountain and the coastal

plain, and about 9,500 tons of dates are harvested from the middle wādī areas in the upland plateau, especially Bīsha. Finally, vegetables and fruits are of minor importance in comparison with the cereals. The areas cultivated with these crops, however, are gradually increasing, especially those irrigated from wells. And demand is also increasing as the population has begun to appreciate their economic value.

These quantities of food crops, fruits, and vegetables are inadequate to satisfy the population's demand, as they amount to a gross per capita supply of only 199kg of cereal, 12kg of fruits and vegetables, and 3kg of other crops.¹⁶ This low productivity in agriculture exists for several reasons:

1. the small size of farms;
2. the use of traditional agricultural methods by the majority of the farmers;
3. the lack of adequate transportation facilities such as feeder and farm roads between farms and markets;
4. the region's high dependency on scarce and irregular rainfall.¹⁷

¹⁶ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, A Central Planning Organization, Socio-Economic Development Plan for the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia, Agriculture (n.p.: Ilaco, 1973), p. 27.

¹⁷ In comparison to other regions in Saudi Arabia, the Southwest Region is the best watered area. However, in

These reasons combine to keep agricultural production at the subsistence level and result in a low standard of living among the agricultural population. Yet the major potential of the Southwest Region lies in its relatively larger amount of agricultural land and water than that possessed by other regions in the country.

Currently, the government aims to use the oil sectors as its main source of income to improve other sectors such as industry, mineral development, and agriculture, among which agriculture is considered to be the most important. In the Second Development Plan for the country (1975-1980) the regional development strategy for the Southwest Region includes the following elements:¹⁸

1. Agricultural development,
2. Domestic tourism in the highlands,
3. Industry as feasible; and
4. Mineral development.

At present, the economy of the Southwest Region is expanding, and government spending in the region has been increasing. And, as development efforts proceed in

terms of rainfall frequency world-wide, the region does suffer from infrequent rainfall.

¹⁸ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Central Planning Organization, Second Development Plan (1975-1980), p. 61.

agriculture, domestic tourism, industry, and mining, the economy of the region should continue to improve.

Trade

Nearly all local farm products are consumed in the region, with the exception of specific crops such as dates, which are exported to other regions. Farmers supply some of their own needs, but because they rely heavily on imported goods a large volume of commodities has to be brought into the region. Almost all such incoming goods are from Jiddah and Riyadh, and only a small volume of goods is brought in through the only seaport in this region, Jizān. Moreover, imported goods are carried in to Khamīs Muṣḥait which serves as a major regional redistribution center for commodities for the whole region. Other important centers are Abha, Jizān, Najrān, Bīsha, Baḥah, and Baljurāshi. These centers divide the entire region into several market areas. There are also some large villages (such as Tathlīth, Baysh, Namaṣ, Zahrān, Muḥail) which work as minor market areas.

Bīsha and Baljurāshi are directly supplied by Jiddah and Taif because they are relatively close to them;

further, they function as central market places for their surrounding rural areas. Local rural markets are the lowest rung in the hierarchical system of trade. Yet these periodic markets, which usually are held once weekly, play a very important role in this region in that most of the rural inhabitants (who are the majority of this region's population) depend on them to obtain their needs. In addition, through the periodic markets most farmers find the only market for their surplus crops among the nomads and other farmers; the nomads find a market for their animals and animal products; and manufactured goods from the larger centers reach customers who would seldom go to the towns to buy them.

CHAPTER III
PERIODIC MARKETS IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION

Introduction

The history of the markets in this region is not well-known. Even in the history books (which are few), though some of the markets' names are mentioned, nothing is said of their origins. Interviews with the heads of several tribes and old people during the field work for this research did indicate that certain markets have existed for several hundred years,¹ and great numbers of them are known to have existed before the Turkish period in this region.²

Because no written history of the markets exists, information was gathered by interviewing older tribal members who could recall what their parents and grandparents

¹For instance, Sunday Rufaidah market is known to have existed over 500 years ago, according to the Sheik of Rufaidah village.

²The Turkish period in Asīr started in 1230 AH (AD 1810), 167 years ago.

had told them about the history and development of the markets. This "oral history" and the researcher's observations of present-day practices will be used in this chapter to discuss market organization, location factors, distribution, and morphology.

Market Organization

In the past, few settlements had permanent markets or shops. Instead, all the organized exchange, selling, and purchasing seems to have taken place at the rural markets which were always held weekly. Such markets were entirely local in function and met most of the immediate needs of the villages of a tribe or one or two clans of a tribe. Since each tribe was considered a political organization, each (and sometimes a clan or sub-division of a tribe) for reasons of security and independence tended to have its own market. This tendency resulted in a large number of small markets which were sometimes near each other. When a large tribe had several markets, it tried to maintain a cycle of operation by holding each market on a different day. Separate markets could be maintained by large tribes or clans living some distance from one another,

and smaller tribes or clans living nearby sometimes found it possible to share a market.

Occasionally, however, conflicts occurred between tribes or clans which resulted in the founding of new markets. For example, over 150 years ago Āl-Yazīd tribe and the people of Al-Masqi operated a market jointly in Asīr called Sabt Āl-Yazīd on Saturday. An unfortunate occurrence caused the people of Al-Masqi to boycott the market; they then established a competing market on the same day as a form of retaliation against the Āl-Yazīd tribe. The authorities finally succeeded in convincing the people of Al-Masqi to change the day of their market to Monday (Ithnain Al-Shaaf), and the two markets continue to operate on Saturday and Monday to this day.

Tribal competition played an important role in the operation of these markets. Thus, for any number of reasons, such as avoiding another tribe's market, the head of a tribe and his sheiks, who had no market, opened their own and compelled their people to attend it weekly, whether or not they needed to buy or sell anything, in order to try to make their market bigger than the other tribe's and to attract to it more people from other tribes. The market was very important to the tribe, and every tribe had a

written document containing laws that applied to the market. Indeed, the market was a very important place to be respected by all persons.

The whole tribe which held the market was responsible for the safety and welfare of all people attending it. Preserving the peaceful atmosphere of the market was the duty of people called Qubala who attended each market day and were expected to solve any problems arising in the market. The Qubala, who were chosen from among the most respected members of the tribe or tribes supporting the market, assisted the tribal heads and sheiks in establishing market laws and were responsible for putting the laws into effect. It was known in almost all markets that when any person left his house to go to market the tribe which held the market was responsible for anything that happened to him until he returned home.

The following is a translation of a document that contains the market laws of Ahad Rufaidah market which belongs to the Rufaidah sub-division of the Qahtān tribes. It was written in 1337 AH (AD 1917) after a conflict between the Rufaidah tribe and the Ziái tribe. The market stopped for several months at that time, and the sheiks of the tribes and the Qubala met and signed this document

to reinitiate the market. (The full Arabic transcript of these rules is given in Figure 10.)

MARKET LAWS IN "AHAD RUFAlDAH" SŪQ (1337 AH)

1. Both the Ziái tribe and the Rufaidah tribe guarantee safe passage to all persons coming from their homes to the market and returning home from the market.
2. If a person from the Ziái tribe kills another person in the market, the victim's relatives or tribe shall not do anything to the killer. The Qubala of Ziái tribe are responsible and they guarantee that they will investigate and decide upon what to do to the killer to appease the victim's tribe.
3. If a person from the Rufaidah tribe insults or steals from someone of the Ziái tribe, the aggrieved person's relatives or members of his tribe shall do nothing until they contact the Rufaidah tribe's Qubala.
4. If any disturbances occur in the market, the bystanders from both tribes shall do nothing until the sheiks or wise men arrive.
5. In any conflict between two parties, the sheik alone will decide whether to settle it himself or turn it over to the religious court.
6. Certain acts are forbidden in the market, and the following fines will be levied for their commission:

If someone's gun is fired in the market but
no one is injured. 20 Riyal
If a market seller charges unfair prices
or uses improper weights 10 Riyal
If someone loads his gun in the market . 10 Riyal
If someone strikes another without
bloodshed. 5 Riyal
(but if blood is shed, the fine will
be determined by the head of the tribe).
If someone takes his knife out of its
sheath 5 Riyal

If someone insults another person. . . . 5 Riyal
 If someone tries his unloaded gun. . . . 2 Riyal

Factors Influencing Market Location

Unlike those of other regions or countries, periodic markets of the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia are not always located by reason of easy accessibility to the market or proximity to a large village. Rather, in the Southwest Region the main factor which has influenced the location of the periodic market was its origin as a tribal market. And the head of the tribe and the sheiks are the people who decide where to put the market. The market is usually located in the village of the head of the tribe or in a place located between different clans of a tribe. The operation of a market is an important responsibility, but its foundation in a village gives that village great importance among the surrounding villages and hamlets.

Once a market is established in a place, it becomes very difficult to change its location, even if its present site is found to be hazardous or very difficult to reach by buyers or sellers. In fact, the tribe or clans near the market will feel very insulted if the market is moved away

from them. Some markets are held in two different places in order to please two different clans or tribes, although most of the time, the two places are very close to each other. Such is the case with Thalūth Namāṣ which is held four weeks in Bani Bakur tribal area, in a deserted area on the edge of the Al-Namāṣ village; and the other four weeks it is held in Al-Klathīmah tribal area. This latter site is the center of the village, and the people prefer it because it is close to the government offices of this village and because some stores have been built there. But since the two market locations were decided upon a long time ago, it would be very difficult to change them.

Ahad Khātt market also is held in two different places: four weeks in Al-Mohammed village and four weeks near Al-Thībah village. The two villages are very close to each other (about one km apart), and the dual market locations were chosen to settle a conflict which occurred between these two tribes a long time ago. The site of the market of Al-Thībah is unsuitable, however, because it is in the middle of a valley where floods have destroyed the stands of the sellers several times. Another market still held in a hazardous area is Ithnain Al-Majārdah. Several attempts to change its site were stopped. One market

whose location the government did change, from the middle of a valley to the slope of a mountain just near the valley, is Sabt Şalab which is discussed as a case study later in this chapter. Finally, among the Bani Shihir markets there is one other market which is held in two different villages, Thalūth Al-Khadrá and Al-Īrq, which are very close to each other as seen on the map in Figure 11. This market is held one month in Al-Khadrá village and one month in Al-Īrq village.

Another factor that may affect the choice of a new market site is the desire to avoid using an existing market. For instance, as described previously, the people of Al-Masqi village established a market to avoid using the Ahad Āl-Yazīd market following a dispute between the two tribes. Yet the two small villages are very close to each other, and at least one of these villages does not need a market.

There was only one small market among the 30 markets visited whose location changed for the reason of easy accessibility to the market. Ahad Āl-Hārith market was founded in Al-Zahrah village; it then moved to Tabab village, the village of the head of the tribe. But the herders who sell sheep and goats stopped coming to the market because it was

THE DISTRIBUTION OF MARKETS IN THE SOUTH WEST REGION OF SAUDI ARABIA

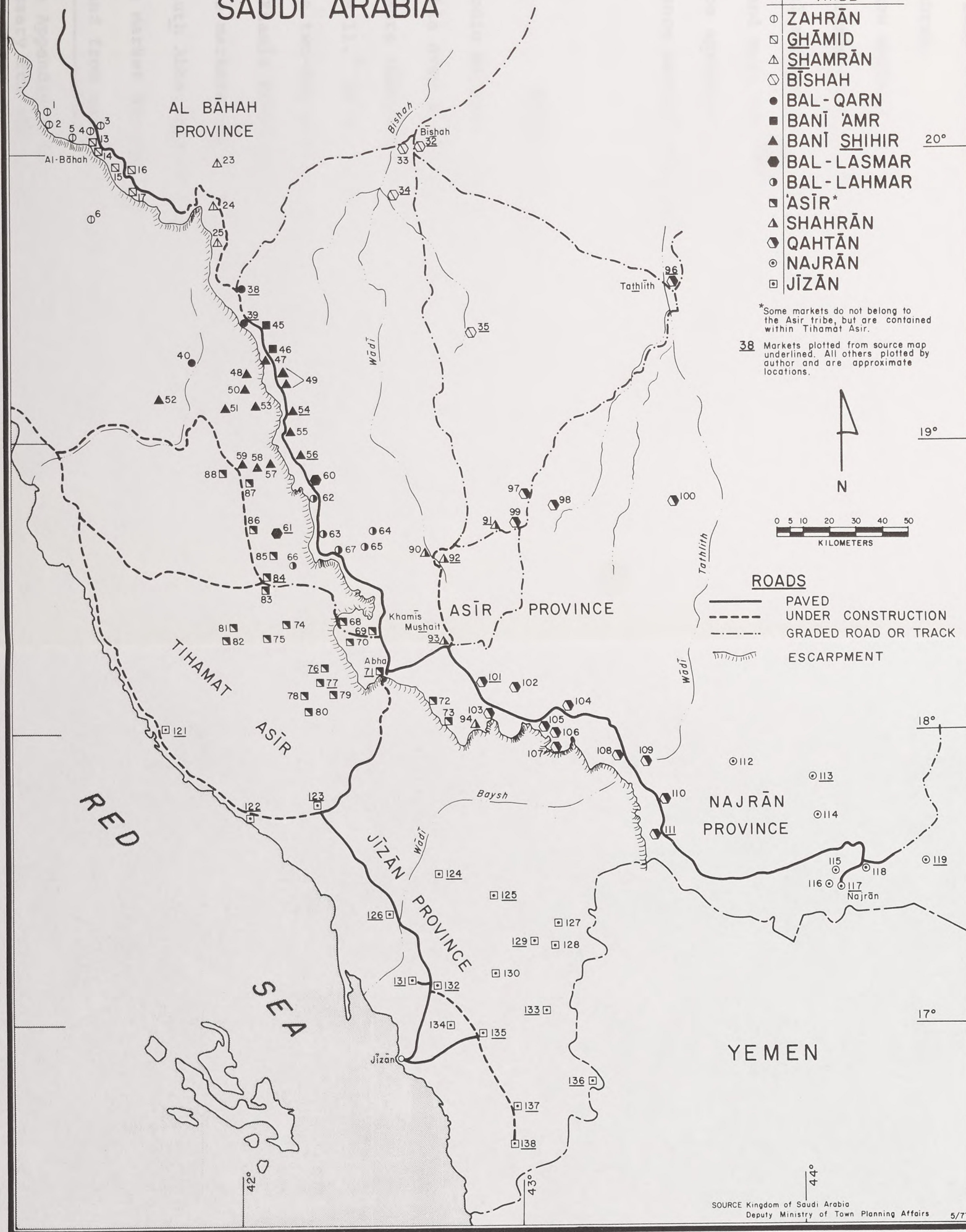


FIG. 11

then too far away from them. Thus, the market was moved back to Al-Zahrah.

Any new markets in this region must have permission from the government before they can open. Although each is still a tribal market in the sense that a certain tribe asks for it and must take responsibility for it, its location has to be approved by the government. In this way, a minimum distance between new markets can be maintained.

Market Distribution

Periodic markets take place in the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia over a seven-day period; from field surveys, 140 markets were identified; 113 markets are plotted in the map in Figure 11.³ Of all these markets, only two small ones operated in a two-day-a-week period. These two markets are Ithnain and Khamīs Rijal and Ithnain and Khamīs Najrān. There are also some markets which recently became daily markets, such as Thaluth Abha, Khamīs Mushait, Khamīs Najrān.

Each market derives its name from the day on which it is held and from either the name of the tribe it belongs

³See Appendix A for the names of the 140 markets and the Glossary for the translation of the names of the days of the week.

to, the name of the head of the tribe, or the name of the place of the market. For instance, Khamīs Mushait market is held on Thursday (Khamīs), and Mushait is the name (Mushait Ibn Salim) of the first grandfather of this family who passed from father to son the leadership of the large tribe called Shahrān.⁴ In another name like Ahad Khātt, the name Khātt is drawn from the name of the valley in which this market is held in the region.

From Figure 11 it may be seen that, with the exception of Jizān province, the periodic markets are distributed in a predominantly linear fashion along the western slope and the crest of the Āsīr Mountains. In Jizān province, the markets are more widely dispersed. By comparing Figure 11 with Figure 9, it is obvious that the different market distributions correspond to the settlement patterns of the population. However, one cannot conclude that markets are larger in areas where the village density is greater since market size depends on the size of the Bedouin population as well as on that of the settled population. The total population, therefore, is difficult to map.

⁴ Hāshim Al-Nāmi, The History of Āsīr (Jiddah, Saudi Arabia: The Printing, Press and Publication Foundation, 1962), p. 110 (in Arabic).

