

Yemen: Religious and Doctrinal Diversity..

A Rich Heritage and a Great Legacy

Aden: The Incubator of Religious and Sectarian Diversity throughout History

The History of Religious Minorities in the Yemeni Society

The Role of Civil Organizations in Spreading Doctrinal Tolerance and Acceptance of Others

Yemen: A Long History of Tolerance and Coexistence



Abdul-Aziz Oudah

Throughout its history, Yemen has been a distinguished model of tolerance, brotherhood, and peaceful coexistence among its people of all religions, doctrines and sects.

Throughout its ancient and modern history, Yemen has not known sedition or conflicts based on sectarian or doctrinal foundations. And all religious doctrines with all their affiliations in Yemen coexisted in peace and in group spirit, especially the Shafi'is and Zaydis, as they are the two prevailing doctrines in the country.

Yemeni history was full of many incidents and evidence confirming the diversity of the social fabric and its comprehensiveness of all doctrinal and sectarian frameworks even religious ones, where religious and sectarian coexistence were taken for granted by most Yemenis, and were considered a natural feature of daily life.

For centuries, Yemenis continued to coexist politically and socially, far from fanaticism and religious conflicts, which could be reflected negatively on the stability of the society.

The phenomenon of tolerance and coexistence has spread throughout history between religious doctrines and reached tolerance with non-Muslim minorities, to reveal a clear image of the tolerance of Yemenis, and their rejection of the language of violence and hatred.

In fact, the different doctrines did not affect the relations of Yemenis among each other, or their coexistence with the followers of other religious minorities who lived in Yemen.

Doctrinal and religious coexistence is one of the basic pillars, which provided a wide space for tolerance towards others, and the rejection of intolerance and extremism. As this coexistence was part of the value transformations that the society is witnessing through education on acceptance of others starting within the family and school by an appropriate curriculum that teaches to respect the human being and recognize his right to be different.

We tried in this issue of the newspaper to provide the reader with an overview of the most important religious doctrines coexisting in the country, not to mention, as much as possible, the religions of minorities who lived in Yemen.

We also reviewed the history of doctrines in Yemen, with the aim of enhancing societal awareness about the importance of rejecting racism and sectarianism, consolidating a culture of coexistence, and respecting the other despite intellectual differences. Furthermore, we interviewed thinkers, religious leaders, and citizens of different religions and doctrines, and presented the results of those dialogues in this issue with full transparency and credibility.



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Issue 9

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- 🔹 What Do Our Youth Know About Doctrines And How Do They View It?
- 🔹 Temples And Churches In Aden: Vivid Witnesses Of The History Of Religious Diversity And Tolerance In Yemen

- 🔹 Doctrinal Affiliation And The Labor Market
- 🔹 How Does Doctrinal Affiliation Affect The Lives Of Yemenis?
- 🔹 Historic Restaurants And Cafes In Aden

Yemen Embraces the First Testament of the Bible

EXCLUSIVE :
Sawt-Al Amal - (Voice of Hope)

Abdul-Bari Taher, a former president of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, said that Yemen has known religious and doctrinal diversity since ancient times. It is the first cradle of the heavenly religions, as this country had known the monotheistic religion before Judaism, Christianity and before

Islam, which is named Al-Khalilia after the Prophet Abraham Al Khalil. Then Yemen knew the Jewish and Christian religions. Taher reveals in an interview with "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that the Old and New Testaments of the Bible exist in Yemen, in addition to the existence of about 70 mushaf (collection of sheets) of the oldest manuscripts of the Holy Quran.

.....Continuation on page 2



Ghulam: Aden Represented a Model of Coexistence and Tolerance

EXCLUSIVE :
Sawt-Al Amal - (Voice of Hope)

The researcher, writer and historian in the modern history of Aden, Bilal Ghulam, said that the doctrinal and religious diversity of minorities in Yemen in general, and in Aden in particular, presented, during the British occupation in 1967, a mixture of many cultures, and contributed culturally, economical-

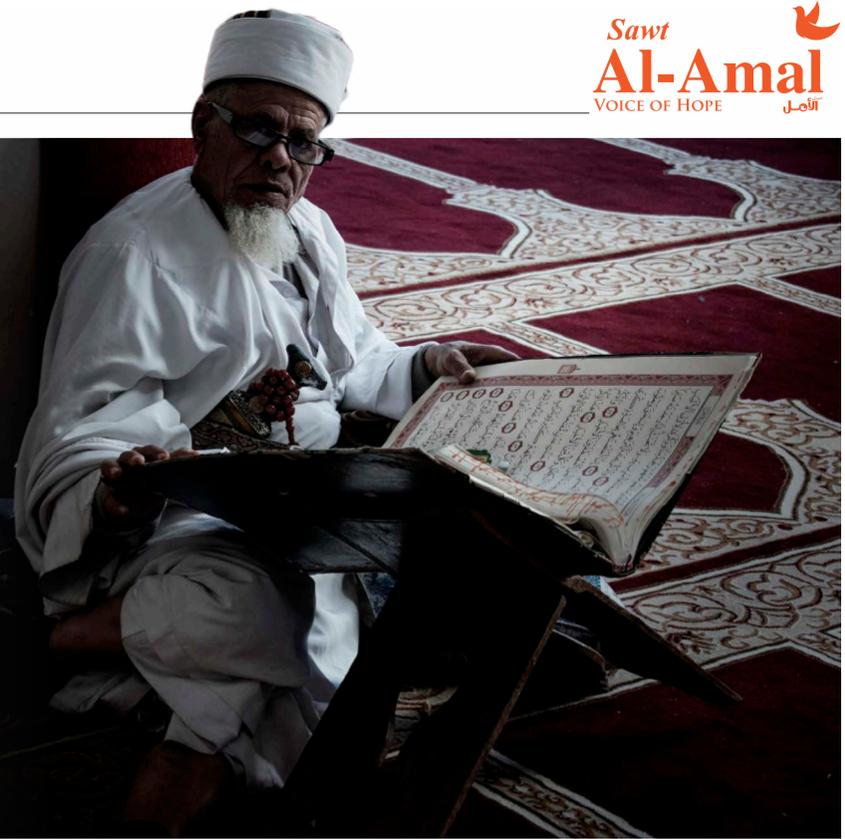
ly and socially in influencing the public life of the citizen. Their customs have merged with the Yemeni society and indulged in it through intermarriage and engaging in commercial and civil work. All of this has had a positive impact on the society.

