THE YEMEN SYLLABUS

Prepared by Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies
This document aims to guide readers toward substantive and important publications related to Yemen.

Section A includes suggestions on how to get accurate and up-to-date information on the country.

Section B lists academics and analysts who have written on Yemen.

Section C outlines what the Sana’a Center views as must-read publications on Yemen. These include books, reports and articles, broken down by theme.
A. Reports and news on Yemen

The Yemen Review

Monthly publication by the Sana’a Center that assesses current diplomatic, economic, political, military, security, humanitarian and human rights developments related to Yemen.

All other Sana’a Center publications

Sana’a Center publications cover a plethora of topics related to Yemen from policy, to economy, to gender, to transportation, and many others.

ReliefWeb
For data and the latest reports on the humanitarian situation in Yemen

Rethinking Yemen’s Economy
For economic analysis: Development Champions Forum

Acled Data
For military and security data on Yemen
1) News in Arabic

Aden al-Ghad: Southern-focused daily

Al-Madnya Magazine: Monthly culture magazine in English and Arabic

Al-Masdar Online: Islah-leaning news site

Al-Ishteraki Net: Socialist party-affiliated news site

2) News in English

Saeed al-Batati @saeedalBatati

Saleh al-Batati @SalehAlBatati1

Mohammed Ghobari @MohammedGhobari

Maggie Michael @mokhbersahafi

Amal al-Yarisi @AmalAlYarisi

And others, such as: Nasser al-Saqqaf, Ahmed al-Haj, and Mohammed Mukhashaf
B. Academics and Analysts

Academics and analysts who have worked and published on Yemen – in English – include:

Adam Baron
@adammbaron

Laurent Bonnefoy
@LaurentBonnefoy

Sheila Carapico
@SCarapico

Iona Craig
@ionacraig

Nadwa Dawsari
@Ndawsari

Maysaa Shuja al-Deen
@maysaashujaa

Elana DeLozier
@ElanaGulf

Sama’a al-Hamdani
@Yemeniaty

Marie Christine Heinize
@MarieHeinze

Gregory Johnsen
@gregorydjohnsen

Elisabeth Kendall
@Dr_E_Kendall

Helen Lackner
@helenlackner

Thanos Petouris
@alYunaniAdani

Stacey Philbrick Yadav
@PhilbrickYadav

Peter Salisbury
@peterjsalisbury

And others, such as:
Marieke Brandt, Luca Nevola, Ginny Hill, Bernard Haykel, Paul Dresch, Steve Caton, and Susanne Dahlgren
C. Publications by Theme

1) General overview and historical background

Below is a collection of books that shed some light on Yemen’s current war and, just as importantly, how the country got to this point.


Tim Mackintosh-Smith provides a broad sweep of what Yemen was in the past and helps set a firm foundation for understanding contemporary issues in the country.


Paul Dresch’s monograph remains one of the decisive overviews of pre-2011 Yemen.


Sarah Phillips’ monograph remains one of the decisive overviews of pre-2011 Yemen.


Noel Brehony provides a history of South Yemen and the 1990 unification.


Gregory Johnson’s book provides an excellent window into Yemen and its contemporary history and politics through the lens of Al-Qaeda.


Marieke Brandt’s book offers important insights into Yemen’s more recent history.

Helen Lackner examines how different factors such as international neo-liberalist policies contributed to the disintegration of the Yemeni state and how other important issues, such as an increasing water crisis, might affect Yemen’s future. Her monograph includes a concise summary of the 2011 uprising in Yemen and its aftermath.

Other books that provide valuable insight into Yemen:


Ginny Hill’s book offers important insights into Yemen’s more recent history.

Askar H. Al-Enazy, “The Long Road From Taif to Jeddah: Resolution of a Saudi-Yemeni Boundary Dispute,” The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2017
2) Yemen’s Arab Spring-inspired uprising, failed transition and the lead up to war

In 2011, Yemen, like many other countries in the region, experienced an anti-government uprising. The failure of the once-hailed, internationally-backed transitional government that ostensibly aimed to make Yemen a functioning democracy served as the catalyst to the country’s current civil war. Salient texts in this regard include:

Ginny Hill and Gerd Nonneman

Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States: Elite Politics, Street Protests and Regional Diplomacy

Chatham House, May 2011

Yezid Sayigh

Crumbling States: Security Sector Reform in Libya and Yemen

Carnegie Middle East Center, June 2015

Helen Lackner

Yemen’s ‘Peaceful Transition from Autocracy:’ Could it Have Succeeded?

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, March 29, 2016

Stacey Philbrick Yadav

Why Yemen’s Internationally Managed Transition led to War

Washington Post, February 18, 2016

Peter Salisbury and Renad Mansour

Between Order and Chaos: A New Approach to Stalled State Transformations in Iraq and Yemen

Chatham House, September 9, 2019
3) Internal Yemeni politics and divisions

While much analysis – and policy – treats Yemen’s conflict as Sana’a-centric, the reality is far more complicated. Over the course of the ongoing conflict, longstanding tensions among various regions of Yemen – which have different histories and political, social, tribal, religious and economic geographies – have dramatically burst to the fore, rendering them a key factor to be dealt with in any coming peace process.