Market Classification

Periodic markets have been classified in several ways in the literature. One of the classifications used indicates type according to periodicity. Periodic Markets in Yorubaland in West Africa are classified by distinguishing simply between (1) periodic markets, and (2) daily markets, and each of these two major classes of markets has a number of types, all based on timing: periodic markets (day or night); two-day; four-day; eight-day; and daily markets: day, morning and night.⁵ Another type of classification is made according to size and location. For example, Skinner⁶ distinguishes between Minor Market, Standard Market, Intermediate Market, and Central Market, each of which is found in a type of central place: Minor Market place, Standard Market town, Intermediate Market town, and Central Market town or Local City or Regional City. McKim used Skinner's designations for the hierarchical levels in his study of periodic markets in Ghana.⁷

⁵Hodder: 50.

⁶G. W. Skinner, "Marketing and Social Structure in Rural China," Journal of Asian Studies, 24, Part 1 (1964): 9.

⁷Wayne McKim, "The Periodic Market System in Northeastern Ghana," Economic Geography, 48 (1972): 338.

Yet another kind of classification focuses attention on the kinds of goods or services provided in the markets.⁸

But markets in the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia do not fit any of the previous classifications since almost all of the markets in that region take place over a seven-day period only. Furthermore, there is no relationship between the location of the market near or in a certain village and the size of the village. Also, there is no distinctive difference in the kind of goods or services provided in the markets. One possible classification of markets in the Southwest Region may be based on the division between Tihama markets (markets on the mountain slopes and coastal plains) and mountain markets. Such a classification, however, may have limited value. Thus, though statistical analysis presented later in this study will demonstrate a difference between Tihama and mountain markets, this classification sometimes creates an unsuitable division between markets belonging to the same tribe or to that tribe's market ring. For the purposes of this study, then, it seems appropriate to classify the markets according to tribal affiliations. Such a classification can be found in Appendix A.

⁸ Hodder: 48.

Market Morphology

Market places vary in their shape, but they are usually rectangular or square, and all are in open places, either beside or inside the village. Of the 20 markets which were surveyed, four are held in the open air at sites chosen by their tribes (see Figure 12). These places are deserted during the rest of the week, and the only evidence of use is some stalls consisting of sticks of wood without walls or a roof (see Figure 13). To provide a roof, sellers either use an umbrella or cover the sticks with cloth to make a shelter during the day of the market.

The other 16 markets are held inside the villages and usually are located in the centers of the villages near their mosques. (Sometimes the mosque is built for the market.) These kinds of markets are also held in open sites, and many sellers sell without a roof over their heads, except for an umbrella. Typically, small store buildings are found at the edge of the market. Almost all of these, which look like rooms with small doors, are usually used for storage of goods, and on the day of the market the seller takes out his goods and displays them in front of his store (see Figure 14). The sellers in the open air sites who do not



FIG. 12.--A Market (Thaluth Al-Namās) in an Open Air Site



FIG. 13.--A Market Seller in His Make-Shift Shelter

have access to such store buildings usually display their wares on mats or on white cloth (see Figure 15). Further aspects of morphology are discussed in the following case study of Sabt Şalab.

Sabt Şalab: A Case Study

Sabt Şalab sūq is one of the seven known periodic markets belonging to a large tribe called Rijāl Almá in Tihama(t) Ásīr. This sūq belongs to one of the 10 tribes of Rijāl Almá called Banī Bakur or Şalab (which itself consists of 10 different divisions). The Şalab tribe lives on a mountain called Şalab and in the Kisān valley. It is bounded on the North and West by Jūnah tribe, on the East by Bani Zaid tribe, and on the South by the Bani Shuábah tribe. The market is located in a place called Al-Khatwah, two km from the nearest village, Al-Habīl, which is 110km from Abha. There are a few huts in Al-Khatwah belonging to the people who work in the market.

Al-Habīl village (approximately 200 people), which is larger than Al-Khatwah, serves as a station in this area



FIG. 14.--(above)
Market Seller Moving
His Goods Out of a
Storeroom on Market
Day



FIG. 15.--(left)
Open Air Seller
Displaying His
Goods on Mats

for passengers going to Darb Banī Shúbah, Jīzan, Rīm, and Abha. It has about eight small shops open daily and two coffee shops. There is also one small clinic, a small law enforcement office, and a primary school to serve the area near this village. During the week this village is very active, except on Saturday, which is the day of the Sabt Salab market, when most of the sellers who have stores in Al-Habīl village go to the market to sell along with many of the remaining inhabitants.

The site of the market was once in the middle of a valley and floods destroyed the stands of the sellers several times. As a result, only two years ago, in April 1975, the government decided to change the site to the slope of the mountain near the original site. The government flattened the new place and asked the sellers to move there. The sellers who had stalls in the first site received land from Abha municipality and built stores in exchange for an annual rent. The annual rents are:

<u>Annual Rent</u>	<u>Size of Land</u>
64 Ry	4 x 4 Meter
28 Ry	3 x 3 Meter
9 Ry	2 x 3 Meter

These rents apply to walled structures; sellers who use wooden stands do not have to pay any rent.

There are 76 shops in the market, 42 of which are made of stone. The others are made of sheets of corrugated aluminum or are stands consisting of only four poles and a roof. There are also six coffee shops which consist of a three-sided hut with a roof and one open side. The consumers use these as a place for rest and food and for luggage storage while they shop.

During the week the market is vacant except for the mill and one store, which are open for the people who pass by (see Figure 16). Sabt Şalab actually operates only on Saturday, and the market then is very busy (see Figure 17). On Friday, the day before sūq day, one can see sellers from distant areas, such as the village of Khamīs Banī Shuábah in Jizān province, starting to arrive in the late afternoon, coming by jeep and an occasional truck to the market. Sellers living nearby come early on the day of the market, although there are some sellers who come as late as noon.

The market has a rectangular shape with two rows of shops along three of its four sides. The fourth side is open and functions as a parking lot and general entrance to the market. The interior of the market is open and is used by sellers of goats and sheep and by other sellers who cannot afford stalls (see Figure 18).



FIG. 16.--The New Site for Sabt Şalab Market
Nearly Vacant on Day Prior to Market Day

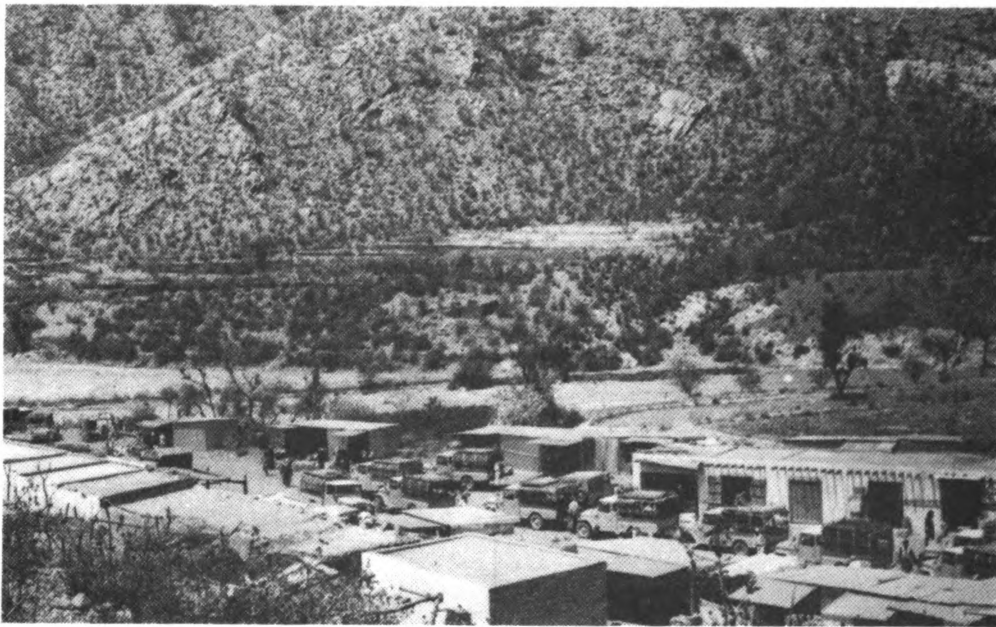


FIG. 17.--Sabt Şalab on Market Day



FIG. 18.--Market Square Used by Sellers
of Sheep and Goats

The orientation of structure, as shown on the sketch map in Figure 19, is not consistent. All of the stone stalls face the open center of the market, as do the aluminum stalls on the west side. On the east side of the market, however, the interior row of aluminum stalls and wooden stands has entrances predominantly on the east side. One may suppose that these structures were built later than the stone stalls and after small sellers had established themselves along the east side of the open area.

The coffee shops are found farthest from the center of the market; on the east side this places them slightly above the rest of the market on the mountain slope.

Table 5 shows the number of sellers by commodity or service offered (some sellers may have sold what they had and left, and some may not have arrived yet). It is very difficult to so categorize sellers according to their commodity since most of them tend to offer a variety, even a surprising combination of goods. Thus, most sellers who sell groceries and staples have several other items such as cosmetics, kitchen utensils, spices, shoes, and different personal aids products. Sellers who sell ready made clothing and cloth also sell other items such as groceries,

SKETCH MAP OF **SABT (SATURDAY) SALAB SUQ**

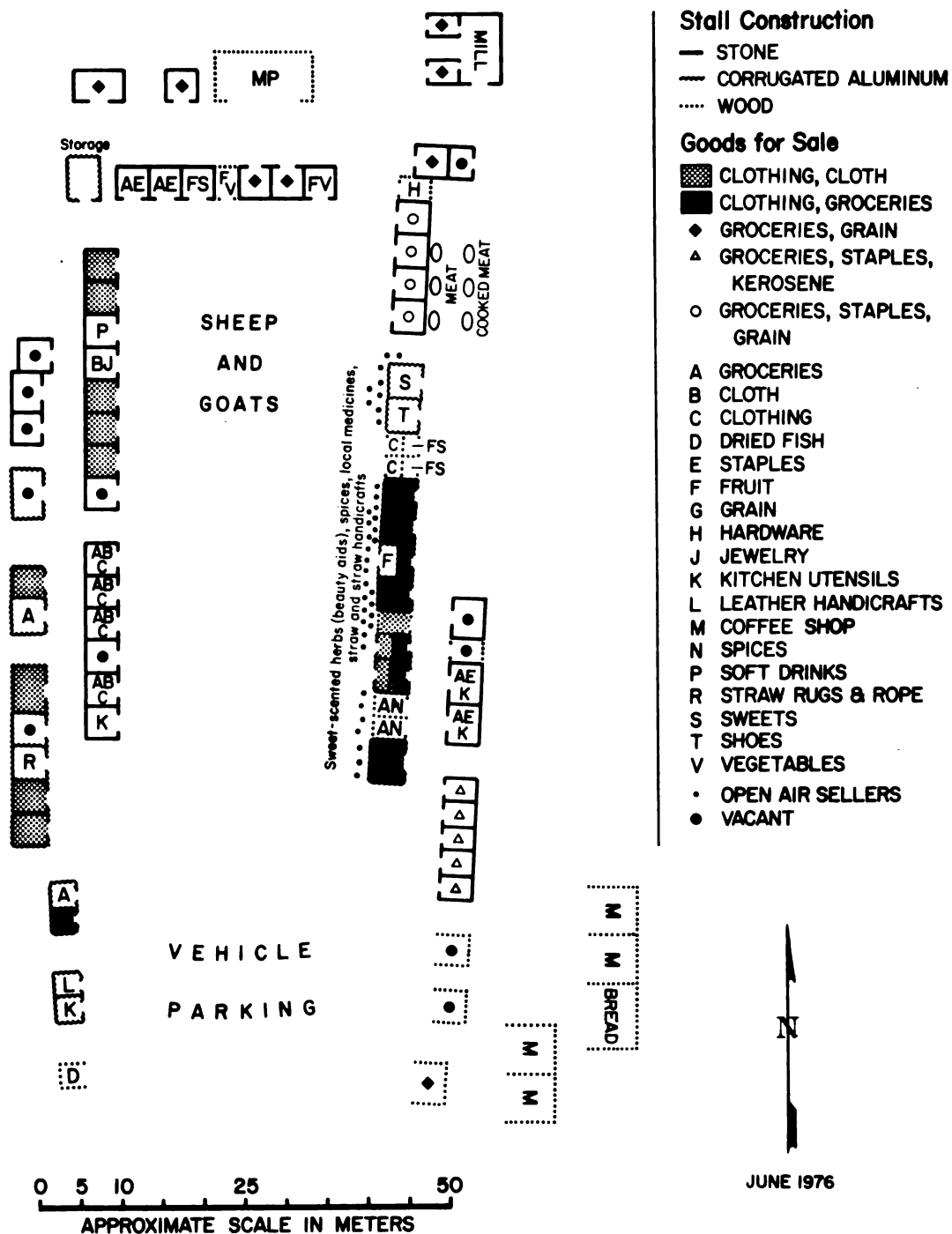


FIG. 19

TABLE 5

CENSUS OF SELLERS AT SABA SALAB SUQ
AT 1:00 P.M. ON JUNE 4, 1976

Commodity or Service	Number of Sellers
Groceries + staples (some have cosmetics, kitchen utensils, spices, shoes)	24
Ready-made clothing + cloth only	14
Ready-made clothing + cloth + groceries + jewelry	14
Sweets + dates + fruit	4
Fruit and vegetables	3
Meat	3
Cooked meat--"Hanet"	3
Kitchen utensils only	2
Leather handicrafts + shoes	2
Soft drinks	1
Dried fish	1
Hardware	1
Mill	1
Blacksmith	2
Open-air sellers: sheep + goat	22
Open-air sellers: one or a combination of: straw and straw handicrafts--sweet-scented herbs, spices, and local medicine--honey-- Saman (clarified butter)	<u>32</u>
TOTAL	129

jewelry, and shoes. Sellers usually offer what is available to sell and there is only limited specialization.⁹

In general, certain groups of sellers may be found in certain areas: sellers of clothing appear more often on the west side of the market, while grocery sellers appear more often on the east. All sellers of sheep and goats are located in the center of the market, and most of the sellers of straw and straw handicrafts (mostly hats), sweet-scented herbs (beauty aids), spices, and local medicines are located along the eastern side of the central open area. Finally, most sellers of raw and cooked meat are located together, facing into the passage between the two rows of stalls on the east side.

Sabt Ṣalab sūq may attract buyers from as far away as 50km. Attendance during the busiest part of the market day is estimated between 400 and 500 persons. Approximately one-third of those sampled come alone, slightly more than two-fifths (43 percent) come with either male or female relatives, and most of the rest come with friends. About 16 percent of the buyers bring some items to sell. Because of the time required to travel to and from the

⁹ The categories indicated in the table and in the sketched map do not mean that sellers included in them did not also carry other kinds of goods.

market and because of the market's social function, most buyers come prepared to stay as long as possible.

The market place plays an important part in the lives of the area's inhabitants. It is considered their main source of food and clothing.¹⁰ It is also sometimes the only source of cash for them. People from the villages surrounding Sabt Salab come to the market with some of their surplus products which they have stored until a need for cash arises. Women are most frequently the ones who bring straw hats, henna, sweet-scented herbs, goat skins, saman, honey, eggs, and hens to sell in the market; and they are likely to use the money to purchase sugar, coffee, flour, soap, kerosene, or an article of clothing for themselves or their children.

The sūq is the focal point of social life for the inhabitants, and the market day is very important to them because this is the only time that they are all together.¹¹

¹⁰ About 46 percent of the consumers interviewed in this sūq (45 consumers) stated that they never go to Abha, the nearest town; 24 percent answered that they go one or two times a month; 13 percent answered with "some times"; and 15 percent did not answer. This shows how people in this area depend on this periodic market. (This question was not analyzed in the whole study because many consumers in the 20 markets avoided answering it.)

¹¹ People also gather in Friday prayer, but since the prayer is held in several places, the gatherings are smaller than those at the market.

Many of them live in very isolated villages. Indeed, the difficult topography separates the people more than the distance in this area. They thus consider the market as a recreation area, where they can meet their friends.

Groups of men gather in coffee shops to discuss business and news, and the women, who visit among themselves while they sell their wares, usually come to the market in a party of relatives or friends. In this way some can shop for household needs, while others sell their products for them.

The head of the tribe attends every market to keep in touch with his people and to conduct his business. Whenever a problem arises, he and other responsible parties, including the law enforcement officials, try to solve the problem immediately. Public announcements are also frequently made.

After the sun sets on Saturday, the crowds have gone home and the market place is deserted again.

CHAPTER IV
MARKET SELLERS AND THE INTERNAL
ORGANIZATION OF MARKETS

Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to identify and describe the principal spatial and socio-economic features of market place activity. This discussion, which offers a profile of market sellers, depends on the analysis of in-different markets in this region which are surveyed on the map in Figure 20. It is probable that most of the findings presented here are sufficiently general to apply to a wide range of periodic marketing systems in the whole region. This is because the 20 specific markets selected for intensive survey were chosen for the purpose of obtaining a comprehensive coverage of the market system of Asīr Province specifically and other provinces and tribal areas in general. One or more markets were chosen for each province or tribe (except for three tribes in the northern part of this region).

