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## THE PROBLEM OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP ON THE EXAMPLE OF YEMEN

### Abstract:

*The article analyses the problem of political leadership in developing countries on the example of Yemen. The main source of data for the analysis is the personal experience of one of the authors, who worked for two years in the local higher education system. The activity of Yemen's national leaders, who headed the authoritarian regime in both parts of the country and who coordinated the political, economic and ideological efforts of the authorities, aimed at modernization of the Arab society, has been chosen as the object of the study. The research focuses on the practice of public administration and social transformations, which was implemented in the Yemen Arab Republic and the National Democratic Republic of Yemen, when Ali Abdullah Saleh (1978-2011) and Ali Nasser Muhammad (1972-1986) - prominent representatives of the modernist authoritarianism, headed these countries. First one was an Arab Marxist, the other a moderate Islamic nationalist. The article uses the method of comparative analysis to show the role and importance of political leadership in Yemen under the conditions of the authoritarian regime. The analysis of relevant leaders' activities provides serious basis for reflection to managers, political scientists and economists.*

**Key words:** political leader, public administration, North and South Yemen, Arab socialism, authoritarianism, pan-Arabism, political crisis.

### Introduction

The problem of political leadership in developing countries is currently too rarely addressed by researchers. The authors decided to study this topic taking into account the history of Yemen - one of the most "unfortunate" modern state. In addition, two other factors influenced the decision of choosing the topic of the article: this year is the thirtieth anniversary of the merger of

both parts of Yemen, as well as there is a personal motive - one of the authors worked for the Yemeni higher education system for 2 years. The object of the study is the activity of two presidents - Ali Nasser Mohammed and Ali Abdullah Saleh. The method of the study is a comparative description of their role and significance in the life of this Arab state.

### **General information**

The first record about Yemeni statehood dates back to the 8th century AD, when King Carib al-Watar managed to unite all the lands of Yemen. Although the territory of Yemen is known historically as Happy Arabia (*Arabia Felix*), today it is the poorest country in the region, with more than half of its population below the poverty line. However, the country has high birth rate, especially in recent decades. The proportion of the youth among the population is very high and reached more than 30% of the total population in 2014 (Mohamed, 2014). Some of young people got the higher education, but they can't find work. According to 2013 data (before the war), about 40% of the population of Yemen lived on \$2 a day, and a third suffered from chronic malnutrition (Kirichenko, 2013, p. 18). Along with this, 50 million units of small arms are at citizens' disposal, and half of all military supplies comes from Russia. According to Dinara Malysheva (2018, p. 108), Russia keeps a leading position in the arms trade with this Middle Eastern country.

The modern Republic of Yemen was formed as a result of consolidation of two states: the conservative-tribal Northern Yemen and the Marxist Southern Yemen. The merger took place in May 1992 on the terms set by North Yemen. The united state turned out to be very fragile and as early as 1994 armed clashes broke out between forces representing different parts of the country. The ongoing massacre and chaos in the country started in 2015. In order to understand this dynamic and extremely dangerous situation, it is worth paying attention to the biographies of Yemen's leaders.

### **Early years**

**Ali Nasser Mohammed** was born on December 31, 1939 in the southern province of Abyan, in a peasant family. Having received secondary education, he worked as a teacher and then as a principal of a primary school. From his young age he participated in revolutionary liberation activities, was a member of the National Liberation Front of South Yemen since its inception in 1963. It should be noted that at the time of its formation, this organization was nationalistic by its nature and had nothing common neither with Marxism nor socialism (Halliday 1978, p. 190-191).

However, the radical socio-economic transformations, which took place in South Yemen after becoming independent in 1967, marked the transition of the National Front to Marxist pro-Soviet positions. By this period A.N.

Mohammed held already a number of responsible government posts. In August 1971, Muhammad Ali Kheitam was removed from his post of a prime minister and was replaced by A.N. Muhammed, perceived to be "one of the leaders of the revolutionary democratic majority in the southern Yemeni leadership (Alexandrov, 1984, p. 184). Concerning the ideological positions of the young prime minister, we can assume that at that time they were anti-imperialist, nationalist and radical socialist.