Barak A. Salmoni, Bruce Loidolt, Madeleine Wells

Regime and Periphery in Yemen: The Houthi Phenomenon

*The Rand Corporation, May 3, 2010*

Thanos Petouris

Understanding the Role of the Southern Question in Yemen’s War

*Muftah, July 2015*

Mayssa Shuja al-Deen

Yemen’s Houthis and Former President Saleh: An Alliance of Animosity

*Arab Reform Initiative, October 7, 2016*

Yemen’s Al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base

*International Crisis Group, February 2017*

Yemen After Saleh

*The Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies, December 13, 2017*
Peter Salisbury

Yemen: National Chaos, Local Order
Chatham House, December 2017

Elana DeLozier

Framing Yemen Peace Negotiations
The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 31, 2018

Thanos Petouris

Britain and Yemen: The End of British Rule in South Arabia Through the Eyes of a Young Political Officer

A Grim Anniversary: Yemen After Four Years of the Saudi-led Military Intervention
The Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies, March 26, 2019

Mayssa Shuja al-Deen

The Houthi-Tribal Conflict in Yemen
Sada, April 23, 2019

Yahya al-Sewari

Yemen’s Al-Mahra: From Isolation to the Eye of a Geopolitical Storm
The Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies, July 5, 2019

Andrea Carboni and Luca Nevola

Inside Ibb: A Hotbed of Infighting in Houthi-Controlled Yemen
Aced Data, October 3, 2019
4) Regional tensions

Descriptions of Yemen as a regional proxy war pitting Saudi Arabia against Iran are simplistic at best and often employed with malicious intent. Nonetheless, regional politics — and their relationship to Yemen’s internal tensions — have undeniably played a key role in bringing Yemen to its current nadir.

Jane Kinnemont

Saudi Foreign Policy is in a State of Flux
Chatham House, February 17, 2016

Thomas Juneau

Iran’s Policy Towards the Houthis: A Limited Return on a Modest Investment
Chatham House, May 6, 2016

Elisabeth Kendall

Iran’s Fingerprints in Yemen: Real or Imagined
The Atlantic Council, October 2017

Mustafa Naji

Yemen’s Role in Moscow’s Middle East Comeback
The Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies, June 28, 2019

Farea al-Muslimi

How Yemen Brought Saudi Arabia and the UAE to the Brink of Divorce
Center for Global Policy, September 25, 2019

Farea al-Muslimi

Locals Running Rings Around the Power Brokers
Chatham House, October 2019
5) The economy and humanitarian situation

Among the world’s most impoverished nations, Yemen is currently home to the Middle East’s most severe humanitarian crisis. But while the country’s economic woes have been exacerbated by the ongoing conflict, they predate the country’s political crisis and subsequent collapse into civil war and are related to a number of endemic issues, including corruption and underdevelopment.

Ginny Hill, Peter Salisbury, Leonie Northridge, Jane Kinnemont

Corruption, Capital Flight and Global Drivers of Conflict

Chatham House, September 1, 2013

Beyond the Business As Usual Approach: Combating Corruption in Yemen

The Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies, November 2018

Wadah Ahmed, Saleh Zaid, Yousef Mohsen

Yemen’s Expatriate Workforce Under Threat: The Essential Role of Remittances in Mitigating Economic Collapse

The Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies, May 31, 2019

Daniel Maxwell, Peter Hailey, Lindsay Spainhour Baker, and Jeeyon Janet Kim

Constraints and Complexities of Information and Analysis in Humanitarian Emergencies: Evidence from Yemen

Feinstein International Center – Tufts University, May 2019

Yemen: Questions About an Aid System

MSF Crash, June 20, 2019
6) Women and Youth

Among the side effects of Yemen’s 2011 uprising was the empowerment of Yemen’s long-stifled women and youth populations. However, four years of conflict have in many aspects rolled back tentative gains toward women’s rights and at the same time simultaneously pushed many women into the workforce, while tens of thousands of Yemeni youths have signed up for the myriad armed groups currently waging war in the country.

Atiaf al-Wazir

_Yemen’s Independent Youth and Their Role in the National Dialogue Conference_

*German Institute for International and Security Affairs, August 23, 2013*

Najwa Adra

_Women and Peacebuilding in Yemen: Challenges and Opportunities_

*_Open Democracy, January 21, 2014_

Wolfgang Gressman

_From the Ground Up: Gender and Conflict Analysis in Yemen_

*_Oxfam, October 20, 2016_

Reem Mousad al-Forassy

_Diaspora Transnational Politics: Peace Contributors or Spoilers?_

*_Governance and Peace-Building Center, July 27, 2019_

Fawziah al-Ammar, Hannah Patchett and Shams Shamsan

_A Gendered Crisis: Understanding the Experiences of Yemen’s War_

*_The Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies, December 2019*
7) Miscellaneous

Not exactly related to current politics in Yemen, but entertaining and informative reads:

Kit Chellel and Matthew Cambell

**The Hijacking of the Brillante Virtuoso**

*Bloomberg, July 27, 2017*

Trevor Marchand, Alan Verskin

“A Vision of Yemen: The Travels of a European Orientalist and His Native Guide.”

Gingko Library, 2017

Stanford University Press, 2018