MARKETS SURVEYED, VISITED, AND NOT IN OPERATION IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION OF SAUDI ARABIA

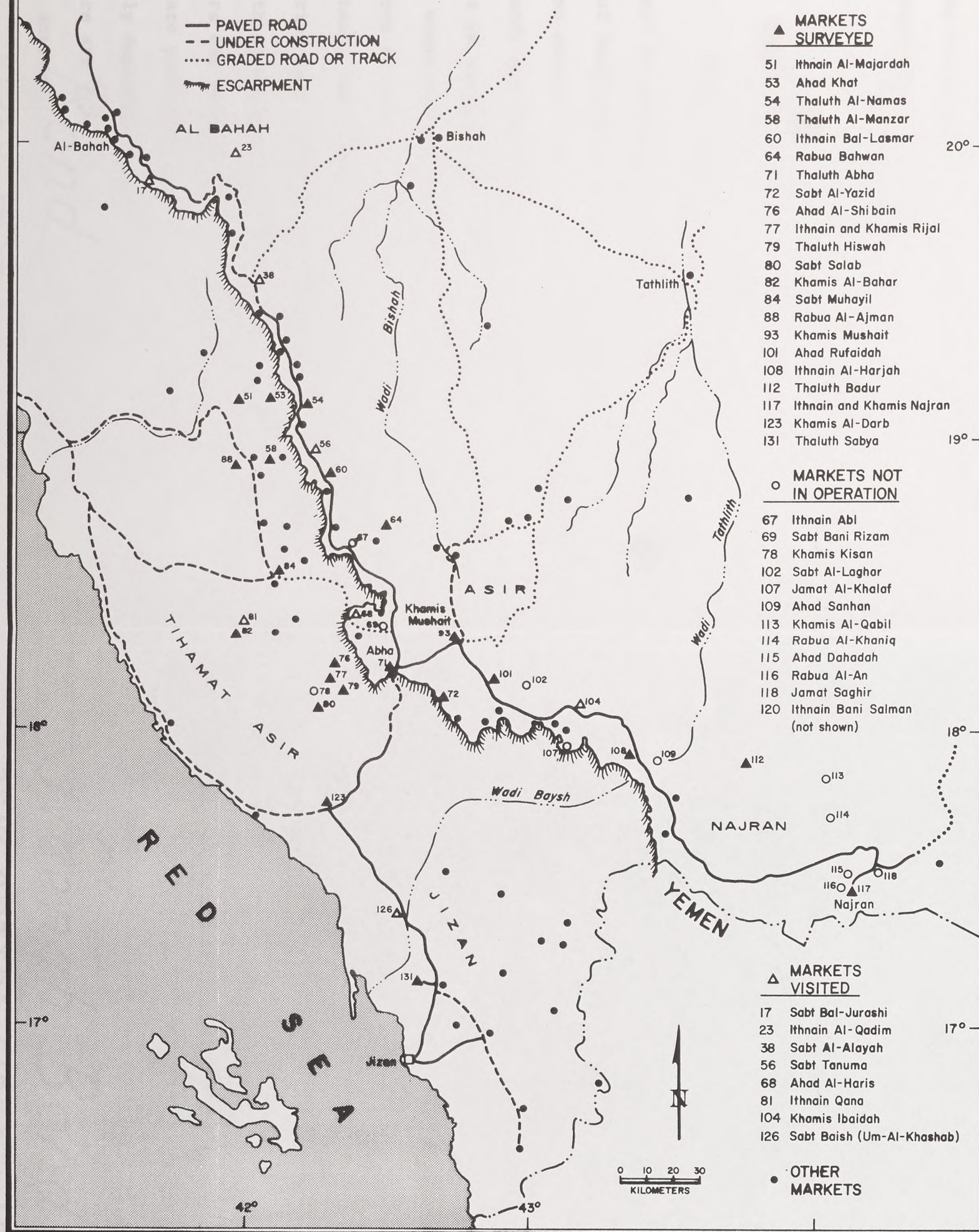


FIG. 20

The data used in this chapter were arranged by the computer, using Statistical Package for Social Sciences Programs: Frequencies and Crosstabs.

Market Seller Characteristics

Types of Market Sellers

"Seller" is employed here as a broad term for the entire range of individuals who may be found offering items for sale in the market. Thus, a seller might be a young boy selling candy and biscuits, or a girl selling henna and straw hats in the market. The term also might refer to a man or a woman selling some fruit from their farm, or reselling spices or coffee they have bought from the market. On the other hand, the seller might be a man who has his own shop, carries many different goods, and displays and sells them both at wholesale and retail.

Sellers can be divided into two types in the markets. There are part-time sellers, those individuals who are only partly dependent on market selling for a livelihood; and there are full-time sellers, those whose incomes depend almost entirely on the market. Although almost all

of the sellers can be differentiated by these factors, two additional facts should be noted:

- 1) Most of the sellers who are wholly dependent on market selling for a livelihood are in some way or another engaged in agriculture: either they own land (even though they may not cultivate it) or their family cultivates the land.
- 2) Herders who sell sheep at the market were categorized as part-time sellers because, although they depend on the market for their income, they do not come to the market regularly; they come only when they need money to buy necessities.

Part-time Sellers

Three-quarters of all the sellers interviewed in the 20 survey markets stated that they engaged in other work besides selling. This indicated that one of the characteristics of the economic activities in this region is the low level of specialization. Table 6 and Figure 21 reveal that 78 percent of the part-time sellers are engaged in agriculture and 12 percent of them are engaged in herding.

TABLE 6

WORK ENGAGED IN BESIDES SELLING

Kind of Work	Number of Sellers	Percentage
Only selling and "Motasabeb"*	135	24%
Have other work	425	76%
Total	560	100%
Have other work	425	
Agriculture	333	78%
Herding	53	12%
Employed	4	1%
Self-employed	29	7%
Student	8	2%

*Motasabeb is a person who buys goods in order to resell them at a profit; unlike a broker, who specializes in certain goods, a motasabeb may buy and sell anything.

In other words, such farmers and herders sell because they need cash. And since agriculture alone, for the majority of them, does not yield any cash income, most depend on other economic activities to provide cash. Others rely on their relatives who migrate to urban areas to work and furnish their families back home with the cash they need. This great percentage of part-time sellers suggests that markets in this region are very important as a means of obtaining cash. The cash, however, is not always reinvested in more

Work Engaged in Besides Selling

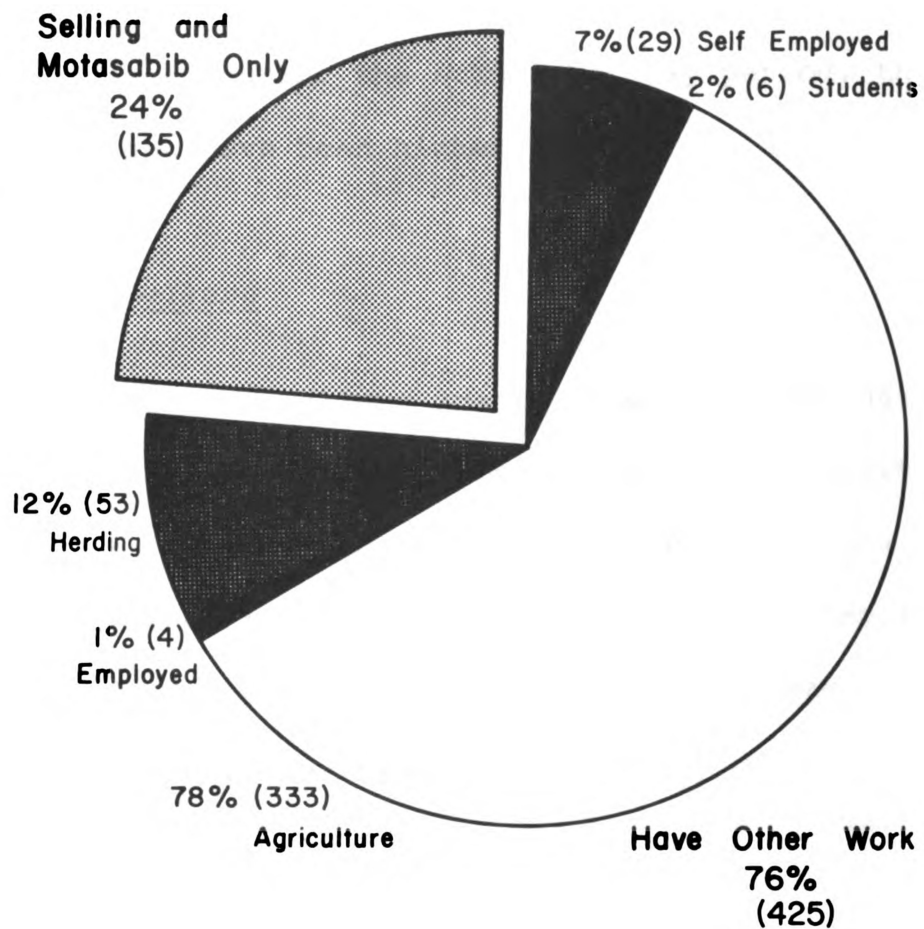


FIG. 21

items to sell. Instead, many of the part-time sellers use it for essential purposes such as clothing, food, and everyday household items.

Only a small percentage of the part-time sellers are school boys (2 percent), though it should be noted that the interviewing was conducted during the school year which probably affected the percentage. If the interview had been conducted during the school holiday period, the percentage might have been higher.

Full-time Sellers

Full-time sellers are those who stated that they do not have other work than selling. Nearly one-quarter of the sellers interviewed in the 20 markets fit this description. But even though they don't have work other than selling, the majority of them live in small villages, maintain land rights, or own land which is farmed in their absence by their wives and children. Yet the poor incomes derived from agriculture have forced many farm workers into selling to cover the cost of family maintenance.

About 12 percent of the full-time sellers are foreign (Yemenis). This percentage used to be higher, but

just prior to the survey a new government law prevented foreigners from working as sellers in the periodic markets.

For the remainder of this chapter, all sellers will be discussed as one group.

Types of Community in Which Sellers Reside

Almost 80 percent of the sellers in the Southwest Region come from rural villages, and 9 percent of them are bedouins (nomadic herders); only 11 percent of them come from towns (see Table 7 and Figure 22). This last percentage includes the three market towns in this survey, Thalūth-Abha, Khamīs Mushait, and Ithnain and Khamīs Naj-rān. These three market towns account for 8 of the 11 percent of the sellers who come from towns.

TABLE 7

TYPES OF COMMUNITY IN WHICH SELLERS RESIDE

Type	Numbers	Percent
Town	64	11%
Village	151	27%
Small Village	295	53%
Bedouins	50	9%
TOTAL	560	100%

Type of Community in which Sellers Reside

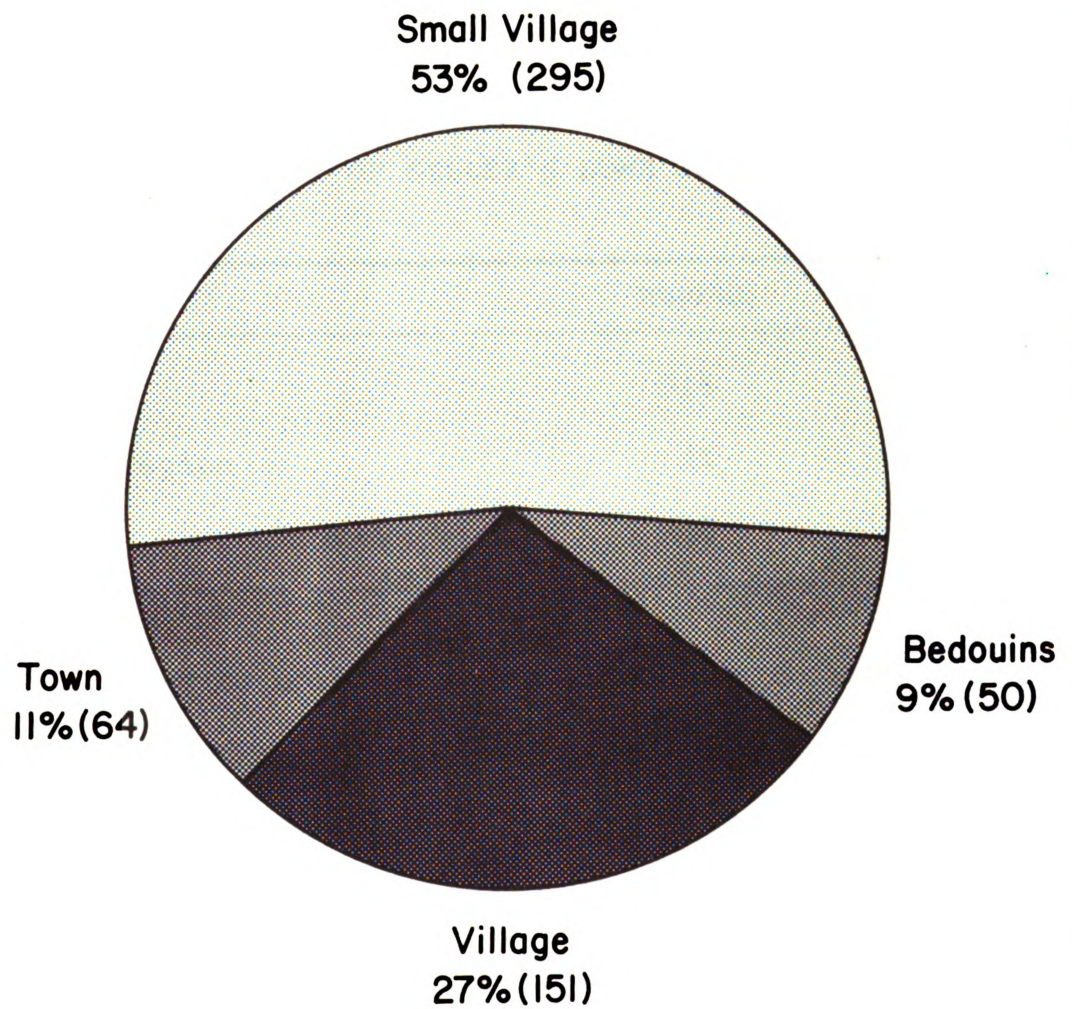


FIG. 22

With regard to the relationship of the seller's home to the market, 92 percent of the sellers interviewed in the 20 markets live in the same tribal area to which their market belongs and they are considered local sellers. Only 8 percent of the sellers live in tribal areas other than those of the markets they attend (see Table 8).

TABLE 8
RELATIONSHIP OF SELLER'S HOME TO MARKET

Kind	Number	Percent
Locally	515	92%
Within the region	45	8%
TOTAL	560	100%

It is important to note here that this does not mean that people from one tribe cannot sell at the market of another tribe. Indeed, in contrast to earlier times, any person from any tribe can sell anywhere he wants. Nevertheless, the majority of sellers sell in the markets of other tribal areas.

Looking at the percentage in the data for this study for each market alone, one can see that there are six

markets of the 20 in which 100 percent of the sellers interviewed are from the same tribal area. One of the main reasons that discourages sellers from going to other tribal area markets is the difficulty of transportation. In fact, even within one tribal area movement is rather difficult. Another reason is that the majority of sellers, as mentioned before, live in small rural villages and have only a small number of simple goods; hence, they want to visit markets near them and return home the same day or the next day. This is especially true of farmers who have only small quantities of surplus for goods to sell.

Modes of Transportation to the Market

More than half of the sellers come to the market by hired cars, while 21 percent of them own cars (see Table 9 and Figure 23). This information on mode of transportation may provide an indication of the economic condition of the sellers in this region. Since the majority of them are farmers and herders living in small rural villages, it is obvious that most of them can not afford to own a car and must come to the market by hired cars. In almost all the

TABLE 9

MODE OF TRANSPORTATION TO MARKET

Mode	Numbers	Percent
Private Car	115	21%
Hired Car	333	60%
Animal	56	10%
Walking	56	10%
TOTAL	560	100%

markets, the cars which are used are Jeeps with four-wheel drive. These are necessary for crossing this rugged area with its unpaved roads.

The cars which are hired may come from several sources: a few sellers own their own cars and charge others to ride with them. Some make their entire living driving. And still others are well-to-do and can buy a car, pay a driver, and charge others for rides to the market. Sellers usually put their goods in cartons and wait on the road for the hired cars to pick them up and take them to the market. Drivers charge sellers by the number of their cartons, and the price differs from place to place, depending upon the condition of the road to the market.