**Ali Abdullah Saleh** was born on March 12, 1942 in the northern Yemeni province of Sana'a. He came from a poor family and lost his father almost immediately after his birth. After finishing elementary school in Damara in 1958, he joined the army. In 1960 he graduated from non-commissioned officer courses at the school of armoured forces and soon received the rank of lieutenant. In 1962 he took part in an anti-monarchist coup inspired by the ideas of Arab nationalism and participated in a civil war, which was unleashed by supporters of the ousted king. Monarchists were supported actively by Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom, while republicans – by Egypt and the USSR. By 1963, there were already more than 500 Soviet military advisers in North Yemen<sup>1</sup>. In December 1967, Saleh took part in the defence of Sana'a and gained fame as one of its heroes (Kassem, 2002, p. 6).

Researchers emphasize especially the role of junior officers Republicans, who defended democracy. *"This part of the officers by its social origin was close to the general mass of soldiers, which was made up mostly of yesterday's poor and poorest peasants. Their worldview was formed under conditions of constant military confrontation with monarchists; their political sympathies, of course, were on the side of the republican regime, neither the monarchy nor the "Islamic state" could be an alternative to it"* (Gerasimov, 1984, p. 173).

## **Presidency**

**Ali Nasser Mohammed** was a member of the Presidential Council from August 1971 to June 1978, and from June 26, 1976 - Chairman of the Presidential Council with the preservation of the post of Prime Minister. On April 20, 1980, at the plenum of the Central Committee, he was elected Secretary General of the Yemeni Socialist Party. Speaking at the II Congress of the YSP in October of the same year, Mohammed emphasized that the main issue, facing the party, was *"to strengthen the leadership role of the YSP in the life of the country as a whole and, in particular, in economic institutions, security and defense institutions"*<sup>2</sup>. He confirmed the course towards the country's socialist

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<sup>1</sup> See.: Naumov A., *Field Marshal Death*. <https://lenta.ru/articles/2017/12/05/saleh/4,02/03/2020>.

<sup>2</sup> Naumkin V., *Democratic Yemen on the path of socialist orientation* [in:] Recent History of Yemen 1917-1982, p. 209.

orientation as a stage in the transition to the formation of socialism. In the same year he was elected Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Council, that is, in fact, became the president of South Yemen. His predecessor, Abdel Fattah Ismail, resigned "for health reasons" and emigrated to the Soviet Union.

On the position of the president of the country, Mohammed worked closely with the USSR. Already in 1970, the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed between the two nations. The politician was awarded by the Soviet Order of People's Friendship.

Under the President A.N. Mohammed, the state began to develop according to five-year plans, like the Soviet Union did. Banks and insurance companies, the port of Aden and the oil industry were nationalized; a cooperative system in agriculture, fisheries and handicrafts was implemented. The policy of women's emancipation was actively pursued –the polygamy was officially prohibited, the right to divorce with an equal division of property was introduced. Great help to South Yemen was provided by the Soviet Union and other Eastern block states, as well as those Arab countries with whose leaders A.N. Mohammed maintained friendly relations (Gugin, 2016, p. 31).

Much was done to improve the living standards of the population, in particular, a new salary system was introduced, as a result of which the average salary level increased by 40%. The state allocated subsidies to maintain stable prices for food and basic necessities. Considerable attention was paid to solving the housing problem. The country's leadership also paid great attention to the development of culture, science and education. In 1987, there were 1,032 primary and secondary schools, 20 technical schools and the University of Aden (9 faculties) in South Yemen (Mohamed, 2014, p. 120).

But the president himself was by no means an unequivocal leader. Here is how Karen Brutents (1998, p. 340), the Soviet party functionary, who was responsible for relations with developing countries, wrote about him: "He is a large, rather powerful physique, walks energetically, talks energetically. But it looks like he constantly harnesses this energy of his own, that this is a take-away behaviour aimed to impress". He soared to the top of power primarily due to a combination of circumstances and the confrontation of the opposing forces in the leadership. Brutents writes about him - ambitious and conceited man, power-hungry, he confirmed the wide-spread idea about the eastern rulers - secretive, vengeful, highly appreciating the joys of life (op. cit., p. 344).

Indeed, rumours attributed to him, the patronage of corruption which nested at his "court" and in his native province of Abyan. After the concentration in his hands the posts of the party's general secretary, president and prime minister, A.N. Mohammed strove to create a regime of personal power: he appointed people loyal to him to responsible posts, crowded out and even eliminated physically his opponents. In the mid-80s, he deviated from the

course of socialist transformation. Russian historian Mikhail Roshchin (2019, p. 311), testifies that the politician tried to compensate the complication of relations with the USSR by the development of relations with Arab countries, Japan and the countries of the West.

