



The Organization of AIYS in 1977-1978
An Archival Document

In 1977, due to the inspiration and introductory planning of McGuire Gibson at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, AIYS was born. Before settling on AIYS, the acronym was suggested as ACYS (American Center for Yemeni Studies) and AIRY (American Institute for Research in Yemen). The latter acronym was dropped when someone pointed out that it was too close to the term "ayr" in Arabic. By July, 1978 the term American Institute for Yemeni Studies (AIYS) was adopted.

One of the founding members of AIYS was anthropologist Jon Swanson, who conducted ethnographic research in the Southern Highlands of Yemen. Jon has sent AIYS the documentation he has of the first meetings creating the institute. AIYS is grateful to Jon for this archive, which is preserved in this pdf.

A history of AIYS written by Dr. Gibson is available on the AIYS website at <https://www.aiys.org/history-1>.