Sellers' Mode of Transportation to the Market Surveyed

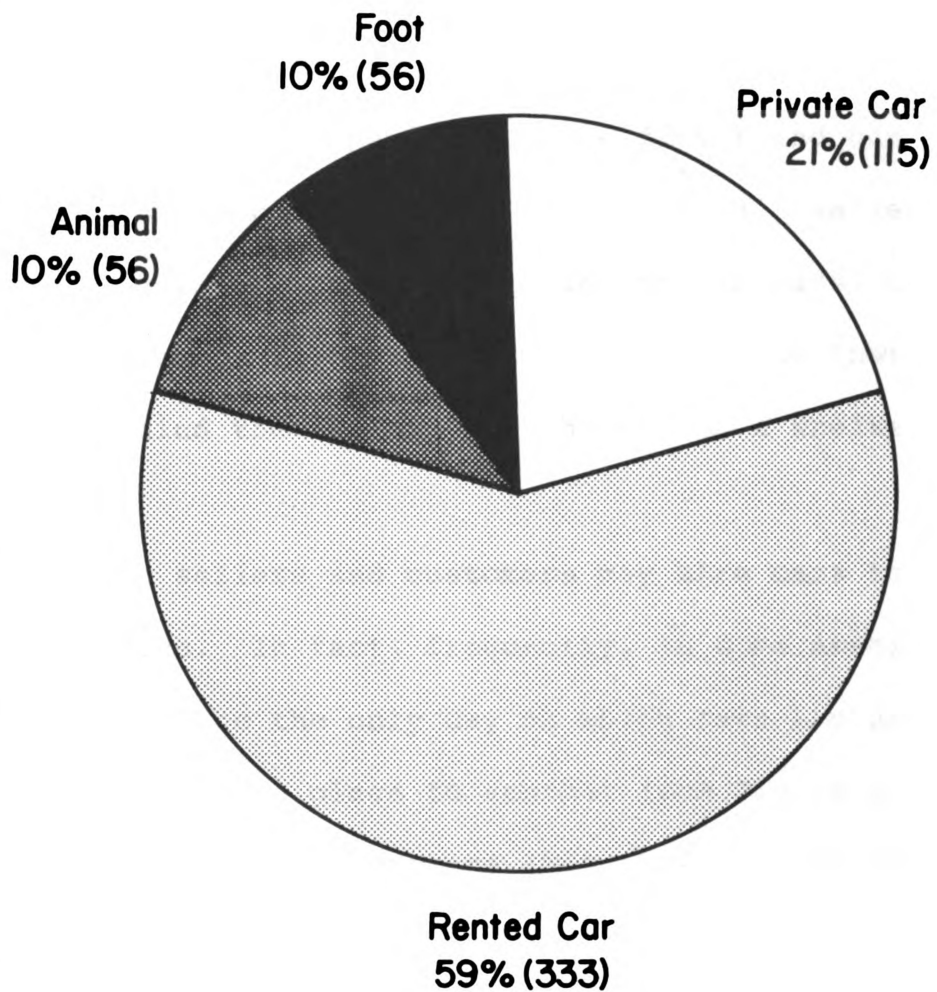


FIG. 23

Sheep brought to the market by car by herders or farmers are charged by the head.

There are some sellers (usually full-time) who engage a car by the day or week at a price agreed upon between themselves and the driver. For that price, they have complete use of the car. They may then try to fill the car with other sellers or buyers who want to go to market. But they are committed to paying for the driver and his car even if no other paying riders can be found. Sellers who rent cars in this manner, and those who own cars, usually use them as shops in the market. They display their goods or items behind the car and use the car as a shelter (see Figure 24).

Both sellers and customers may hire cars to travel to the markets. In fact, frequently, in some areas the market day may be the only day on which cars are available for travel from one place to another (see Figure 25).

The sellers who stated that they come to the market on animals or by walking (20 percent) may (1) live in the same village which holds the market, (2) live very close to it, (3) have storage or a shop at the market, or (4) be bedouins who usually use camels or land donkeys to carry their goods while they drive their herds of sheep or goats.



FIG. 24.--Seller Using His Car as a Shop



FIG. 25.--An Example of Rural "Public Transportation"

Length of Experience in Selling at the Market

All sellers were asked to recall the length of their experience in market trading. Table 10 and Figure 26 contain a breakdown of this information. The majority of the sellers (67 percent) have been working at the market more than five years, and only a few of them (5 percent) have worked less than one year. Although the survey did not include any information on the age of the sellers, observation revealed that most of the sellers are old people. These old people have the greatest experience in selling at the market, and they have adapted their life to this kind

TABLE 10
NUMBER OF YEARS AS SELLER

Number of Years	Number	Percent
Less than one year	28	5%
1 - 5 years	157	28%
5 - 10 years	140	25%
More than 10 years	235	42%
Total	560	100%

Length of Experience in Selling

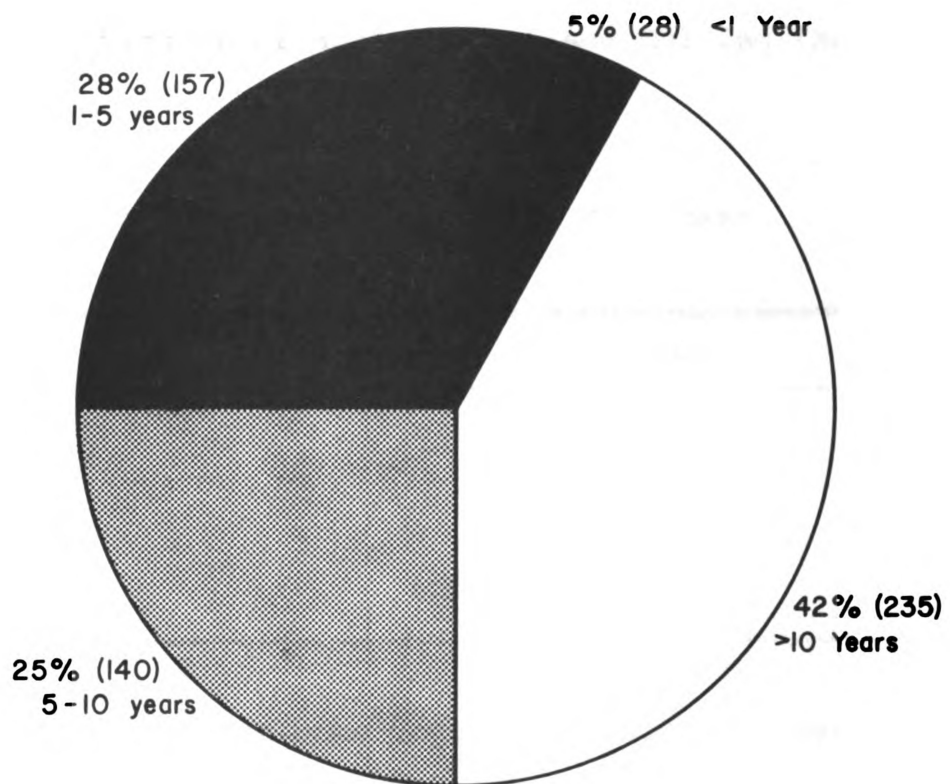


FIG. 26

of work. On the other hand, the young people are more attracted by the great opportunity to work in urban areas, and they emigrate there in great numbers.

More than 80 percent of the sellers indicated that they come to the market surveyed weekly. Only 19 percent do not attend regularly (see Table 11). Most of the sellers coming to the market regularly are either full-time sellers or sellers living in or near the village holding the market.

TABLE 11
FREQUENCY OF SELLER VISITS TO MARKET

Number of Times	Number	Percent
Weekly	455	81%
Sometimes	105	19%
TOTAL	560	100%

Herders usually do not come regularly; instead, they come only when they need to obtain goods from the market.

Three of the 20 markets have grown from weekly to daily operation. Nevertheless, more sellers come to each of these three markets on the day on which it used to operate when it was a weekly market. Only a few sellers attend

the market daily, and almost all of these are from the same town or village which holds the market. Other large villages which do not operate daily markets sometimes have one or two shops open several hours a day.

Because of local customs, only male sellers could be interviewed for this survey. Nevertheless, observation in the markets revealed that about one-fourth of the sellers in most of the markets are female. In fact, in the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia women have traditionally assumed an important position in farming work and market trade. And although there are fewer women in these roles today than in the past, they continue to occupy such a position.

Market Trade and Activities

In the last 30 years market trade in this region has changed a great deal. In the past almost all sellers were either farmers or bedouins selling their own produce. Most farmers at that time had some small surplus for disposal or had some handicrafts to exchange. Goods in the market were very simple, as is obvious from the comments of a foreign author who visited the Tihama, Asīr, and Hijaz

mountains in 1947 and described the goods that were sold in

Thalūth Makhawa market:

Here cattle, sheep and goats, a few camels and donkeys are sold, also grain, coffee, salt and cloth, earthenware pots, palm-frond mats, baskets and ropes, grindstone, vegetables, honey and sweet-smelling herbs.¹

All the goods mentioned here, except clothes, were produced locally and brought to market by the sellers themselves.

There were almost no resale items. Also, several handicraft items (earthenware pots, palm frond mats, baskets and ropes and grindstones) were sold at the market.

At present markets are different. Although most of the goods mentioned above are still available, quantities are less and other goods have become more important. Also, a number of goods are now found at the markets which were not there before.

In this section, attention is focused on the relative importance of items sold at markets, the source areas of the different items sold, and the ownership of goods.

¹W. Thesiger, "A Journey Through the Tihama, The Asīr, and the Hijaz Mountains," Geographical Journal, 110 (July to December 1947): 189.

Principal Foodstuffs

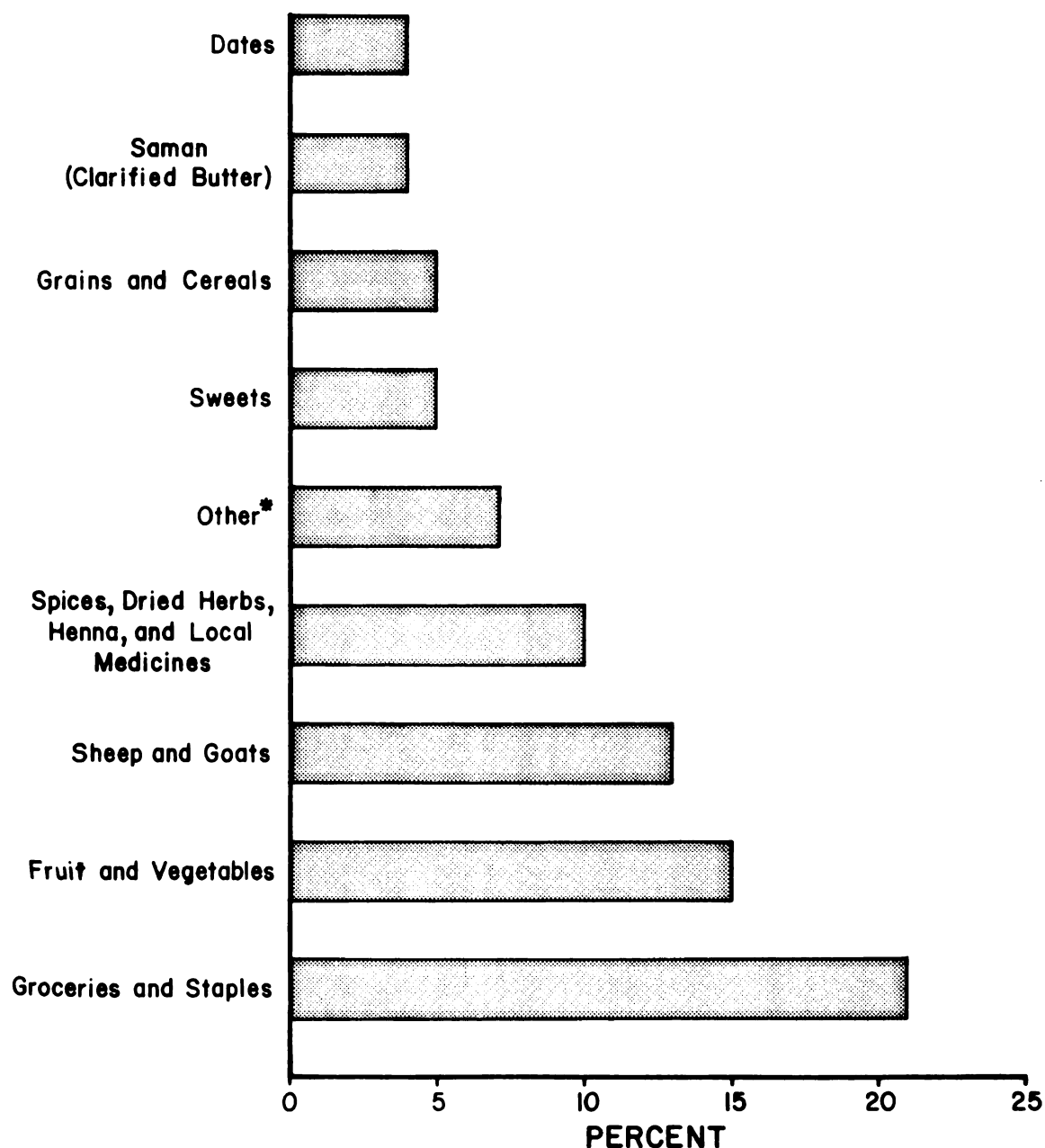
The majority of the sellers, 84 percent, in the markets sell foodstuffs. Table 12 and Figure 27 show the range of foodstuffs sold at the markets surveyed and the percentage of sellers selling each item. The four main categories of items sold at the market are discussed following Table 12.

TABLE 12

RANGE OF FOODSTUFFS SOLD AND THE PERCENTAGE OF
SELLERS SELLING EACH ITEM AT 20 MARKETS

Foodstuffs	Percent
Groceries and Staples	21%
Fruit and Vegetables	15%
Sheep and Goats	13%
Spices, Dried Herbs, Henna, and Local Medicine	10%
Grain and Cereals	5%
Sweets	5%
Saman (clarified butter)	4%
Dates	4%
Other Things	7%
Sesame oil, salt, garlic and onion, camels or cows, honey, dried fish, cooked food, meat, hens, soft drinks	

THE RANGE OF FOODSTUFFS SOLD, AND THE PERCENTAGE
OF SELLERS SELLING EACH ITEM AT TWENTY MARKETS



A Total of 84% of All Sellers Sell Foodstuffs

*Sesame Oil, Salt, Garlic and Onions, Camels and Cows, Honey, Dried Fish, Cooked Food, Meat, Chickens, and Soft Drinks

FIG. 27

Groceries and Staples, Except
Fruit and Vegetables

These terms refer to products of sellers who sell combinations of the following goods: canned foods (all kinds of canned foods, such as tomato sauce, dried milk, tuna, pineapple, Kraft cheese); sugar; tea; coffee; imported corn oil; flour; grains (sellers selling grain only are listed separately); rice; imported fat. (Most sellers also sell some non-foodstuffs, such as pins, paper, Tide, soap.)

About 21 percent of the sellers are involved in selling groceries and staples. This percentage may suggest that these kinds of items are in high demand in the periodic markets in this region. And, in fact, rural consumers need most of these goods in their daily life. Since they do not have enough cash to buy in large quantities, they usually buy most of these items weekly for their homes.

The groceries and staples sellers usually own or rent storerooms at the market which serve as shops on the market day and as storage areas during the remainder of the week. Some also use their cars as shops for these kinds of goods mainly because they sell several items and it would be difficult for them to carry produce around.

Fruits and Vegetables

About 15 percent of the sellers interviewed sell either fruit or vegetables or both. But it is important to note that fruit sellers far outnumber vegetable sellers, and that vegetables other than tomatoes, cucumbers, and some beans are rarely found at most of the markets. (a larger selection of vegetables may be found in the town markets.) This is because vegetables are not an important part of the diets of the rural people, and because only a few farmers plant vegetables in most of this region. Most of the fruits sold at markets are imported (oranges, apples, bananas), though a small number of local fruits, such as peaches and grapes, are sold in season by the farmers themselves.

Sheep and Goats

The selling of sheep and goats is one of the important activities in the periodic markets in this region. More than 13 percent of the sellers interviewed in the markets sell sheep and goats. Most of them are herders who bring some of their herds in when they need money or certain goods from the market. Some of them prefer to sell

their sheep or goats to a motasabeb (see the note in Table 6 for a definition of this term), instead of spending all day trying to sell them themselves. In this way they have the rest of the day at the market to buy what they want and to make arrangements to return to where they live. Others may try to sell their herds by themselves and shop later, or they may have some relative come with them to do the shopping.

The sellers of sheep and goats always gather in a specific part of the market place, either in the center of the market, if the market has an open yard, or in one corner apart from the market.

Sellers who sell meat at the market usually buy the sheep or goats they slaughter from these sellers. Then, they slaughter the animals far from the market and sell the meat by pieces instead of by weight at the market. However, this practice in some markets has resulted in so much deceptive selling that the government now forbids it and requires meat to be sold by weight.