**Ali Abdullah Saleh** was appointed a member of the interim presidential council in June 1978, after the assassination of President Al Gashmi. Among the actions, committed by the interim presidential council, was the severance of contacts with the National Democratic Republic of Yemen, which was accused of organizing an assassination attempt on Al Gashmi. On July 17, 1978, Saleh was elected the new president of the Republic of Yemen (Northern Yemen) and commander in chief of the armed forces. 76 out of 96 people voted for his election, one was absent, the rest abstained (Kassem, 2002, p. 8). Shortly after the election, the new president suppressed successfully an attempt of a coup and ordered the execution of 30 officers plotting for his removal. Then, or maybe a little later, he uttered a catch phrase that became the slogan of his political life and death: *“To rule Yemen is like dancing on the head of a snake”*.<sup>3</sup> In his keynote speech, A.A. Saleh stated that the new leadership of the YAR will work to keep the principles and goals of the anti-monarchist revolution of 1962. It was first time, when the speech of the President of North Yemen declared *“the need to follow the path of freedom and democracy, support the cooperative movement and make progress towards the construction of a modern centralized state”* (Gerasimov, 1984, p. 194).

After coming to the power, the President A.A. Saleh made significant changes in the command of the army and state apparatus, had removed the most odious representatives of the feudal tribal elite and corrupted officials from their posts. The North Yemeni leader proclaimed the beginning of a new stage in the country's political life, characterizing it as a period of building a democratic society in which representatives of all political directions will have equal rights. An important step, aimed at emphasizing the collegiality in the development of decisions on domestic and foreign policy issues, was the creation of an Advisory Council of 15 people. The Council convened on the initiative of the President and under his chairmanship, and was empowered to discuss internal and external issues affecting higher national interests.

A certain democratization of the country under Saleh led to the revitalization of public and professional organizations, such as the General Federation of Cooperative Societies, unions of doctors and journalists, the society of Yemeni women, the youth and sports organizations. A union of Yemeni writers, common for both Yemeni states, was created by the initiative of the president and the organization of united youth camps with people from South Yemen was widely practiced. The leader of the YAR also took measures

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<sup>3</sup> M. Legutko. *Śmierć niezatapialnego*. EPA-PAP <https://www.gosc.pl//smierc-niezatapialnego>, 13.01.2020.

to improve the financial situation and to raise the living standards of the population. In 1979, salaries were increased for all categories of public services, including military personnel. The law on state social insurance was adopted for the first time. Similarly to South Yemen, the state allocated special funds from the budget to stabilize prices. (But North Yemen, thanks to investments and activities of firms from Western countries, operated with more significant funds). Extensive construction of infrastructure, new hospitals, schools and cultural centers was made in North Yemen, mainly with the help of foreign investments (Gerasimov, op.cit. p. 183).

Under presidency of Saleh, traditionally friendly Soviet-Yemeni relations received a new impetus for the development. The Soviet Union continued to assist the YAR in the formation of the armed forces and in the training of national personnel (Mohamed 2018, p. 28). Soviet military specialists served both in North and in South Yemen, even though South Yemen was not always friendly to them.

Russian researchers always emphasize the special role played by the army in the security system of developing countries. *“In those of them,”* wrote Lev Kotlov (1971, p. 220), *“where there are no deep party traditions, the army is the most organized mechanism, which often takes the initiative to implement socio-political changes”*.

### **A.N. Muhammad's career**

Ali Nasser Muhammad had many opponents among the leadership of the republic - party and governmental ones. In March 1985, contrary to his wishes, his main opponent, former president Abdul Fattah Ismail, returned from the forced emigration to Moscow. By approaching the Third Congress of the Yemeni Socialist Party (October 1985), the struggle between supporters and opponents of Muhammad intensified. The opposition, K. Brutents (1998, p. 345) argues, received the support of most members of the party, including those in the armed forces. As a result of the congress, Muhammad was in the minority in the political bureau, and A.F. Ismail was elected its member and secretary of the Central Committee. Naturally, the opposition began to demand redistribution of posts in the party-governmental leadership, which forced the president to search for a radical solution. In April 1985, A.N. Muhammed, meeting the Soviet delegation in Aden, hinted fairly transparently at his readiness to use force against the opposition (it should be noted that by then, the popularity of Ismail had increased significantly on the backdrop of the arbitrariness of the president and rampant corruption).