He explained that Yemen has been characterized, since the dawn of Islam, with tolerance, coexistence, freedom of cultureContinuation on page 2





The Majority of Yemenis Follow the Shafi'i Doctrine



“The Shafi'i doctrine, attributed to Imam Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (204 AH / 818 CE) is one of the most popular jurisprudence Sunni doctrines which was accepted by the majority of scholars and the general public. The Shafi'i doctrine has spread in the central regions of Yemen (Taiz, Ibb and Tihama), as well as the southern regions. The Shafi'i doctrine became the doctrine of the ruling Sunni countries in the regions of the Central Yemen and Tihama.

By: Shawki Al-Abbasi
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Entering of the Shafi'i Doctrine into Yemen

The followers of the Shafi'i doctrine represent the majority of the population of Yemen, and the entry of the Shafi'i doctrine into Yemen, in Al-Jund Mikh-laf (Mikh-laf was an administrative division in ancient Yemen), with the Imam Al-Faqih (al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Jamhi al-Qurashi, 430) and he taught the Shafi'i fiqh, so the fuqaha (the persons trained in fiqh) of this doctrine in this country benefited from him. His school was in the town of Sahfanah, so the Shafi'is of Al-Ma'afar, Lahj, Aby-an, Ahl Al-Jund, Suhul, Uhaza, Ennah and Wadi Duba studied there, and many Yemeni scholars graduated from there.

More than a thousand years after the advent of the Zaydi doctrine, companion of the Imam Al-Hadi Yahya bin Al-Hussein, and the religious litigations between the Zaydi and the Shafi'i doctrines - were almost limited to non-essential formal things, such as the position of hands and saying "Amen" after Al-Fatiha while praying, or making haste towards the best thing in the Adhan (call to prayer) of the one and skipping it in the Adhan of the other. Nevertheless, these differences did not prevent them from meeting in one mosque, and everyone worships God in the way he deems correct.

Social Situation

Adherents of the doctrine live their social lives in great harmony with each other



er and with others. You see them intermarriage, and they have no objection on their children marrying from another doctrine.

Jamal Ibrahim, from Taiz, the stronghold of the Shafi'i doctrine followers, says: "I did not mind my daughter marrying a young man belonging to the Zaydi doctrine as he is an educated man with morals. As belonging to a doctrine, in my opinion, is not an obstacle to marriage and intermarriage between Yemenis", he adds, "Yemenis coexist with each other, Shafi'is or Zaydis". And he confirms that sectarian litigations lead people and the country to many dangers and evils that destroy the society.

He pointed out that Yemen is a country of coexistence and sectarian tolerance, and that the culture of tolerance was part of the Yemeni behavior and life, and it will always be so, God willing!

On his part, Muhammad Al-Habib, an educational man in Taiz, says that the



Shafi'i doctrine is characterized by the moderation and intermediary, and the followers of the doctrine adapt to everyone, and do not have any sectarian sensitivity or intolerance towards others. In fact, the followers of the doctrine practice their social life naturally and religious rituals in

their areas or the areas in which they live and work in the governorates whose residents follow the Zaydi sect.

And Habib adds, "Over decades, the majority of the followers of the Shafi'i school have devoted themselves to the fields of trade, finance and business, and

they were largely present in government jobs by virtue of that they were highly educated, have a great culture, experience and skills in the administrative work".

Intermediary and Moderation

In the context, the researcher in the social and demographic affairs, Jawad Muhammed Ali says, "Sectarianism or doctrinal was not one of the causes or headlines that was a cause of disputes between Yemenis".

He adds, "The Shafi'i doctrine represents the largest proportion of the population, but the sectarian bond among the followers of the Shafi'i doctrine is weak, unlike other doctrines that see the priority of belonging to the sect such as the Zaydis, the Ismailis, and others.

He pointed out that the followers of the Shafi'i doctrine in Yemen enjoy intermediary and moderation. They practice trade, agriculture and work in government jobs by virtue of education and qualification. Fanaticism of the doctrine is no longer important to them because if they practice their rituals according to what they are used to and inherited from their fathers and grandfathers, they do it away from extremism and exaggeration.

Formal Difference

Yemen has not known anything of sectarian fanaticism like the rest of the countries among the followers of the two main doctrines (Shafi'i and Zaydi), whereby Al-Shafi'is pray side to side. There are no mosques dedicated to followers of this or that doctrine. The mosque in which a Shafi'i Imam preaches is frequented by all the people leaving nearby with different doctrines, and vice-versa. As for the sectarian division, it greatly coincides with the geographical division (Upper Yemen or the plateau, Zaydi, and the lower Yemen or the central plateau, and the plains, Shafi'i)

In the context, Daifallah Muhammed, Imam and First in Charge of a Mosque in Sana'a, says, "The difference between the Shafi'i and the Zaydi doctrines is formal and not effective. For example, we find that Yemenis perform their prayers, some of them side by side, and they marry each other, as well as some of them live next to each other. Indeed, focusing on the differences and variances makes us tear apart the same social fabric".

Continuation From Frot Page....

Ghulam: Aden Represented a Model of Coexistence and Tolerance

and religious and doctrinal practice for all sects and minorities who used to practice their customs, prayers and celebrations with the participation of all without discrimination, in a distinct spiritual at-

mosphere for each sect, indicating that the Yemeni society accepts the culture of others, which is why they were allowed to freely pursue their lives since ancient times.

He pointed out that Aden was famous, throughout the ages, for its peaceful coexistence and tolerance with followers of doctrines and religions, since the time of the British colonization, until recent-

ly. However, the general situation in the country during successive periods, since independence, has contributed to reducing the presence of manifestations of worship and religious and sectarian rituals in Aden. That is why some of the followers of doctrines and religions have left towards various Yemeni governorates, European countries, India and other countries, and the ones remaining are still

practicing their ideological life individually.

Yemen Embraces the First Testament of the Bible

He explains, "The first manuscripts of the New Bible written in Aramaic and its writer who is one of the most important

Disciples of Christ and was named (Eli), are still present in Yemen to this day.

According to Taher who is a former head of the Book Authority, the "New Testament" copy is in the warehouses of the Yemen's Ministry of Culture in Sana'a, while the "Old Testament" copy is in the treasury of the Central Bank of Yemen, after it was in the National Library in Taiz.

Coexistence since Hundreds of Years: Diversity of Yemeni Commercial Markets

By: Rajaa Mukred
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“In Yemen, people practice various professions; the majority shares many of them, and there are no preferences in the jobs given in terms of societal category, group or region. Thus, there are some professions that are characterized by some doctrinal groups; however, this does not mean that they are, exclusively, practiced by them. In fact, this is the most prominent thing that ‘Sawt Al-Amal’ (Voice of Hope) newspaper has noticed about some religious doctrines.

Any person wandering around the markets of Aden, specifically in Crater, finds Ismaili merchants trading in incense and perfumes and Indian clothes import, and some others work in spices. As for the capital Sana'a, specifically Bab al-Yemen, the visitor finds many types of clothes and fabrics for most of the merchants there belong to the Ismailia sect, and mostly work in the clothing trade.