Spices, Dried Herbs, Henna,
and Native Medicine

Sellers who sell spices, herbs, henna, and local medicines account for 10 percent of 560 sellers interviewed in all the markets. These items are separated from groceries because there is a large number of sellers who sell only spices or only herbs; a few also offer a small assortment of other goods, including dried henna, coffee, or local medicine. Interestingly enough, there are some older sellers (usually women) who buy spices from bigger sellers in the same market, divide them into smaller quantities, and sell them at prices that produce a very small profit. Some of them mix particular spices with other herbs to make native medicines.

Other Items

There are several important items sold in the markets in addition to those discussed above. At least 5 percent of all the sellers surveyed sell the following goods: grains and cereals, sweets, dates, and Saman (clarified butter). Although grain is the most important product in this region, there are few grain sellers at the markets. This may be

because most farmers produce mainly to cover their own basic demands and sell only excess crops, and because some farmers sell their crops to brokers at the market who buy small amounts for resale. The locally produced grains and cereals, coffee, and dates are usually sold by quantity instead of by weight (see Figure 28). Saman, considered an important part of the diets of rural people, is very important in that some of the urban people go to these kinds of markets especially to buy it from herders and farmers who make it themselves. Saman is always in a goatskin bag (see Figure 29).

Principal Non-Foodstuffs

Only 46 percent of the sellers in all 20 markets surveyed sell non-foodstuffs. Table 13 and Figure 30 show the range of non-foodstuffs sold at the markets and the percentage of sellers selling each item. The three main items sold by most non-foodstuff sellers are discussed below.

FIG. 28.--Selling by
Quantity (a Wood
Bucketful) Instead
of By Weight

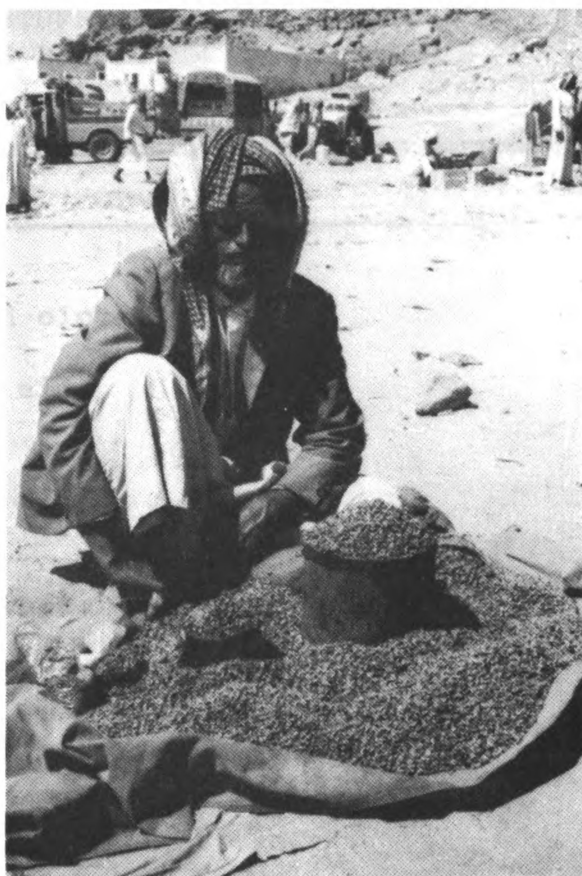


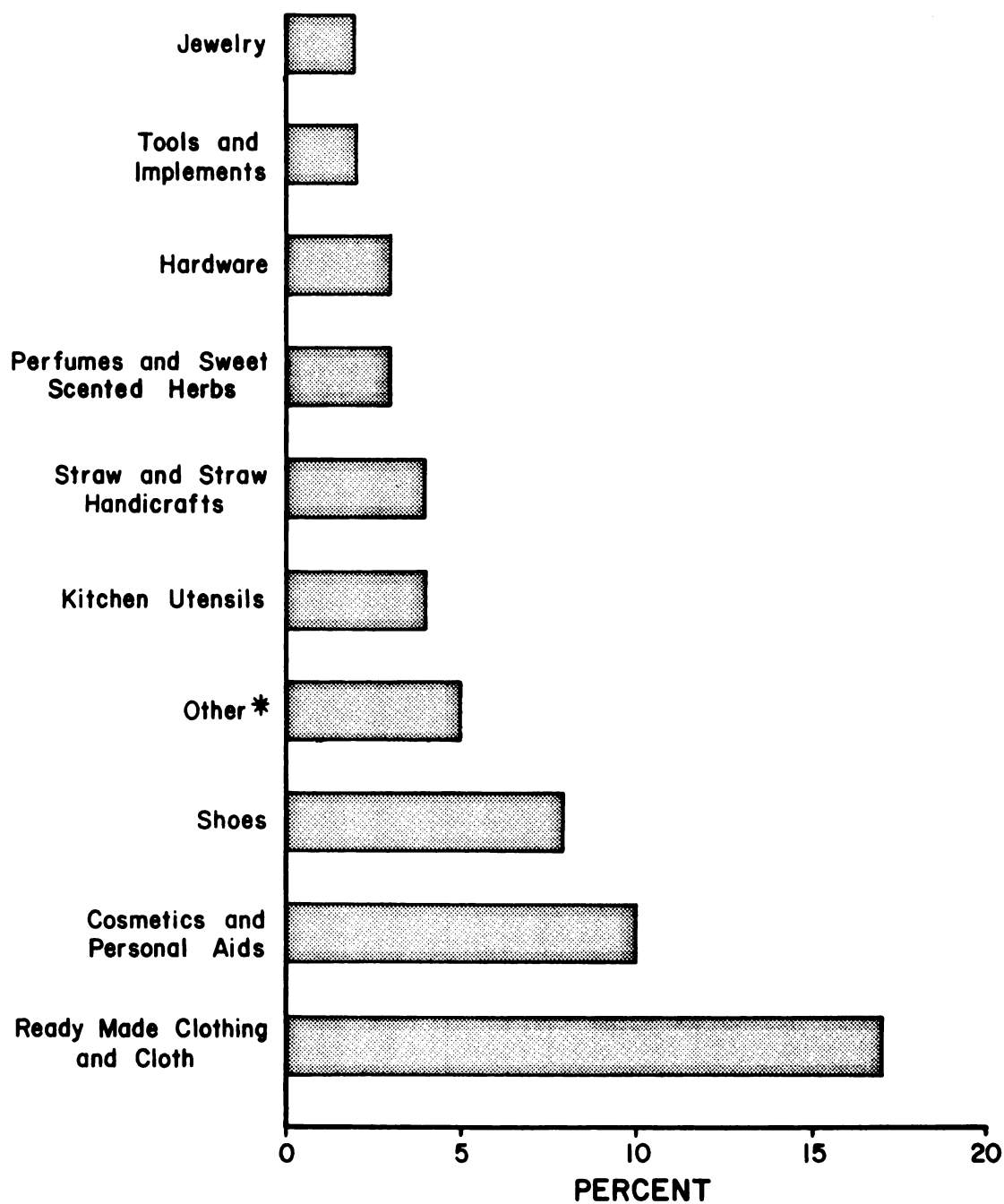
FIG. 29.--Selling Saman in Goatskin Bags

TABLE 13

RANGE OF NON-FOODSTUFFS SOLD AND PERCENTAGE
OF SELLERS SELLING EACH ITEM IN 20 MARKETS

Non-Foodstuffs	Percent
Ready-made clothing and cloth	17%
Cosmetics and personal aids	10%
Shoes	8%
Kitchen utensils	4%
Straw and straw handicrafts	4%
Perfumes and sweet-scented herbs	3%
Hardware	3%
Jewelry	2%
Tools and implements	2%
Other things	5%
Forage, goatskin bags, rugs, rope, green tobacco, wood handicrafts, and fire wood	

THE RANGE OF NON-FOODSTUFFS SOLD, AND THE PERCENTAGE
OF SELLERS SELLING EACH ITEM AT TWENTY MARKETS



A Total of 58% of All Sellers Sell Non-Foodstuffs

* Forage, Goatskin Bags, Seeds, Rugs, Rope, Green Tobacco, Wood Handicrafts, and Firewood

FIG. 30

Ready-Made Clothing and Cloth

About 17 percent of the sellers interviewed sell ready-made clothing or hand cloth. Some of the sellers make the clothing themselves, but most of them buy it ready-made and resell it in the markets. Some farmers work in their homes as tailors and then sell to sellers at the markets. Most of the sellers are full-time sellers and travel from market to market to sell their goods. Also, a majority of the foreign sellers interviewed are ready-made clothing and cloth sellers.

Cosmetics and Personal Aids

Cosmetics include goods such as baby powder, skin cream, hair oil, "kohl" (similar to black mascara), or any products women use for their beauty, while personal aids include scissors, safety pins, buttons, combs, writing paper, and so forth. About 10 percent of the sellers interviewed sell a combination of these items. There are some of the grocery sellers, too, who sell a few of these items in their stalls.

Shoes

About 8 percent of the sellers sell shoes in the markets, most of which are imported, though there are some locally made shoes. Shoes are usually sold with other items such as groceries and staples, personal aids, and hardware. Only very new sellers sell shoes exclusively.

Other Items

Other items sold by more than 3 percent of the sellers include straw and straw handicrafts and sweet-scented herbs. The straw handicrafts in particular, made and sold usually by women, are found in nearly every market.

It is apparent from observation and the survey that there is no specialization of sellers in particular goods. Instead, most of the sellers offer a variety of items. They may have one item as a principal good in their stall, but they have several other items in addition (see Figures 31A and 31B). Most sellers try to find out what goods are in greater demand by consumers and bring them if possible to the next market. For instance, since plastic five gallon cans are used by most of the rural inhabitants to carry water, most of the sellers in the markets have them in their



FIG. 31 A. A Clothing Seller Who Also Offers Kitchen Utensils and Plastic Cans



FIG. 31 B. A Jewelry Seller Who Also Offers Clothing, Hardware, and Personal Aids

stalls. Thus, sellers who sell groceries, cloth, kitchen utensils, hardware, ropes, and shoes usually have some of these cans to sell, too. So it is the demand by consumers for specific kinds of goods which makes such goods abundant in the market.

Origin of Goods

Analyses of interview data on the origin and classification of items sold at all 20 markets indicates that about half (50 percent) of the sellers obtain their goods locally (i.e., from their own farms, from other sellers at the same markets, or from other markets within the tribal territory) (see Table 14).

Another 30 percent obtain their goods within the study area, or the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia, and from several towns and large villages in particular. Main towns in the area include Khamīs Mushait, Abha, Jizān, and Najrān. And large villages include Muhāyēl, Sabia, Bishah (see Table 14).

Eleven percent of the sellers acquire their goods outside the region, namely, from Jiddah, Mecca, Riyadh, and Taif. They make these long trips to obtain goods at lower

TABLE 14
 ORIGIN AND CLASSIFICATION OF ITEMS SOLD
 AT 20 MARKETS

Origin and Classification	Percent
Origin of items sold:	
Locally	50%
Within the region	30%
Outside the region	11%
Locally and within the region	1%
Within and outside of region	8%
Classification of items sold:	
Self-made handicrafts	11%
Locally produced farm products	28%
Goods for resale	64%

cost and avoid the profits of brokers or middlemen (see Table 14).

From Table 14 it is also apparent that only 11 percent of the sellers market handicrafts they have made; only 28 percent (including sheep and goat herders) market farm goods or animal products they have produced themselves

locally. The majority of sellers (64 percent) market goods they have bought specifically to resell.

Patterns of Seller Movement

Within most areas periodic markets have adjusted their days of operation so that sellers may conveniently travel from one to the next on successive days. This temporal synchronization of market days creates a pattern of seller movement referred to as market rings.

To find out whether or not this pattern exists in the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia, sellers were asked to enumerate the markets which they regularly attended weekly in addition to the survey market. The data obtained from these questions tend to confirm that sellers move from market to market according to their days of operation. The volume of data from all 20 markets proved to be beyond the scope of this section, however, so only data from seven markets in Tihamat Asīr will be analyzed.

Table 15 indicates the number of markets which sellers attend weekly in addition to the survey market.

About 40 percent of the sellers interviewed do not visit any market other than the one surveyed. These sellers

TABLE 15

NUMBER OF "OTHER" MARKETS SELLERS ATTEND WEEKLY

Number of Markets	Number of Sellers	Percent
No other markets	86	40.9
1 other market	14	6.6
2 other markets	34	16.2
3 other markets	44	20.9
4 other markets	22	10.5
5 other markets	10	4.9
TOTAL	210	100.0

are usually farmers who come to the market surveyed to sell small quantities of surplus farm goods or handicrafts, or herders who come to sell some of their herd. Those few who are large sellers in the biggest market in this area, Sabt Muḥāyil, which has recently begun to operate daily, have sufficient daily activity that they do not have to travel to achieve profit. The other 60 percent are sellers who regularly visit from one to five other markets. A third of these visit three other markets besides the market surveyed. Those traveling sellers whose income depends almost entirely

on the market must attend a number of periodic markets in order to make enough profit to remain in business.

The traveling sellers move around a network of periodic markets. Some of them return home at the end of the market week, and others return home each night. On the days the sellers do not travel, they may choose to stay at home and rest; some work in their fields; and others may go to town or large markets to buy the goods they are going to resell. Craftsmen may work to increase their inventory.

Sellers were also asked to name the markets in which they sell and how often they go to each one. Table 16 lists the percentage of sellers of each of the seven markets who identified another specific market attended weekly. The following table suggests that there are two groups of markets. Each group consists of several markets linked with each other, a linking which is accomplished through the movements of the sellers with their goods.

Most periodic markets in this region operate on successive days in such a way that within each group of markets belonging to a large tribe (and a large tribe may have several groups) only one market is operating on any given day. Some may have two on the same day at a

TABLE 16

PERCENTAGE OF SELLERS WHO IDENTIFIED SPECIFIC MARKETS
ATTENDED WEEKLY

	Sabt Salab	Ahad AL-Shibain	Ithnain & Khamis Rijal	Thaluth Rim	Thaluth Hiswah	Rabua AL-Bena	Sabt Muhayil	Ithnain Qana	Khamis AL-Baher	Rabua AL-Ajma	Ithnain Targash	Ahad AL-Quraiha	Ithnain AL-Majardah	Other Markets	
Sabt Salab	53	22	13	27	13	13	2	2	-	-	-	-	30	%	
Ahad AL-Shibain	13	67	20	17	6	63	3	-	-	-	-	-	6	%	
Ithnain Rijal	33	27	33	13	13	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	%	
Thaluth Hiswah	40	40	10	2	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	%	
Sabt Muhayil	-	-	-	-	2	2	44	34	36	8	6	-	27	%	
Rabua AL-Ajma	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	5	60	5	15	35	20	%
Khamis AL Bahar	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	43	53	-	-	-	26	%	

considerable distance from each other. For example, the markets Thaluth Rim and Thaluth Hiswah belong to two small tribes of the main tribe Rijal Alma, and both operate on Tuesday. Although these markets appear near to one another on the map in Figure 11 (see Chapter III,) in reality the rugged topography makes travel between them both long and difficult. Further, although both operate on the same day, they belong to the same group of markets, as shown by seller participation recorded in Table 16. This situation may be explained in two ways. Some sellers may live nearer one market than the other, and, although participation in a market is no longer limited to members of the tribe operating it, other sellers may prefer to sell in a market operated by their own tribe.

