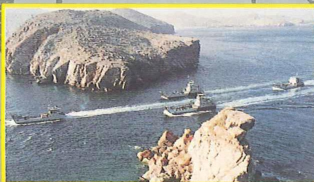
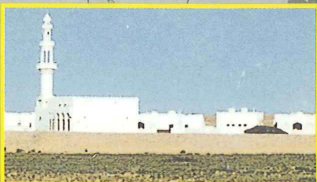
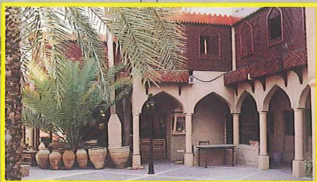
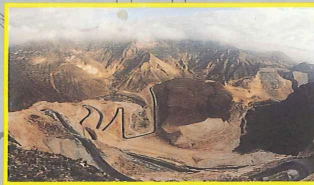


Sultanate
of Oman

Years of Endeavour and Achievement

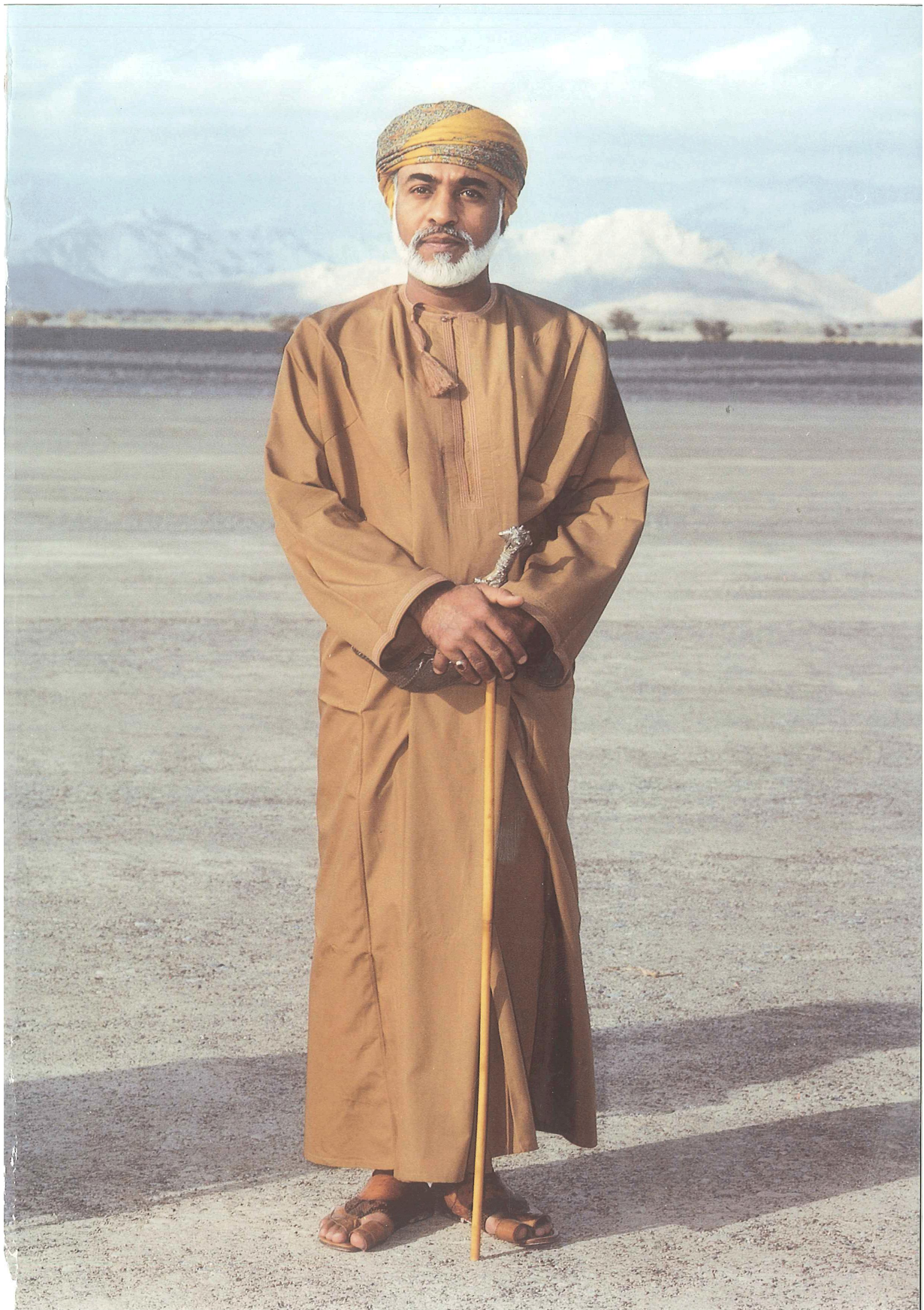


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Years of Endeavour and Achievement



A'Dakhliya



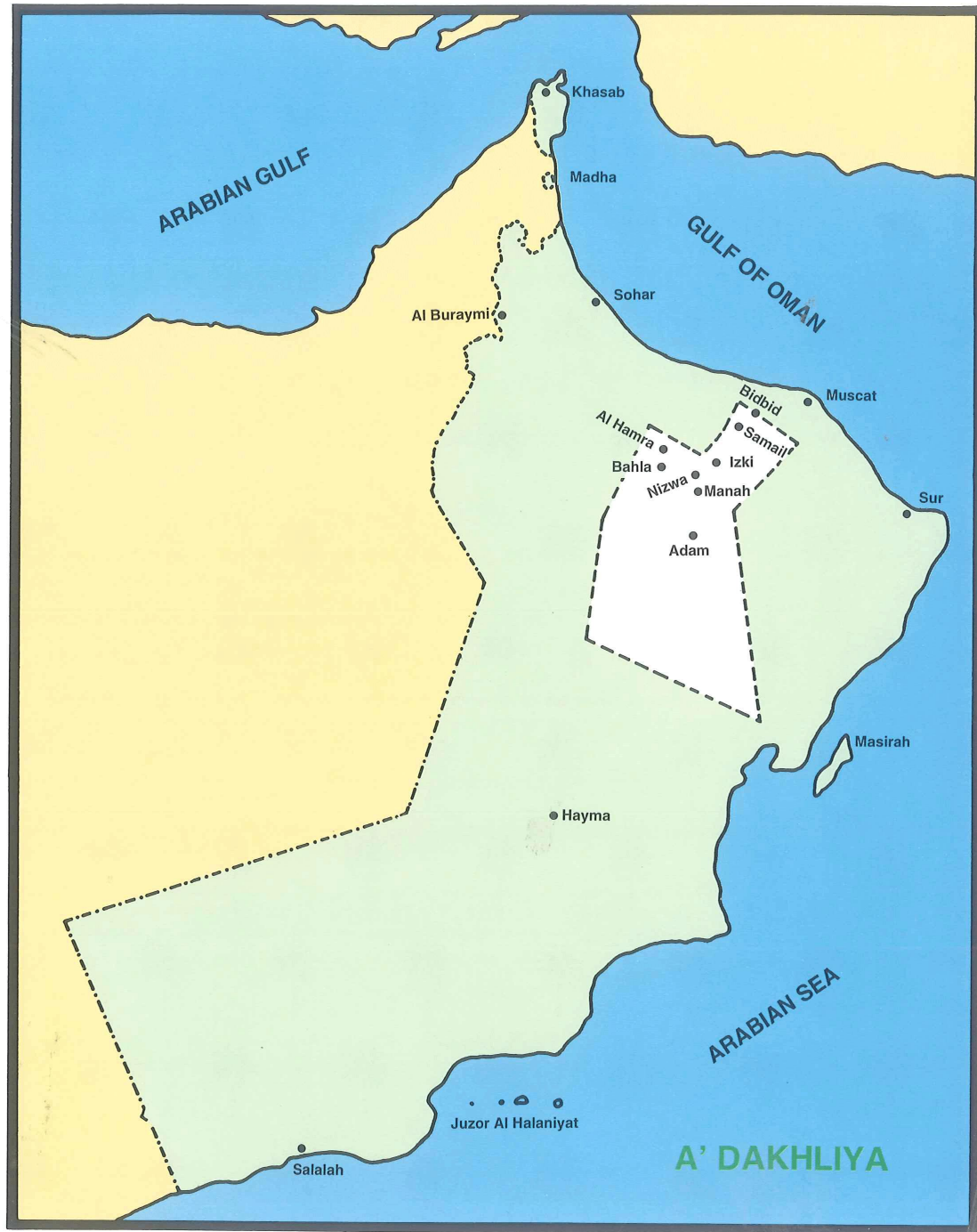
PROLOGUE

In an age when miracles have ceased, Oman has been privileged to witness its own miraculous transformation. The phenomenal successes of the past quarter of a century must be seen by any standards as constituting a remarkable period in history, certainly one with no parallel in modern times.

To assess the scale of what has been accomplished during the course of the Renaissance inspired and led by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, we must look beyond the physical landmarks, beyond even the time in which it was achieved, and view the human and cultural dimensions of the transformation. There we find the dedication and strength of purpose and also the pride in their country which has ever characterised the Omani people. The twenty five years which followed the new dawn which came on 23 July 1970 have been the formative years of a regenerated Oman, years which saw the successful struggle to regain the glories of the past and build the foundations of a future full of promise. In this review of the past 25 years, the Ministry of

Information has pleasure in presenting this set of ten volumes, "Years of Endeavour and Achievement" which recount the major episodes of Oman's history and its arduous path to its modern reconstruction, which include a brief resume of the geography and special features of each of the provinces.

These modest volumes do not aspire to contain more than the highlights of Oman's long and illustrious history and the successes of the Renaissance which has conferred such proud achievements on the land and people of Oman. "Years of Endeavour and Achievement" continues, and with it, it is confidently hoped, will come increasing prosperity, and the continued blessing of peace and stability. Today, as Oman advances towards the horizons of the 21st century, every Omani can take courage and faith from the leadership and solicitude for their future of their beloved leader, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said.





Years of Endeavour and Achievement

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos has been determined from the moment of his accession to improve the standard of living of his people and to provide coming generations with a full, fruitful and happy life. This achievement - the salvation of his country from its years of stagnation - has required a dedication and unity of effort by His Majesty and his people almost unparalleled in history.

The circumstances in which the country found itself in 1970 demanded what amounted to a declaration of a state of emergency. The situation was such that the desperate need for education and health care overrode any question of cost.



Today the success of those efforts can be seen in every aspect of the Sultanate's life - health care, education, housing, roads and communications, a variety of social services geared towards raising the standard of living of the Omani people, are all in place. It can be said that no fundamental need exists which has not been met in the Renaissance launched, led and stimulated by the Sultan's example.

Thus all of the needs for a healthy, literate and culturally satisfying life are today available to all Omanis, from the Shams mountains in the interior and the Qamar mountains in the remote south western corner of Dhofar; to the citizens of the stark rocky peaks of Musandam in the far north east. The fruits of development now belong in equal measure to the tiniest island of the Arabian Sea, to Thamrait and Muqshin and the settlements and towns of the western desert which challenge the harsh sands of the Rub' Al Khali or Empty Quarter. This is the tangible reality which is today part of the experience of every Omani citizen, irrespective of his origins or domicile, a mere 25 years from the accession of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos.

All this, of course, could not have been achieved without the massive injection of capital investment. Now the time has come when the responsibility for development must be shared as a collective obligation by all. Provision must be made for the increasing and youthful population to have the opportunities to play their full part in Omani's future in the knowledge that the fate of their country rests largely with their efforts, and careful measures must be taken to ensure that economic factors are taken fully into account.

The coming five-year Plan which will take effect

in January 1996, will pursue this road to balanced development, particularly now that the members of the Majlis Ash'Shura - representing the various regions and provinces - have contributed to its preparation, and in the process have expressed the opinions of their constituents.

It is important that the meaning of the term 'balanced development' be clarified in this context. It does not mean that development projects must be equally spread in the same number and type in every region, all of them enjoying permanent immunity against cutbacks. Development must be applied selectively for the benefit of the whole nation in those areas and in those forms when this can best be achieved.

Balanced development in the true sense cannot be achieved without the discipline of economic planning. The first consideration in assessing a region for investment must be to take account of its population; for a region populated by three thousand people cannot reasonably expect to obtain State investment of the same order of magnitude as a region with a population of fifty thousand. There has to be a sense of proportion in the allocation of funds.

Secondly, it would not be rational or fair to propose that equivalent quotas of State funding be allocated to regions of arid desert, coastal plain and rough mountain terrain. Every region demands an individual response to its specific development requirements, in line with the characteristics of the region and with a view to achieving a balance between satisfying as far as possible the needs of the regions and the needs and interests of the nation as a whole.

Thirdly, balanced development, with its projects



and priorities, and as it is anticipated that it will be effected in the Sultanate, will be preceded and supported by scientific studies to assess its economic viability and, in recognition of the two points outlined above, the relative natural advantages of each region will be examined and exploited.

Finally, and this is of the greatest importance, we cannot escape from the reality that resources, irrespective of the rate at which they might be expected to grow, will remain limited in the face of rising needs, a factor which makes it imperative that we are careful to choose the most appropriate plan. We have a difficult balance to strike between the two sides of the development equation: the resources available on the one hand and escalating needs on the other.

Over and above these controls, Oman is today faced by a challenge it shares with many other countries. It is being forced to review the schedule of its priorities and to tighten the reins on expenditure to more closely reflect available resources, while paying due respect to the needs and requirements of the coming stage of development. The challenge is presented by the instability of world oil prices and the fact that the future of these is no longer easily predictable as a consequence of a variety of international and regional factors.

Here in Oman, it has become necessary to acknowledge the sometimes unpalatable truth that it is no longer possible to achieve a result by taking short cuts or departing from the path of scientific development, with its specific programmes and precise methods.

To an equal extent it has become necessary to

acknowledge the logic of cost controls and to understand that proper development will never be the reward of misguided planning.

Efficient development is directly related to and subject to the level of economic activity. To expect otherwise or to attempt to purchase it by going into debt would not only fail, but would lead to disaster.



A Panorama - the old and the new



Nizwa market won the "Best City Award" of The Organization of Arab cities



Once this area was covered with the dust of oblivion, but the golden years of Oman have restored its esteem, its eminent standing and its great value in the hearts of the Omanis.



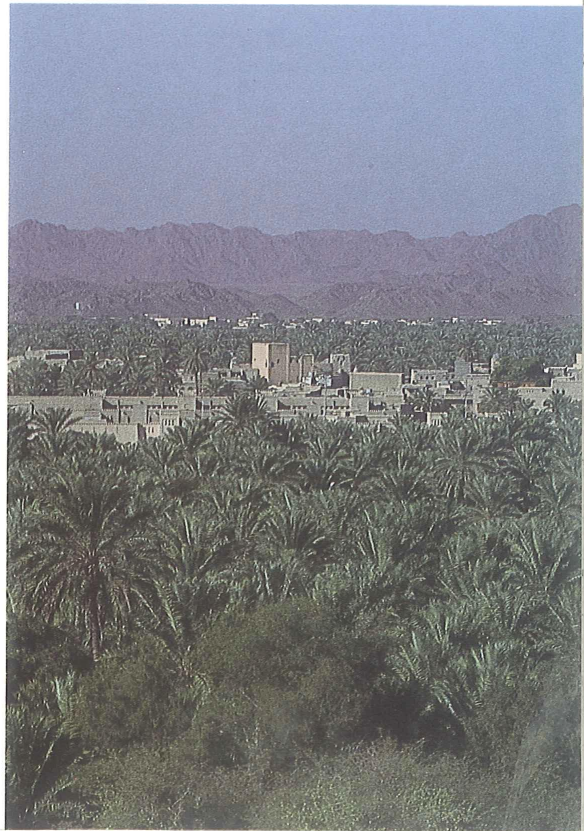
The story of the Dakhaliya region is difficult to grasp from a summary, not because it is located in the heart of Oman, but because of its sentimental value in the minds and hearts of Omanis. Here the city of Nizwa which has played a distinguished role in the study of Islamic civilization, it was the home of scholars, poets and men of literature. Here intellectuals were born, who dedicated themselves to revive Islam. They did not accept the rigidity of Islam and so and worked to enrich Islamic civilization, suffering accusations of seclusion and isolation, and of severing the ties of communication with others hostile to their progress.

From here, from Sumail, the revered Companion of the Prophet Mazn Bin Ghadhuba went to Mecca to embrace Islam from the bearer of His message, Mohammed Bin Abd Allah.

In the heart of the Dakhaliya lies Nizwa, a sanctuary for scholars and jurists and a stronghold for leaders and powerful men. This ancient city and the Dakhaliya region around it, became for some time, covered with dust - the dust of oblivion -. The golden years in Oman, however, have restored its esteem and its eminent standing and great value for the Omanis.

The celebration of the 24th national day of the modern renaissance of Oman (November 1994) was held in Nizwa, the capital of the Dakhaliya, glorifying and defining its cultural and intellectual role in the life of this nation which works to the utmost of its abilities for a better future - hoping to change its hopes and desires into a memorable reality.

When His Majesty Sultan Qaboos chose, at the beginning of his era, to cleanse Oman and the Omanis from the disease of stagnation, he wanted the "March of Prosperity" to develop modern life and at the same time preserve the origins and intellectual heritage of Oman. His Majesty has taken measures as "a cure" for extremism, fanaticism, and factionalism, whatever its motives and origins, by considering them hateful plants poisoning the soil where only good should grow. This "cure" came from the Dakhaliya, the area of Islamic jurisprudence and its jurists. The Muslim scholars and jurists here, worked to redress the situation of



Nizwa 'The Pearl of Islam'

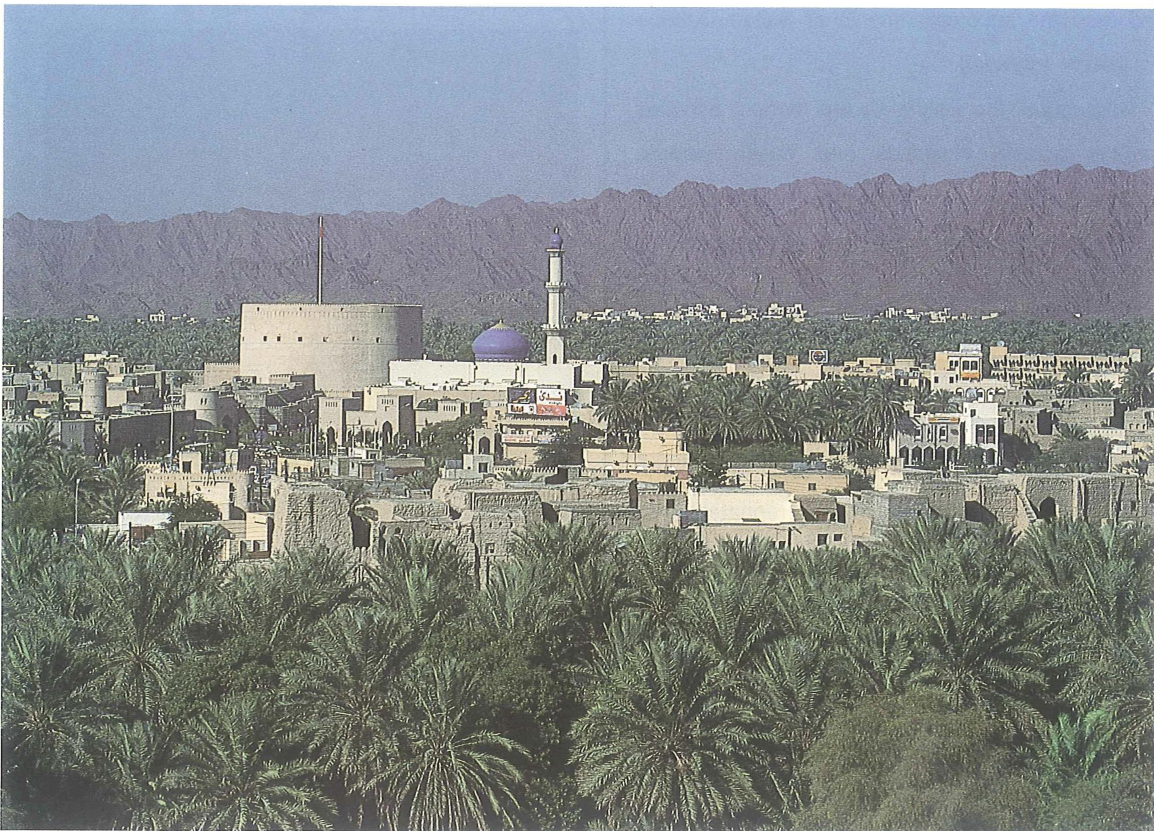


stagnation which had led to the weakness of the Islamic nation. This stagnation extinguished the light of intellectualism and led to a situation in recent years of a kind of extremism. Its source was a lack of knowledge by young Muslims of the truths of their religion or a complete knowledge of it. This "cure" is important because it put an end to stagnation and revived Islamic thought adapted to the modern age. Developed and based on contemporary jurisprudence, it is bound by the principles of religion capable of offering the right solution for contemporary problems which affect Islamic societies. It shows the world the entire truth of Islam

and the essence of its eternal law good for all times and all places.

