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CFEY

FRANÇOIS BURGAT

# The French Center for Yemeni Studies

## Research

Since 1982, the mission of the French Center for Yemeni Studies (CFEY) is to initiate, coordinate and to support the works of the French, Yemeni, or foreign teams in the Social Sciences and Archaeology focusing on Yemen and its neighbouring countries (Oman, Saudi Arabia, Eritrea). The fields of current research are broad: from South Arabian civilization to the construction of the modern State; cultural heritage, identity and change in Yemen; the archaeology and history of Southern Arabia in the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods; the study of the social significance of traditional practices and of the evolving dynamics in contemporary Yemeni society.

The CFEY provides students and researchers the scientific, documentary, administrative and accommodation services necessary for their projects. In the social and political sciences, the CFEY attempts to train specialists on Yemen and to encourage researchers on the Arab cultural area to more systematically integrate comparative contributions on this country, which is often seen as the 'historical matrix' of the Arab and Muslim world. Research results, whether preliminary or final, are regularly presented to interested audiences through public lectures given in French, Arabic or English. These conferences take place either at the centre itself or in other locations in Sanaa.

## Cooperation and Formation

The CFEY cooperates in its research missions with several Yemeni, French and/or foreign academic institutions. These collaborations can develop into partnerships with the establishment of joint programmes. Alongside its own programmes or in cooperation, the CFEY is able to support individual projects of students or researchers who are designated by their universities. The requests, accompanied by a brief presenta-

tion of the research project and a letter of recommendation, must be submitted to the centre at the beginning of the university's academic year. The CFEY is also able to facilitate the stay of students wanting to attend intensive sessions or individual courses on Arabic language at local language institutes. Lastly, the CFEY may offer internships to interested students (e.g. office work, public relations, documentation and research). The conditions of the internships (i.e. salary, accommodation, etc.) vary according to the nature of the requirement and the time needed to complete the assignment.

## Statutes

The French Center for Yemeni Studies is a research body in the social sciences which depends administratively on the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Department of Social Sciences and Archaeology. It is part of a worldwide network of 28 French research centres and institutes. Its management is supervised by a scientific council of 12 members. Under the initiative of Pr Christian Robin, the CFEY was created in 1982. Its current director, François Burgat, a political scientist, succeeded anthropologist Franck Mermier (1991-1997) on 1 October 1997.

## Library and Publications

CFEY's library comprises close to 3000 works, half of which are in Arabic (including periodicals), which focus mainly on Yemen and about twenty running titles from the Yemeni press. CFEY is currently computerizing this collection (software DAD) and planning its progressive expansion to other countries of the Arabian Peninsula.

In the attempt to further critical discourse and the exchange of ideas on Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula, it is CFEY's policy to organize lectures and produce scholarly material. The CFEY publishes in French, and occasionally translates into Arabic, the works of its own researchers and its Yemeni colleagues on the Arabian Peninsula. The centre produces *Les Chroniques Yéménites*

(reviews of the centre's annual activities complemented by original articles) and *Les cahiers du CFEY* (monographs or travel literature). It also publishes in conjunction with scholarly journals (*Monde Arabe Maghreb-Machreq*, *Peuples Méditerranéens*) or commercial publishers (*Actes Sud*), as well as independently or in association with other research centres such as IFEAD (Syria), IREMAM (Aix-en-Provence), URBAMA (Tours), American Institute for Yemeni Studies (Sanaa), Deutsches Orient-Institut (Hamburg), etc. Recent publications include:

- CFEY-Centre de Recherche franco-allemand de Berlin-Deutsches Orient Institut de Hambourg, *Le Yémen contemporain*, Franck Mermier, Rémi Leveau, Udo Steinbach (Director) Paris, Karthala, 1999;
- Al-'Ansi, Yahya, *Traditional agricultural knowledge in Yemen*, CFEY-American Institute for Yemeni Studies, 1998 (in Arabic) (This is a collection of Yemeni popular local practices in Agriculture related to Astronomy);
- Mercier, Eric, *Aden. Un parcours interrompu*, Sanaa-Tours, CFEY-URBAMA (Villes du Monde Arabe collection), 1997, ISSN 0247-8498, ISBN 2-86-106-1080. (This is the first scientific French-language work on the city of Aden, a preliminary work for a doctoral thesis in geography, interrupted by the premature death of the author in October 1996.);
- Mermier, Franck (directed by), *L'Etat face à la démocratie, Monde arabe Maghreb-Machrek*, 155, January-March 1997, ISSN 1241-5294. (This is a multidisciplinary approach to contemporary Yemen by a French-Yemeni research team.);
- Zayd Ali Muhammed, *Trends of mu'tazilite thought in Yemen*, CFEY, 1997 (in Arabic); and
- Al-Akwa' Ismaïl b. Ali, *Les hijra et les forteresses du savoir au Yémen* (translated from Arabic by Brigitte Marino), Cahiers du CFEY 2, 1996,

ISSN 1248-0568, ISBN 2-909194-05-1.

## The following are forthcoming:

- Al-Hadrami, Abd al-Rahmân, *History of Zabid and the Tihama*, CFEY-IFEAD (in Arabic);
- *Raydân, 7*, IREMAM-CFEY: Revue des antiquités et de l'épigraphie du Yémen antique (in French and Arabic);
- Jazem, Mohamed, *Les registres de l'Etat rasoulide*. (edition of a 13<sup>th</sup> century Arabic Manuscript);
- Ory Solange-Maury Bernard, *Les ors du Sultan. La mosquée al-'Abbâs à Asnâf*, CFEY-IFEAD; and
- Tuchscherer, Michel, *Chronique de 'Abdal-Rahmân al-'Bahkali (1182/1768-1248/1832)*, CFEY-IFEAD (in Arabic).

## Publications may be ordered from the CFEY or from:

- Librairie Avicenne, 25 rue de Jussieu, 75005 Paris. France E-mail: Librairie\_Avicenne@compuserve.com
- Librairie de l'Institut du Monde Arabe, 1 rue des Fossés Saint Bernard, 75236 Paris Cedex 05, France



For more information on the CFEY and for the online version of the 1998-1999 *Chroniques Yéménites*, novelties of the library, etc., please visit: <http://www.univ-aix.fr/cfey>

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