In response, the Kremlin guests tried in every possible way to dissuade the president from pernicious steps, warning that it would be the finale in Aden's relations with Moscow. At the end of December, K. Brutents writes (op.cit., p. 346), *“Muhammad made the final decision to crack down on the opposition*



*physically. He visited Addis Ababa, where Mengistu, who already had similar experience in dealing with the enemy, supported or even suggested this decision”.*

On January 13, 1986, A.N. Muhammad tried to destroy his main opponents in the party. He organized a meeting of the Politburo, which consisted of 11 people. The president's guards opened the fire at the meeting. Mohammed's opponents - Vice President Ali Antar, Defense Minister of the National Democratic Republic of Yemen Salih Muslim Kassem and Chairman of the Control Commission Ali Shaya Hadi - were killed. A.F. Ismail was seriously injured, he was put in an armoured personnel carrier and burned out there<sup>4</sup>. A.N. Muhammad himself was waiting for the end of the massacre 70 kilometers from Aden. On the same day, meetings were organized in all party organizations and institutions, as well as meetings of the army leadership. Supporters of the president were absent from these meetings. Yemeni historian Abdul Samad Mohammed stated that on that day *“many representatives of the party and military elite of the National Democratic Republic of Yemen were killed, and the president announced that he had suppressed an attempted coup”* (Mohamed, op.cit., p. 114). The characteristic for this occasion was the one, which was published in the official statement of *Pravda* newspaper about the *“failure of the conspiracy in Aden”*<sup>5</sup>. However, on January 15-16, the army supported opponents of the president. *“In South Yemen,”* the historian notes, *“a civil war began. Supporters of A.F. Ismail won, as they were supported by the tank forces and the Navy of NDRY. A.N. Muhammad suffered a complete defeat”* (Mohamed, op.cit.). The President asked North Yemen for intervention and made a proposal for immediate reunification. But A.A. Saleh refused to unite with the South in conditions of political instability. A.N. Muhammad went to Ethiopia and asked Mengistu Haile Mariam for help, however, he refused also. After that, he and his supporters went back to YAR.

On January 25, a new government was organized, it was headed by Haidar Abu Bakr al-Attas. He did not join any of the armed fractions, kept good relations both with Moscow and the rich Arab countries, and most importantly, advocated the unification of Yemen. Ali Salem al-Beid was elected the new President of the National Democratic Republic of Yemen and the General Secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party. During the fighting, Aden, the capital of South Yemen, was destroyed severely. According to various estimates, from 5 to 17 thousands of military and civilians were killed. All foreign specialists, who worked before the coup in the country, were evacuated.

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<sup>4</sup> Until recently, it was believed that his body was not found. But in 2012, Russian press published reports that people who knew Ismail claimed that his remains were buried in a closed coffin without being presented for identification to journalists.

<sup>5</sup> «Pravda», 1986, 14<sup>th</sup> of January.

In June 1986, at the YSP conference, the actions of A.N. Muhammad and his supporters were defined as a “*bloody reactional coup*”. The conference documents noted that “*a bloody conspiracy ... had devastating consequences for the national economy in the spheres of housing, state enterprises, and brought huge losses in general*” (Cordesman, 1993, p. 14). At the same conference, the leadership of the YSP decided on an amnesty for participants of the events of January 1986. Many supporters of the runaway president were released. However, the former leader of South Yemen did not give up the struggle for power. In December 1987, the NDRY authorities sentenced him to death, but the sentence was not carried out, as Muhammad was hiding in North Yemen. Also in December 1986, an open trial was held on those, responsible for the January events, in which 142 accused were held, 48 of them in absentia. Some of those found guilty were shot.

So ingloriously ended the presidential career of Ali Nasser Muhammad. In 1989, while in Sana'a, he declared that he would not fight for power in South Yemen (Mohamed, op.cit., p. 200). During the civil war in Yemen in summer of 1994, he spoke out against the support of the Democratic Republic of Yemen, proclaimed by the southerners under the leadership of Ali Salem al-Beyd.