The "cure" of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos emerged from "the Pearl of Islam", which is the historical name of the city of Nizwa, as it is a stronghold for jurists and scholars. Its ancient guiding role in Islamic culture induced the return to the area, carrying the torches of hope for the restoration of Islamic intellectual progress. This is contemporary jurisprudence, bound by principles suitable for the true religion, and capable of leading Oman on a long and splendid journey.

This cultural message of the jurists and scholars





is the first characteristic of the area, a harmony of the past, present and future, not only for Oman but for the entire Islamic world. The Dakhaliya region, and in its heart Nizwa, is a guide for the revival of the legal renaissance attuned to the spirit of the modern age. This is particularly appropriate in the light of the modern accomplishments of the golden years of Oman. A quarter of a century of modernization has succeeded in preserving heritage with dignity, and has not only benefited Nizwa, but even the extremely rugged mountainous regions of the area, despite the cost.

The first spot on the horizon kissed by the rays of the sun in the early morning is Jabal Al Shams and here the accomplishments of Sultan Qaboos are deeply engraved.

Throughout the Dakhaliya are modern services for the people. Hospitals and health centres equipped with the most modern equipment and vigilant staff, providing health care to the people of the eight Wilayats.

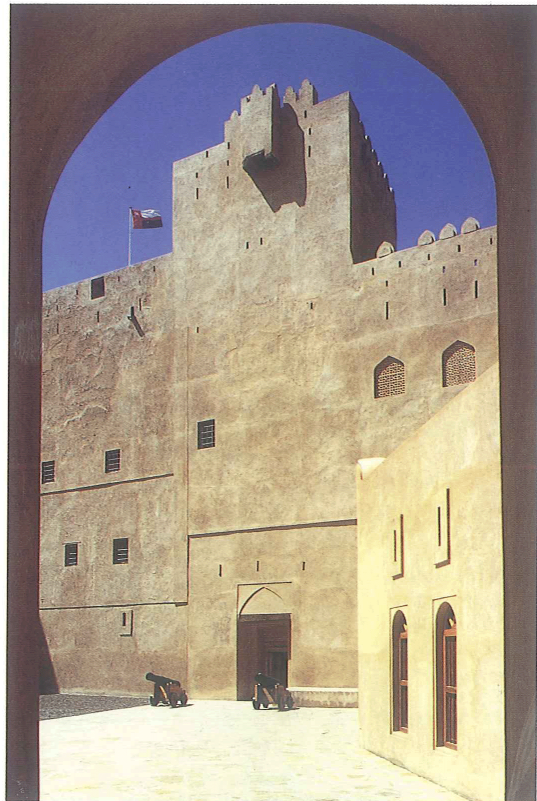
There are 46 primary schools - 21 for boys and 19 for girls and 6 mixed. 50 preparatory schools - 25 for boys, 23 for girls and 2 mixed. 25 secondary schools - 12 for boys and 13 for girls. All of them provide a modern education, impregnated with original Omani Islamic values. Currently, all together, there are 67,091 students studying in these schools out of a total Omani population of 199,401.

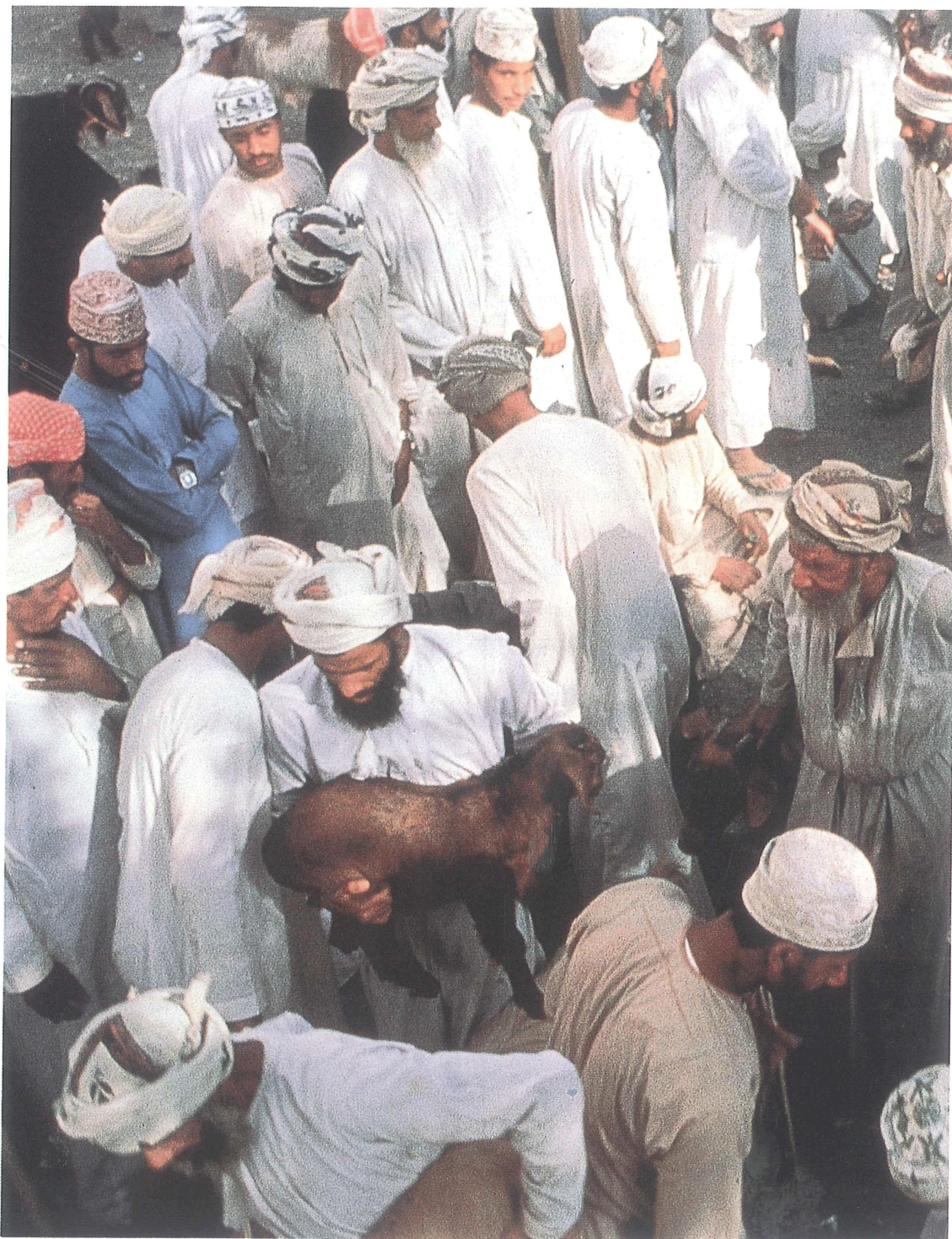
There are modern methods of transport in the various Wilayats and tarmac roads built in accordance with the most modern international specifications.

A fine balance can be clearly seen between the modern lives of the citizens of the Dakhaliya and the heritage and wonderful mountain nature, particularly in Jabal Al Akhdar and Musafa Al Abriyeen.

Nizwa fort is one of the most important historical sites. It was built by the Imam Sultan Bin Saif Bin Malik Al Ya'rubi. It took 12 years to build and was finished in 1668. The diameter of its vast round tower is more than 27 metres. It is comprised of impregnable fortifications and re-inforced defensive towers.

There are numerous castles in the Dakhaliya region. Jabrin is in the Wilayat of Bahla, which was built in the 17th century A.D. It is an impregnable defensive fort in the quiet village of Jabrin and





An auction on market day



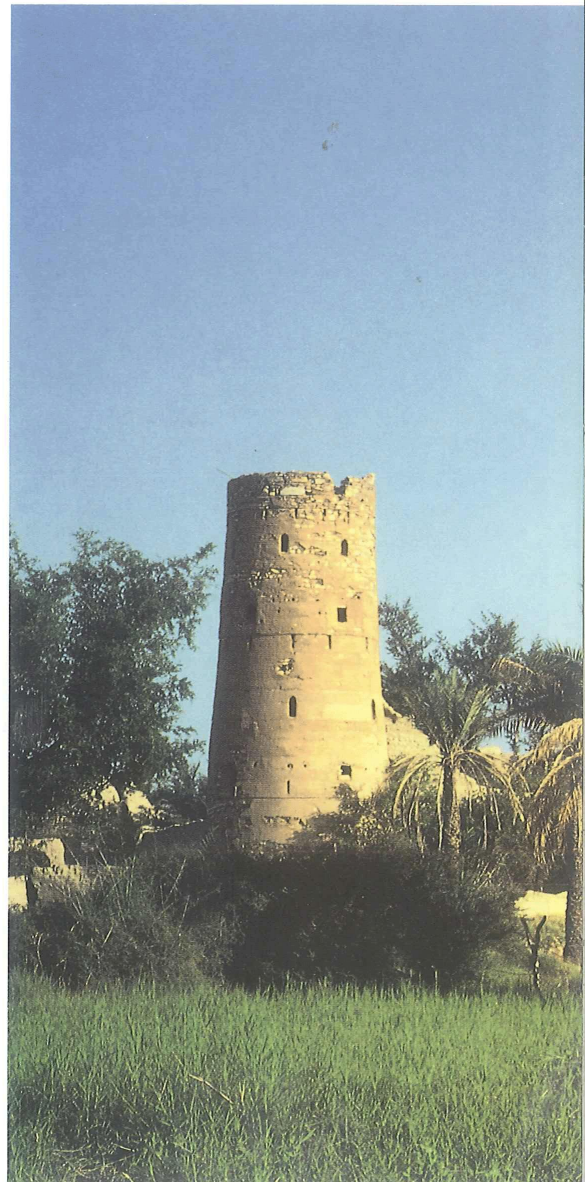
includes halls for the study of Islamic legal sciences and arts.

The Wilayat of Bahla itself is an historical place, surrounded by a wall for a distance of about 7 miles, which has seven gates.

The Wilayat of Adam in the ancient past was an important centre for trade. The caravans going on or returning from their summer and winter journeys met here. This, in the Jahaliya period - the period before Islam. The Imam Ahmad Bin Sa'id, the founder of the rule of the Bu'Saidi family, was born here. His house is still standing today.

The Wilayat of Al Hamra is a fascinating area. The mountain here, with its water source, is covered with terraces growing fruit and vegetables. At its summit the minimum temperature sometimes reaches 4 degrees below zero. There are also tens of falaj here which divide their water into beautifully designed channels.

There is a mixture of historical sites from the Stone Age to the advent of Islam, together with places of natural beauty, at the summits and foot of the mountains and also first class modern services. This blend is the second characteristic of the Dakhaliya and makes it suitable as a tourist attraction for those who love history and its sites. The Dakhaliya with its special blend of heritage, nature and modern achievements is a good example of the panorama that is Oman.



War and peace - A fort and palm trees

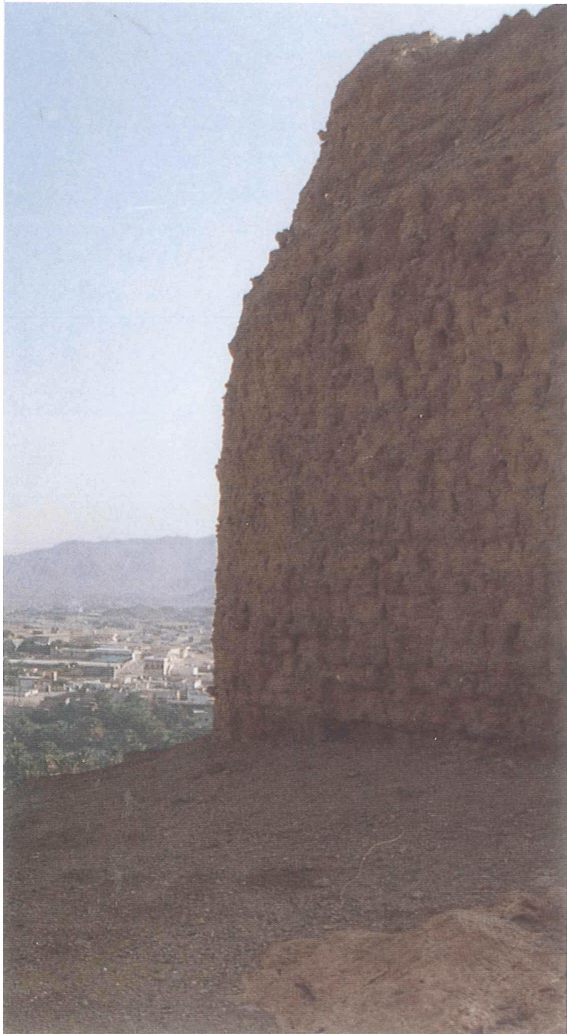




The Wilayats



A legacy of the past



Every inhabited place in Oman benefits from modern services, even that place which is kissed by the first rays of the sun in the morning - Jabal Al Shams - bears witness to the achievements of the era of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos.



Nizwa Mosque and Fort

The Pearl of Islam

It was a stronghold of leaders and powerful men, a refuge for scholars and jurists, a place frequented by poets and men of literature, a city of great importance in the hearts of the Omanis, a place of high standing, an eminent place of august worth.

It is important not only because it was the political capital in ancient times, but also because it was a place giving rise to many jurists of the religious sciences who spread Islam abroad. The city of Nizwa is 180 kilometres from the Governorate of Muscat, the present capital of the Sultanate of



Oman. It possesses a wealth of a mosques, and forts and castles for its defence, some of which included institutes for science and knowledge.

It was one of the first towns in Oman to embrace Islam, and the mosque of Al Shawadhna, named after 'Issa Bin 'Abd Allah Bin Shadhan was the first

mosque in this area. The first mosque built in Oman is not far from here, just a few kilometres away at Sumail, where the Companion Mazen Bin Ghadhuba, the first Omani to embrace Islam lived. He built the first mosque called Masjid Al Midmar, which His Majesty Sultan Qaboos recently renovated at his own expense.

There are numerous other mosques in Nizwa the most important being Samad, which is still a seat of learning jurisprudence and Islamic sciences, and the mosque of Al 'Ain wa Al Sheikh.

Nizwa was covered with glory when it was given the name "the Pearl of Islam" because of all its schools of Islamic jurisprudence, scholars and disciples in all areas of Islamic studies. The scholars who graduated from there set out through Oman carrying science and knowledge and illuminating hearts and minds with the desire for God, and saving them from darkness.

The Imam Al Salat Al Kharusi, the Imam Jaber Bin Ziyad, the Sheikh Mohammed Bin Ibrahim Al Kindi, the Sheikh Al 'Ulama Bashir Bin Al Mandhar, Al Sheikh Ahmad Bin 'Abd Allah Bin Musa Al Kindi are some of the most outstanding scholars of Nizwa.

The Castles

This area is also famous for its forts and castles. The most important are Nizwa fort, which was built by the Imam Sultan Bin Saif Al Ya'rubi and took 12 years to build. It was finished in 1668 AD and the diameter of its circular tower is more than 37 metres. It has fortifications as well as fortified defensive towers. Inside there are places for worship and prayer, places for government administration and 7 wells for fresh water. There is also the fort of Tanuf, with three towers, which is at the foot of Jabal Al Akhdar, and the fort of Al Radida, in a strategic location governing the



His Majesty The Sultan presents the prize of Nizwa City to the Wali

entrance to the wadi leading to Jabal Al Akhdar. It was built in the era of Al Ya'ruba and Al Sayid Mohammed, son of the Imam Ahmad Bin Sa'id, added to it.

Nizwa is also famous for making leather, gold and silver handicrafts, khanjars, wedding jewelry,

swords and other handicrafts embellished in the wonderful Omani way.

The capital, Nizwa

Since the era of the Imam Mohammed Bin Abi 'Afan in the year 177 AH the Imams of Oman



adopted Nizwa as their capital. The late Sheikh Salim Al Siabi outlines the reasons for changing the capital from Sohar to Nizwa. He says "Oman was exposed to numerous attacks from the Persians, and from Indian pirates, so the Muslims decided to move the capital of the Imamate from Sohar to

Nizwa. Nizwa was considered a place which offered greater resistance and was more inaccessible, a place where they could establish their authority. The Imam agreed and after that they rarely left Nizwa, except for important matters.

So Nizwa became the seat of the Imamate in Oman and the headquarters was in the fort. In the era of the Imam Ghasan, Nizwa was called "the residence of the King of the Arabs" as well as the "Pearl of Islam".

The Fort

The last word on the esteem and glory of Nizwa comes from His Majesty Sultan Qaboos himself, in a speech he made on the 18th November 1994, at the celebration of the Year of Heritage in this city. He described it as a city of history, science and heritage, with its original proud fort. His Majesty added "the city of Nizwa has played an outstanding role in the path of Omani civilization and is still doing so. It was the stronghold of leaders and powerful men and a refuge for scholars and jurists, a place frequented by poets and men of literature, this city is of great importance in the hearts of Omanis, being a place of a high standing, an eminent place of august worth".

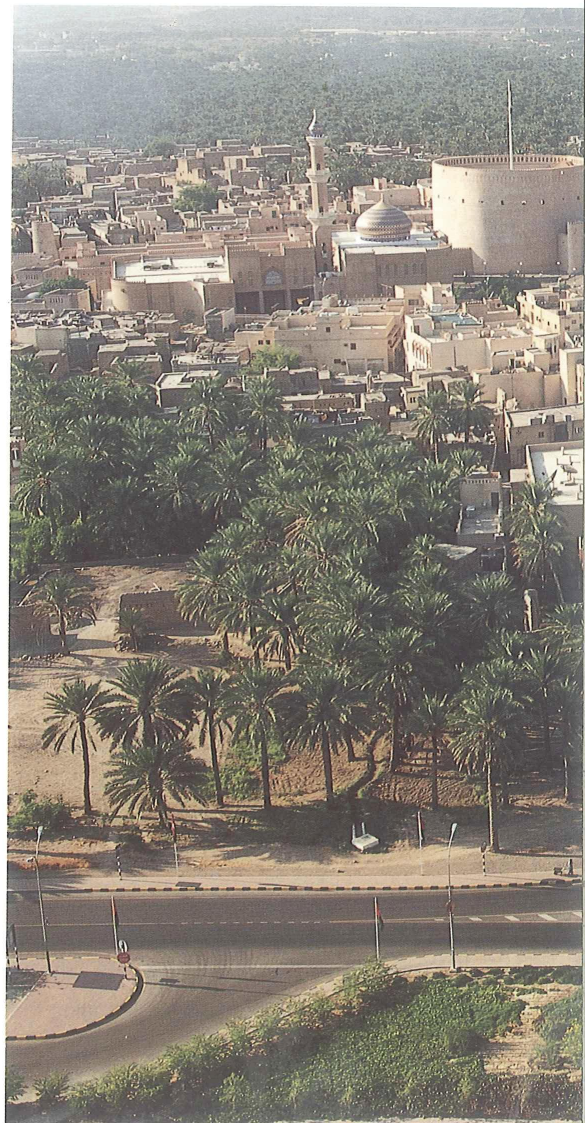
On the same occasion His Majesty issued a decree establishing an institute for judges in Nizwa, which prepares Sharia' judges and jurists which the courts will have need of in the next stage of development. The members of this institute obtain a university degree in civil and Sharia' law and when they graduate they are granted a higher diploma which qualifies them to enter the judiciary.