Nasser Al-Faisali, a clothing merchant in the Bab al-Salam market in Sana'a, describes the situation of economic dealings between the merchants of various doctrines as normal, and that there is a coexistence, and affirms that there is no doctrinal influence on economic dealings between merchants.

Muhammad Shaabah, a clothes merchant in Shomailah district, agrees with him by saying: “Economic matters and dealings are taking place in an appropriate manner, and there has never been a disagreement between merchants because of a different doctrine”, affirming that there is a great coexistence.

Harmony and Synergy between the Merchants

There are two prevailing doctrines in Yemen, namely the Shafi'i and the Zaydi, which constitute the majority among the Yemeni people, and their work basically consist on trade, government jobs and free business. And there are also some prominent merchants from the two doctrines in the field of trade.

Mahmoud Al-Qubati, a food merchant in Al-Hawban in Taiz, says: “Despite the circumstances that Yemen is going through, the economic situation continues with its commercial dealings, as there is harmony and synergy among the merchants. Never has it happened that two merchants fought because of the doctrinal difference, and the competition in the markets is based on the merchandise in terms of quality and prices ».

As for the Salafists, you often find them in the charitable and remunerative works, and sometimes, voluntary works and living in mosques. Some of them work in the Sharia ruqyah, sometimes in return of a fee and some others for free, and other professions practiced by the common people, whether in the honey trade or others.



Ali Al-Rahi, a watchmaker, who also owns apiaries to sell honey, in Sana'a, explains that most of those whom he met and dealt with in selling honey were the Mutawa'a (Salafis), and that the Bab al-Salam market in Sana'a gathered in many religious sects. For example, Ismailis are clothing merchants, and Jews, especially the eldest, used to make kamariyat (stained-glass windows with half-moon shape) in the past.

Al-Rahi adds, “Currently, the kamariyat are operated by Yemenis, since the Jews are not numerous”, and he confirms that merchants have coexisted for a long time.

Also, other religions live in Yemen, such as Christianity and Judaism, as most of those Christians are of different nationalities, such as Ethiopians... During the visit of ‘Sawt Al-Amal’ (Voice of Hope) to their workplaces in Sana'a, the newspaper found that some are working for Yemeni owners, and most of the pro-

fessions in which they work are selling Abyssinian food, trade in leather (leather shoes), and Abyssinian honey.

As for the Jews in Yemen, they were famous for their handicrafts, such as making silverware, kamariyat and doors.

Those who are familiar with the religious sects in Yemen notice the diversity in the professions practiced by each sect and its preferred trade, and this is what the ‘Sawt Al-Amal’ (Voice of Hope) newspaper concluded in its visits to markets and shops. It enjoyed the dialogue with some merchants, as it came out with a description of the current economic situation based on opinion of merchants and economists.

The Current Economic Situation

During the talk of ‘Sawt Al-Amal’ (Voice of Hope) about the state of the economy and if there is a doctrinal influence on the investment movement, it hosted Faisal Al-Hudhaifi, specialized in economics and political sciences at the University of Taiz.

He talked about the situation of the Yemeni economy without mentioning doctrinarism, for the fact that there is coexistence and it did not appear in the economic arena.

Dr. Al-Hudhaifi says that the current economy is the economy of shares, it is far from any control, and there are no more features of the state's economy.

The reason for that is that the state's resources, represented by important sectors such as agriculture, fish, oil and gas, and investment projects, are no longer functional, yet some of them are produced minimally under the shadow of investment traffic disruption.

And Dr. Al-Hudhaifi adds that the service economy, which is run by the private sector, has contracted to its minimum levels with the rise in the insurance cost of maritime transport, which caused an increase in the prices of imported goods and raw materials that enter the local industry and agriculture, with a clear absence of the investment economy, and the withdrawal of investors from the scene.



Minority Religions in Yemen: History Unites Us

صوت
الأمل

By: Manal Ameen
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“Yemen is considered one of the Arab countries which encompasses many diverse religious and ethnic doctrines around the world, and has been known since ancient times as a country of peaceful coexistence and religious tolerance, as witnessed by Yemeni historians, orientalist and European travelers. There is a homogeneous mixture of religious sectarian practices and religions of minorities that are present in a number of Yemeni governorates.

Jews

The Jewish community in Yemen was one of the most important and oldest minorities, and accounts differ as to the history of its presence in Yemen, as it is said that Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, sent prisoners to southern Arabia and Yemen after the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BC, according to what the researcher specialized in the Jews of the Arab world Ahmed Kamel Rawi indicated, and they practiced their religious rituals and traditions in complete freedom, in their temples which reached in 1930, 39 (thirty-nine) synagogues in Sana'a.

The Wayback Machine website stated in its 2019 report that the number of Jews in Yemen in 1948 reached 55,000, but in 2018 it decreased to less than 50 people due to the increasing emigration of many of them to Israel.

Journalist Ibtihal Al-Salihi asserts that the followers of most of the minorities in Yemen used to live their lives and practice their rituals normally, and there was harmony in the Yemeni fabric without discrimination, but the continuation of the successive conflicts in Yemen led to a sharp decrease in the number of Jews, as a result of their immigration abroad.

According to what the General Organization of Antiquities, Museums and Manuscripts in Aden reported to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope)

newspaper, the only temple for the Jews is the Grand Jewish Sanjut Temple, which is the largest in the Arabian Peninsula that has been completely demolished, and its features were obliterated during the past periods. As well as, the Jewish school, built in 1911 in Sirah was damaged by neglect and successive conflicts.

Hindus

The Indians in Yemen were present before the British occupation in 1839, according to what the Yemeni researcher Hana Abdul Karim mentioned in her book entitled “Communities in Aden 1967-1967”. As it was estimated that the number



Fairouz

of Yemenis of Indian origin in Aden in 2015 was more than 200 thousand, and some of them are present in Mukalla, Al Khokha, Hajj and Sana'a as Sunni Muslims. And among them are Shiites, Hindus and Kashi in smaller numbers.

Irfan Fairouz, a journalist of Indian origin, says: "In the 1980s, many Indians of non-Muslim religions moved to Europe and India, only a few of them remained to this day. And despite that, most of the synagogues were turned into establishments affiliated to the state, and the rest of the Christian and Hindu churches were closed. However, there are Indian (non-Muslim) families who still practice their religious rituals in

their homes, especially Hindus."

“Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) attempted to interview a Hindu family in Aden to learn how to practice their religious rituals and worships, and their societal lifestyle in the city, especially since they have shops (barbershop and building materials) in which they have been working since a hundred years, thus the request was rejected.