In 2006, after appeals of the Yemeni government, A.N. Muhammad was going to return, but he remained in Syria, where he headed the Damascus Center for Arab Strategic Studies. In 2011, Mikhail Roshchin (2019, p. 311) writes, “*during anti-government protests in Yemen, he was invited to join the Transitional Council as part of Saleh’s opposition forces*”.

In 2017-2018, A.N. Muhammad was spotted in Moscow at the meetings of the Valdai International Discussion Club as an expert on Yemen. Maybe Russia, grounding on the basis of opportunistic and globalist considerations, forgave him past sins. Speaking on February 19, 2018, he said: “*As for Yemen, the UN and the great powers must exert the necessary pressure to end the war ... It is necessary to start a political settlement and restore the destruction*”.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps he also meant Aden, which was destroyed 35 years ago by his personal order.

### **A.A. Saleh’s way**

In May 1990, the unification of the Yemen Arab Republic and the National Democratic Republic of Yemen took place. The economy of second country suffered from the collapse of the socialist bloc and the crisis in the USSR. Abdullah Ali Saleh led the state, and the party leader of South Yemen, Ali Salem al-Beid, became his deputy. Some reserachers believe that the formation of a united Yemen was an indisputable merit of Saleh. He was

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<sup>6</sup>Ali Nasser Mohammed. Stability in Yemen is an integral part of the worldwide security. Opinions of experts. <https://en.valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/stabilnost-v-yemene/19.02.2020>.



awarded the title of General in appreciation of his tremendous achievements in the unification of the nation.

A relatively liberal constitution was adopted, parliamentary elections were held, in which the conditionally "southern" socialists got the second place. But the overwhelming majority remained with the northerners. The discontent of the inhabitants of the south, writes Alexei Markov, "infuriated the desire of the natives of the north to develop local oil resources. It seemed to the southerners that this whole association was one big conspiracy"<sup>7</sup>. In the fall of 1990, Saleh supported the invasion of Saddam Hussein in Kuwait, which, after the expulsion of Iraqi troops from the country, led to a deterioration in relations between Yemen and other Arab countries, as well as to the mass deportation of approx. 800 thousand of Yemeni workers who were there to earn money. "The population of Yemen," writes Alexei Markov, "in one fell swoop grew by 7%, returnees had to be settled in temporary camps."<sup>8</sup> So, the flow of money, sent to the homeland, dried up completely both in northern and southern parts of the country.

In 1994, a civil war broke out in Yemen between the North and the South (the armed forces of both parts of the country were never united). Ali Salem al-Bade, after consulting in the United States with the Vice President Al Gore, attempted to secede South Yemen and to create the so-called Democratic Republic of Yemen there. The separatists accused the northerners of an unfair distribution of income from the sale of oil, as it was the Aden region, where the country's main oil reserves were located.

However, during the two summer months, the northerners under the command of Saleh crushed the southerners and took control of the entire territory of the country. Yemeni socialism ceased to exist, although the amnesty was declared for all the warriors. But it did not affect the sixteen main commanders of the South. Against the backdrop of the victory in October 1994, the Yemeni Parliament elected Saleh the President of the united Yemen under the new constitution. Later he was solemnly awarded the title of Field Marshal. In September 1999, Saleh won with 96% of the vote in the first presidential election, and in 2001 he secured the adoption of constitutional amendments that extended the presidential term to 7 years. That time it was noted that the president uses his political and military talents primarily for his own benefit. For example, Saleh announced that he would not participate in the next presidential election, but did not keep his word and in October 2006 he was re-elected for a 7-year term. Although Yemen is the poorest country in the region, the leader

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<sup>7</sup> Markov A. *Field Marshal Death. Drowned Yemen in the blood of a dictator, which was killed by his own allies.* - World, Lenta.ru, 10.01.2020.

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem.

accumulated gigantic wealth, which is estimated at between \$ 30 and \$ 60 billion in reports of non-governmental organizations.

To stop the uprising, which was smouldering in the south and Shiite north of the country since the mid-90s, Saleh made an alliance with al-Qaeda militants. However, after the September 11 attacks, he joined the global anti-terror coalition. Though, his critics claim that the decisive argument was the huge military and financial assistance from the United States, and Saleh did not fight too actively with terrorists to make the cash flow as long as possible. President's problems began to grow by 2010, as gigantic corruption and growing internal conflicts devastated the state treasury. Back in 2005, Saleh cancelled food subsidies, which led to widespread protests from the population.