The first group of markets shown in Table 16 is more distinctive than the second group because it belongs to one main tribe, Rijāl Almá, the other group of markets, belongs to several small tribes. Figure 32 shows the percentage of sellers regularly attending other markets within the first group of markets. From interviews, observations, and, as shown in the figure, these six markets, (1) Sabt Şalab, (2) Ahad AL-Shiábain, (3) Ithnain and Khamis Rijāl, (4) Thalūth Rim, (5) Thalūth Hiswah, (6) Rabūa AL-Bina,

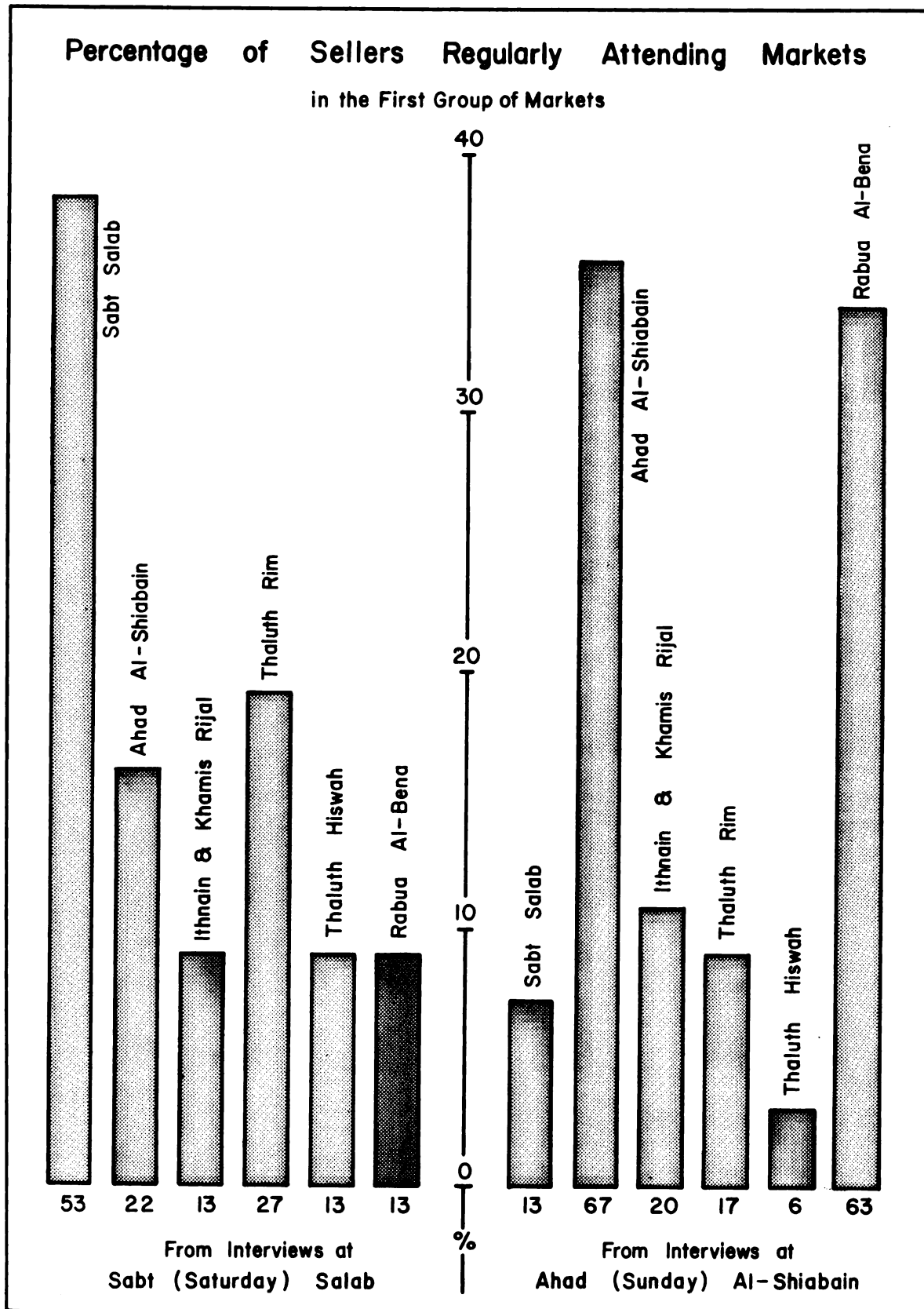


FIG. 32

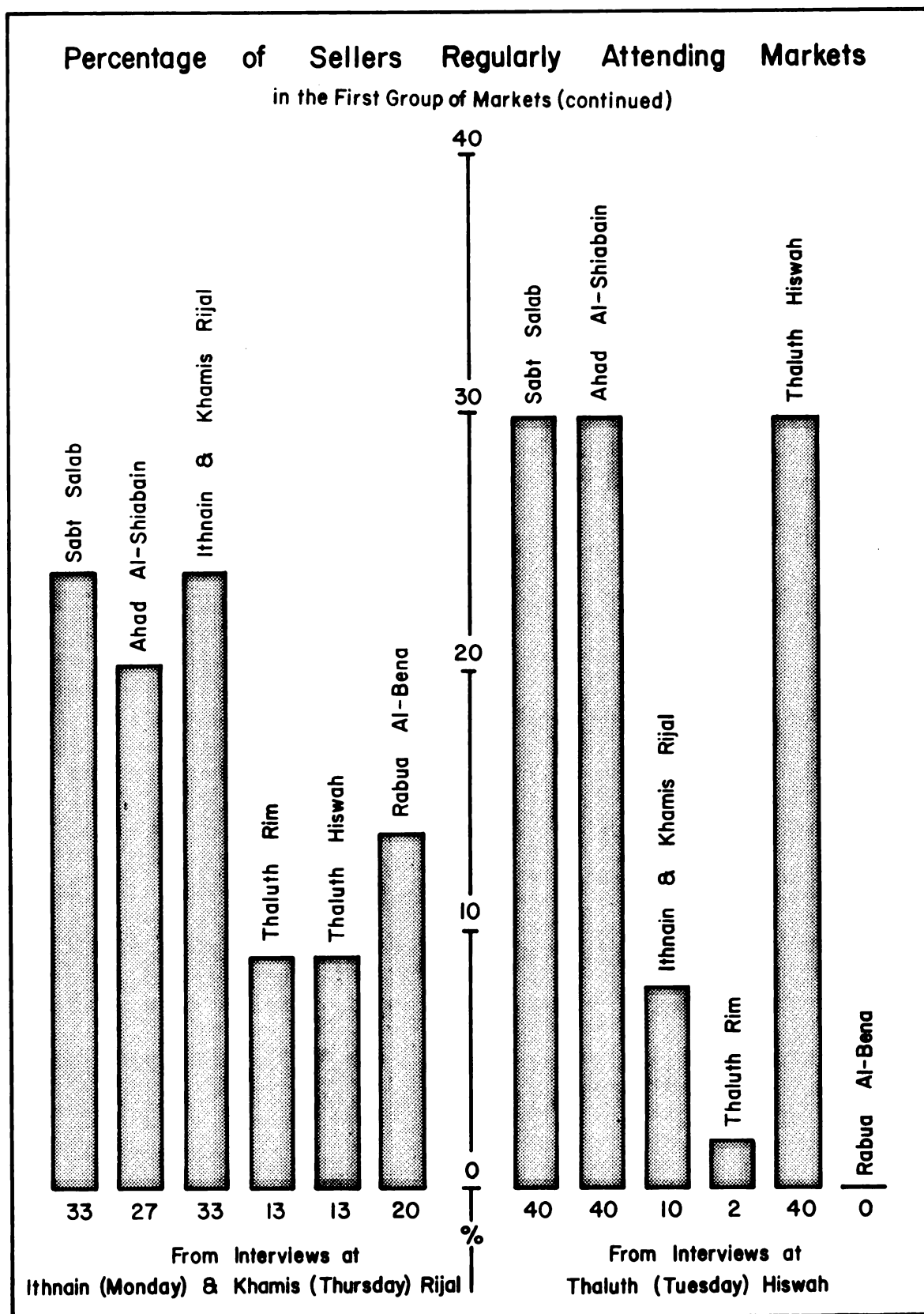


FIG. 32 (cont'd.)

appear to be linked with each other, and a large percentage of sellers move between them weekly.

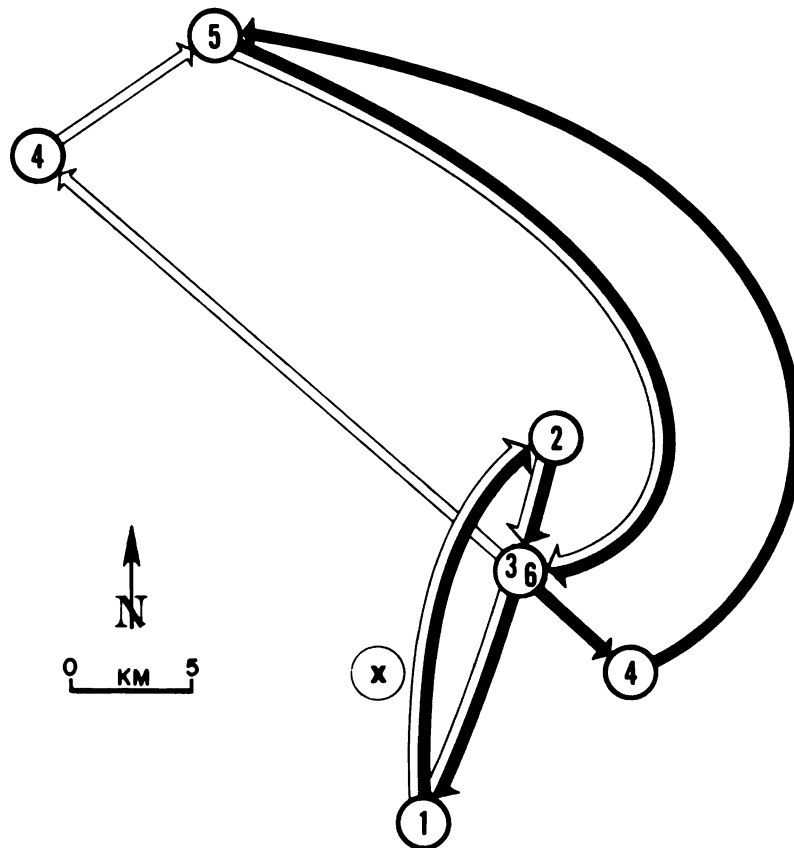
Friday is the only day that sellers in this tribal area do not have a market. The market in Rijal village used to be held on Monday and Friday, but operation on Friday created a conflict between commerce and religious observances in the minds of many in the area. A disturbance in the former Thursday market, Khamis Kisān, forced its closure, and created a missing link in the market ring. This made Thursday available for operation of a market in Rijāl that did not disturb the people's religious convictions.² Thus, the ring was made complete again.

Figure 33 shows the pattern of the sellers' movement in the first group of markets. Most sellers follow this pattern in this area, but a few go to other markets beyond this group, such as Khamīs Al-Darb.

In summary, most sellers regularly visit several markets a week which belong to a certain ring of markets. They may attend one or two other markets for certain reasons, but they always return to their usual ring of markets, which is often near their homes. When asked to

²The strength of popular feeling against Friday markets for religious reasons (Friday is the Muslim holy day) becomes obvious when one observes that only a few of the 140 markets within the study area operate on that day.

Pattern of Seller Movement in the First Group of Markets



- 1 Sabt (Saturday) Salab
- 2 Ahad (Sunday) Al-Shiabain
- 3 Ithnain (Monday) Rijal
- 4 { (north) Thaluth (Tuesday) Rim
(south) Thaluth Hiswah
- 5 Rabua (Wednesday) Al-Bena
- 6 Khamis (Thursday) Rijal
- X Khamis Kisan (closed)

Lines of movement are depicted schematically.
Shading emphasizes division of sellers on Tuesday.

explain their regular pattern of movement, several sellers mentioned that the regularity enabled customers in each market to recognize and patronize them and helped the sellers themselves learn of the demand for goods in the area.

CHAPTER V

PATTERNS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Introduction

In Chapter iv attention was directed to analysis of the market sellers and the range of goods sold at a periodic market in the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia. In this chapter the study turns to analysis and discussion of the patterns of consumer behavior. The first section will focus particularly on the market hinterlands. This will be followed by discussion of non-economic aspects of periodic markets. The data used in this chapter were obtained through interviews of 545 consumers at the same 20 markets.

Market Hinterlands

All the consumers interviewed were asked to report the name of their place of residence, the time they spend coming from home to the market surveyed, and their mode of

transport. Consumers were not asked about the distance they traveled because it was recognized that they do not have such information. Rather, it was thought that the names of villages and places, when mapped, might provide good information about the periodic market hinterlands in the region. Unfortunately, however, even these data could not be interpreted since the majority of the villages and places were not found on any map. In addition, the only available village index of this region, which was used to locate certain markets on the map in Figure 11 (see Chapter III), contained only some of the villages mentioned by consumers. Therefore, the distance traveled by consumers could not be ascertained. Instead, consumers were categorized either as "people from the same tribal area" or as "people from outside the tribal area but within the Southwest Region."

The majority of the consumers (96 percent) came from local areas "within the tribal territory" (see Table 17). This suggests that most people use their own tribal markets. But it should be noted here that "tribal area" means the main 14 tribes, each of which has several small tribes which may each have one or more markets (For instance Asir tribes have 22 known markets). Only a few consumers

TABLE 17

RELATIONSHIP OF CONSUMER'S HOME TO MARKET

Located	Percent
Locally	96.5
Within the region	3.5

(4 percent) come from outside the tribal area which may suggest that markets serve areas which are mostly within the tribal territory or that markets are distributed in such a way that people within each tribal area rarely need to use markets from other tribal areas.

Table 18 and Figure 34 reveal that more than half of the consumers spend less than one hour coming to the market, and about one-quarter of them spend from one to two

TABLE 18

TIME SPENT BY CONSUMERS TO COME TO MARKETS SURVEYED

Time	Number	Percent
Less than one hour	323	59.0
1 - 2 hours	132	24.0
2 - 3 hours	42	7.7
3 - 4 hours	33	6.1
More than 4 hours	15	2.8
TOTAL	545	100.0

Consumers' Travel Time to the Market Surveyed

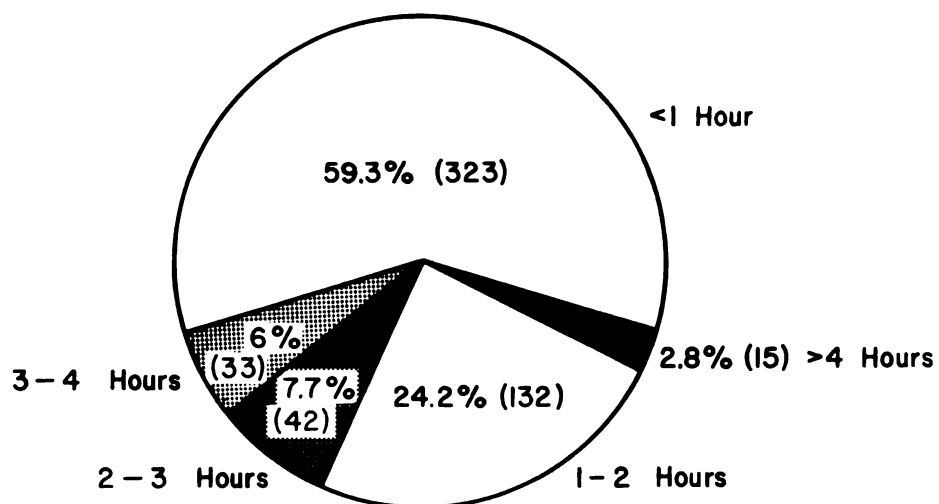


FIG. 34

Consumers' Mode of Transportation to the Market Surveyed

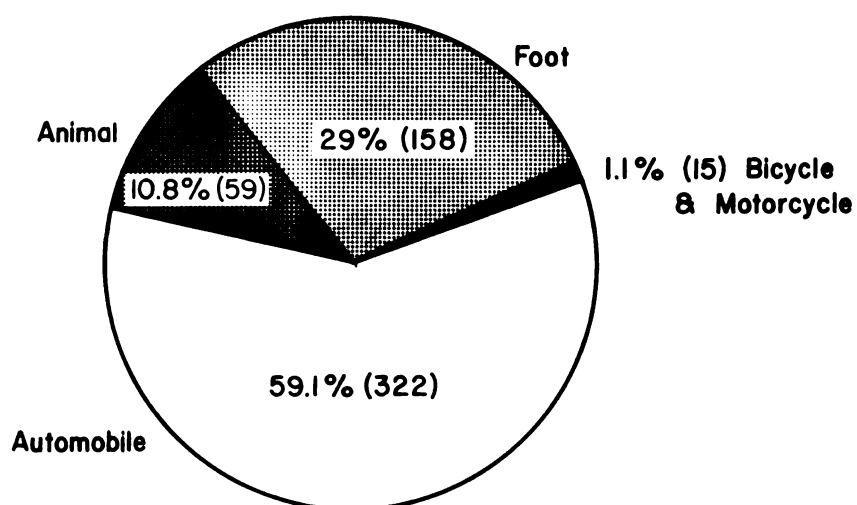


FIG. 35

hours. Only a few spend more than two hours. Most of the people who stated that it takes them more than four hours are bedouins.

Travel time is governed by mode of transportation (see Table 19 and Figure 35). Although most market locations were chosen before the use of automobiles, about 60 percent of the consumers now come by car. As discussed in the previous chapter, hired cars are available between some villages and markets. About 30 percent still walk. In fact, a few of the bedouins may walk 12 hours across rugged terrain to reach the sūq. For example, Tihamat Rabiah bedouins spent 15 hours to reach Market Sabt Al Yazid in the Asīr mountains. But most of them may walk up to four hours from the villages around the market.

TABLE 19

MODE OF TRANSPORTATION TO MARKET

Mode	Percent
Car	59.1
Motorcycle - Bicycle	1.1
Animals	10.8
Walk	29.6

Although the market hinterlands could not be measured and mapped, the data discussed before suggest that the size of market hinterlands is small. Since all the markets were originally tribal markets, their locations were designed to permit any member of the sponsoring tribe to attend the market and return home in a single day. Those people who were far away from the market of their tribe might ask to or take responsibility for opening a market near them. In addition, the region's rugged topography creates transportation difficulties (whether by animal or by foot as in the past, or, more recently, by car) that discourage large hinterlands. In most cases, the size of a market depends primarily not on the size of its hinterlands but on its population density.