With all this it is no wonder that the Omani Ministry of Information chose the name "Nizwa" for the first serious, quarterly, cultural magazine, which was published for the first time in November 1994.

Wilayat Nizwa

The number of inhabitants in the Dakhaliya is about 229,791, 87% are Omanis.

There are 58,582 inhabitants in the Wilayat of Nizwa. In the Wilayat of Bahla there are 46,119 people. There are 38,403 inhabitants in the Wilayat of Sumail. In the Wilayat of Izki there are 29,836 people. There are 18,026 inhabitants in the Wilayat of Bidbid. In the Wilayat of Al Hamra there are 14,390 people. There are 13,817 inhabitants in the Wilayat of Adam. In the Wilayat of Manah there are 10,618 people.



Nizwa City





Nizwa at night

Located in the heart of the Dakhaliya, it is bounded by the Wilayats of Izki, Adam and Al Hamra. It has two localities (niyaba) - Jabal Al Akhdar and Birkat Al Mauz. The total number of inhabitants is 58,582. Nizwa Fort heads the list of important archaeological features in the Wilayat. It is 24 metres high with an external diameter of 43 metres and an internal diameter of 39 metres. Seven wells are located in it, and numerous openings for those defending the fort and the city during the wars of ancient times. There are also prison cells, which were used to punish wrongdoers.

This was the headquarters of the Ruler. It was built by the Imam Sultan Bin Saif Bin Malik Al Ya'rubi.



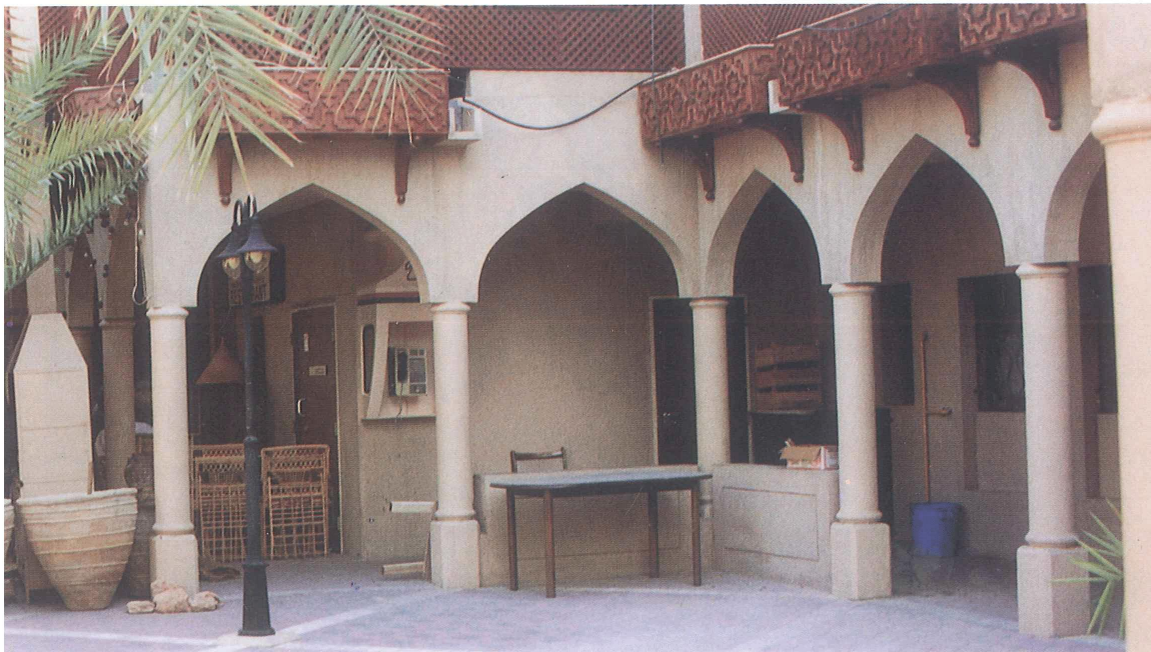
Beautification and antiquities in Nizwa

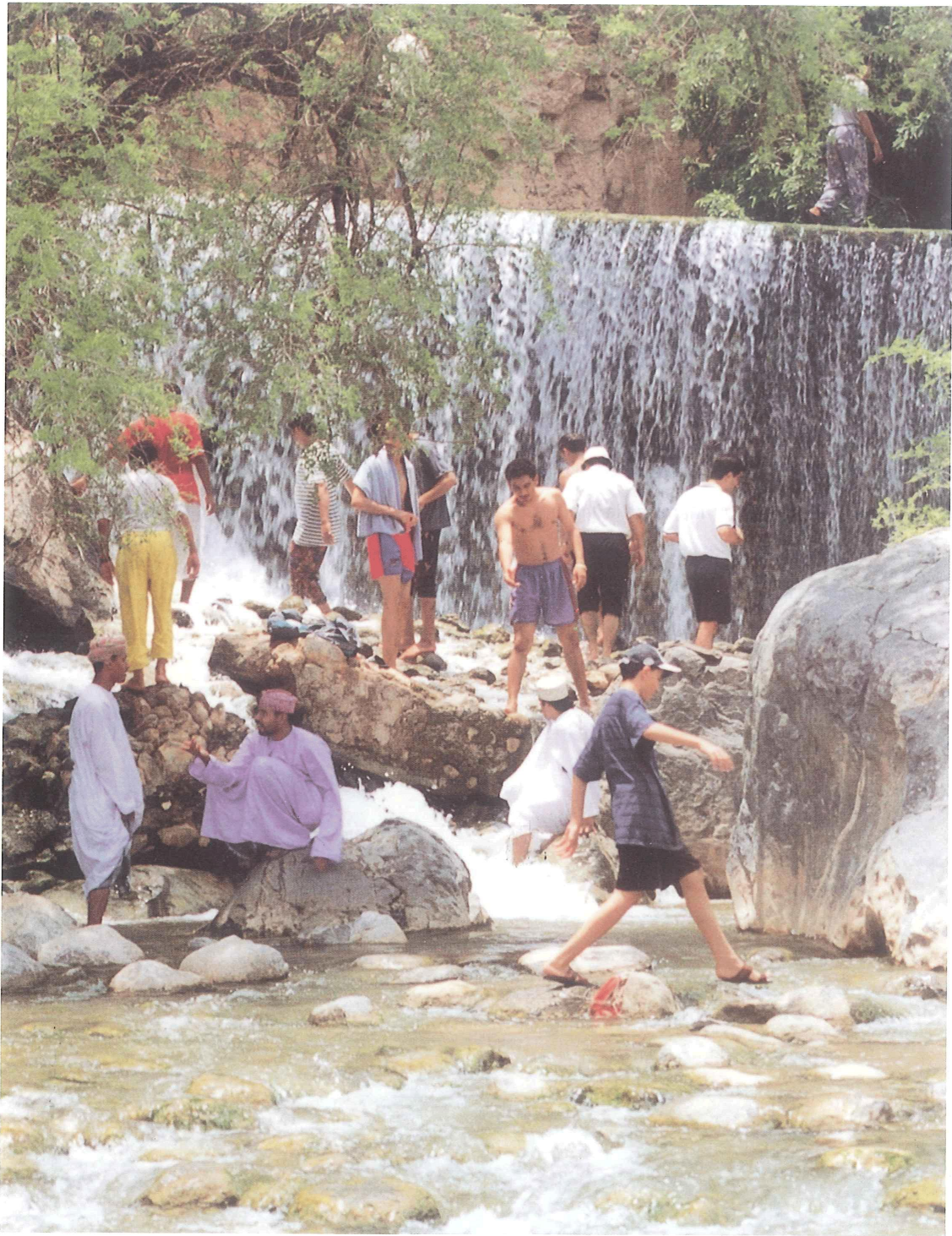


There is a second fort in Nizwa, built in the era of Imam Al Salat Bin Malik, which was the headquarters of the Wali. Nizwa Mosque, where Friday Prayers were held in the time of the Imams, is famous as a beacon of science. So'al Mosque was also built in the time of Imam Al Salat Bin Malik in the 2nd century of the Hijra. The Al Shawadhana Mosque, attributed to 'Isa Bin 'Abd Allah Bin Shadhan is located in the 'Aqr district. Al Sharja Mosque, located in So'al was built in 727 A.H. In addition there are the mosques of Al 'Ain, built by the Imam Al Mahna Bin Jafar, and Al Sheikh, built by the Ulema Bashir Bin Al Mandhar in the era of Imam Al Jalanda Bin Mas'ud, and Al Sharij in Tanuf which was built in the time of Omar Bin Nabhan in

337 A.H. There are three forts, Tanuf Fort in the village of the same name, Bait Salit in the Wilayat of Nizwa, and Al Radida, in Birkat Al Mauz, which was built in the Al Ya'rubia era and restored and added to by Al Sayid Mohammed, the son of Imam Ahmad Bin Sa'id.

Falaj and springs abound in this area, there are more than 89, the most important and famous is Falaj Daras which is distinguished by its width and length. In addition there is the rich market of Nizwa which was recently renovated, preserving its historical character. Besides all these sights there is Jabal Al Akhdar with its agricultural terraces, falaj and springs which are a wonderful tourist feature, being visited by tourists more and more (about 3000





Tourists enjoy the picturesque falls at Wadi Tanuf



a year). The Wilayat of Nizwa depends on these falaj and springs for its irrigation. There is a dam in Wadi Tanuf called Wadi Tanuf Dam, which took 14 months to build. This project was finished in the second half of December 1989 at a cost of approximately 1,300,000 Omani Riyals. This dam is one of the achievements of the March of Prosperity of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos. Its aim is to increase the subterranean water which feeds the falaj of Tanuf and the stream of Wadi Tanuf in addition to Falaj Daras in Wadi Al Abyad, and the wells between Tanuf and Nizwa. This increase in subterranean water between Tanuf and Nizwa has made it possible to increase the agricultural area. It is estimated that the lake behind the dam is about



Traditional jewellery and khanjars



0,70 million cubic metres and can be emptied by opening the two main sluices. It takes four days to drain. The dam, 135 metres long, is located on the water course of Wadi Tanuf which is famous for its mineral water.

The most important wadis in the Wilayat are Wadi Al Abyad, which spawns the famous Daras Falaj, which is the most important and biggest falaj in the Sultanate. There is also Wadi Tanuf with the falaj of the same name.

There are numerous occupations in the Wilayat of Nizwa. These industries produce dates, red sugar, Omani sweets, they practice weaving, tan leather, make rose water and work gold and silver. The traditional songs are the Razha, 'Azi for men, and the Wailiya for women.

The modern renaissance, led by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, has turned its hand, over the last 25

years, to this Wilayat of science and history. In the field of modern education there are now more than 20 schools, primary, preparatory and secondary. There is also a Technical Industrial College, an Islamic Institute, an Agricultural Institute and a Trade School. In the field of health services, there is a hospital and a public health unit with another hospital in the locality (niyaba) of Jabal Al Akhdar, together with a health centre in the locality (niyaba) of Birkat Al Mauz. There is also a nursing institute.

Government offices and directorates are distributed throughout the Wilayat of Nizwa. The most important are: the General Directorate of Education and Training, the General Directorate of Health Services, the General Directorate of Municipalities, Regions and Environment, the General Directorate of Agriculture and Animal Resources, the Housing Department, the



Classrooms are full of keen students



Municipality, Trade and Industry, Social Affairs, the Public Organization for Youth Activities, Sport and Culture, Electricity, Water, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Water Resources, the Hijra Department, Post, the Office of the Public Organization of Telecommunications, an office for collecting and distributing agricultural produce, a department for developing local organizations, a factory for dried



His Majesty the Sultan opens the Royal Oman Police Academy at Nizwa



dates, the central market, the Labour Office, the Passport Office, Police Headquarters, Criminal Court, Sharia' Court, and the Wali's Office, in addition to Nizwa Police Academy.



Beautiful inscriptions on a door

Suspended Channels

The locality (niyaba) of Birkat Al Mauz is famous for the channel of its falaj, Al Khatmin, which slopes down from the heights of Jabal Al Akhdar. It was dug in the time of Imam Sultan Bin Saif Al Ya'rubi, known as Qid Al Ard, and at times is suspended above the ground. This locality is also famous for growing banana trees which is probably where its name comes from. There is also the Bait Al Radida, Al Radida was one of the outstanding teachers of history in the Wilayat of Nizwa. All these tourist features benefit from the care of the government.

The Police Academy is an important cornerstone in the development of the police. It conducts courses for both new recruits and refresher courses giving scientific training on how to deal with modern equipment in the field of police work and other relevant disciplines which help the police perform their duties. Courses are given, for example on, finger printing, the identification of criminals, photographing criminals, and Islamic Law, etc. The Academy has various departments and facilities, such as the research department, the procedures department, the training of new recruits department, and the department of special training, which includes sports and self defence. All these help improve the level of performance of officers of various ranks in the field of their speciality and in accordance with the demands and needs of their work. The Academy also organizes courses aimed at raising the general efficiency of officers and legal and administrative staff.

In the last few years a complex has been established, which is a model for providing services for the inhabitants, and is equipped with the latest technology. This complex is a wonderful step in the field of practical training which qualifies men of the



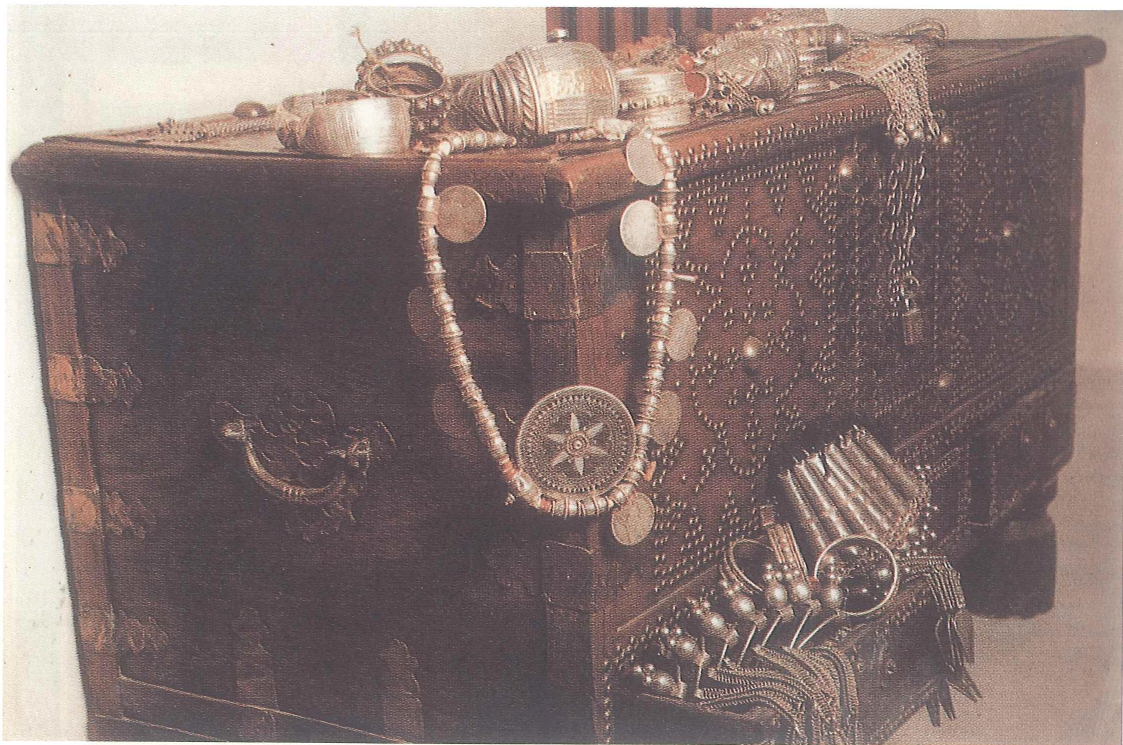
Facilities in modern Nizwa market



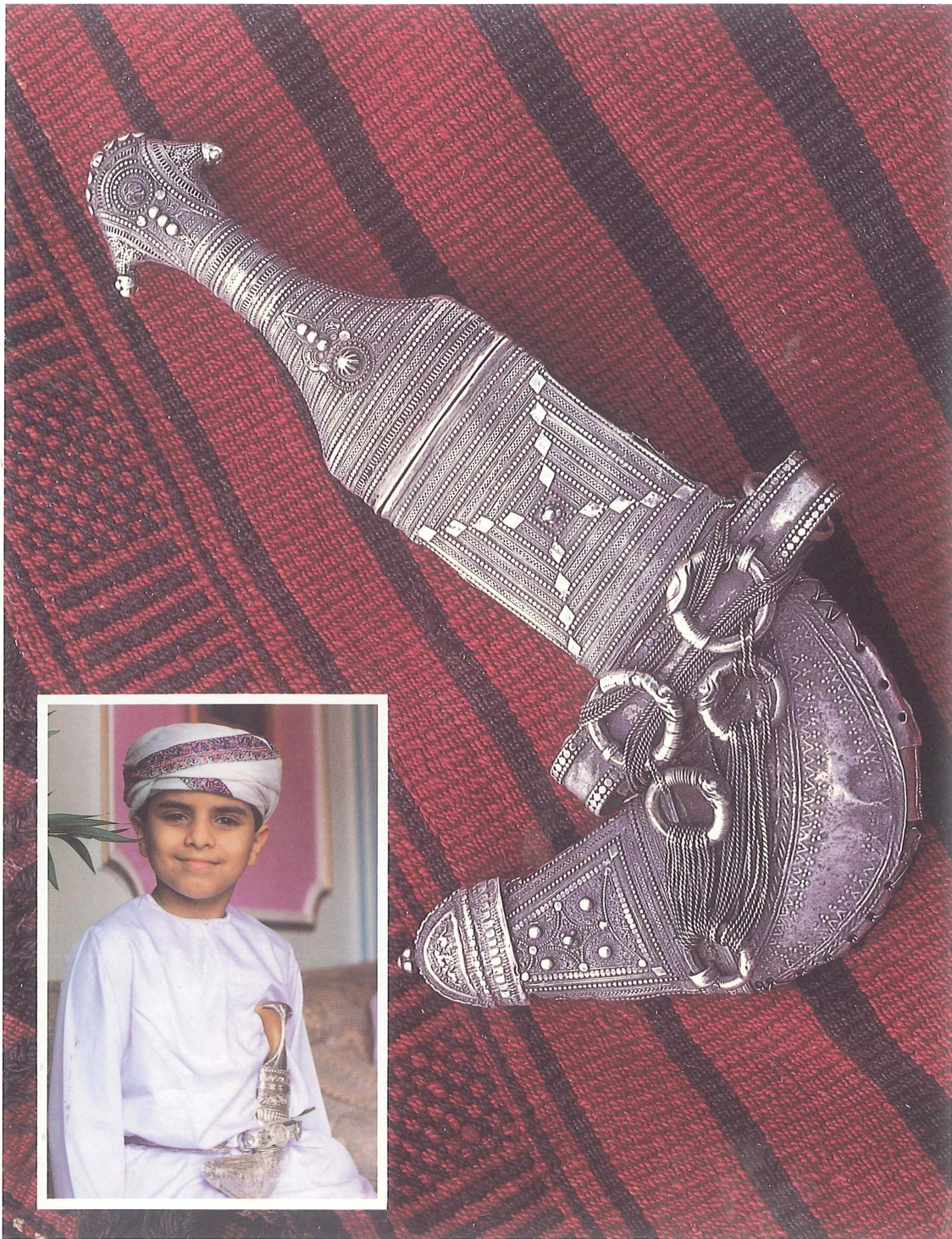
Oman Police Force to carry out the work entrusted to them in the service of their country and vigilance of its security, safety and stability.