Christians

Members of the Christian religion, including Somalis, Ethiopians, Indians, and others residing in Yemen, influenced public life in Yemen during different periods of time, and they practiced their religious rituals with ease in their own churches and temples.

Mansour Yusuf Khan, the first official in charge of the Ras Marbat Church, told “Sawt al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) newspaper that since the British withdrawal in 1967, the church used to receive foreign Christians and Yemeni Christian adherents, as normal as other churches in Aden, until the insurance code appeared, which led to closing all churches in Aden and keeping only two Catholic churches in Tawahi district and Saint Joseph Church in Sirah district for worshippers until 2015. And there were no Christians left in Aden, except for less than ten individuals still practicing their religious rituals and their annual celebrations in this church on a non-continuous basis.

A resident of Al-Tawahi District in Aden of Somali origin, Muhammad Hussein, stated that the Catholic Church of St. Anthony in Al-Tawahi used to receive hundreds of Christian worshippers since the British colonization, until recently, and Christians in Aden are Catholics and practice their rituals and ceremonies on Easter and New Year according to the Gregorian calendar, as well as their prayers all week long.

He added, “During the past years, this church and other churches of Aden and its temples, have been subjected to many problems, difficulties and neglect, which has led to their complete closure, and they have become abandoned buildings, and few Christian adherents in Aden pray from their homes”.



صوت
الأمل

Temples and Churches in Aden:

Vivid Testimonies on Diversity, and Religious Tolerance History in Yemen!

Manal Ameen
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“The city of Aden, in southern Yemen, has embraced, through its historical stages, religious, sectarian and doctrinal diversity. Based on this, a number of mosques, Hindu temples and Christian churches were established in which all religious and sectarian rites and beliefs were practiced, and their effects are still present until now, as a witness to the diversity that distinguished this city, and made it as a model for Yemeni cities.

Hinduism

The Hindu religion is considered the second largest religion, which was widespread in Yemen after Islam. It has spread since the presence of the English in southern Yemen. About 120,000 people follow it, most of them from the Indian community, according to a study by the Pew Research Center in 2010.

In the nineteenth century, five Hindu temples were built in Aden: Shr Trikamraijji Haveli Temple (1862), followed by the Bharat Library (India Library), Sheikh Othman Hanumanji Temple (1882), Shri Ramchandra ji Temple (1875), Shri Hinglaj Mataji Mandir Temple, and Shri Shankar Hanuman Temple, that is located in a large cave called Dasamari Bazar in Crater, where their prayers and religious rituals were held.

A report published by the General Authority of Museums, Antiquities, and Manuscripts in Aden for the year 2017 of which “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) obtained a copy, reviewed the most important Hindu temples, which still exist, despite what they have been subjected to, from vandalism to neglect during long periods, represented in: 1 - Shri Ji Temple (1882), which is liable to be demolished, 2- Shri Hinglaj Mataji Temple (1900), which was subjected to vandalism in 2015, 3- Shri Toshirji Temple, which needs restoration. All temples are located in Sirah District, and there is a Shri Ramchandra ji temple which was built in 1875.

Christian Churches

Christianity, in Yemen, was the third most widespread religion among the population in ancient times. And according to John of Nikiû in his book “History of Egypt and the Ancient World”, Christianity entered Yemen thanks to Theophilus Al-Hindi, in the fourth century, and the Yemenis converted to Christianity in that period.

The first in charge of Ras Morbat Church, in Tawahi district, Mansour Youssef Khan, indicates to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) that the city of Aden still maintains a number of churches that follow the three Christian sects: Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox, but it has been closed since the English withdrawal from Yemen in 1967.

Concerning the history of the Protestant Church of Ras Morbat, Khan said, “The Ras Morbat Church is one of the oldest churches in Yemen in general, and Aden in particular, as it was built in 1863 with a value of two thousand pounds Sterling during the reign of Queen Victoria, and is known internationally as the England Church. It is considered as the first church built since the British entered Aden, and there is a similar church in London called Eden Church.

Since 1993, a body responsible for the churches in Cyprus called the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, which is the supervisor of the Protestant churches in the world, began negotiating with the relevant authorities in Aden during that period to restore the church in order to supervise it, and it was agreed on that. In 1995, it was rehabilitated and opened a charitable clinic, which still provides health services to the people of the region without discrimination. Khan says about the history of the oldest church in Aden, and on the ongoing prayers at the present time that “the church is able to receive Christian worshipers, and since 2015 it has received very few of them to perform their prayers and rituals but not as much as before”.

The report issued by the Antiquities Authority in 2017 indicated that the number of churches currently in the city has reached five, including the Church of Saint Mary Garrison (Legislative Council 1871), Saint Joseph Church (1852), Salahuddin Church in



Aden:
The Incubator
of Religious and
Sectarian Diversity
throughout History

Al-Buraiqeh (1870), Saint Anthony Church (1860) and Ras Morbat Church (1863).

Religious Sites

Othman Nasser Abdul Rahman, Director of the Antiquities Department at the General Authority of Museums, Antiquities, and Manuscripts in Aden, showed “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) the number of temples and churches currently in the city, which has reached nine churches and temples that follow different religions and sects, and that the number of mosques which follow a number of the confessional doctrines and needs to be restored and rehabilitated, are amounted to about 19 mosques. After 1990, about 16 mosques were demolished and rebuilt in a completely different and modern style.

And Abdul Rahman adds, “There is a the Grand Jewish Sanjut Temple located in the Sirah district, which was considered one of the largest synagogues in the Arabian Peninsula, was demolished and no longer has an effect during the post-independence periods of British colonialism, as well as the Persian Temple and the Crematorium known as Tower of Silence, and Dakhma, near Shamsan Mountain that dates back to 1873 for the Persian (Zoroastrian) sect.

Othman Abdul Rahman states that Al-Rizmit School which is currently called Lutfi Jaafar Aman School was built in 1958 when Mr. Charles Wood submitted a document known as Wood's Educational Kit, and included educational plans and curricula within the policies of that period, in addition to the Sultan's School, which was established in 1935 for the sons of sultans, sheikhs and elders, and was closed in 1952. Over time, it was subjected to a lot of ruin as a result of neglect.

Reducing the Role of the Culture Office

With regard to the interest in religious antiquities in Aden, the Director of the Planning Department in the Culture Office, Dr. Firdaus Yusuf, explained that most of the Jewish and Hindu temples and other temples, expressing the various religious culture, of all sects, doctrines, religions and races in the city of Aden, have been completely obliterated over time since the British withdrawal.

Yusuf suggested that the reason of shrinking the role of the Culture Office which is supposed to play a supervisory role in order to preserve all historical and archaeological monuments such as ancient temples, churches and mosques is the general situation that the country is going through from various public aspects.