The Social Functions of the Local Periodic Market

The social significance of the local periodic market to the rural tribesman was and still is very important because it is considered an ideal place to meet friends, once of the principal sources of news, and the only place for recreation in the rural settlement. Looking around the

market, one can see several groups of people gathering and talking about a wide range of topics. Many of them can be seen in the small coffee shops. The amount of handshaking and the wide variety of customary forms of greeting are very impressive. Both men and women wear the best clothes they have according to their customs, which differ from place to place.

On the day of the sūq, heads of tribes, sheiks, and other important tribal members meet to discuss the week's events and to resolve any problems that arise. Moreover, the tribal heads and sheiks or the government authorities use the weekly sūq as a place for announcements (see Figure 36). News or announcements usually reach the whole area around the market since each person attending the market will be asked by his neighbors and those who meet him afterward about what has happened in the sūq.

The market's religious function is also important. Religious people, usually from towns, visit the weekly markets to give advice and religious instruction to the tribal people. These speakers come to the market, find a high place from which to talk, and ask the people to gather for several minutes. Sellers and consumers leave everything



FIG. 36.--Heads of Tribes Making Public Announcements
on Market Day.



FIG. 37. Market Crowd Listening to Religious Speech

during this time to listen and market activity stops until the speaker is finished (see Figure 37).

It is very difficult to measure these non-economic aspects of periodic markets. Consumers were asked if they come to market when they do not need to buy anything; and if so, why they do come. The reliability of information obtained by these questions is poor, however, and will be discussed only generally. In fact, these questions, for unknown reasons, were avoided by the consumers. Some answered with "No," and others responded with answers such as, "I never thought about it," "I don't know," or "Sometimes," for the first question. Overall, the proportion of consumers answering this question with "Yes" (they come to market even when they do not need to buy is 20.5 percent (see Table 20).

Of those replying "Yes," one-third stated that they come to meet friends. This percentage, although it is based on only certain consumers' responses to this question, may suggest that the market is actually used by rural people as an opportunity for entertainment and recreation in this region. About 27 percent of them come to use government offices, such as the Amarah (the prince's office) or court, which are usually located either in the village holding the

TABLE 20

REASON FOR MARKET ATTENDANCE WHEN NOT BUYING
(20.5% of respondents)

Reasons	Percent
To meet friends	34.8
For government office	26.8
For mail or having letters written	14.3
Browsing	11.6
Hospital	8.0
Business	4.5

market or near it. Observations in all markets suggest that the same percentage could apply to all those who might on any market day come to market without intending to make purchases.

CHAPTER VI
REGIONAL VARIATION IN MARKET ORGANIZATION

Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of regional variation in market organization. The method utilized to test whether or not seller characteristics vary across markets surveyed was discriminant analysis.

Hypotheses Tested

The following three hypotheses were tested by discriminant analysis.

1. Seller characteristics vary across the 20 markets surveyed.
2. Some differences exist between those markets in the Tihama area (markets on the west slope of the

Asir Mountains) and those on the mountain in terms of behavior of the sellers in the two groups.

3. The sellers in any market belonging to a certain tribe possess different characteristics than the sellers at another tribe's markets.

In order to test the first of these three hypotheses it was necessary to find out if one can determine if each of the 20 markets has characteristics which distinguish it from the others. In order to test the second hypothesis, it was necessary to find out if one can distinguish between the first two groups of markets (Tihama markets and mountain markets) and to determine whether it is accurate to classify the markets into these two groups. In order to test the third hypothesis, it was necessary to find out if one can distinguish among markets that belong to different tribes. To attempt to answer these questions discriminant analysis was applied to several groups of markets by using the following specific variables which determine seller characteristics:

1. Residence: Types of community in which sellers reside.
2. YRSSLL: Number of years as a seller.
3. Mode: Mode of transportation to market.

4. Frequency: How often seller comes to market surveyed.
5. Selerorig: Relationship of seller's home to market.
6. People: Individuals assisting seller.
7. Other work: Work engaged in besides selling.
8. Goodsorg: Where items sold originated.

The scores on three variables (people, other work, goodsorg) were originally nominal-scale values which are not usable in SPSS. Thus, these three variables were recoded into an ordinal scale (e.g., for variable other work: agriculture, herding, selling, self-employed, student, homemaker, and motasabeb, were recoded into agriculture versus non-agriculture, where agriculture was assigned a value of 1, non-agriculture, a value of 2).

Discriminant Analysis

Basically, discriminant analysis attempts to distinguish statistically between two or more groups of cases by looking at a selection of discriminating variables that measure characteristics on which the groups are expected to differ. The mathematical objective of discriminant

analysis is to weight and linearly combine the discriminant variables in a fashion so that the groups are forced to be as statistically distinct as possible. The analysis aspect of this technique provides several tools for the interpretation of data. It helps in testing for the existence of groups and shows what criteria can be used to discriminate among them.

The first analysis was performed on all the 20 markets surveyed, treating each one as a separate group. The second analysis was performed on the following two groups of markets:

1. Markets in Tihama areas (the west slope of the Asīr mountains). In this group four markets were chosen:

Sabt Ṣalab Thalūth Hiswah

Ithnain AL Majārdah Ahad Khat

These markets were selected because they are in isolated rural areas, a condition which would insure that they were not affected by modernizing influences represented by towns.

2. Markets in the mountains of the Asīr area: Four markets were chosen in this group with respect to

their location away from the main towns in
this area (Abha and Khamīs):

Sabt āl Yazīd	<u>Thalūth</u> AL-Namās
<u>Ithnain</u> al Ḥarjah	<u>Ithnain</u> Ballasmar

The third analysis was performed on seven selected
markets, each of which belongs to a different tribe:

Sabt Salab	<u>Ithnain</u> AL-Ḥarjah
Rabūa AL-Ajma	Rabūa Bahwan
<u>Ithnain</u> AL-Mazardah	<u>Ithnain</u> Ballsmev
Ahad <u>Khāt</u>	

The First Analysis

The first hypothesis, that seller characteristics vary across the 20 markets surveyed, was rejected in that the analysis revealed a homogeneity among sellers from market to market. In fact, only 21.5 percent of the sellers were correctly classified; the misclassified sellers did not fall predominantly in one or two markets but were divided among all the markets.

The Second Analysis

In the second analysis two runs were performed. The analysis of the first run tested the second hypothesis that some differences exist between those markets in the Tihama area and those on the mountain in terms of seller behavior in the two groups. Only 61.5 percent of the known cases were correctly classified. This result indicated a slight difference between the two groups as there were some sellers in each group who (according to their characteristics) ought not to belong to the group they were in (see Table 21).

TABLE 21

PREDICTION RESULTS FOR THE SECOND ANALYSIS (FIRST RUN)

Actual Groups		Number of Cases	Predicted Groups Membership	
Name	Code		Group 1	Group 2
Group 1	1	110	67.0 60.9 pct	43.0 39.1 pct
Group 2	2	90	34.0 37.8 pct	56.0 62.2 pct

In the prediction results for Group 1 (Tihama markets) 60.9 percent of the sellers were correctly classified and 39.1 percent were misclassified and should have been placed in Group 2. Also, for Group 2 (mountain markets) 62.2 percent of the sellers were correctly classified and 37.8 percent of them were misclassified and showed a similarity to the sellers of Group 1.

If we examine the individual contributions made by the variables on this analysis in Table 22 by the stepwise method, we see that mode of transportation to the market, the frequency of attendance of the seller at the market, and the selerorig (the relationship of seller's home to market) combine to make the best discriminant variables, since the variables prior to stage 3 show an increasing order of magnitude on the significance of the F value, and the steps after 3 indicate a decreasing order of magnitude. Thus, step 3 indicates the optimal number of variables to include for this analysis; in other words, they were the best discriminant variables between the Tihama markets group and the mountain markets group.

The reason why mode of transportation is one of the best discriminant variables is mainly related to the fact that the economic situation and the topographic condition

TABLE 22

SUMMARY TABLE OF STEP-WISE DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS
FOR THE SECOND ANALYSIS (FIRST RUN)

Step	Variables	Com- bined Wilks Lamda	Combined F Value	Signif- icant	Rao's V	Change in Rao's	Standardized Discriminant Function Coefficients
1	Mode	.98	3.97764	.047	3.977	3.977	.743
2	Frequency	.95	4.60995	.011	9.266	5.289	-.707
3	Selerorig	.93	4.89029	.003	14.820	5.553	.631
4	Other work	.92	3.98517	.004	14.185	1.365	-.0268
5	People	.92	3.36573	.006	17.175	.989	-.0266
6	Years of Selling	.91	2.86601	.011	17.641	.465	.150
7	Goodsorg	.91	2.45975	.019	17.756	.114	-.090
8	Residence	.91	2.14581	.033	17.795	.039	.059

are different. In the Tihama area most of the sellers are relatively poorer than those of the mountain groups. Few of them own cars, so most usually come to market by hired cars. The topography of this area is very rugged and almost devoid of any easy transportation routes. In the mountain areas, however, the situation is different since the seller's economic conditions are relatively better than those of the above group; a large number of them own private cars.

The topography of this area is rugged, but it has better transportation routes and it is connected with the main towns in the area.

The second best discriminating variable is frequency of attendance. Reviewing the raw data, we find that a large percentage (82 percent) of the sellers in the four Tihama markets attend weekly, but fewer (75 percent) of the sellers in the four mountain markets do so. Looking specifically at the misclassified sellers in Tihama markets, we can see that most of them come by private cars and do not attend weekly, while of the misclassified sellers in the mountain markets, most come by rented car and attend weekly.

The third best discriminating variable is the relationship of a seller's home to the market (whether he lives within the tribal area of the market or not). The raw data indicate that the number of non-local sellers (within the region) is larger in the Tihama markets than in the mountain markets despite Tihama's more rugged terrain. Though paradoxical at first glance, this fact may be explained by the greater town-to-market distances in Tihama and by the greater dependence of that area's people on local periodic markets. The other variables are less important in discriminating between these two groups.

The analysis of the second run tested the second hypothesis for the same two groups, Tihama markets and mountain markets. The only change made was in using all the markets surveyed (except one, Khamīs and Ithnain Naj-rān, since it does not belong to either group because of its location). Nineteen markets were utilized in this analysis and they were divided into two groups:

Tihama markets:

Sabt Ṣalab	Ahad AL <u>Shibain</u>
Ithnain Rijāl	<u>Thalūth</u> Ḥiswah
Sabt Muḥāyil	Rabua AL <u>Ājmah</u>
<u>Khamīs</u> AL-Bahar	Ithnain AL <u>Majārdah</u>
<u>Thalūth</u> AL-Manzar	Ahad <u>Khāt</u>
<u>Thalūth</u> Ṣabia	

Mountain markets:

Sabt AL-Yazīd	<u>Thalūth</u> Abha
<u>Thalūth</u> AL-Namāṣ	Ahad Rufaidah
Ithnain AL-Harjah	Rabūa Bahwān
Ithnain Ballasmer	<u>Khamīs</u> Mushait

This time 64.3 percent of the sellers were correctly classified. However, this improvement in the percent of correctly classified cases is not great.

Table 23 indicates that 67 percent of the sellers in Markets Group 1 (Tihama markets) were correctly categorized; 33 percent of the sellers should be placed in

TABLE 23

PREDICTION RESULTS FOR THE SECOND ANALYSIS (SECOND RUN)

Actual Groups		Number	Predicted Groups Membership	
Name	Code	Cases	Group 1	Group 2
Group 1	1	320	214.	106.
		66.9 pct		33.1 pct
Group 2	2	210	83.	127.
			39.5 pct	60.5 pct.

Group 2 (mountain markets). But in Group 2 the percent of the sellers correctly categorized was 60 percent; 40 percent of them should be placed in the other group. Thus, the percentage of sellers in Tihama markets who were

correctly categorized is greater than the percentage of sellers correctly categorized in mountain markets.

It is important to note from Table 24 that the variables having the highest combined loadings on this variate are different from the variables in the analysis of the first run (i.e., Residence becomes the most important variable after being the least important one in the

TABLE 24

SUMMARY TABLE OF STEP-WISE DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS
FOR THE SECOND ANALYSIS (SECOND RUN)

Step	Variable	Com- bined Wilks Lamda	Combined F Values	Signif- icant	Rao's	Change in Rao's V	Standardized Discriminant Function Coefficients
1	Residence	.973	14.83985	.000	14.840	14.840	-.671
2	Frequency	.950	13.96730	.000	27.988	13.148	.550
3	Selerorig	.927	13.84782	.000	81.701	13.714	-.512
4	Mode	.903	14.12569	.000	56.826	15.124	-.634
5	Goodorg	.898	11.93523	.000	60.132	3.306	-.24869
6	YRSSLL	.894	10.37047	.000	62.818	2.686	-.21776
7	People	.893	8.95506	.000	63.406	.588	.096
8	Other work	.892	7.85716	.000	63.702	.296	-.077

previous situation). Thus, in this run we can see that the type of community in which the seller resides is the first important discriminant variable to enter the analysis in the step-wise method. That might be explained by the fact that these two town markets were included in the second run; these are in the two main towns in the mountain area. In the mountain markets many sellers stated their type of residence to be a town, while at the same time there were no sellers in Tihama markets who made the same statement. In fact, there is only one main town in the Tihama area, and this is very far away from most of the markets in that area. In other words, there are a large number of sellers living in towns in the mountain markets, a fact which makes this variable very good for discriminating between the two groups of markets.

However, the other important variables from the analysis of the first run are also of significance in this analysis of the second run. But it is obvious that the latter represents a better estimate of the differences between the two groups since the Wilks Lamda and the significance of the F test are better for the second test. This could be due to the more representative nature of the analysis of the second run, as discussed above.

The Third Analysis

The third analysis was conducted to test the third hypothesis, namely, that the sellers in any market belonging to a certain tribe possess different characteristics than the sellers at another tribe's markets.

In this analysis the computer recognized that there were no statistically significant differences between the sellers in these markets. Only 37.1 percent of the sellers were correctly classified. The remaining 62.9 percent of the sellers were misclassified and appear to be more like sellers from markets other than those in which they were classified.

From Table 25 following, we notice that misclassified sellers do not fall predominantly in one of two other markets; rather, they are divided among all the remaining markets.

In summary, a great deal of similarity among sellers was shown by the discriminant analyses applied to all 20 markets and to the seven different tribal markets with the variables discussed previously. However, the markets studied may vary in ways not well shown by these kinds of groupings. Thus, the second set of analyses, which grouped

TABLE 25
PREDICTION RESULTS FOR THE THIRD ANALYSIS

Actual Group Name	No. of Cases	Gr. 1 pct	Gr. 2 pct	Gr. 3 pct	Gr. 4 pct	Gr. 5 pct	Gr. 6 pct	Gr. 7 pct
Group 1	45	33.3	15.6	0.0	8.9	6.7	24.4	11.1
Group 2	20	20.0	30.0	5.0	20.0	5.0	10.0	10.0
Group 3	25	4.0	16.0	40.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	16.0
Group 4	25	8.0	12.0	4.0	64.0	4.0	0.0	8.0
Group 5	20	25.0	0.0	25.0	15.0	10.0	25.0	0.0
Group 6	20	0.0	10.0	10.0	0.0	10.0	65.0	5.0
Group 7	20	15.0	20.0	10.0	15.0	10.0	15.0	15.0

mountain versus Tihama markets, indicated that differences exist among the sellers of these two groups which suggest that one should look at these groups separately.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this study was to determine the distribution of and to describe the heretofore unexamined periodic marketing system in the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia. In the previous chapters, the past and current characteristics of this system were presented.

In this region agriculture is the main natural resource and the principal economic activity for the majority, or 89% of the population. Most of this percentage is made up of inhabitants of rural villages, hamlets and isolated farms; the remainder are nomads or "bedouins" who usually follow migration routes according to the seasons of the year. Most of the rural inhabitants depend on these periodic markets to obtain their needs.

In addition, periodic markets serve three main purposes: farmers sell their surplus crops to nomads and to other farmers; nomads find a market for their animals and animal products; sellers traveling from market to market

supply manufactured goods from the larger centers to customers who would seldom go to the towns to buy them.

The periodic markets examined in this study serve to articulate the rural economic structure of the Southwest Region. As the main source of foodstuffs and non-foodstuffs for the rural and nomad community, the periodic market plays two vital economic roles in the lives of the region's inhabitants. First, it is virtually the only place where the rural people can sell their farm produce, and the bedouins, their livestock and animal products. It is sometimes the only source of cash for both groups, and sellers, who travel from market to market during the week depend almost entirely on the market for their income. For the most part, the periodic market can be considered primitive; in other words, many of the sellers are farmers who sell their products by dealing directly with the consumer.