One of the products of the Renaissance has been the building of Nizwa market, which was part of the development and beautification project for the ancient city and cost 2.5 million Omani Riyals. The market covers an area about 7,600 square metres and has a number of separate buildings. One building for vegetables, one for fruit, one for meat and poultry, one for fish, one for dates and one for traditional handicrafts. In addition there is a restaurant and other services. The market is located next to Nizwa fort and was designed to compliment it. It is 7 metres long and has three huge gates, each one 3 metres high. Some of the gates open onto the neighbouring date garden and onto the old markets, which have been preserved for their

historical and cultural value. The market was built in the traditional style of the city of Nizwa with all the walls painted with a local material called "Saruj" which is a gypsum material burnt more than once until it is brown. This is the same material which is used for Nizwa fort so the market blends in well. Perhaps this is why Nizwa won the prize of the Organization of Arab Cities in 1993. The old souk, which has also been restored without violating its natural construction, is located in the area near Nizwa fort in the centre of the city. It is characterized by its narrow all ways which have little shops on either side for gold and silver workers, people selling traditional produce of the Dakhaliya area, such as dates, dried dates, rose water from Masafa Al 'Abriin in the Jabal Al Akhdar, and citrus fruits. Others sell old rifles and ammunition, some of which date back to the last century and are of the type that



Valuables are kept in a traditional chest



The khanjar, symbol of manhood



fire only one shot. Others make and sell khanjars, and those of the Dakhaliya region are mid way between being straight and curved. Yet others sell Omani sweets which Nizwa is famous for because of the red sugar which they produce there.

Nizwa industrial area is the fourth in the Sultanate after Rusail, Sohar and Raysut. It is located near the village of Timsa' on the street leading to the Police Academy. It covers an area of 3 million square metres. The first stage has 130 pieces of land of 1,200 square metres, 104 pieces of land 2400 square metres, and 53 pieces of land of various size. These 287 pieces of land add up to a total of 26.27 hectares of which 1.38 hectares are given over to public services. These services include a power station, a mosque, an administrative building, a water tank, and a water treatment plant. The last stage of the industrial area covers 82.57 hectares. The total cost of the industrial area is 2,500,000 Omani Riyals.

The Youth Complex in the Wilayat of Nizwa is one of the most important projects the Wilayat has benefited from in recent years. Here, the celebrations for the 24th National Day (the Year of Heritage) were held. His Majesty made one of his most important historical speeches which outlined the work of the nation in construction, modernization and renovation.

The sports complex is located in Seih Al Kuds and covers 443,000 square metres and includes a grandstand in the sports stadium for about 15,000 spectators, with 2000 seats for important people in a special covered area with the royal box in the middle. There is also an information centre for television, radio and newspapers with a special room for announcers, where all the equipment

necessary for broadcasting television and a public address system can be found. Together with a room for lighting equipment, a changing room for players, a first aid room, a prayer room, a general store, a room with a fire fighting control system, a room for equipment for the public address system and a police centre. There is also a six lane track and a grass area for track and field events, which is surrounded by safety fencing and advertising



Nizwa Youth Complex



hordings.

The administrative building is comprised of meeting halls, reception halls, a cafeteria, stores and toilets etc. The outside fence surrounding the youth complex has a number of gates and entrances, which are guarded. There are also car parks, including one for important people.

The Complex has two centres, one for tree planting and gardening and one for general

maintenance.

Jabal Al Akhdar, with its low temperatures which drop below zero during the winter, also benefits from long periods of rainfall, making it a good supply of water. The villages located at the foot of these mountains use this water for irrigation, and the land there is covered with fruit trees and various types of vegetables. The most important of these are grapes, pomegranates, walnuts, almonds, apples, pears,



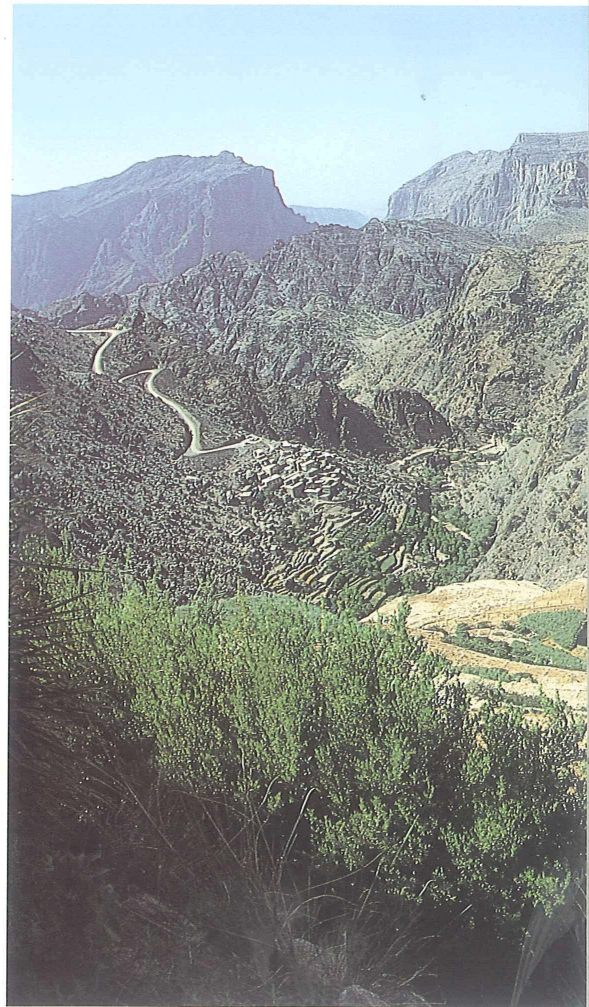


lemons, and olives. Milk is also produced. This area also has the Falaj Al Kabiri which irrigates nearby fields and stretches for a distance of more than 1000 metres, as well as the falaj of Al Qanti and Al A'war.

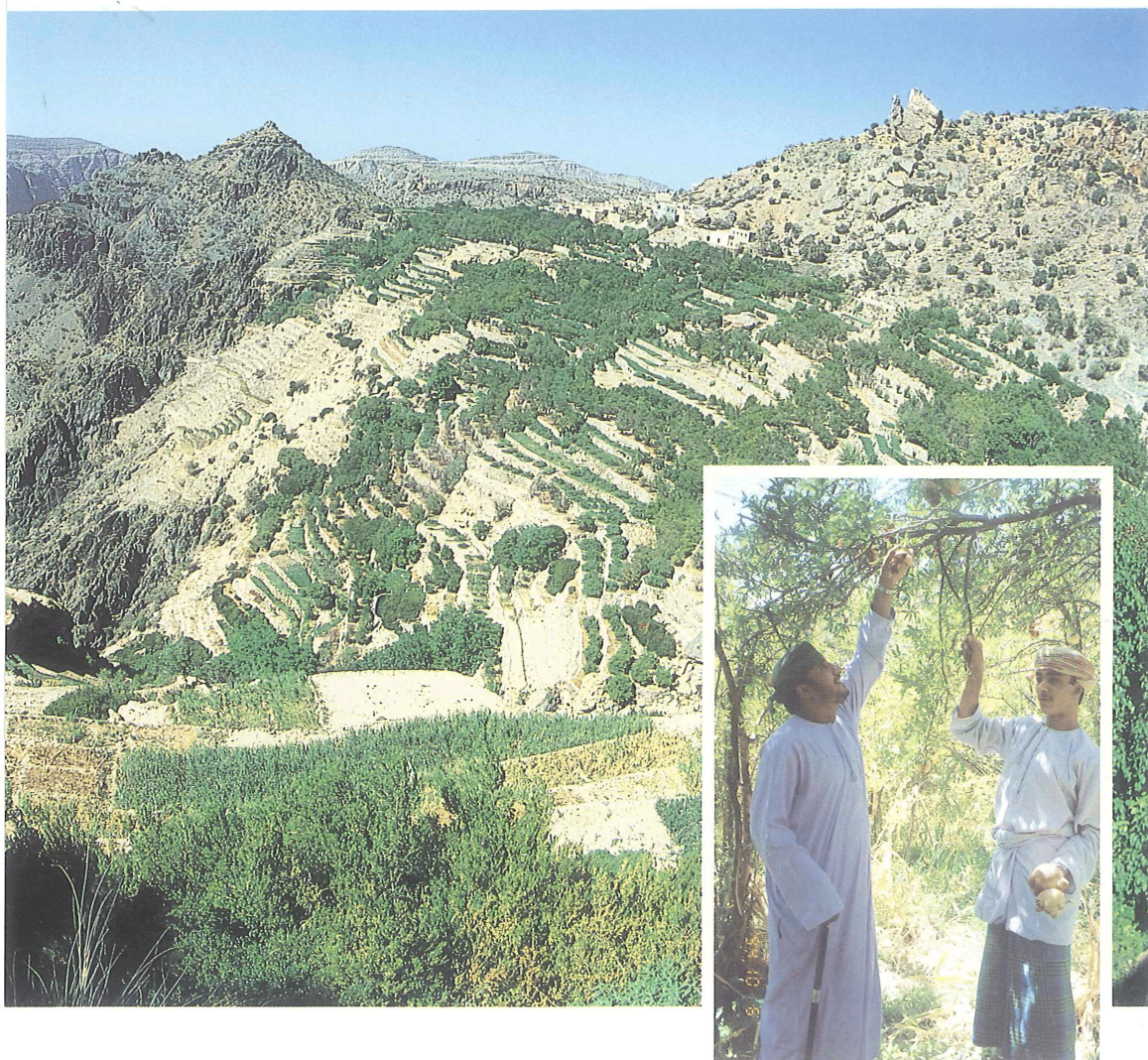
The locality of Jabal Al Akhdar has benefited from the special care of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos who ordered a complete development plan. This plan has been implemented and there is now a modern hospital with about 27 beds including a maternity department, a children's department, x-ray department etc. The Wilayat has also been provided with education services, electricity, water, communications, social care for the needy, housing and municipal services. The government makes continuous efforts to develop the Jabal Al Akhdar region and in this the Armed Forces of the Sultanate provide special services. They build mountain roads to reach the places that are inaccessible, to help in linking the areas of the Sultanate. Thus the Armed Forces participate in the development of the country in addition to the original and vital role of providing security and stability and preserving the peace of the country and its sovereignty. The Armed Forces also participate in providing transport services to carry provisions and building materials for the inhabitants of the Jabal Al Akhdar and other remote and rugged areas, which are difficult to reach by ordinary means of transport. They also provide health services in the form of the "flying doctor" a medical team which is flown by helicopter to Jabal Al Akhdar to provide medical services to the citizens where ever they may be.

**At the end of 1994 there were
23 trade bank branches in the
Dakhaliya.**

In 1970 there were none.

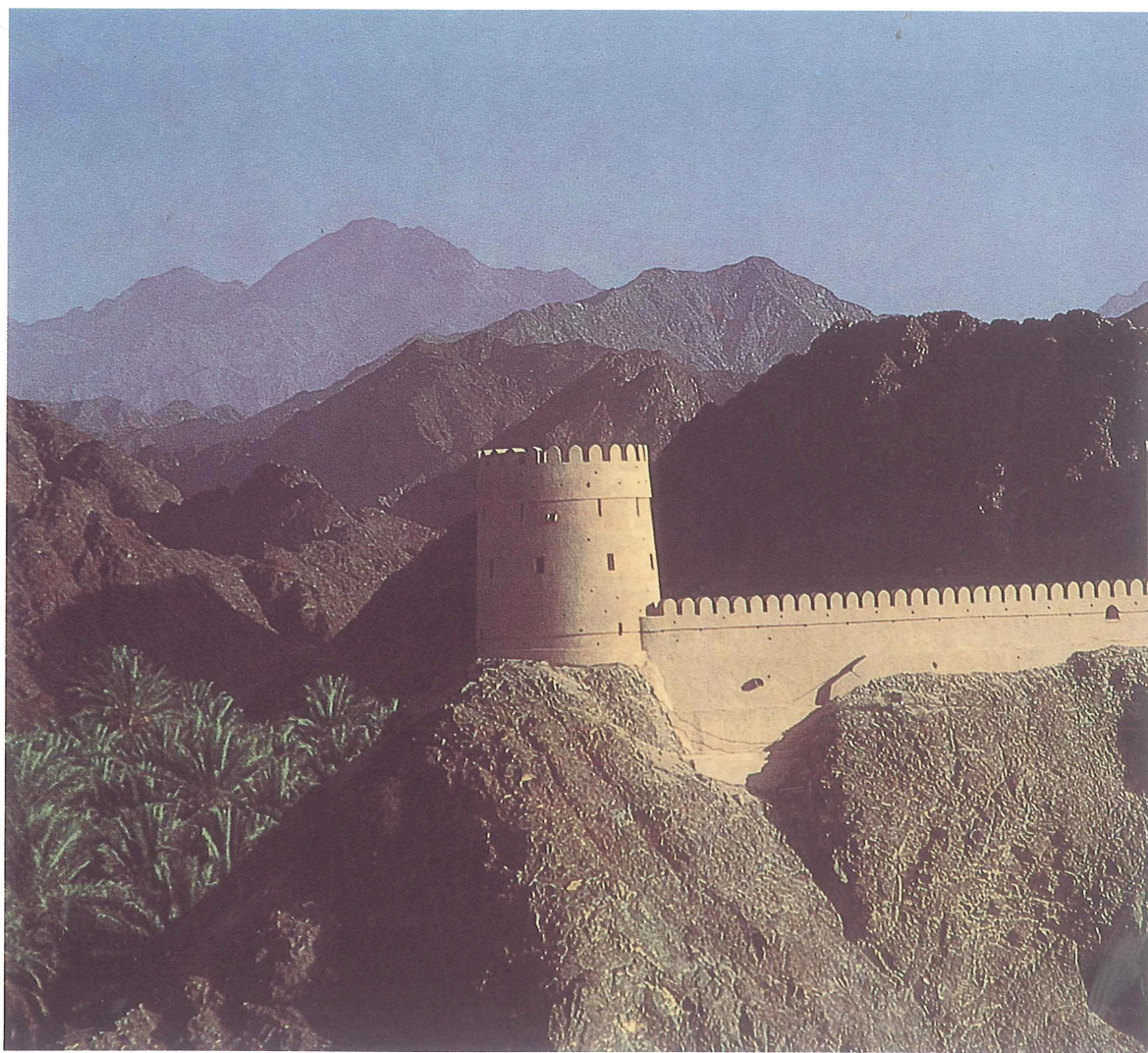


Al Jabal Al Akhdar

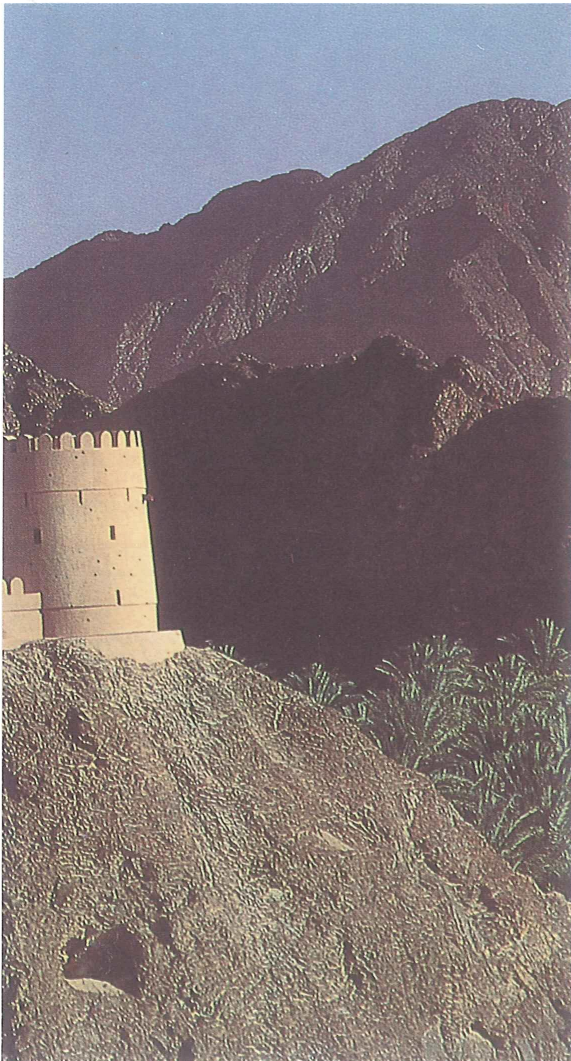




Wilayat Sumail



The fort at Wilayat Sumail



The number of people benefiting from social security in one year alone, 1994, was about 5,891. In 1970 there was no social security system.



Old towers in Sumail

Sumail is surrounded by a chain of towering mountains and their wadis play a big role in dividing the mountains of Al Hajar into two chains, the

Western Hajar chain with Jabal Al Akhdar as its summit, and the Eastern Hajar chain with Jabal Saman as its summit. There are 38,403 inhabitants

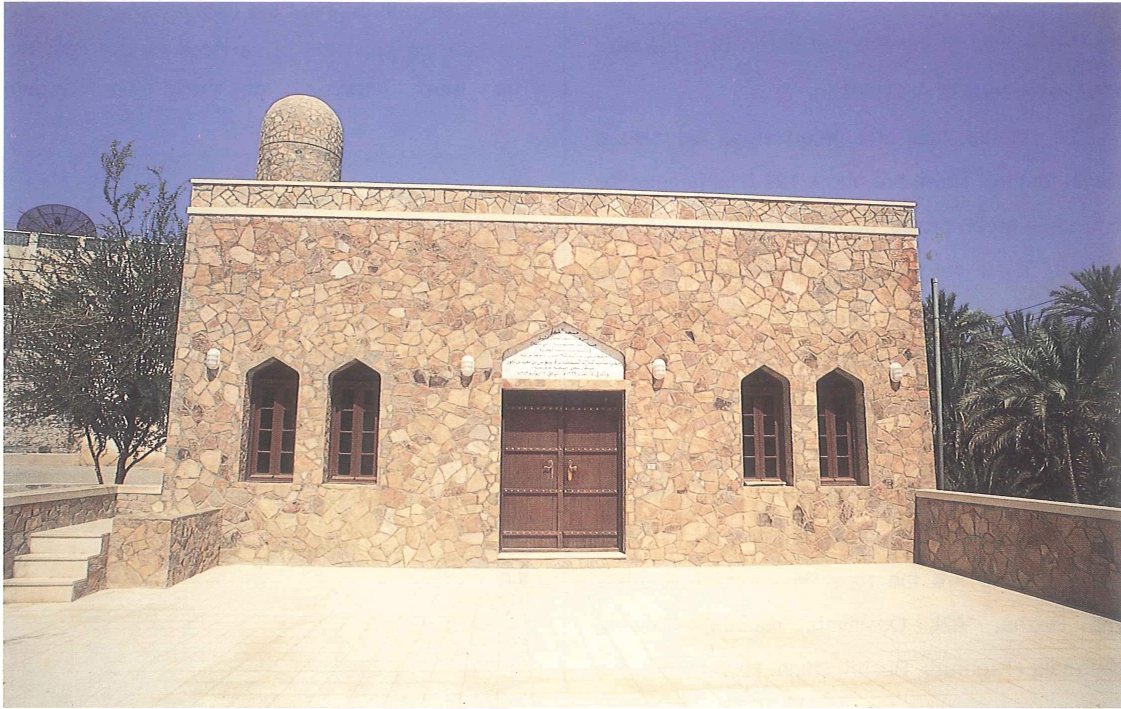


Green Sumail



in 55 villages. The Wilayat of Sumail is famous, historically, in that it was the first Omani area to embrace Islam at the hand of the Companion of the

Prophet Mazan Bin Ghadhuba. He built the first mosque in Sumail, in the 9th century of the Hijra, the Mosque of Mazen, which is now known as



Mazin bin Ghaduba Mosque



Masjid Al Midmar.

The Wilayat of Sumail is a place for imams, scholars and jurists who have played an outstanding role in building Islamic civilization in the service of the true and tolerant belief. The Wilayat is also famous for its fort, rooted in the past but which no one knows who built. The last person to restore it was Imam Nasir Bin Murshid Al Ya'rubī. The Wilayat, in fact, has about 115 castles, forts and towers, however the most important is the fort of Sumail which is located on one of the mountainous



hills in the centre of the city together with its towering castle and tower called Burj Al Daw'aa. There are also about 300 mosques of historical importance, the most important being the mosque of the Companion of the Prophet Mazin Bin Ghadaba and the mosque of Al Qiblatain.

The springs, falaj and green areas are also a tourist feature. There are about 194 falaj famous for their large green oases, gardens and trees adjacent to them. There are many palm trees, especially the palm "Al Fard" which is the symbol of the Wilayat. There are also 15 springs.

There are various occupations, industries and traditional songs. Weaving, textiles, pasturage are the most important occupations, and tanning, weaving palm leaves, gold and silver working, and sweet making are the most important industries. The Razha, 'Azi, Qasifiyah, Nadabi, Masinia, Maradafa (Taghrud), Bushri, Dana, Rababa and the Mizmar are the traditional songs.