The Ismailis in Ye

Reject Conflicts and Coexist in Peace

By: Nada al-Bukari - Manal Ameen
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“The Ismaili sect in Yemen is considered one of the most famous sects that fall into the Bohra or Al-Makarima division, as the Ismaili da'wah (teaching) secretly achieved its successes during the reign of the Fatimid era in Yemen through the preacher Ibn Hushib Mansur al-Yaman (who died in 914 CE / 302 AH) and the preacher Ibn al-Fadl (who died in 910 CE / 303AH). This is according to what was mentioned in the early Ismaili testimonies regarding the Sulayhids and the modern da'wah (teaching) in Yemen within the book “Uyun al-Akhbar” (Book of Choice Narratives) by the preacher Idris Imad al-Din ibn Al-Hasan in the seventh volume, and his book “Nuzhat al-Afkar”. They are distributed in Haraz in Sana'a, in the village of Al-Mazahin in Ibb, in the Crater area in Aden, where the Bohra market is located.

About Them:

Al-Musta'li Ismailis are called the Tayyibis after the Fatimid Al-Musta'li who entered the concealment in 1130, and under which the Musta'li group was led by a series of preachers residing in Yemen, then they moved to India in the year 1539. Hence, the Bohra, as they are known, have maintained a culture with distinguished traditional ritualism, and this is what was referred

to in the book “A Modern History of the Ismailis: Continuity and Change in a Muslim Community”, by Dr. Farhad Daftary as co-director and head of the Department of Academic Research and Publications at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, consulting editor of the Encyclopædia Iranica, and co-editor of the Encyclopedia Islamica.

Abdulaziz Muhammad (a pseudonym), a member of the Ismaili sect, told “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) that the Sulayhid state was one of the most successful countries in Yemeni history, as they created a kind of sectarian coexistence through the foundation of the Ismaili Sulayhid dynasty by the preacher Ali Al-Sulayhi who lived in Haraz. He chose the city of Sana'a as its capital. His motto was religious tolerance, and he gave the people of other religious sects the freedom of belief, and did not force anyone to convert into Ismailism, which strengthened the foundations of his state. Then the Queen Arwa (the free Queen), who is considered as the last ruler of the Sulayhid state, took over the reign. She contributed to reviving the economy of Yemen through her strong connection with the Fatimid ruler during her reign at the time, as she used to extend a helping hand with gold and aid, in return, he strengthened the foundations of her rule and her authority during that period.

As the book “A Modern History of the Ismailis: Continuity and Change in a Muslim Community” explained that the Bohra community witnessed a state of ascension in the nineteenth century thanks to the British protection. They transferred their base into Mumbai, and after the independence they merged with the Indian Muslims, as well as preferred to remain in India instead of immigrating to Pakistan. Hence, the

Bohra focuses on the Fatimid identity, and they are inspired by its civilization and architectural character, and today they constitute a wide class of merchants (Bohra means the trader) and professionals.

The majority of the Ismailis (the Bohra) are based in the Haraz region, at the southwest of the capital Sana'a, which includes the tomb of Hatam Al-Hadarat (Hatim ibn Ibrahim), the third Fatimid preacher, which is considered one of the most important shrines of the sect's followers in the country.

“Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) newspaper visited their places of residence, in the Haddah area in Sana'a, and checked a religious center called Al-Faid Al-Hatimi, which is dedicated to the Bohra, and includes a number of mosques and buildings surrounded by a garden full of flowers, in addition to a restaurant.

A high number of the Ismailis followers are located in Al-Ramah neighborhood in the Nuqum area where they have the Bohra mosque which is designated for the sect, in addition to the existence of a fiqh (jurisprudence) school specialized for their children, in which they learn the Quran, the jurisprudence, and their religious beliefs.

A Sect that Recognizes Peace and Coexistence

The Ismaili state continued for a period of time in Yemen, and few of them remained in specific areas. They have left the governance and integrated into the society. They were receiving continuous support from the Ismaili and Fatimid preachers in the rest of the countries in which they resided.

Abdul Aziz Muhammed said, “We are proud to have ruled Yemen during the reign of Queen Arwa Al-Sulayhi, which was considered one of the most prosperous periods of ruling in Yemen at that time, because “we are a sect that only recognizes peace, tolerance and coexistence”.

On his part, Seif Al-Din Jaafar, a member of the Bohra community in Aden, says, “Our religious prayers and rituals are still performing in our “Al-Bohra” mosque normally, and most of the time in our homes, thus we have stopped practicing the celebrations of our sect for years because of the general situation of the country”.

