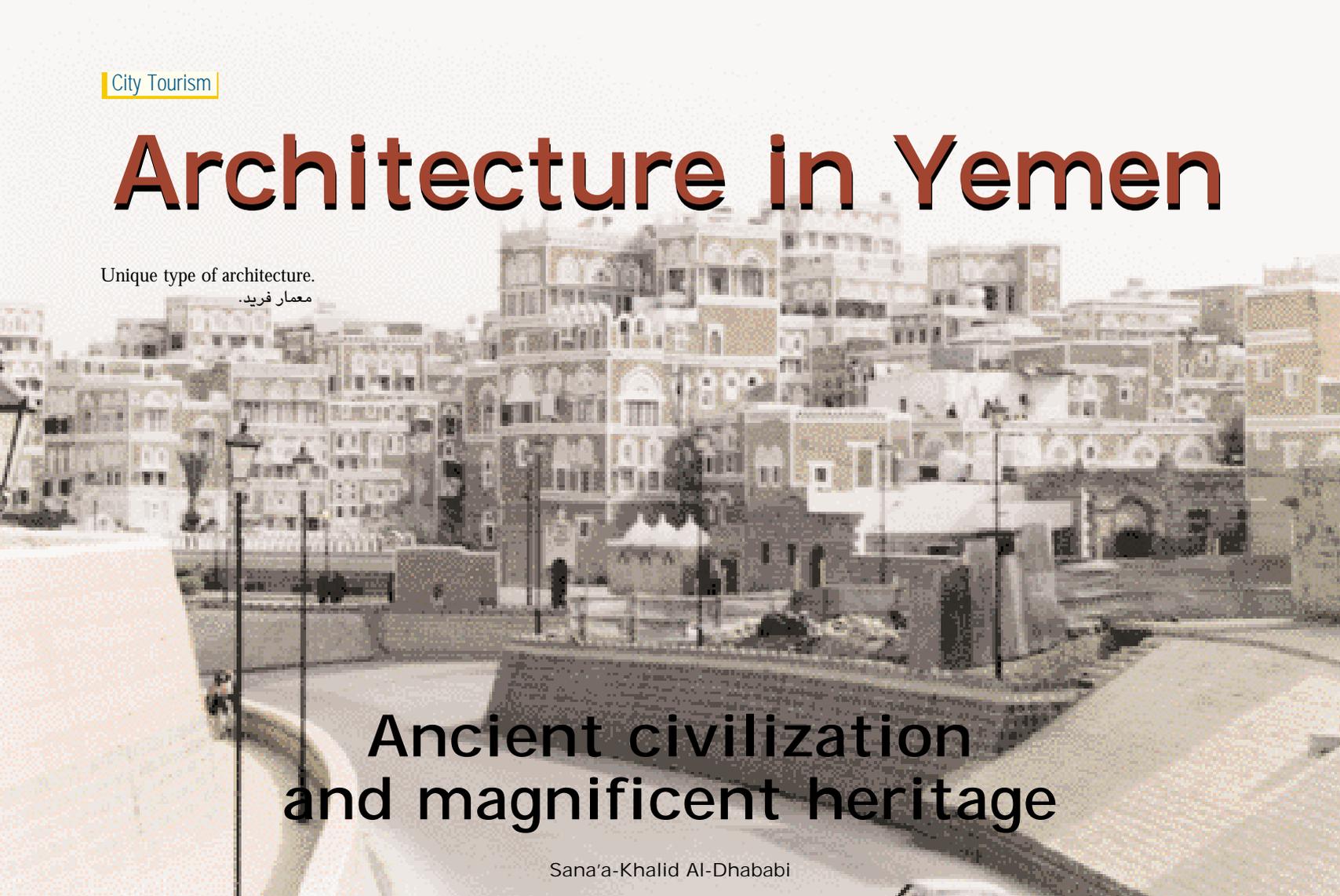


# Architecture in Yemen

Unique type of architecture.  
معمار فريد.



## Ancient civilization and magnificent heritage

Sana'a-Khalid Al-Dhababi

With their bare hands the people of Yemen have carved every thing from the mountain: the steps, the front of the house, the doors and the windows. The Yemenis did not leave anything without decoration - even the bracelets, the belts and the daggers. Wherever you go in villages and towns you see these exquisite, rare and beautiful decorations. Yemeni villages scattered over the mountains are like a tape showing the work of great sculptures. It all indicates the magnificent effort of those who built these unique houses. You will be really amazed by the unique architecture that Yemen is duly proud of.

### The background of Yemeni architecture

Yemeni architecture, with its distinguished features, is not a new phenomenon - it has a long history dating back to centuries before Islam. The old Misnad inscriptions show this art form existed in Yemen in ancient times. There are many scholars who make the connection between Misnad and Yemeni architecture.

Some have added to the description of Yemen the description of "The Country of Palaces". Whenever architecture has been mentioned, the name of Ghamdan Palace will also be mentioned. This palace was one of the ancient sky scrapers, built in the first century A. D. and demolished during the reign of Caliph Othman bin Affan. The palace had 20 stories and was made of marble and granite.

### Types of Yemeni architecture

Adam Metz mentioned four types of cities in his book "Islamic Civilization in the Fourth Century" : the Greek type, the Mediterranean, the Persian and the Yemeni, such as San'a, Mecca and Fostat.

Yemeni architecture can be classified as follows:

- Houses built from local stones, as in Taizz, the villages of Al-Mahwit, Hajjah and Rema.
- Houses built from bricks. This type can be seen in busy cities, such as San'a, Sa'dah and Zaid.
- Houses made of compressed mud, such

as in Al-Bayda and Sayun. Houses with up to six stories.

- Houses built from mud, as in Hadramawt, Al-Muhrah, Hudaydah and Abyan.
- Houses made of wood, reed and straw.
- Tents made of goat skin, as in Ma'rib, Al-Jawf and Hadramawt.

These different types, materials and construction methods depend on the availability of materials and the climate.

### Sana'a houses

The Sana'a house rises to about seven floors, and each two joined floors are surrounded by a belt with beautiful decorations. Each floor has a particular function. The ground floor is used as a granary, for keeping the animals and the grinding wheel. The second floor is for the family. Higher floors are exclusively for the male folk. Most houses have a top floor room called "Al-Mufraj". It is a long room well decorated and furnished.

Sana'a is unique in its architecture: that is why it was selected as the capital of Arab culture this year. ■