The most important agricultural products are animal fodder, fruit and vegetables, citrus fruits and dates for which the Wilayat is famous. The most important types of dates are the Naghal, Fardh, Handhal, Khanizi, Mabsali and Khasab.

The modern features of the Wilayat of Sumail developed during the era of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos are many. In the field of education there are 20 modern schools for boys and girls in the three stages of education, primary, preparatory and secondary. In the field of health care there is Sumail Hospital which has a number of units and health centres providing medical care for citizens throughout the Wilayat. There is also a textile

factory which brings modernization to this traditional occupation for which the Wilayat is famous - a blend of old and new.

There are also various government offices and departments throughout the Wilayat to provide and facilitate the provision of services for the citizens. The most important of these are Sumail



Traditional handicrafts



Municipality, the Housing Office, the Post Office, the Labour Office, the Department of Water Resources, the Agricultural Department, the Electricity Office, the Office for Education and Training, Sumail Sports Club, a Police unit, the Sharia' Law Court and the Wali's Office.

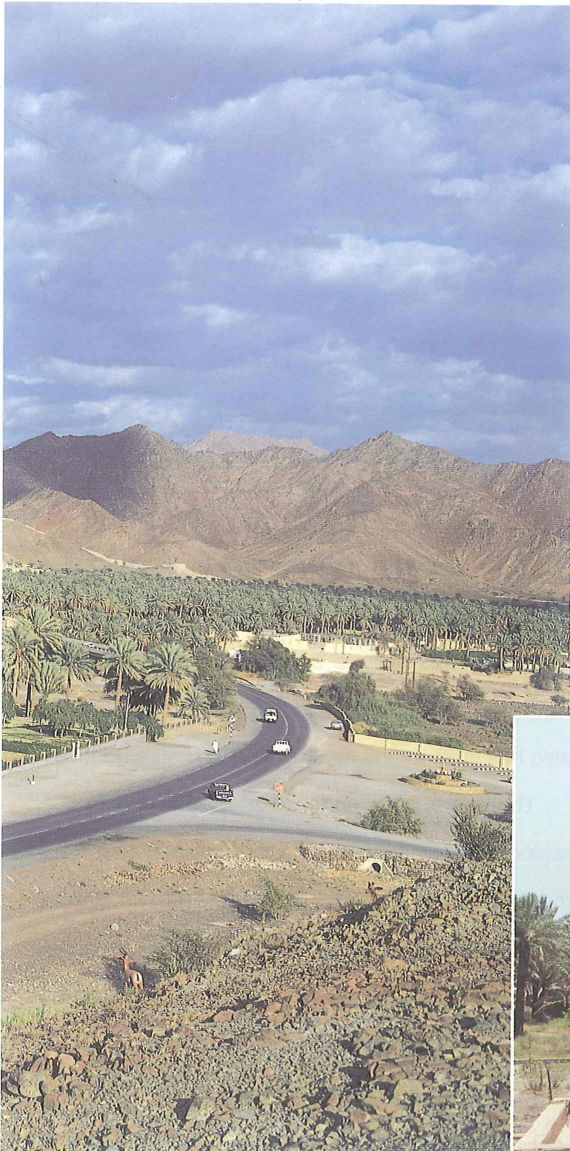




Wilayat Bahla



Bahla



14,377,000 Riyals, 12.8% of the total amount spent on social housing in the Sultanate, was used in the Dakhaliya. The government built 1889 social housing units in the Wilayats of the Dakhaliya for those of limited income. In 1970 there was no social housing.





A road enters a village

This Wilayat neighbours the Wilayat of Ibri, part of the Dhahira region, and the Wilayats of Nizwa, Al Hamra and Manah of the Dakhaliya region. It has many wadis, the most important being Nakhar, A'ala, Sidham and Wadi Quriyat. There are about 46,119 inhabitants. It is considered as one of the most important archaeological places in the Sultanate of Oman, having many castles and forts. Foremost among these is Bahla fort which dates back to the Jahiliya period. It is of international historical importance and has been included in the list of sites of international heritage by Unesco.

The Wilayat is surrounded by a wall about 7 miles long, and has 7 gates. It is like a fortification, protecting it from outside attack in ancient times.

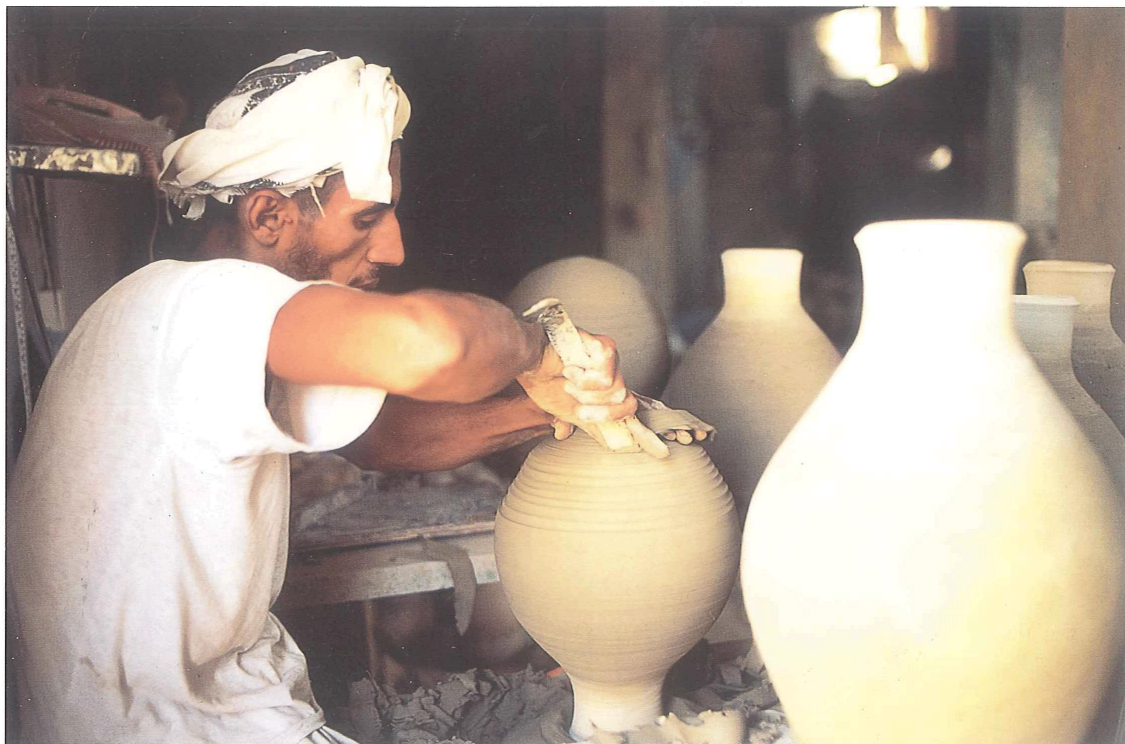
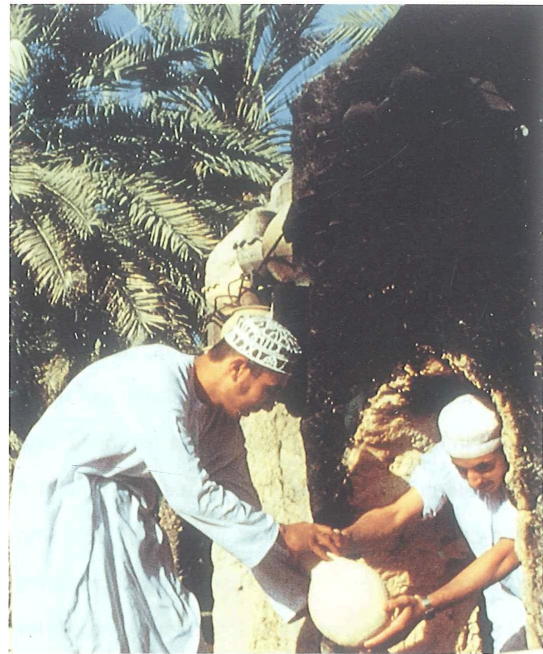
The fort of Jabrin, which was built by Imam Bal'arb Bin Sultan Bin Saif Al Ya'rubi, is also located in this Wilayat. It was built as a palace for the Imam and his family and as a defensive fort in times of war. It also has halls for the study of Islamic jurisprudence.

There are other forts such as the one in the region of Bisia, which has many towers, and 'Aqir fort, where there is also a castle and two towers besides the ancient market and the fort in Bahla town itself. The Wilayat has about 24 ancient and modern mosques, and about 32 springs and falaj.

There are a number of occupations, industries and traditional songs as well as some popular/folk games. Gold and silver working, making swords, khanjars, blades, kohl jars and chains, copper



working, making woven and wooden handicrafts, and sweet making. There is also a pottery factory. The traditional songs are the Razha, 'Azi, Ta'uita, the contest of swords and blowing of trumpets, and the popular games are the Ram, Sula, Mazra, Huta, Shabah and La'ba Al Qadhima. Over the last 25 years the Wilayat has benefited from modern facilities and services propelling its citizens into the modern era with hopes for a prosperous future. There are now 29 boys and girls schools for the various stages of education, primary, preparatory and secondary. In the area of health services there is a central hospital in Bahla, besides three other health centres in Bisiya, Ma'mur and Ghafat. There



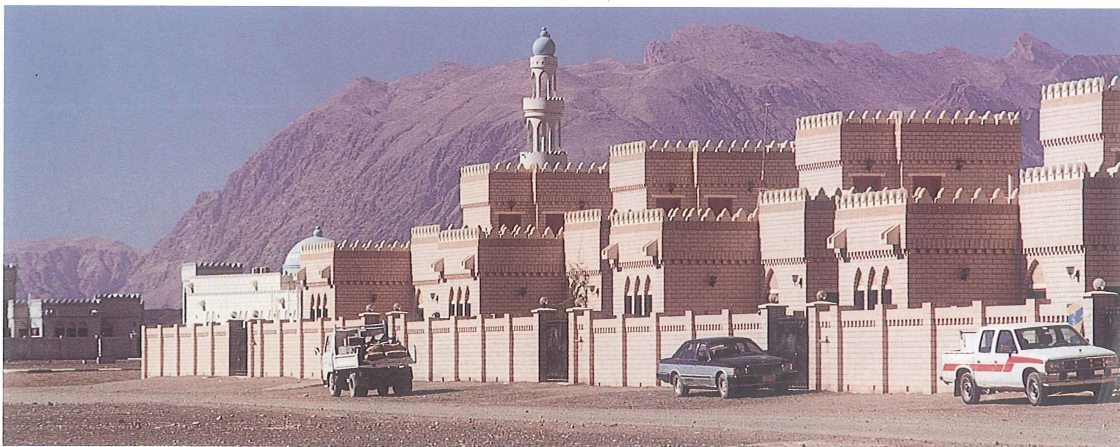
Traditional Bahla pottery-making



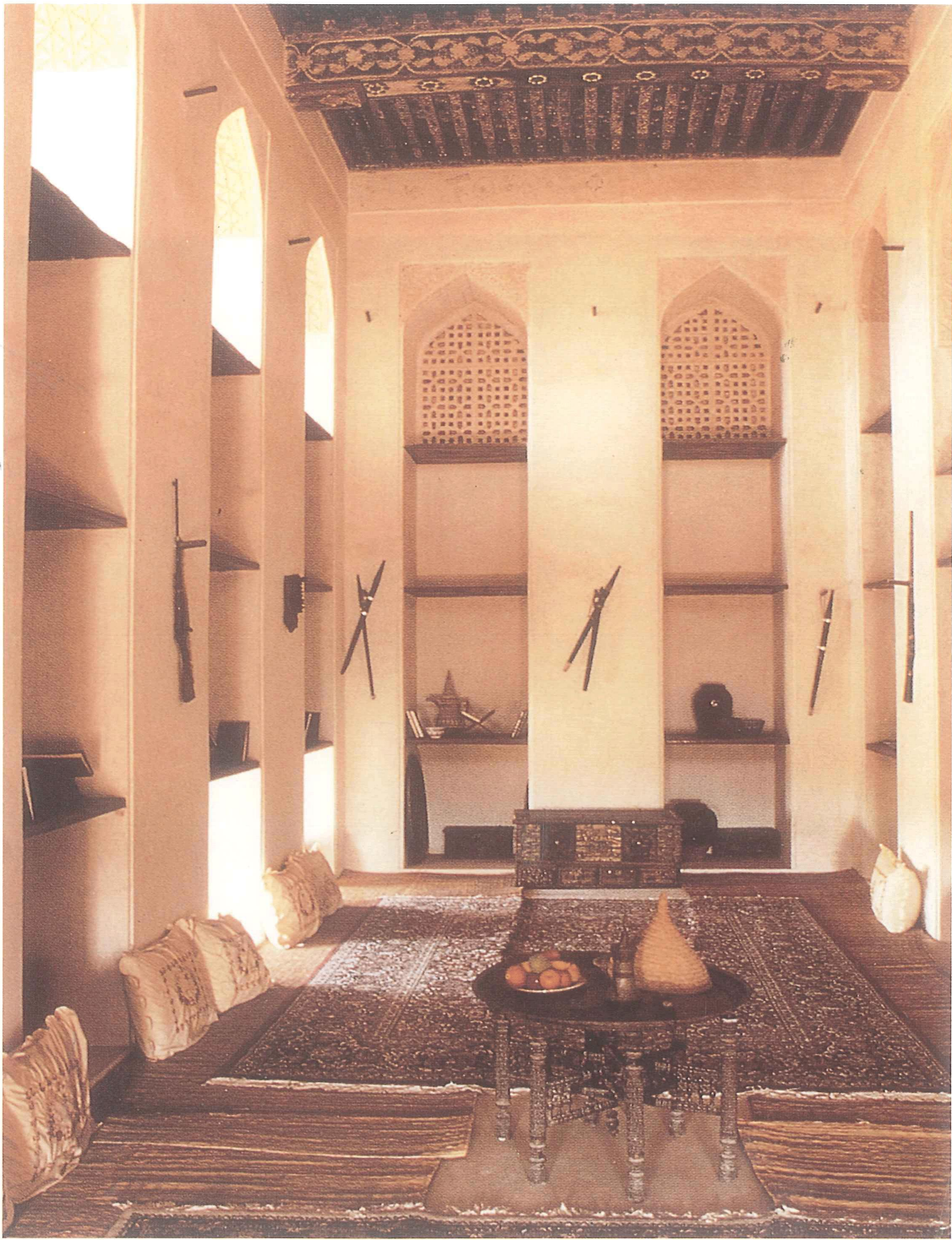
are also government offices such as the Office of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the Development Office, Post and Telecommunications Office, the Electricity Office, the Roads Office, Bahla Sports Club, Bahla Police Station, the Sharia Law Court and the Wali's Office. Within the framework of the government programme for developing agriculture and plant production and increasing varieties, a modern centre for agricultural research has been set up in Jamah in the Wilayat of Bahla. It has two units, one for research into the palm tree, and the other for research into crops of the field and fruit and vegetables. This agricultural research and guidance and support is used as a tool to achieve a model for inventing types of agricultural crops with high production that have a high resistance to desiccation and drought.

In the school year 1994/5 there were 121 government schools in the Dakhaliya for the various stages of education - primary, preparatory and secondary. 67,091 students studied in them.

In 1970 there were no modern schools. There are 20 centres for adult education distributed throughout the Wilayat, and 24 centres for eradicating illiteracy.



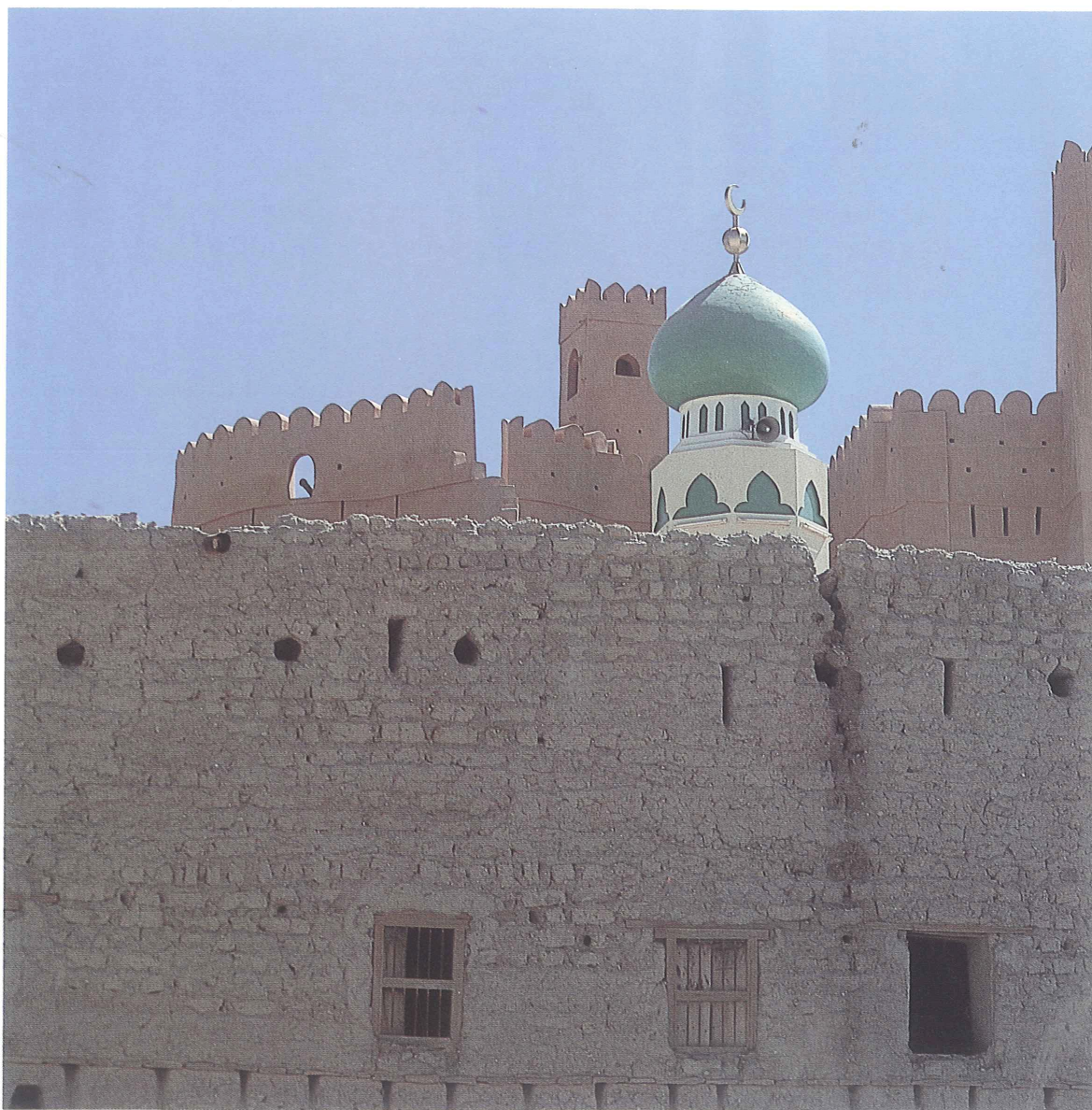
Subsidised homes provided by the government throughout the Sultanate



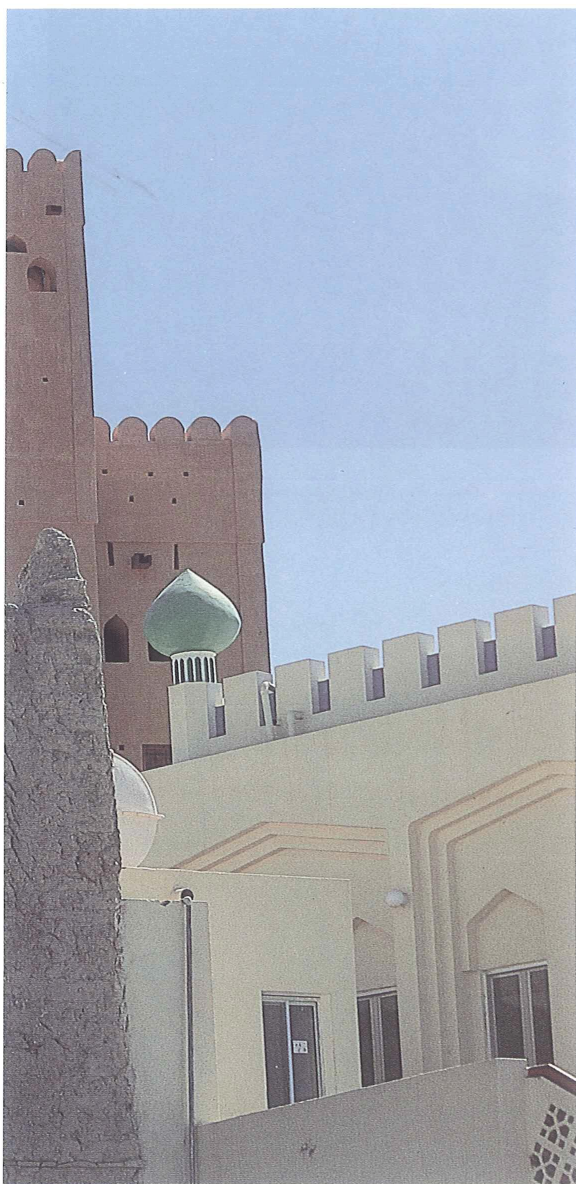
Jibrin Fort built by Imam Ba'larub in Sultan Al-Ya'rubi, restored during the reign of H. M. The Sultan



Wilayat Adam



The beautiful architecture of a mosque in Adam



At the end of 1994 there were six hospitals in the region with 394 beds, in addition to 10 health centres and 12 preventive health units.