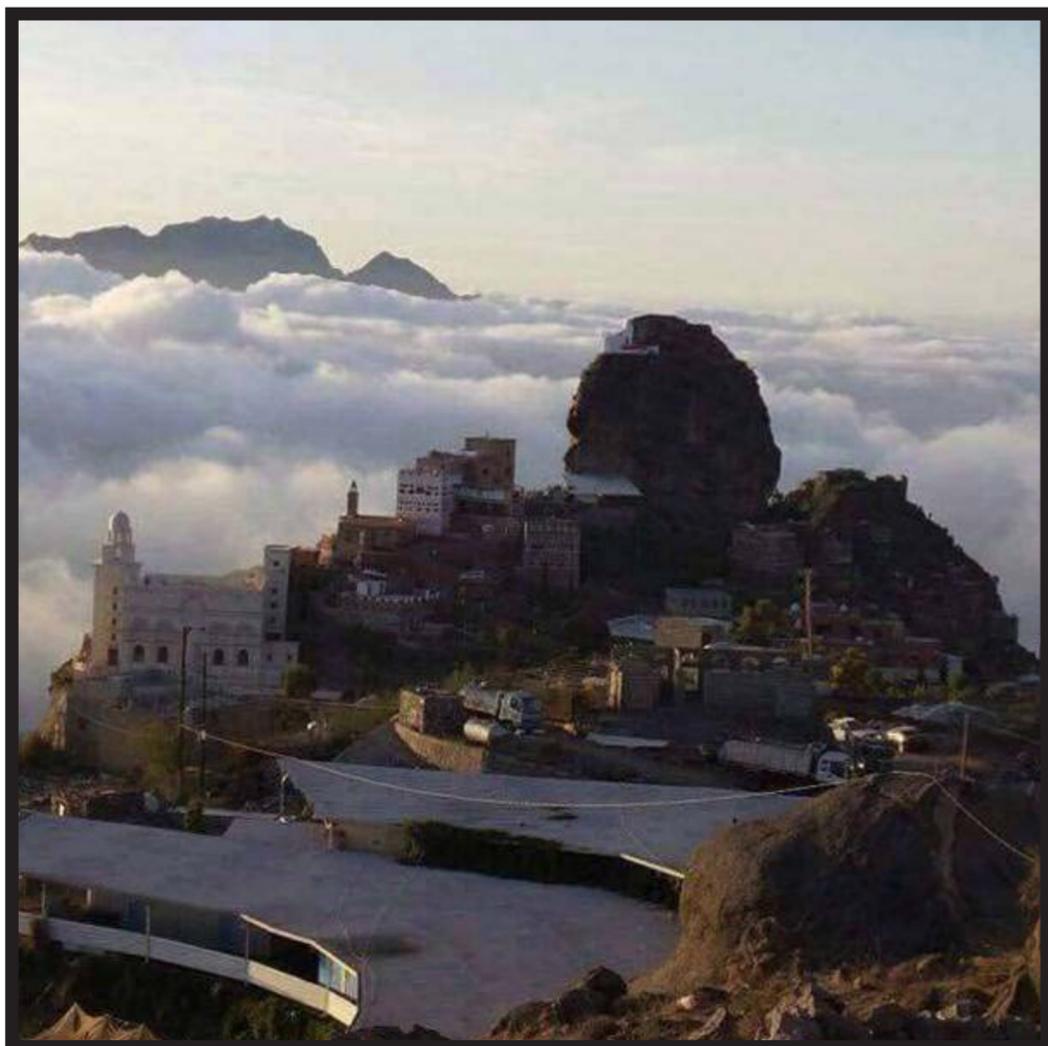
Religious Ritual

Mahran Roštam, a citizen of Indian origin, says that the Indians belonging to the Ismaili sect (the Bohra) in Yemen practice their religious rituals and live normally, but in Aden, they practice their rituals individually, and they also have two mosques: Al-Khoja which was closed many years ago, and Al-Bohra which still receives members of this sect only during prayers and rituals.

Mahran adds that “the rest of the Bohra community in Aden practices their religious and economic life out of sight and in a fairly stable manner. They also have a senior who solves their life problems in Aden called Qutb Al-Din Fakhred-din Barbara.

Saeed Abdullah (a pseudonym) says to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope), “There are only 300 members left from the Ismaili community, the Bohra, in Aden, and the number may have decreased because of the general situation in the country”.

The Ismaili sect is considered a minority compared to other sects, especially as it is a sect that



believes in freedom of expression, freedom of thought and belief. It does not force anyone to follow it and they are satisfied with their limited number. And according to Abdullah, one of the Ismaili sect members, the number of Ismailis in Yemen does not exceed 20,000. As for Al-Makarima, they are more, and some of them have integrated into the society to the extent that you can only recognize them in their areas of concentration. Their religious rituals are represented by visiting the tomb of Hatim ibn Ibrahim, the third Fatimid preacher in the village of Al-Hutayb in Haraz, after their return from the Hajj rituals (the pilgrimages) every year. They would celebrate the arrival of the Sultan Mohammad Burhan Al-Din, the Sultan of Bohra in India, and dance folk dances in celebration and appreciation of his place among them.

Economic Conditions:

The Ismailis are one of the sects in which the economy represents the most important aspects of their lives, and they are famous for the spice trade,



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A Sect that Recognizes Peace and Coexistence

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in addition to real estate, industrial investment and money exchange. Hence, there are those who work in the governmental and private sectors, the army and security but their share is small because they heavily depend on the trade.

Hassan Abdullah, a garment merchant in Bab al-Salam in Sana'a, one of the markets in which the majority of Ismailis merchants (Al-Bohra) are stationed, says, "We, the sons of this sect, have worked in trade since ancient times and the majority of us depend on it, and some of us join governmental and private jobs", adding, "We have relationships with importing merchants despite their different sects, and we do not find any difficulties in dealing with them, as we are characterized by tolerance and brotherhood in the Yemeni society".

In the same context, Umm Raghada, a shopper, says, "Ismailis are among the best merchants in terms of treatment, as I have for many years been buying from them their Indian goods, which are of high quality and at reasonable prices compared to other stores".

Seif Al-Din Jaafar, the owner of a perfume store, and one of the members of the Bohra community in Aden, confirmed that the departure of the majority of the sect's members to Yemeni governorates and other countries to improve their standard of living contributed to the decline of our trade in Aden which is concerned with the field of perfumes, incense supplies and building materials, thus less than nine shops remained, and despite that, we are still involved in business normally".

Their Social Life

The unique mixture of the Ismailis (the Bohra) is a mixture of religiosity and modernity which positively contribute to the development and prosperity of the places in which they live, making them gain a special place in the society.

The members of the sect are distinguished by their distinctive clothes; where the men wear long white shirts similar to the Indian clothes and place a keffiyeh over their heads decorated with red and gold colored threads that is tied and placed over the head in a certain way, while the women wear outfits consisting of two pieces, the first of which covers the head, and the second covers the lower part of the body, often in multiple colors and has hand-

made inscriptions.

In a field visit to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) in the Haddah area, it was noticed that most Ismailis tend to be introverted and coexist at the same time. As Umm Jamil, a resident of the neighborhood in which the people of the sect reside, says, "I have lived in this

hood for more than 12 years and I don't belong to the Ismailis but I found them an example of coexistence. However, they do not share their joys with us which are very similar to those of the rest of Yemenis, but are limited to their followers".