The second economic role played by the periodic market relates to the fact that it is the lowest rung in the hierarchical system of trade in this region, whereby goods from outside the region reach the rural community. Figure 38 depicts the various origins of goods sold at the periodic markets.

THE ORIGIN OF GOODS DISTRIBUTED IN THE PERIODIC MARKET

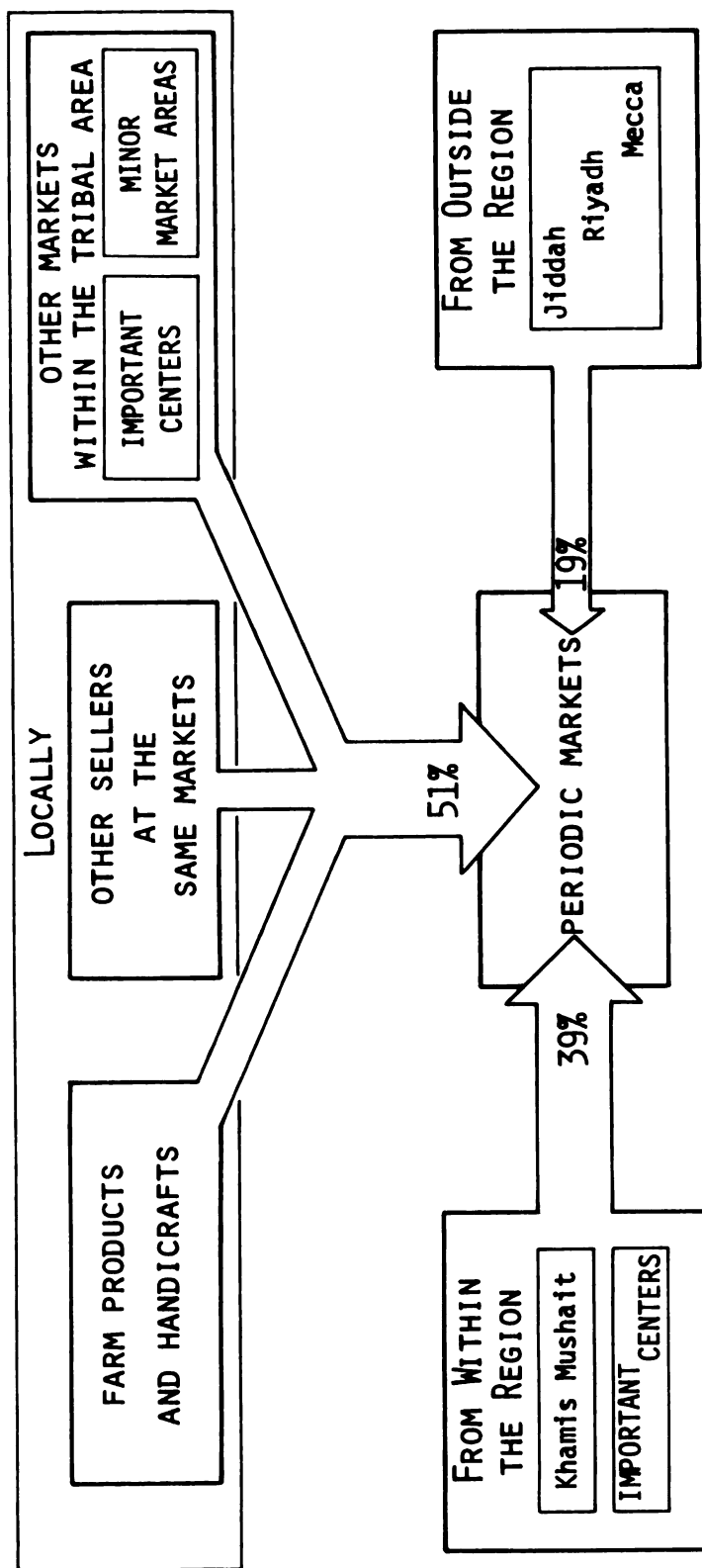


FIG. 38

Sum of percentages is greater than 100% because some sellers have multiple sources of goods:

Locally 50% } diagram includes "locally and within the region"(1%)
 Within the Region 30% }
 Outside the Region 11% } diagram includes "within and outside the region"(8%)

Clearly, the majority of goods is local and regional in origin. Items from outside the region constitute less than a fifth of the goods traded. The chain of distribution, however, is more complex. Imported goods usually arrive at Jiddah, Damman, and Riyadh (and a smaller number at Jizān). From here they may go to Khamis Mushait, which may be considered the major redistribution center in the Southwest Region. Goods are then carried to the important centers such as Abha, Najrān, and Jizān (Baljurashi and Bahah receive goods directly from Jiddah and Mecca because of their proximity). From the important centers, goods move to large villages or the minor market areas such as Bishan, Namāṣ, Tathlith and Muḥayīl; and from here they are delivered to the periodic markets. At the same time, a few of the sellers in the periodic markets receive goods directly from Jiddah, Riyadh, and Mecca; and trade between the intermediate centers further complicates the supply network.

Such long and complicated channels of distribution for imported or extra-regional products, coupled with the lack of an efficient transportation system and the non-existence of marketing facilities, result in high costs.

These costs in turn raise retail prices considerably as the sources of production or supply become more distant or more isolated. For example, the price of a bottle of Coca Cola in the important market center of Khamīs Mushait or Abha is about \$.21. But in the periodic market of Sabt Ṣalab in Tihama the same bottle costs about \$.70. Also, in the periodic markets in Tihama, imported fruits such as apples and oranges will bring at least one and a half times their cost in the towns of Abha or Jizān.

The same conditions that raise the prices of imported goods depress the prices of local goods. Products such as Saman (clarified butter), henna, or locally produced, seasonal fruits and vegetables bring lower prices in Tihama markets than in Khamīs Mushait or Abha because they are produced locally; the farmers cannot benefit from the higher prices in urban centers because they have no opportunity to trade there.

As previously discussed, the periodic markets now exist primarily as a local trade center for farmers within a limited area to market their goods and as a place from which to distribute imported goods coming into the region via traveling sellers. The local nature of the market is

due to the lack of adequate transportation, absence of storage facilities, and low production.

With the continuation of the general socio-economic plans in this region, and as planned production increases are realized, the marketing system will require development and expansion beyond its current local nature. This development can be aided by the improvement of the transportation system. For example, the construction of two new paved roads in the region has begun to change the importance and size of some markets. Although they are not yet complete, the roads have already linked parts of the area and caused some markets to close and others to enlarge. In the map shown in Figure 20 it can be seen that most markets not in operation are markets close to the main town in the region. From observation it is also clear that markets far away from these towns are getting bigger. For example, those markets very close to Abha and Khamis Mushait, such as Sabt Bani Rizam and Ithnain Abl which are linked by the new asphalt road (Taif-Abha-Jizān Road), are not in operation because the inhabitants of these villages prefer to make trips to Abha to sell or buy their goods since the transportation to this town has become easier and selling there more profitable. Another example is

Ahad Rafaidah market, close to Khamis Mushait, which has become very small and local, while a market like Ithnain Al-Harjah, according to the inhabitants, has grown after the construction of the paved Abha-Najrān Road.

Several additional examples can be drawn which suggest that when an adequate transportation system is provided, farmers are encouraged to find alternative markets where the demand for their goods may be greater. Their discovery of such alternatives will lead to the closing of markets which have existed as trade centers for small communities. Provision of adequate transportation for farmers will also result in the growth of other markets (at a distance from urban centers) which can better serve a larger area.

It is the role of government agencies, such as the Ministries of Agriculture, Transportation, Commerce and Industry, and Municipal and Rural Affairs to lead efforts to connect an increasing number of markets with the urban and important centers previously discussed. These agencies should also support the growth and development of periodic markets which have the potential to serve larger areas and become important collection and distribution centers.

In addition, efforts to raise the educational level of persons served by the markets should be closely followed

by attempts to develop means by which an increasing flow of information can be provided on market prices, both within and beyond the region. When coupled with a more efficient transportation system, such information should enable farmers and traders to find more profitable markets for their products.

Finally, the social significance of periodic markets to the rural inhabitants has also been discussed. As an ideal center for social activities, the market is the focal point of rural social life. As such, it can be utilized by government agencies as a place in which instruction can be provided concerning improved agricultural and marketing methods.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A
CLASSIFICATION OF MARKETS
ACCORDING TO TRIBE

APPENDIX A

CLASSIFICATION OF MARKETS
ACCORDING TO TRIBE

In the Southwest Region of Saudi Arabia there are twelve major tribes (from north to south): Zahrān, Ghamid, Shamrān, Bīshah, Bal-Garn, Banī Shihir, Bal-Lasmar, Bal-Lahmav, Asīr, Shahrān Qahtān, Najran, Jizān. Two of these, Najrān and Jizān, do not actually refer to a specific tribe, but rather to two provinces each of which encompasses many smaller tribes. The number of markets for each tribe varies (see the following list).

I. ZAHRĀN Markets	Village Name*
1. Sabt Al-Mandag	
2. Rabūá Al-Şafh	
3. Rabūá Quraish	Al-Aṭawlah
4. Sabt Al-Rūmi	
5. Sabt Al-Nagaáh	Al-Şafrah
6. Khamīs Al-Makhwāh	
7. Sabt Ramā	

*Village name provided if different from market name.

8. Sabt Al-Jardā
9. Aḥad Al-Ṣabir
10. Aḥad Al-Ḥajrah
11. Khamīs Baraḥrah
12. Khamīs Al-Shuárā

II. GHĀMID Markets

13. Aḥad Raḡhdān
14. Khamīs Al-Bāḥah
15. Sabt Ghashmar Al-Ghashāmrah
16. Aḥad Bani Wālbah
17. Sabt Bal-Jurashi
18. Sabt Al-Farāh
19. Aḥad Al-Ghafrāh
20. Ithnain Bani Sālim
21. Ithnain Wādi Yabas
22. Thalūth Al-Ḥamīd

III. SHAMRĀN Markets

23. Ithnain Al-Qādim Bāshūt
24. Ithnain Shiqaiq
25. Aḥad Al-Qarn
26. Rabūá Al-Malik
27. Thalūth Al-Najājīr

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|------------|
| 28. | Aḥad K <u>h</u> ath <u>h</u> ām | Al-Farasah |
| 29. | Aḥad Sh <u>h</u> ari | Al-Dār |
| 30. | K <u>h</u> amīs Nak <u>h</u> is | |
| 31. | Sabt Al-Rawhān | |

IV. BĪSHAH Markets

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|--------|
| 32. | K <u>h</u> amīs Namrān | Bīshah |
| 33. | Rabūá Al-Rawshan | |
| 34. | Ithnain Al-K <u>h</u> āzmi | |
| 35. | Ithnain Ṣamakh | |
| 36. | Aḥad Tibālah | |
| 37. | Aḥad K <u>h</u> aibar | |

V. BAL-QARN Markets

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|------|
| 38. | Sabt Al-Álāyah | |
| 39. | Ithnain Āl-Salamah | Ámīm |
| 40. | Thalūth Ímārah | |
| 41. | Sabt Hījāb | |
| 42. | K <u>h</u> amīs Al-Bazāḏah | |
| 43. | Jumāt Thraibān | |
| 44. | Rabūá Nukhāl | |

VI. BANĪ AMR Markets

45. Thalūth Banī Āmr Āl Al-Shaikh & Āl Jarrār
46. Ithnain Halabā Bin Jamīl

VII. BANĪ SHIHIR Markets

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 47. | Rabūā Al-Saru | |
| 48. | Aḥad ĪBS | Al-Ḥaid |
| 49. | Khamīs Al-Kḥadrā & Al-Īrq | |
| 50. | Sabt Kḥatbah | Ṣīwī |
| 51. | Ithnain Al-Majārdah | |
| 52. | Aḥad Tharbān | |
| 53. | Aḥad Khāt | Āl-Thībah and
Āl Muhammad |
| 54. | Thalūth Al-Namās | |
| 55. | Ithnain Al-Zahārah | |
| 56. | Sabt Tanūma | |
| 57. | Ithnain Biqrah | |
| 58. | Thalūth Al Manzar | |
| 59. | Jumāt Athrub | |

VIII. BAL-LASMAR Markets

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 60. | Ithnain Bal-Lasmar | Āl-Kh ^h raim |
| 61. | Khamīs Mitair | Ibn Mitair |

IX. BAL-LAHMAR Markets

- 62. Sabt Baih̃n (Āl-Shinaif)
- 63. Aḥad Ṣabaḥ
- 64. Rabūá Bahwān
- 65. Khamīs Ḥash-ḥash Al-Māwain
- 66. Rabūá Firshāt
- 67. Ithnain Abl

X. ASĪR* Markets

- 68. Aḥad Āl-Ḥaris Al-Zahrāá
- 69. Sabt Banī Rizām
- 70. Ithnain Rabīáh
- 71. Thalūth Abha Zabnah
- 72. Sabt Āl-Yazīd
- 73. Ithnain Al-Shaáf Al-Masqi
- 74. Rabūá Al-Bina
- 75. Thalūth Rīm (Jazáh)
- 76. Aḥad Al-Shībain
- 77. Ithnain and Khamīs Rijāl
- 78. Khamīs Kisan
- 79. Thalūth Hiswah Al-Thalūth

*Some markets do not belong to Asīr tribe, but are contained within Tihamat Asīr.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------|
| 80. Sabt Ṣalab | Al-Khaṭwah |
| 81. Iṭhnain Qana | |
| 82. Khamīs Al-Bahar | Mayyādi |
| 83. Ṭhalūth Bani Ṭhūāh | |
| 84. Sabt Muḥāyil | |
| 85. Aḥad Al-Raish | |
| 86. Iṭhnain Tarqash | |
| 87. Aḥad Al-Qiraiḥāh | |
| 88. Rabūā Al-Ājmah | |
| 89. Jumāt Rabīāh | Al-Jumāh |

XI. SHAHRĀN Markets

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| 90. Iṭhnain Bin-Hashbal | |
| 91. Rabūā Raghwah | |
| 92. Aḥad Bani-Thawr | |
| 93. Khamīs Mushait (Al-Darb) | |
| 94. Iṭhnain Bin-Ḥammūd | Tamniyah |
| 95. Ṭhalūth Yaárah | |

XII. QAHTĀN Markets

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 96. Ṭhalūth Tathlīth | |
| 97. Sabt Al-Maḍḍah | |
| 98. Aḥad Al-Ārīn | |

- 99. Thalūth Tarīb
- 100. Jumát Al-Amwāh
- 101. Aḥad Rufaidah
- 102. Sabt Al-Laghar Al-Sabt
- 103. Khamīs Liḥāf Al-Wadiyyain
- 104. Khamīs Íbaidah Al-Būṭah
- 105. Rabūá Shaáf Jārmah Lajwān
- 106. Sabt Banī Bishr Al-Sabt
- 107. Jamát Al-Khalaf
- 108. Ithnain Al-Ḥarjah
- 109. Aḥad Sanḥān Sarūm
- 110. Rabūá Talḥah
- 111. Khamīs Ṣahrān

XIII. NAJRĀN Markets

- 112. Thalūth Badur
- 113. Khamīs Al-Qābil
- 114. Rabūá Al Khāniq
- 115. Aḥad Ḍaḥaḍah
- 116. Rabūá Al-Ān
- 117. Ithnaīn and Khamīs Najrān
- 118. Jumát Ṣaghir

119. Sabt Ḥabūna Al-Kḥdrah
120. Iṭhnain Banī Salmān

XIV. JĪZĀN Markets

121. Rabūá Al-Qahmah
122. Aḥad Al-Shiqaiq
123. Kḥamīs Al-Darb Darb Bani Shuábah
124. Iṭhnain Al-Ḥaqu
125. AḥAD Harūb
126. Sabt Baish (Um-Al-Khashab)
127. Rabuá Al-Dāir
128. Iṭhnaīn Fayfā
129. Kḥamīs Aībān
130. Jumāt Al-Mushowwaf
131. Ṭhalūṭh Sabya
132. Iṭhnain Ḍamad
133. Kḥamīs Al-Ārḍah
134. Iṭhnain Al-Jahwah
135. Rabūá Abu Ārīsh
136. Kḥamīs Al-Kḥawbah
137. AḥAD Mīzāb
138. Iṭhnain Sāmtah

139. KhamIs Rakhyah

140. KhamIs MiqzÍ

GLOSSARY AND TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration system is that of the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, except for words with a common form in English, e.g., "Saudi."

Days of the week:

Saturday	Sabt
Sunday	Aḥad
Monday	Ithnain
Tuesday	Thalūth
Wednesday	Rabūá
Thursday	Khamīs
Friday	Jumá (t)

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