In 1970 there were none of these of course.



Adam Mosque



Awaiting the arrival of H. M. The Sultan



This Wilayat is neighboured in the north by the Wilayats of Manah and Bahla and in the south by the Wilayats of Mahut and Haima, part of the Wusta region, in the south west the Wilayat of Ibri, part of the Dhahira, and in the east the Wilayat of Mudaibi, part of the Sharqiyah. It is about 295 kilometres from Muscat and is the main entrance to the Dakhaliya from the south. There are about 13,817 inhabitants living in more than 60 villages.

Some say that its name comes from "adim al ardh" (the surface of the earth), whilst others say it means "the fertile land which is located in the middle of the desert". Historical sources indicate that Harat Bani Shibani, in this Wilayat, was a meeting place for caravans in the time of the Jahiliya and archaeological finds, such as swords and coins, reinforce this. Harat Al Jama in the same



Wilayat, however, dates to after Islam - 717 AH.

In addition to these two places there are also other important archaeological sites such as the mosques of Al Jam'aa Al Mahlabiya Bint Al Mahlab Bin Abi Sufra, Al Rahba, Al Gharifa, Al Huashim Al Shiabana and Al Rugha. The most outstanding forts and castles are the two castles of Falaj Al 'Ain, the 2 castles of Falaj Al Malih, and the fort at Adam. It is estimated that there are about 30 towers. There is another mosque in the Wilayat of Adam around which are spun stories which are close to fables. The people of the region differ as to when it was built, or by who, or how, as there is no trace of building material. The name of this mosque adds to the mystery as it is called "Bani Ruh" i.e. the mosque which built itself. There are other areas in the Wilayat of Adam which are famous as the birth places of men who actively participated in the making of Omani history. The most outstanding area is "Al Busaid" mosque where the founder of the royal family, Al Imam Ahmad Bin Sa'id was born. His house is still standing today. There is also the Shiabna area, which historical sources indicate was the meeting place for trade caravans in the age of the Jahiliya, and Al 'Ain area where Darwish Bin Juma'a Al Mahruqi, the author of the book "Al Dalail Fi Al Lawazim wa Al Wasail", was born. Other outstanding scholars are Al Mahalub Bin Abi Sufra, Mohammed Bin Saif Al Shibani and Hasan Bin Harmil Al Mahruqi. Other tourist features are the springs. There are three in the Wilayat of Adam, two of them Rakhim and Jandali are located at the foot of Jabal Salakh, and Nama is located on the banks of Wadi Halfain. There are also 24 falaj, however, 20 of them have dried up and fallen into decay with the passing of time, so now only four remain.



Occupations and traditional industries are gold and silver working, weaving palm leaves, weaving wool, blacksmithery and making Omani sweets. The most outstanding songs are the Razha, 'Azi and Wana.

As with other Wilayats throughout the length and breadth of the Sultanate, Adam has benefited greatly from the March of Prosperity of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos. Government services and their offices are found throughout the Wilayat fulfilling the needs of the citizens. The most important achievements are the building of numerous schools for the three stages of education, primary, preparatory and secondary, Adam Hospital, post and telecommunications, transport and paved

roads, the municipality with its cleaning and beautification services, electricity and water, a centre for developing agriculture, a police station, the Sharia' law court and the Wali's office.



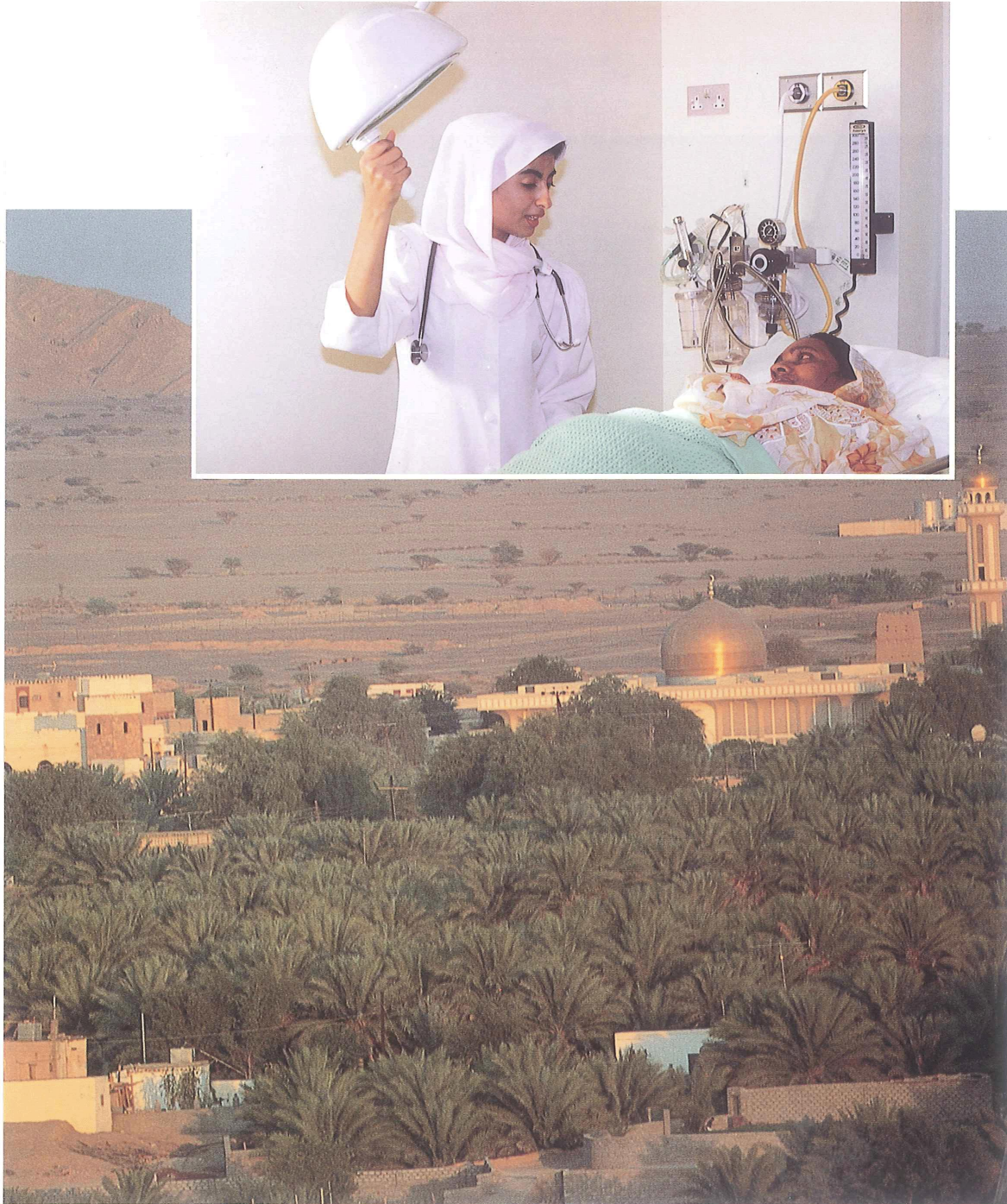
A falaj



Evening in Wilayat Adam



Health care





Wilayat Al Hamra



Nature in Wilayat Al Hamra



At the end of 1994, electricity output of the government power stations in the Dakhaliya was 120 million kilowatts per hour.

A gas powered station will soon be completed in the Wilayat of Manah, with a capacity of 120 megawatts to supply the Wilayats of the region with electricity and to dispense with the diesel unit which is currently in use. This diesel unit will be later installed in another region of the Sultanate.





A farm in Wilayat Al Hamra

Located in the north west part of Jabal Al Akhdar, it is bordered in the west by the Wilayat of Ibri, in the east by Nizwa, in the north by Rustaq and in the south by Bahla. It has 14,390 inhabitants living in 25 villages. It is best known for Musafa Al 'Abriin, the castle and the "Aridl".

Musafa Al 'Abriin is famous for its superb natural beauty, the agricultural terraces on the mountains and Jabal Shams with its soaring height which rises to about 12,000 ft. It is said that the name dates back to its creation when it received the first rays of the morning sun and the last rays in the evening.

There are a number of important archaeological features which confirm its great age. The most important are Hasaa Bin Salat which is a rock

engraved with writing and ancient pictures depicting bygone times. Roghan fort, with its strategic military position, in the town of Musafa dates to before Islam, and Al Furs fort in the town of Ghul in the west of the Wilayat, which was besieged by Malik Bin Fahm. They could not resist the siege for long and fled to the mountains. The mountain road between the valleys and through the ravines, called Sanbak Al Furs, is rutted by wooden wheels which indicates how ancient man depended on strong muscles to exist in this rugged area.

Since the advent of Islam in this Wilayat as in others, mosques have been built. The most outstanding is Jamia' Al 'Arid which can hold about 1000 people and has 62 columns. This indicates the



size of human habitation in this spot. It dates back to the 4th century A.H. There is also the Jamia' Al Qaria in the east of the town of Al Hamra, which can hold about 200 people.

There are other tourist features such as Bait Al Na'ma which was built long ago and is considered an architectural masterpiece of its age. The village of Al Nakhar is famous for its moderate climate in the summer months as well as for a number of caves, grottos and falaj. As this area is a mountainous one there are many valleys sloping from the tops of the mountains which make for wonderful scenery. The most important of the wadi's are Al Nakhar, Sahma, Al Malah and Wadi Ghul, where the dam of the same name is located. It is about one kilometre from the meeting point of Wadi Nakhar and Wadi Ghul, about 3.8 kilometres north west of the town of Al Hamra. It is 415 metres long and was finished in November 1989. It took about 14 months to build and cost about 1,200,000 Omani Riyals. It was built to improve the situation of underground water which feeds Falaj Al Hamra, the existing agricultural wells, the falaj and wells near Bahla and to increase the agricultural area. The size of the lake storing water at the dam is estimated at about 1.3 million cubic metres, it can be emptied by sluices over four days. It is expected that it will increase underground storage by about a cubic metre a year, on average.

Agriculture in the Wilayat of Al Hamra depends to a great extent on falaj, but a large area also depends on wells, especially in the region of Wadi Al Khur. The most important agricultural crops are



Children enjoying their natural surroundings



A street entertainment



Al Hamra

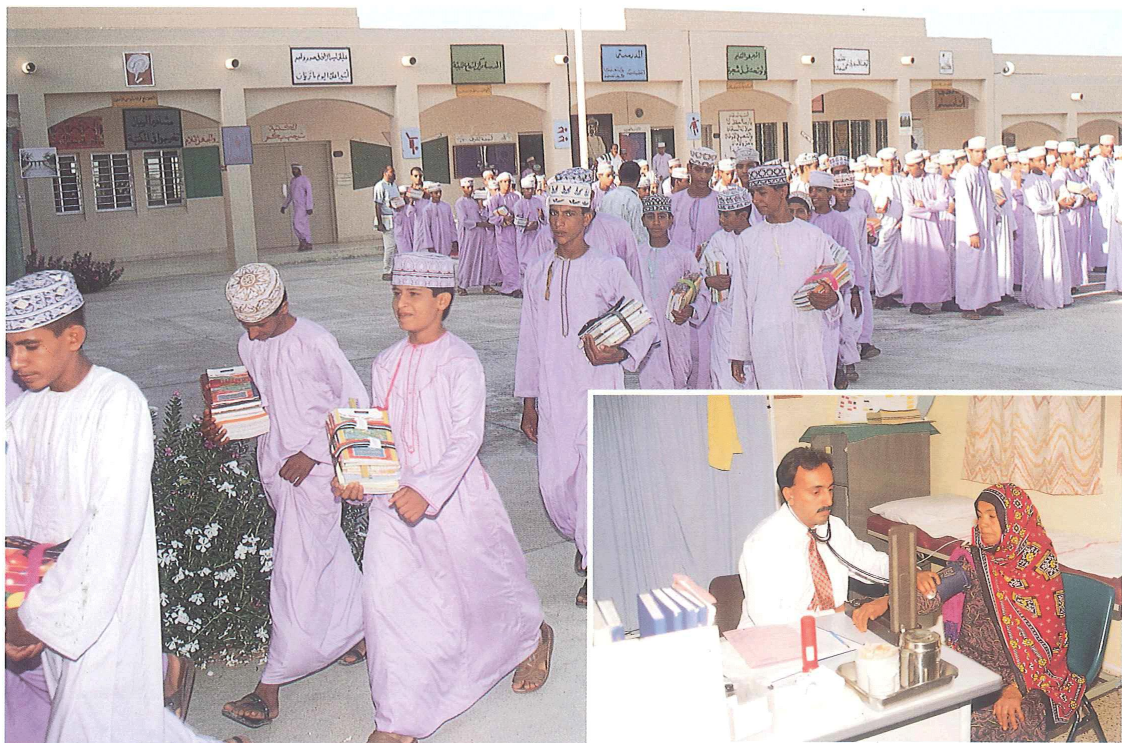
dates, lemons, oranges, vegetables and animal fodder. The inhabitants also practice animal husbandry - cattle and goats. The traditional occupations are, agriculture, animal husbandry and folk remedies, and the industries are extracting red sugar, making rose water and lemon juice. They also make rope and textiles. Traditional songs are the Razha, Zafan, 'Azi, Taghrud, Al Jamal wa Nashid Al Muqata'.

The place which is kissed by the first rays of the sun in the morning - Jabal Al Shams - bears witness to the achievements of the era of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos. The citizens enjoy various services, for example there are 8 schools, which operate in morning and afternoon shifts, for boys and girls in all three stages of education - primary, preparatory and



secondary. In the field of health care there is a hospital, a health centre and a public health unit. Drinking water is in continuous supply to all parts of the Wilayat and likewise electricity and post and telecommunication services. There is a paved road system which facilitates communication and transport both within the Wilayat and with neighbouring areas. The most important government offices responsible for providing these services to the citizens are, an office for developing agriculture, a public health unit, post and telecommunications, the Ministries of Electricity, Water, and Transport, Al Hamra Sports Club, social affairs, health services, a police station, the Wali's office and the Sharia' law court.

By the end of 1994 there were 13,490 telephone lines in the Dakhaliya. 5,500 private post boxes and 11 post offices. In 1970 there were no telephones, no post boxes and no post offices at all !



Books and learning

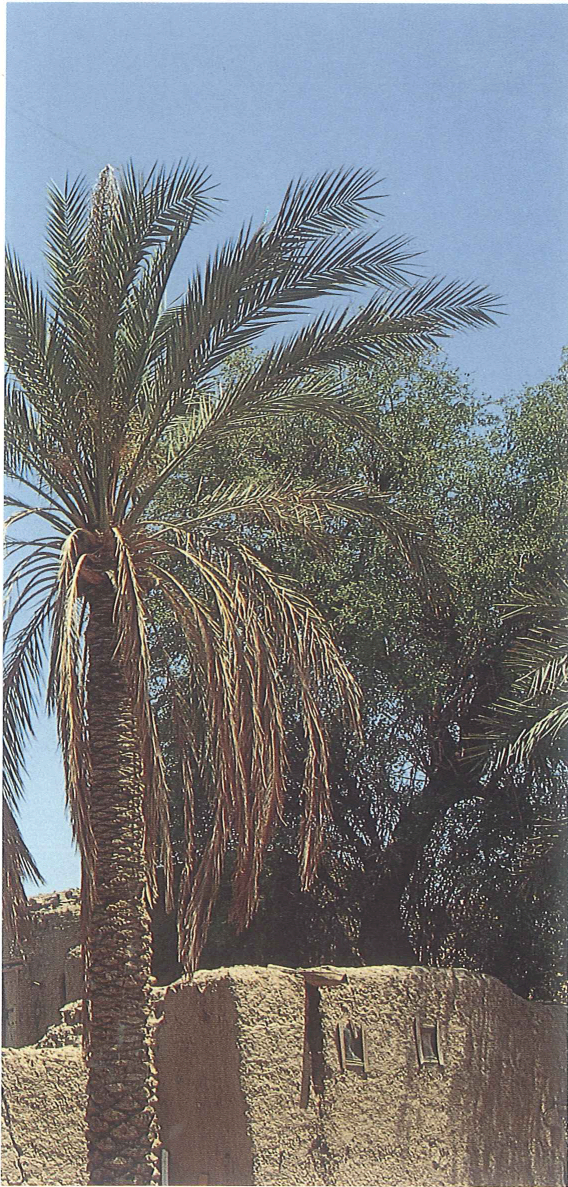
Care for the aged



Wilayat Manah



Ancient buildings in Wilayat Manah



There are 4,251 establishments in the trade register in the Dakhaliya with a capital of between 5000 and more than 5 million Riyals.

Of these 426 are manufacturing companies. These figures reflect the amount of trade activity in the Dakhaliya during the last 25 years, especially in light of the fact that in 1970 there were no companies at all !



Modern housing

This Wilayat is bordered by the Wilayats of Nizwa and Bahla in the west and north, the Wilayats of Izki in the east and the Wilayat of Adam in the south. There are 10,618 inhabitants in 10 villages. Evidence points to Manah being the first spot in the region where Malik Bin Fahim Al Azdi rested, before the Arabs entered Oman when the Ma'rab Dam in Yemen broke. There is a falaj in Manah which still bears the name Falaj Malik Bin Fahm.

The most important archaeological features are the forts of Al Fiqain, and Al Bilad, one in the town of Al Ma'mad and the ancient fort in the town of Al Ma'di. In addition there is the ancient mosque which was built in the time of the Imam Omar Bin Al Khatab Al Kharusi, and the mosque of Al Shura'at, both of which have been restored during the era of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos.

There are numerous touristic attractions in the Wilayat of Manah. There are vast caves in the district of the ancient town, which is surrounded by an old wall. It is said that these caves were used at



A bountiful harvest



the time of the war to hide women and children. There is also a subterranean vault in one of the ancient houses in the town of Al Fiqin, and ancient ruins in Jabal Bu Saroj, which is thought to have been a centre for trade, built of rock and close to them to the south there is a rock inscribed by Ibrahim the Companion, with "We met in this place, 70 horsemen not from Manah and not from Nizwa". In Az Al Qadim mosque there is another rock with the footprint of a man on it. The story goes that a man took it from its place and took it with him on his trip to a place in the south. At night he got down to rest and when he woke up in the morning he couldn't find the stone! He searched for it and found it in the place he had taken it from. The weight of this stone was estimated at 50 rotl (about 100kg), it can still be found there today.

In the Wilayat of Manah there are two springs. One of them 'Ain Al Bilad and the other 'Ain Al

Ma'ya. There are also about 13 falaj. The traditional occupations are pasturage, agriculture, blacksmithery, goldsmithery, carpentry, textiles, weaving and pottery. The most important agricultural products are dates, sugar cane, beans, animal fodder, fruit, citrus fruit and various types of wheat. The traditional songs are the Razha, 'Azi, Tazmil, Qasafiyat. Taghrud and Tahlula. Women's songs sung at weddings are the Wailiya, Ta'wib, and Hambura Masahalia.