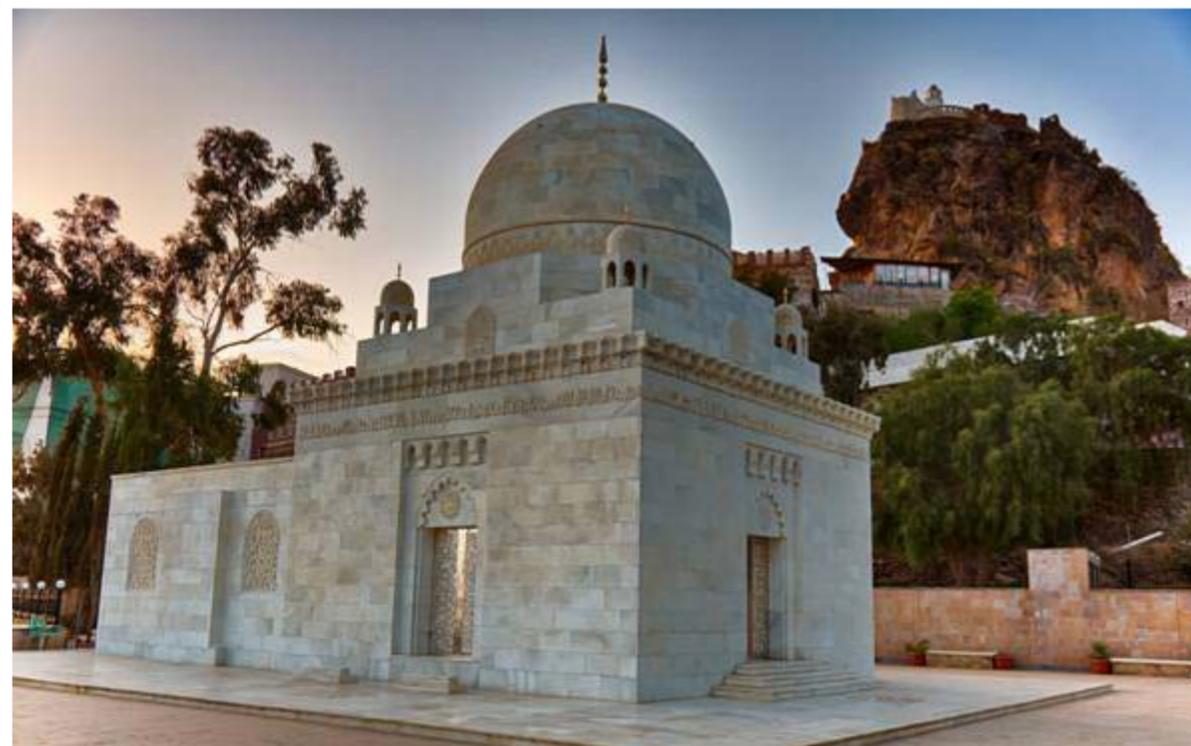
She added, "The members of the sect are distinguished by their skills in cooking various foods, and the way they eat it, as they do it collectively in groups of eight or nine people, which strengthens the characteristic of solidarity among them. They often share their meals with friends and neighbors, believing in the principle of coexistence and sharing. And before eating, they have little salt, believing that it cures sickness and seven other diseases, foremost of which is leprosy".

Sect Marriage

One of the followers of the sect, Ismail Muhammed (a pseudonym), reviewed the customs followed in marriage which is that the ceremonies are usually held on the occasion of the celebration of the Sultan's birth, where they register the names of the members of the sect who want to marry in order to help them with the marriage ceremonies and dowries, and to supervise the preparation of the wedding ceremony, which is only considered symbolic and it is known as (the summer fees). As for the marriage costs, they are covered by their leader, and wedding happens in a group, as well as they are keen on the presence of the Sultan, proof of religion, to increase the blessing according to their belief.

Members of the sect marry each other; their sons are rarely married from other sects, and if this is done, it is according to their own way and according to their Sharia rulings. As Ismail indicated, "We celebrate marriage just like the Yemenis, with its customs and traditions, and girls from different sects marry our sons. As for our daughters from the Ismailis, we prefer to marry them from the same sect, a person whose morals is known to us, far from prestige, pride and lineage".

The Ismaili sect is considered one of the sects that accept the beliefs, sects, and religions of others, and they tend to peace, rejection of conflicts, and seek coexistence and peace among members of the society.





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The city of Aden has been distinguished, since ancient times, by its religious, ethnic and sectarian diversity which left clear traces on economic, cultural and social life, and made it a platform for tourists and visitors from various Yemeni governorates and countries of the world. Perhaps one of the most important things that Aden is famous for, since ancient times, is its distinctive food, which combines between all its cultures and sects.

By: Manal Ameen
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Historical Restaurants and Cafés:

The History of Religious Minorities in the Adeni Society!

Ahmed Anwar, a resident of the ancient Crater district, says, “Since ancient times, until now, the people of Aden bragged about going to the restaurants that offer the most delicious and distinguished food, and that express the history of the city and its coexistence, especially those restaurants that offer Indian, African and Pakistani food, and other foods that have characterized the city”.

Anwar, who is of Indian origin, mentioned that one of the most famous restaurants which people knew around the city is Remi Restaurant, which served spicy foods of Indian origin, such as Abu Humar potatoes, Attar, Koshin Brookshari, and Oshaar, which is a lemon pickle with red hot chili pepper and Indian Dal, and other spicy meals and sweets which were distinct and had a different flavor; the people of Aden of Indian origin were distinguished more than others.

For his part, the journalist Fadl Ali, says, “The streets and lanes of the city of Aden still, until now, show the extent of the diverse ethnic and sectarian homogeneity, and their overlap in the local fabric of the city, through their names that still exist until now, such as Al-Yahud neighborhood, Al-Bohra Street, Al-Dawabiyah neighborhood, Al-Hunud neighborhood, the Persians Temple, Al-Rizmit area, Al-Makawiya and others.

Fadl explained that the Remi restaurant which was established in the 1980s in the region of Saffron combined, in its foods and fame, the Indian feature, which affected the Adeni community, in particular, and the Yemeni, in general. Thus, it has been closed for nearly a year which caused a bit of frustration for the lovers of the distinct Indian taste.

The Impact of Minorities Restaurants on the Society

There are historical restaurants which people have known in Aden since ancient times that have contributed to spreading the culture

of followers of different religions and sects in the Yemeni society, as well as establishing different patterns in eating distinguished meals on occasions, as people now eat different meals during designated days of the week, within the customs and traditions that have become firmly entrenched in their minds since ancient times such as the Indian Dal food, which characterizes the people of Aden, especially on Fridays during family gatherings, and the Zurbani with the Oshaar.

“Aden restaurants have a long history, as it used to play an important role, and it is almost becoming a part of history. Some of these popular restaurants are 100 a hundred years old”, This is what Muhammed Ahmad Al-Baidani, an Adenian writer and political historian in Copenhagen, mentioned in his article entitled “Popular Restaurants of Aden” indicating that these restaurants did not change their locations, or even the furniture quality in them in order to preserve the old entity and the historical reputation which made these restaurants’ fame become a part of the national heritage, and not just a restaurant.

Among the famous historical popular restaurants in Aden which is linked to minorities is Palu restaurant that is specialized in selling kebabs, which dates back to 1926 and which Muhammad Palu, Indian origin Muslim, has established in Al-Midan in Crater District.

The owner of the restaurant, Naguib Palu, who is considered the fourth-generation restaurant founder says, “The restaurant is always keen to present a kebab meal to customers, with its special flavor which contributed to its continuation to this day”, and he adds, “The restaurant has opened 94 years ago, and despite its association with a certain sect, it still attracts many customers from Aden and outside, and receives many reservations on many occasions”.

For his part, Ahmed Qassem, one of the restaurant’s customers, says to the newspaper that the restaurant has a great reputation at the level of Aden and the Yemeni governorates, especially in serving the kebab meal with a distinctive taste, which has earned it a lot of fame over the past years, and of course nobody knows the secret behind the flavor of the kebabs which is a characteristic of the Palu family.