In the winter of 2010-2011, during the "Arab Spring", Yemen was swept by demonstrations against Saleh's regime. Yemeni autocrat firstly announced his resignation and "leaving with dignity," but then again broke his promise and ordered the police to shoot the demonstrators. According to the government, more than 2 thousand people were killed during the riots, more than 22 thousand were injured.

According to the plan of the Gulf Cooperation Council of the Arab States on resolving the internal crisis, signed on November 23, 2011, Saleh resigned from the government in exchange for granting immunity from prosecution for his crimes on the position of a president. Since 2014, a civil conflict if not war has been continuing in Yemen: the Houthis (the Shiite movement of Ansar Alla) rebelled against the authorities, led by the new president, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi (Korotaev, 2015, p. 79). Under their control were many areas of the country, including the capital. However, after the intervention of the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia, the authorities managed to regain control of some of them. Saleh at first supported the Houthis uprising, and the military loyal to him fought on their side against the authorities and the Arab coalition. But at the end of November 2017, a conflict between recent allies in the war with the government - Houthis rebels and supporters of Ali Abdullah Saleh arose in Sana'a. In a televised speech on December 2, he said: "Yemeni citizens tried to endure the Houthis recklessness for 2.5 years, but I can't do it anymore. I urge the brothers in neighbouring countries to stop aggression and lift the blockade".<sup>9</sup> (Markov, op.cit.). Immediately after the ex-president's statement, army units loyal to him, started the fight with the Houthis. On December 4, 2017 Houthis rebels killed Saleh in the village of Sunkhan near Sana'a. Legutko (op.cit) writes about this: "*Saleh led the repressive system, which was robbing his citizens on a large scale. However, his death is bad news. The civil war will intensify, it will become more and more difficult to prevent the world's largest humanitarian catastrophe.*"

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<sup>9</sup>A. Markov, *ibid.*

## **Conclusion**

Leadership is a complex and important social phenomenon, the origins and interpretation of which dates back to ancient times. In the Old Testament we find many instructive materials about leaders. Ancient historians and philosophers - Herodotus, Plutarch, Plato, Aristotle; in the Middle Ages, the Prophet Mohamed and St. Thomas Aquinas showed interest in leadership, attempted to describe it and comprehend it.

A political leader is a person who can connect various social groups and solve important problems with their support. However, it seems to the authors that the characters of our article comply more to the definition of Machiavelli: a political leader is a sovereign who unites and represents the whole society and also uses any means to maintain public order and maintain his dominance (Gugin, Pliszka, 2009, p. 23).

So, two leaders of the same nationality. What is common between them? Both took part in the liberation struggle against tyranny, hegemonism and monarchism from their early youth. Both came to the heights of power at a relatively young age. Both have undergone evolution in ideology. Both were prone to corruption and were guilty of the deaths of thousands of people. And both crashed ultimately in their political career. Each of them in his own way became an enemy of the Yemeni people, betraying their fundamental interests. Now their country is plunged into a situation of the so-called controlled chaos, the key reason of which both allies were. How long this condition will last - no one knows. The world has lost interest to Yemen. It seems to us that only a new legitimate federalization of the country could become an alternative to war and chaos.

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### **Problem przywództwa politycznego na przykładzie Jemenu**

*W niniejszym artykule poddano analizie problem przywództwa politycznego w krajach rozwijających się na przykładzie Jemenu. Wybór tematyki poddyktowany jest tym, że w 2020 upłynęło trzydzieści lat od zjednoczenia tego państwa oraz doświadczeniami osobistymi jednego z autorów, który przez dwa lata pracował w tamtejszym systemie szkolnictwa wyższego. Przedmiotem badań jest działalność autorytarnych prezydentów Jemenu i Narodowo-Demokratycznej Republiki Jemenu: Alego Abdullaha Saleha (1978-2011) i Alego Nassera Muhammada (1972-1986). Pierwszy z nich był arabskim marksistą, drugi – umiarkowanym islamskim nacjonalistą. W artykule zastosowano metodę analizy porównawczej, za pomocą której ukazano rolę i znaczenie przywództwa politycznego w Jemenu w warunkach reżimu autorytarnego.*

**Słowa kluczowe:** przywódca polityczny, administracja publiczna, Jemen Północny i Południowy, socjalizm arabski, autorytaryzm, panarabizm, kryzys polityczny.