ANTHROPOMETRIC EVALUATION OF NUTRITIONAL STATUS AND GROWTH OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN ADEN, DEMOCRATIC YEMEN.

THESIS

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By
SALAH SALEM A. HAITHAMI
M.D. (Aden)

SUPERVISED BY

Prof. Dr. Aly A. Al-Nofely
Prof. of Phys. Anthropology
Medical Division,
National Research Center, Cairo.

Dr. Amin A. Nasher
Pediatric Consultant
Children's Hospital, Aden.

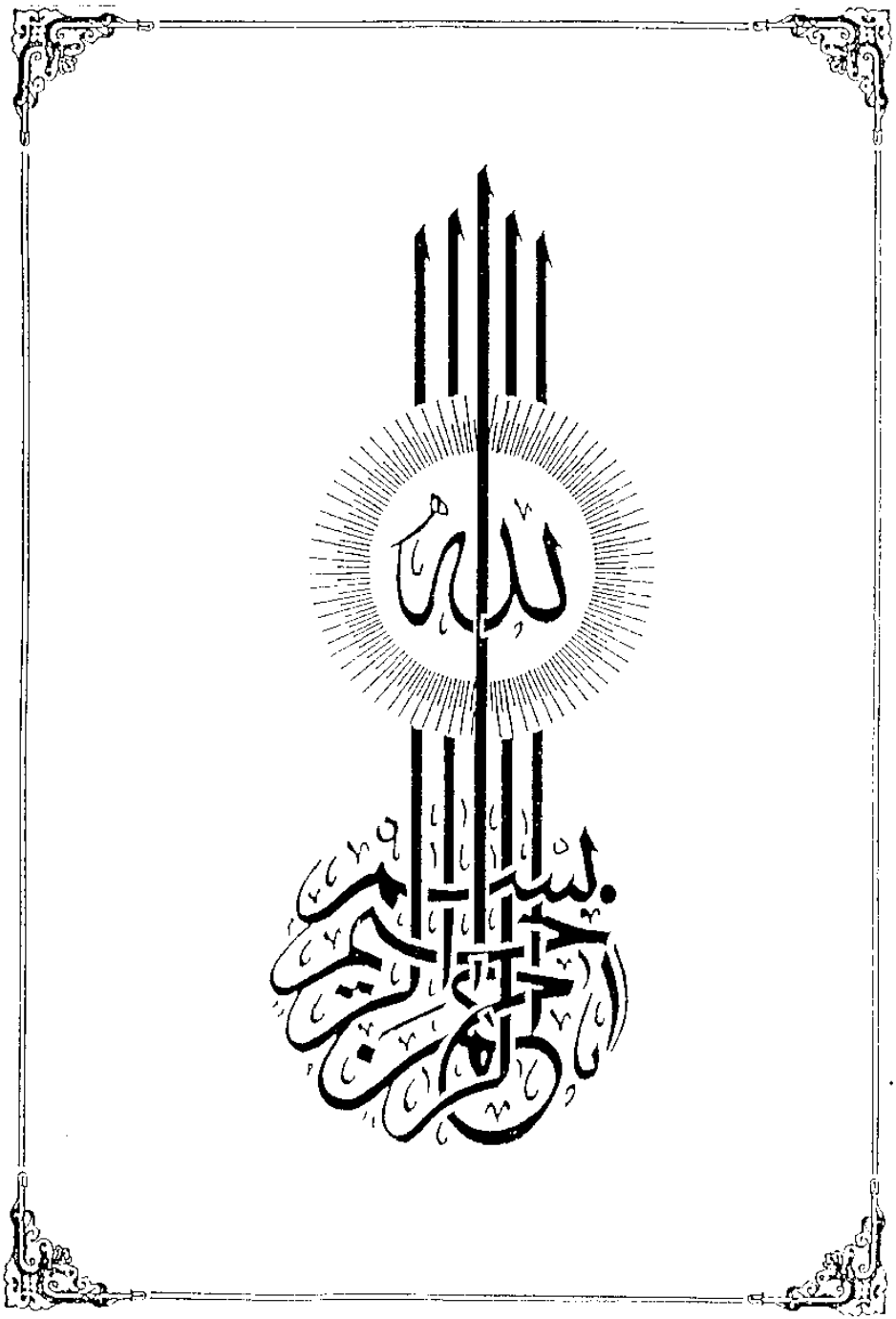
Dr. Mohamed Salah I. Gabal
Lecturer, Dept. of Community,
Environmental and Occupational Medicine,
Faculty of Medicine,
Ain-Shams University

Dedicated to

My father for his moral support

and

My wife for her devotional patience.



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Dr. Salah Salem Haithami.

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"A physician must know, and must be at great pains to know, if he is to do his duty, what man is in relation to his food and drinks and habits generally, and what will be the effect of each on each individual".

Hippocrates

Nutrition may be defined as the science of food, the substance there in, its action, interaction and balance in relation to health and disease. It is the process by which the organism ingests, digests, absorbs, and utilizes the food substances (Mitchell, et al., 1976).

Child nutrition and growth are universally accepted criteria for assessment of his health status in the community. Child care is a big responsibility especially that the dependent child of today is the productive man of tomorrow.

In spite of a lot of work that was done in the field of nutrition, great efforts are still needed to elicit the state of nutrition in different populations.

In Democratic Yemen many health problems remain unexplored and more researches are needed to identify the extent and magnitude of each including nutritional problems. There are very few community-based investigations concerning

nutrition especially among children (Bourgade, et al., 1983 and Nasher, et al., 1984).

Base-line data, however, concerning health status of primary school children in Democratic Yemen are, unfortunately, lacking and, like many other parts of the Arab World, there are no local growth standards. Therefore this study is intended to throw light on some aspects of the nutritional problems in this particular population.

This study was carried out in the capital (Aden Governerate) on the primary school children aged 7-12 years just before the onset of pubertal spurt.

According to WHO expert committee and several other authorities (Jellife, 1966; Tanner, 1966; Gurney, 1972; WHO, 1976; Waterlow et al., 1977 and WHO, 1983), the following anthropometric measurements were used to reflect the nutritional status and growth of our sample:-

body weight, body height, mid-arm circumference and skinfold thickness. Besides, these measurements were related to some selected well defined social factors to add value to the results attained and explain the nutritional indices in concern. These factors are:-