The achievements of the Renaissance are numerous, the most important being four schools for modern education at the three stages, primary, preparatory and secondary.

Some of the government offices which provide services for the citizens are, a health centre, a centre for agricultural development and animal resources, Manah Municipality, and the Sharia' law court. In this Wilayat there is a wonderful place



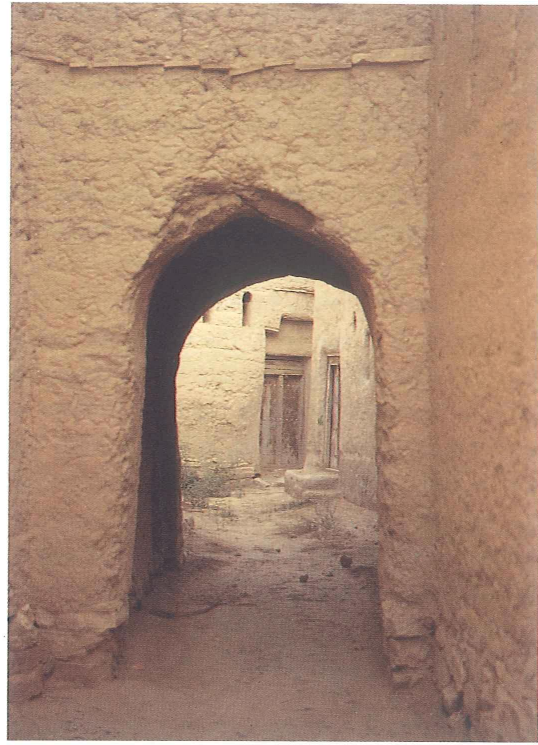


which is the focus of attention for its citizens, a place the heart yearns for, it is Seih Al Barakat where His Majesty Sultan Qaboos camps whilst on his yearly inspection tour. This is where the citizens have the opportunity to directly express their loyalty and devotion to their leader. His Majesty calls an open session with the sheikhs and notables of the region and he listens and pays heed to their cares and problems. He is accompanied by ministers and advisors who try to solve the problems immediately if possible. The sheikhs and noblemen, on their side, pay heed to His Majesty's directives which outline the path of national unity and the future aims for the good of Oman and Omanis.

Seih al Barakat

There is a place in the Wilayat in Manah which is precious to the people of this area.

That place is "Seih al Barakat", one of the main stopping points of His Majesty the Sultan's motorcade during his Majesty's annual tours of



The heritage in Manah



His Majesty The Sultan confers with his people during a "Meet the People Tour"



A Classroom of attentive students



A child's health is important

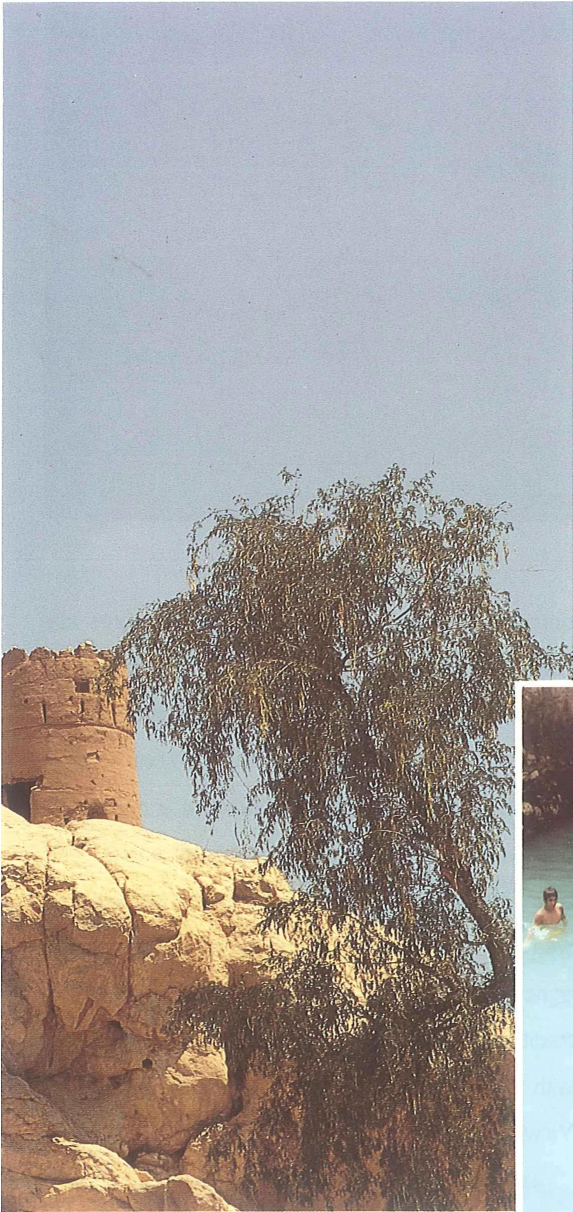
inspection. It is there that he pitches his Royal Camp so that citizens can come and tell him directly of their loyalty and allegiance to him as they await the open session held by His Majesty with the local sheikhs and dignitaries. It is at these sessions that His Majesty hears his people's problems and directs his ministers and advisers to resolve them on the spot, within the limits of what is possible and available. From their side the local sheikhs and dignitaries listen to His Majesty's directives which outline the direction the country should take in the future.



Wilayat Izki



The fort at Wilayat Izki





The legacy of the glorious past

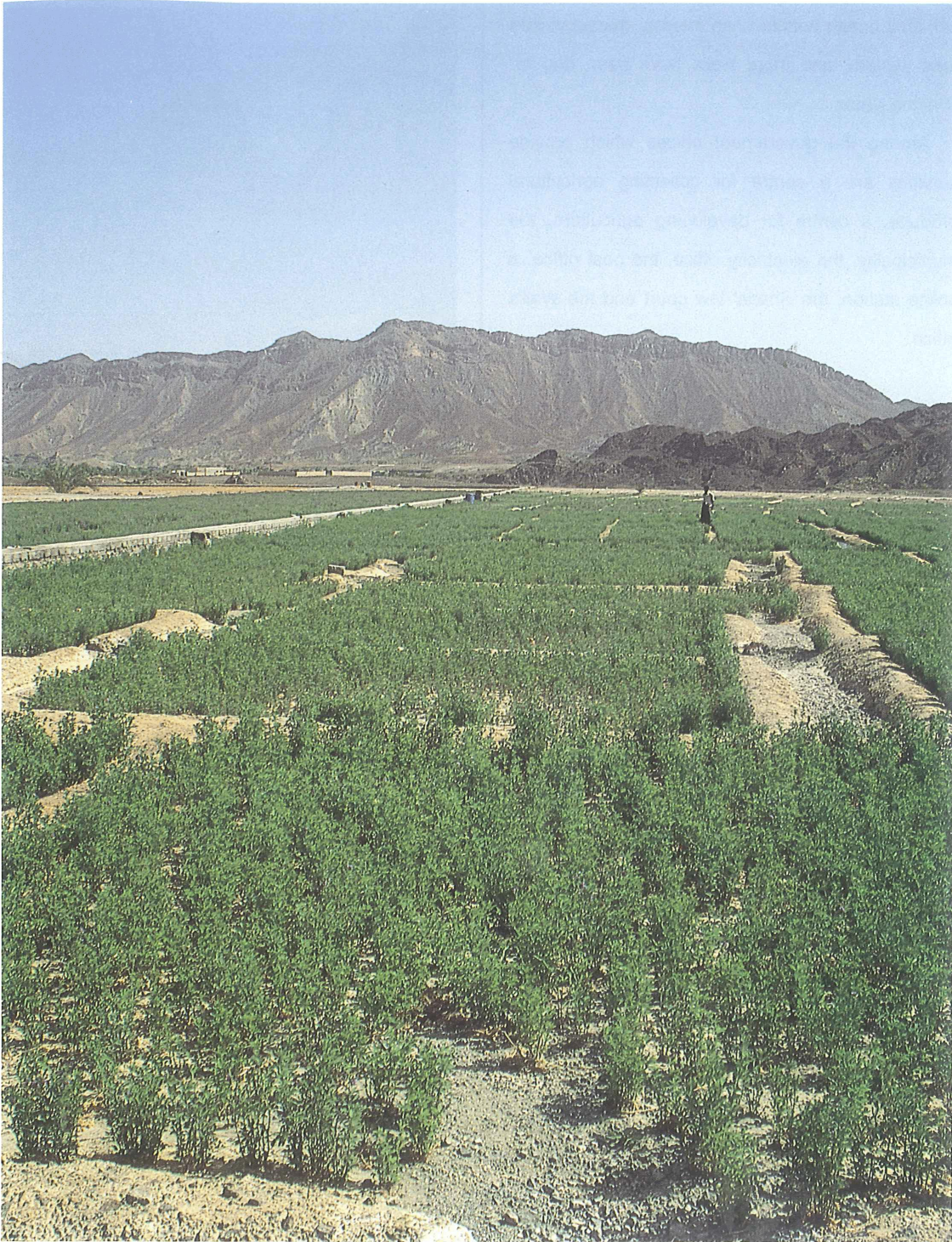
This Wilayat borders the Dakhaliya Wilayats of Sumail, Manah, Nizwa and Adam and the Wilayat of Mudaibi which is part of the Sharqiyah. There are about 29,836 inhabitants living in 26 villages.

Before Islam it was called "Jarnan" because of an idol (awthan) which was worshipped there in a cave under Hila Nazar. It was a meeting place for various caravan routes, so its markets flourished. The archaeological features bear witness to the age of this Wilayat, rooted in the past. There are nearly 142 towers and 3 castles - Al Awamir and two others in the town of Al Qariatain, in addition to a number of houses of historical importance such as Al Nazar wa Al Yaman, and a big castle built in the era of Al Sayid Sa'id Bin Sultan, parts of which have been destroyed with the passing of time and with

erosion. The most outstanding tourist features are Falaj Al Malki which takes its name from Malik Bin Fahm Al Azadi, and Ghar wa Jarnan about which are woven a number of stories half truth half fiction.

The people of the Wilayat practice a number of occupations, industries and traditional songs. The main industries are leather tanning, textiles and weaving, and the main occupations are carpentry, agriculture and construction. The most important traditional songs are the Razfa, 'Azi (the contest with swords), and for the women the Ta'wib or Ya'wib.

Izki has benefited a great deal over the years of the renaissance led by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos. There are now 11 schools for boys and girls, at the primary, preparatory and secondary stages, there



Expansion in agriculture helps economic diversification



are also health services, an internal macadamized road system, and more wells have been dug for drinking water.

Among the government offices which provide services are a centre for collecting agricultural produce, a centre for developing agriculture, the municipality, the electricity office, the post office, a police station, the Sharia' law court and the Wali's office.



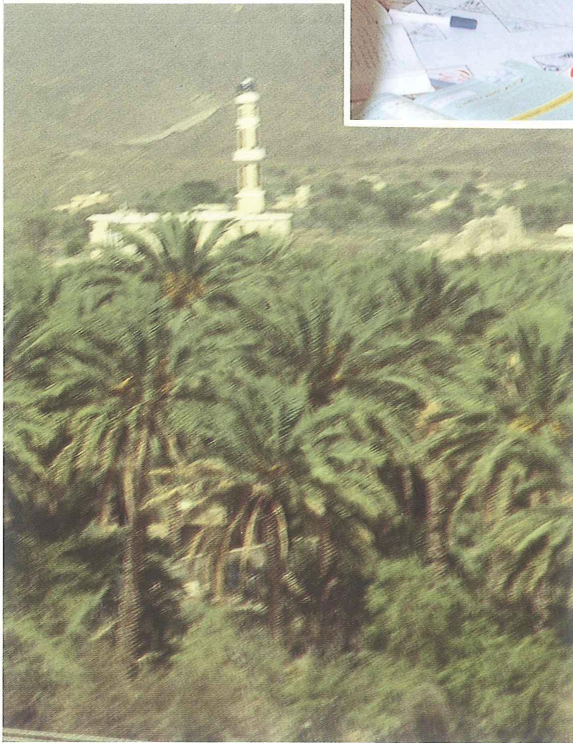
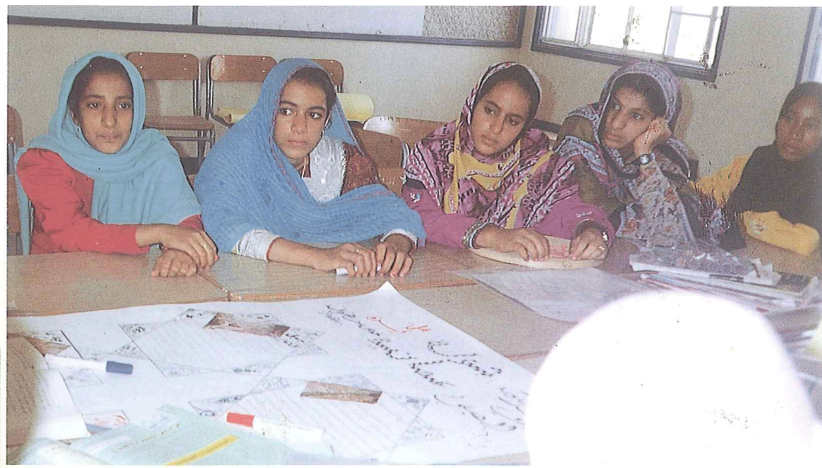
The wadi of Izki



A beauty of nature in Izki



Women have every opportunity to study

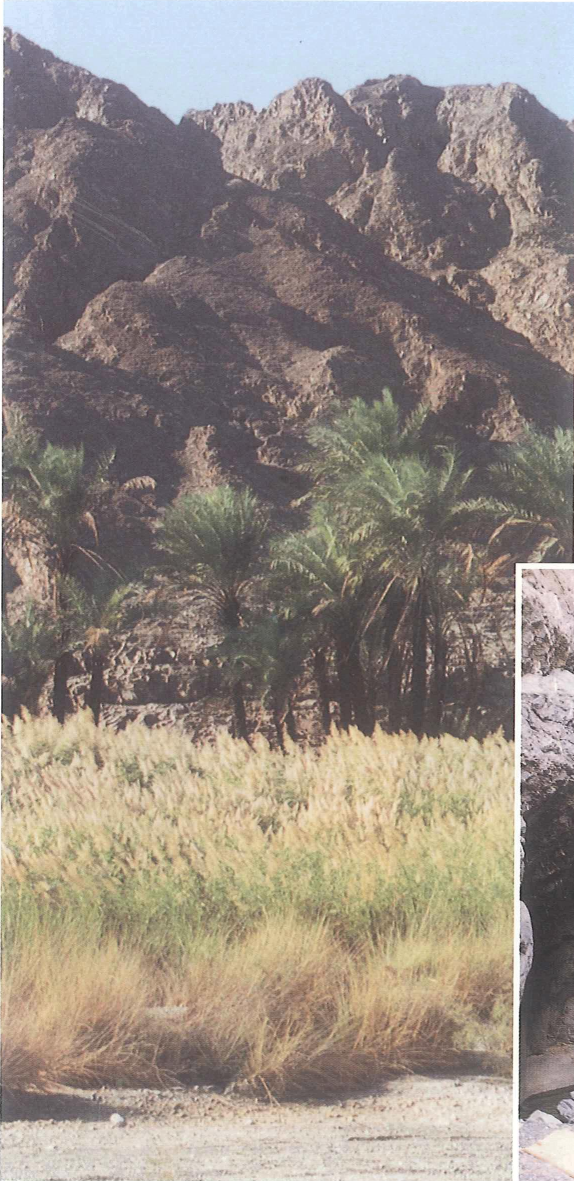


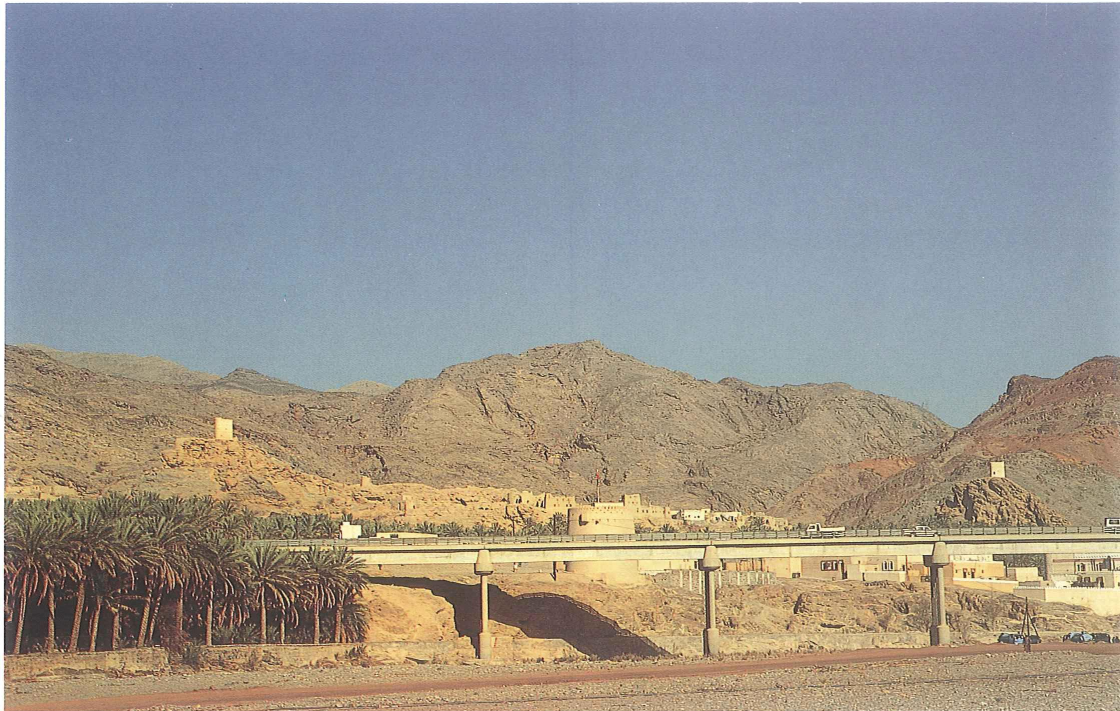


Wilayat Bidbid



Nature in Wilayat Bidbid





Fanja bridge

This is the first Wilayat of the Dakhaliya region from the direction of the Governorate of Muscat and is about 80 kilometres from Muscat itself. The Wilayats of Sumail and Dama and Al Taiyin, of the Sharqiyah region, border it. There are 18,260 inhabitants living in about 83 villages. There are 120 mosques.

It is estimated that there are about 40 towers in various parts of the Wilayat, the most famous being the tower of Fanja, and the towers of Al Manshira, there is also the fort of Naqsi. The tourist features are 'Ain Qa'id and also in Naqsi and Handarut. There are a number of falaj, the most important are the falaj of Al Raha'a and of Al Hamamiat in Fanja.

Bidbid is characterised by a number of



The fort



occupations, industries and traditional songs. Pasturage, agriculture and trade are the occupations and textiles, pottery, and rug making, which is an ancient hand industry dependent on parts of the palm tree for raw material - especially the leaves and branches. The traditional songs are the Razha, 'Azi and Fan Al Lal.

Over the last 25 years the Wilayat of Bidbid has benefited a great deal. There are now 6 schools for the three stages of education, primary, preparatory and secondary. There is also a health centre and an anti-malaria unit. The most outstanding of the government offices are a centre for developing agriculture, a post office, a centre for the care and rehabilitation of the handicapped, a police station,



Kindergarden



The day begins at a girls' school



Modern roads

the municipality, the Wali's office and the Sharia' law court.

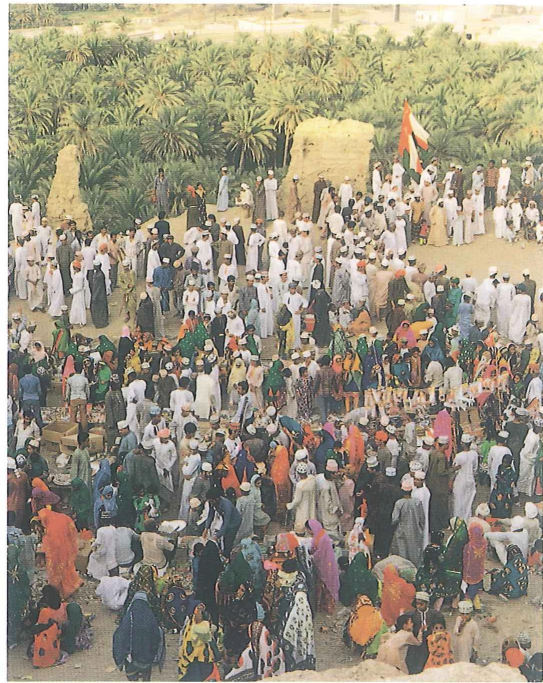
One huge project, of great cost, is the project currently being implemented to widen the road from Burj Al Sahwa to Bidbid, the expected completion date is the end of this year (1995). This road is one of the main roads in the Sultanate. It leads to the Dakhaliya, the Sharqiyah, the Dahiriya, the Wusta and the Governorate of Dhofar, besides linking the coast road to the Batinah region and the road to Muscat. The first stage of the project will widen the road between Burj Al Sahwa and the intersection leading to the Wilayat of Bidbid in the Dakhaliya, and to the Sharqiyah region. It is 36 kilometres long and will cost 17 million Omani Riyals (44,200,000 U.S. Dollars). The Ministry of Transport and Muscat

Municipality are co-operating in supervising the implementation of this project. The project includes the building of intersections, fly overs, channels for draining water, changing the present route, and building a bridge over Wadi Fanja - 270 metres in length. The work requires the dynamiting of 100,000 cubic metres of rock!

The project also includes widening the Rusail - Nizwa road, where a road is being built parallel to the present road, in addition to 7 intersections, building a service road, 3 channels for draining water and junctions, all with the necessary protective barriers, lights, signs and road markings. Included in the project of widening the Rusail - Bidbid road, is the building of the biggest bridge in the Sultanate, supported by 48 concrete pillars and



built according to international specifications for heavy traffic with full loads. This bridge will link the sides of Wadi Bidbid. In addition to its role in facilitating the movement of traffic across the Wadi, it will also provide a viewing point for the unique beauty of the Wilayat.



Eid Celebrations in Bidbid



Precious water is monitored



Folk Arts



An Al Razha dance



The traditional songs of the Dakhaliya region reflect the commitment of the people to the ways of Islam. The most outstanding of these songs are those connected to the sword and the desert. The second feature is that songs from outside the area are almost non-existent. The third point is that most of the songs are either about work, especially agricultural work or religious songs.



The Qassaafiya

This is a Razha with a fast rhythm. When people meet for the Razha Al Kubra the proceedings begin with it. The youths of the tribe perform it in preparation for the "Razha" of the adults.

The Qassaafiya is performed at the school where the youths study the origins of the art of Razha and practice it. The rhythm is simple, its poetry has a short metre, and it is mostly description or chaste love poetry. However, when adults participate in the Qasifiyah it is eulogies, satire and about war.

Usually the Qassaafiya does not last long, until the square has emptied for the "Nazha" of the adults.

In the verses of the Qassafiya the song begins by singing the word "Laal". It has no meaning but of its three letters, the middle one is a long vowel which allows singing on the same level of the poetry which will be sung in the Qassafiyah. Perhaps this is the reason it is sometimes known as the "Laal Al Qassafi", to differentiate it from "Lal Al 'Aud" also known as the "Razhat Al Kibar".

The Razha

This type is characterized by the sword and the poetic exchange.

The name "Razha" indicates the dance of swords, with the man collapsing beneath the weight of the sword, he has to carry this weight during his



Traditional Music



high jumps in the air and land standing firmly on his feet, without trembling or falling. The tradition still exists of throwing the sword in the air and catching it again as it comes down. This catching is a kind of boasting among the men of the Razha. The weight of the sword or the sharpness of the weapon is important.

Long ago it was the way for the group to express the needs of the people of the Wilayat. It was also a way to announce war, gather troops, announce victory or mediation between the warring parties for a settlement between them.

The men of the Razha gather together for amusement and to display their skill in swordsmanship and combat with swords and shields. The poets of the tribes vie with one another with their skill in love poetry, eulogies, satire, riddles and conundrums. This is the literary picture of the combat with swords.

The Razha starts with the sound of the drums, so that the men gather together to work out their affair, a poet from every tribe extemporizes, explaining the event for which they have gathered.

The forms of the Razha differ in the movements of the participants, the type and speed of the rhythm governing the movements, the poetic metre which form the singing of its verses, and the subject which the poet extemporizes on.

The different kinds of Razha have names, each one indicating one of its attributes. Either the poetry, or the movement, or its connection to a certain place. Of the best known of these is the Razha Mashuba which is love poetry or eulogies.

The Razha Al Harbiyaat is poetry for the purpose of war, whether for or against the raids for water, or for announcing previous victories, or for settling a dispute between the warring parties.

In the Razha Al Hawaama one of the rows remains fixed, and often the row is wide, while the other row turns a complete circle about the square, parallel, for a short time, with the fixed row. They continue round until they stop opposite the fixed row, which in turn then begins a similar circle.

The Razha Al Khaalidiya which is special to the Wilayat of Wadi Bani Khalid in the Sharqiya, is characterized by being like the Qasaafiya, the Razha of the young people.

The Razha Al Naahiya which changes the group of the Hambal to one display row, divided in the middle into two parts. Each of them stands opposite each other at the side (Naahiya) of the square.

When two tribes meet - in the Razha each of them is accompanied by its special drums. These drums are often passed down from generation to generation.

The Razha has two drums the Kasir and the Rahmani. Each of them is beaten with a raised stick from both sides. To the sounds of the drum the side which is to begin, starts the song, singing the text poetically and melodiously.

The two drummers move between the two close parallel rows until the song ends. When the drums of this side fall silent, the drums of the other side start with a new verse. Often this is a reply to the first verse. Then there follow poetic verses and singing, exchanging between the rows until the Razha



achieves the aims for which it was convened.

Al Hambal

"Al Hambal" is a "singing procession" of men going to or coming from the venue of "al Razha".

It is called "al Masirah" (procession) because it involves movement from one place to another. It is also called "Zamil al Rijal" (men's song and dance).

"Al Hambal" has a brisk, double beat.

The "Kaser" and "Rahmani" drummers lead the procession. They may be accompanied by the "Burgham" (a type of wind instrument) player, who plays a series of staccato notes to summon the people to "al Hambal".

The drummers at the head of the procession either face forwards (like the other members of the procession), or face the procession and walk backwards.

The members of the procession form themselves into short parallel rows, one behind the other, with a reasonable space between each row to allow each individual to carry his gun or sword in a forward-inclined position, in a display of boldness and courage.

"Al Hambal" may consist solely of men, without women. However, if the event to which the procession is heading is one in which women would participate - such as greetings on the birth of a child - the women will join in the procession, with their children, behind the last row or men.

Al 'Azi

This is poetic recitation without any chanting or

singing. It is performed by an individual outstanding poet or story teller. The poet of Al 'Azi comes out from his group, grasping his sword and his shield. As he walks slowly he recites poetry of glory and praise. He shakes his sword to show all those present at the meeting and this shaking makes the blade tremble.

Behind the poet the group of men participate. They turn in the square between the two rows of Razha, who gather to form a circle around the poet and his followers. They reply with a number of short cries in the traditional manner, like the short loud shouts of the word "Wasalamat", which in olden times was accompanied by the shooting of a bullet from a rifle.

The participants still cock their rifles with a penetrating sound, which can be heard at the same time as these shouts which usually follow the first scanned verse which the poet recites.

There is another shout "Al Mulak Allah Yadoom" (The reign of God is everlasting) and the participants prolong the letter "Alif" in expression of the sublimity of the cry- and they repeat it again at the end of the poetic verse which the poet of Al 'Azi recites.

In some Wilayats of the Dakhaliya region, the poet ends his poetic phrase with the glory of his family and their praise, or praise of his friends and their relatives with the expression "Sabiyan yakaba ya kabar al Shim".

There are three kinds of Al 'Azi poetry. The first - the "Al Alifiya" where each verse begins with the letter "Alif" (A), from which the name is derived. The



verses continue until the letter "Al Yay" (Z) Except for a number of the letters, satirical poetry is used in the "Alifiya". The length differs according to whether the poet can use all the letters.

The second type is the "Al 'Adadiya". Here the first three verses, at least, begin with a numerical formula. The poet says the first, then there is a poetic verse, then he says the second, another verse follows and so on. The length, here, depends also on the ability of the poet and the length of his poetical repertoire.

The third kind is the "Al Mutlaqa". Here the poetry is free and not linked to an order of letters or numbers, rather its verses depend on the quality of the poet and his creativity.

The "Qasida Al 'Azi" begins, usually, with "In the name of God" and ends with a prayer and peace on the Prophet of God.

One of the important aims of the Al 'Azi poetry, now, is to praise His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, and the merits of his era.

There precedes the Al 'Azi (or follows it) what is called the "Al Ta'iyuta" or "Al Ta'eeyeeta" especially in the Wilayats of Al Hamra and Bahla in the Dakhaliya region, and in Yanqal and 'Ibri in the Dhahira region.

The "Ta'iyuta" is a picture of glory, with men and women shouting the word "Sud". "Al M'aeet" (the shouter) shouts the name of the person who he wants to praise. Then he talks about his Wilayat and his country and its great Sultan, together with various historical glorious deeds. The participants in "Al Ta'iyuta" reply and with one resounding voice

shout the word "Sud", "Al M'aeet" then repeats the names of those who he intends to praise or who they are proud of.

The "Al Ta'eeyuta" ends with the saying "Al M'aeet" (the shouter) and the expression "Al Muslimeen Takbir".

Al Taariq

This is a Bedouin song which is sung either on the back of a camel or sitting on the ground. Two singers perform it. One of them begins then the other takes over the poetry and the song at the end of the verse. He repeats his performance exactly the same as the performance of the first singer.

The chant of the song does not change - in Al Taariq - from one poem to another, it is also almost fixed from one singer to another and from one Wilayat to another.

The song of Al Taariq deals with a number of aims of poetry and song. Most of them are love poetry or recollections or praise of the she-camel and her merits.

Al Taariq is performed during the slow walk of the camel and so the rhythm of the singing in it differs from the singing of the Al Taghrud which is performed during the quick pace of the camel.

The names of the Al Taariq differ between the areas of the Sultanate. In the Wilayat of Sur in the Sharqiya it is called "Al Tawareeq" which is pronounced "Al Tawareej".

Al Taghrud

This song is sung on the back of camels or



horses, either to encourage them or their riders.

The "Taghrud Al Bush" is called the "Razha Al Bedu" or "Razfa Al Bedu".

It is a group song with a fixed chant which does not change from place to place. This type is characterized by a lengthening of the long vowels in a marvellous wave of singing. It makes an audible picture of the movement of the mount.

The Taghrud is sometimes called "Shila Al Rukaab" (the song of the riders). It is also called "Hambal Al Rukaab". In both cases there is only one singer.

Because of the musical character of the "Al Taghrud Al Bush" it is called names like "Al Gheerud", "Al Ghaarud", "Al Taghreera", "Al Taghreed", "Al Ghuruda", "Al Ghurud" or "Al Ghaaruda".

The origins of this song go back, long ago, to a group of men who performed it whilst mounted on camels going to battle or returning victorious from it. It was also performed for amusement at night, whilst the Bedouin were sitting in their tents.

As for the "Taghrud Al Khail" it is a song permeated by shouts to encourage the horse. It is a song of praise with the poetry enumerating the horses merits and suitability.

Usually the "Taghrud Al Khail" is performed by the riders, getting ready for racing and is characterized by bravery and courage and helping the weak.

Al Wanna

This is a song of recollections which the Bedouin

perform individually to amuse themselves whilst on the back of their she camels on a long journey. Thus it was in olden times, of course!

Now, however, the singer performs it with one of his hands on his side and he closes his eyes during the song. The Bedouin form a circle around him, sitting on the ground. Then another Bedouin participates with another rhyme taking over the poetry and chanting song from him in the last verse. He repeats his song just as the song of his companion.

Most of the poetry of Al Wanna is love poetry and recollections, and a little is praise of the camel. Sometimes it is called "Al Nawaha" (the professional mourner) because of its sorrowful character.

Tuq Tuq

In the Wilayats of Oman the children celebrate in their own special way on the night half way through Ramadan. They go around the streets of their area, moving from house to house, stopping in front of them singing and asking for sweets. They beat a





simple rhythm to the expression "Qarnaqshwah, qarnaqshwah give us some sweets".

The children make the rhythm to this song by knocking two shells from the sea shore. In the Batinah region, where most of the Wilayats have a coastline, this celebration is given the name "Qarnaqshwah" from the sound of the friction of the outside surface of the shells.

However, in the Wilayat of the Dakhaliya by virtue of its mountainous nature the children perform the same song but to the rhythm of two pieces of stone, which make the sound "tuq tuq", hence its name here.

If the people of the house reply to the request of the children for sweets they praise them but if they don't they satirize them.

Tahlula

This is performed on the first nine days of the month of Dhu Al Hijja near the festival of the blessed Haj (Eid Al Adha), sometimes also on the days of Ashura. There is a reciter who reads in a clear voice verses of a Islamic poetry, one each day. The youths of the Quran school, and others, walk behind him shouting at the end of each verse with the invocation "Allah Akbar" and "Allah Al Hamd" or "Subhan Allah la Allah illa Allah". The Tahlula is still known in the Wilayats of the Dakhaliya and Sharqiyah.

Tasiif and Duasa

This is a type of song which is almost extinct, however there are some reciters and people who

still know it in the north of the Batinah and especially in Falaj Al Qalnal in the Wilayat of Sohar. The Tasiif accompanies the mowing of the wheat, grain and barley. Someone with a beautiful voice leads the song and after him, all those gathered to cooperate in this seasonal work, reply. The men gather to help each one who grows wheat or barley "each in his turn" when the crop becomes ready for harvest. The poetry of Tasiif is characterized by the speed of the rhythm full of thanks to God for his grace and for what he has bestowed on his servants of bountiful good. The Tasiif ends when the loading of the harvest on the backs of the mules is finished, indicating the completion of the task.

The Dawasa accompanies the operation of



Wailiya Al Nisa dance

separating the grains of wheat from the ears by beating it with the branches of the palm or thick sticks to the rhythm of the song. They put the stems of the wheat or barley with the ears on the ground and stand in front of it. The row of men, all carrying a thick stick, then hit the ears of wheat in a strong unified circular movement capturing the rhythm. They reply to the singing of the solo performer who



knows the poetry of the Dawasha and continue the recitation and the replies and the beating until the grain is separated from the ears and it is collected by its owners.

Wilayat Al Nisa

A type of popular traditional song known in the Wilayat of Manah in the Dakhaliya and it is performed without drums. This song is performed to a rhythm with a unity of movement. The women form in groups and stand in a line. They put their right arms on the shoulders of their neighbour and this gives each group a rhythmical uniform movement. Each one shakes a silver stick held in her free hand. When the leader of the group shakes her silver stick the groups break up and then reform in different groups, in a skillful circular movement. The leader continues shaking her stick until the exchange of places between the groups of women is completed.

Taymina

This is performed at celebrations when a child completes the learning of the Quran by heart, what is known as "Khatm Al Mushaf". For these type of celebrations the children gather together in the same school where they have learnt the Quran (boys and girls) in a procession headed by the teacher of the Quran who reads a Qasida of a religious nature. At the end of each verse the children reply in a strong unified voice with the word "Amin". Perhaps it is this that gives the song its name. It differs in form or pronunciation from place

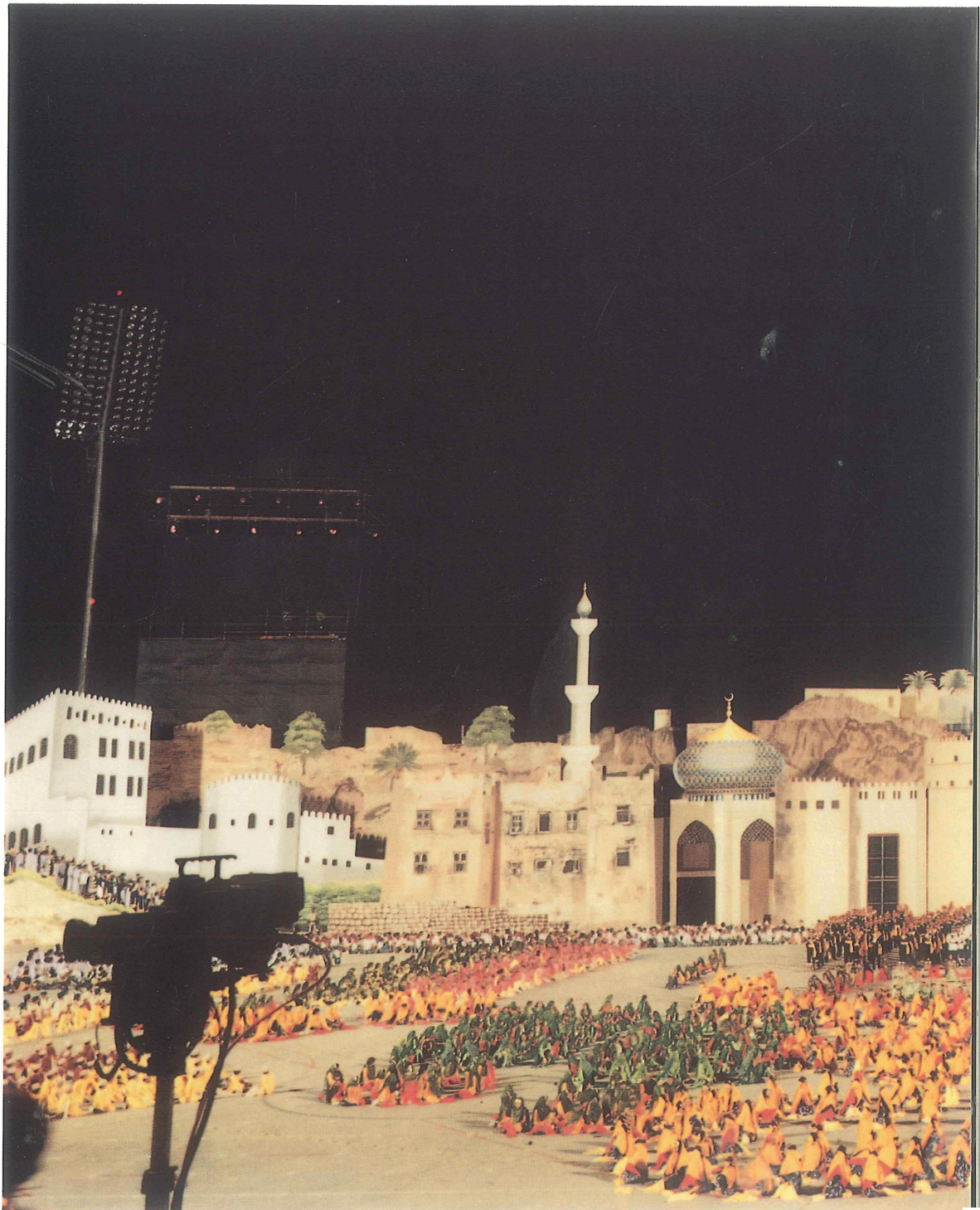
to place, however, it can be limited to four names, Al Tamina, Al Taymina, Al Tawmina and Al Awmina.

A woman in the service of the father of the boy honoured participates in the procession. She walks in the middle of the children carrying a basket covered with a green scarf. Inside the basket is a gift from the father of the boy to the Quran teacher (often an article of clothing).

Thus in some areas the song is called "Al Wahba" ("hiba" meaning "gift") indicating what the family of the boy gives to the teacher.



Al Taymina, a celebration held when a child has learnt The Quran



Nizwa city celebrates the 24th National Day





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Promotarget

Photographers

Oman News Agency

Mohammed Mustafa

Salim Al Hashly

Khamis Al Muharbi

Mohammed Al Rashdi

Taghleb Al Barwani

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Reflections

Photocentre

Jacob William Cruisor

Steve Molton

David Mendz

Loliden

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