Among the old and famous restaurants of ethnicity in Aden is Salho Restaurant which was owned by a Somali man. It has been established, according to witnesses from the residents of Al-Midan area, in the Crater district, in the seventies of the last century, and was specialized in serving lunch and dinner such as Somali lamb, with broth, roti and pacha, in a different and distinct way during that period.

Al Hajjah Saeeda Al-Kaf says, “We used to buy lunch from Salho restaurant in the eighties, and sometimes dinner because what was offered during that period was distinct and clean. Especially in that period, there were not many restaurants like today; with time, and the closure of the restaurant, it still maintains a good reputation in the minds of many people, which made it be considered one of the most important historical restaurants that left an imprint on people”.

Minorities Cafés: A Gathering Place for All Communities

The popular cafés have a distinct role in drawing the features and history of this city Aden that accommodates all ethnicities and sects in the Yemeni society, and which emerged at the beginning of the last century, according to the historical studies of the city of Aden. These cafés dated for more than hundreds of years. Many affiliations, sects and religions were gathered in it, the inhabitants of

the city and its visitors, in which experiences, stories, information, customs and traditions are exchanged for each class of followers of the different religious doctrines and sects.

Among the most important and oldest cafés in the historical city of Aden is Zako Café in Al-Midan area, Al-Haj Shawka Al-Somali café in Zaafaran Street, Somalia Café in Al-Mualla district, Fouad Aman Indian Café in Sheikh Othman district, Farie Café which was established in the early eighties in Saffron, Ceylon Café in Al-Sabeel street, and Al-Sakran Café which appeared in the 1960s in Sheikh Abdullah Ishaq Street, in the Crater District.

Zakko Café is one of the oldest and most famous cafés in the historical city of Aden which was founded in the 1930s, during the British rule of Aden by Al-Hajj Zakaria Muhammad Ilyas of Indian origin.

It has gained great fame because of its location in the old Crater Market area, which is considered one of the busiest areas. It offers the famous Adani tea, which is distinguished by its different flavor, which contributed to its fame in the city and the country in general. The café also used to offer some snacks, and various meals with a traditional Indian feature.

Here, one of the café-regulars, Haji Awad Ahmed, a 53-year-old man, indicates that the café is the only outlet that enhances the mood, and that he was used to visiting it a longtime ago, especially when sipping the distinctive white tea cup with khameer bread, meeting friends, and exchanging talks about what is going on in the country and memories of the good-old days. He adds that he has many friends, from different religions and sects, and he shares with them their celebrations and some of their rituals because of his belief in the importance of living among all human beings.



Yemenis Life.. Was It Affected by Religious Doctrines?

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“The Yemeni street is witnessing a remarkable merging of its members, from the various religious doctrines in Yemen, as the Yemeni tends to balanced thinking, away from doctrinal fanaticism and sectarian strife that may lead the society to the abyss. This is what was confirmed by the German traveler Niebuhr, about his trip to Yemen in 1763, in his book entitled “Journey to the Arabian Peninsula and to Other Neighboring Countries”, about wonderful impressions of the coexistence of the doctrines in Yemen with each other, explaining this through numerous comparisons between Yemen and other countries.

By: **Mona Al-Assaadi**
Sawt Al Amal (Voice of Hope)

Muhammed Munir, a 22-year-old student at the Faculty of Sociology at Sana'a University, says, “I am with the doctrinal and religious coexistence, so the more there is an area of intellectual and religious freedom, according to a constitution that protects this right, the better will it be for all”.

Amani Saleh, 25-year-old journalist, agrees with him, by saying: “Life is based on the principle of difference, and the Islamic religion has guaranteed the right to choose a religion, so the call to Islam is based on encouragement and not coercion, just as Article (18) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted in 1948, stipulated that every person has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This includes his freedom to adopt a certain religion, and to embrace any belief he chooses. This is why I see doctrinal and tangible coexistence in the reality of the Yemeni street is a model of love and peace”.

In the same context, Ali Muhammed, a 50-year-old police officer, says, “I did not know that there were Islamic doctrines until I reached the university level, so I began to get acquainted with the doctrines that exist in Yemen, which are: Ash'ari, Shiite, Sufi

and Salafist, and some minority doctrines as well, such as Ismailism. Therefore, the coexistence of people in Yemen, with all their doctrines, is a cause for pride and happiness”.

As for Umm Abdullah, a housewife, she says, “I do not understand the doctrines much but I sincerely worship God, and I narrated that one time I went to my husband's family home, and his 12-year-old niece found me holding my right hand on the left in prayer, so she asked her mother to tell me to lower my hands, and when I finished praying, my husband's sister took me aside and said: ‘it is preferable to put your hands down during prayer’. And when I asked my husband about that, he said that I can let my hands down in prayer according to the Maliki doctrine, but grasping is popular with the followers of Al Shafi'i”.

While Muammar Ahmad, a student says that the Shafi'i, Hanbali and Maliki are all Sunni doctrines that have coexisted in Yemen for a long time. There is neither contradiction among them nor any ideological differences in the origins.

The Difference of Doctrines: Does it Hinder Marriage?

According to a poll conducted by “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) on a sample of people, it was found that 73.3% do not object marrying from another doctrine, while 20% do not marry except from certain doctrines,

and 6.7% do not marry except from the same doctrine.

Sahar Muhammed, a 27-year-old Arabic language teacher, says, “I belong to the humanist doctrine, and I do not care much about the doctrines and religions of others. On the contrary, I deal with them without religious barriers”, adding: “My friend belongs to the Ismaili doctrine: she visits us constantly and we share a lot of different food. Although they did not accept my brother's marriage to their daughters because we do not belong to their doctrine - we maintained the friendly relationship that binds us with them”.

In the context, Mrs. Amina, a 50-year-old woman, who belongs to the Ismaili doctrine, explains to us that, “there are no doctrinal barriers to marrying our daughters to non-Ismailis but this is how it is, so we only marry from the same doctrine”, explaining: “this is not strange to us Yemenis. We are part of a tribal society, and Yemeni tribes prefer to marry off their daughters from the same tribe to which they belong”.

While Rajaa Saleh, a 24-year-old man who works in nursing, confirms that she knows the truth about the fundamental differences between one doctrine and another. She adds, “I belong to the Shafi'i doctrine because I feel part of the family, but I refused to marry someone who belongs to the Salafi doctrine, because I do not believe in many

of their religious beliefs, but I respect them”. She adds, “The Salafi doctrine is different from the Shafi'i, and this is all about, but it does not mean that I hate them. On the contrary, I like to create friendships with Salafi girls very much”.

As for, Muhammed Abdullah, a 27-year-old man, representing the opinion of the majority of young people says, “I do not care about doctrines, and I have no problem marrying any woman who follows a certain doctrine. The most important thing is for her to have good character and religion”.

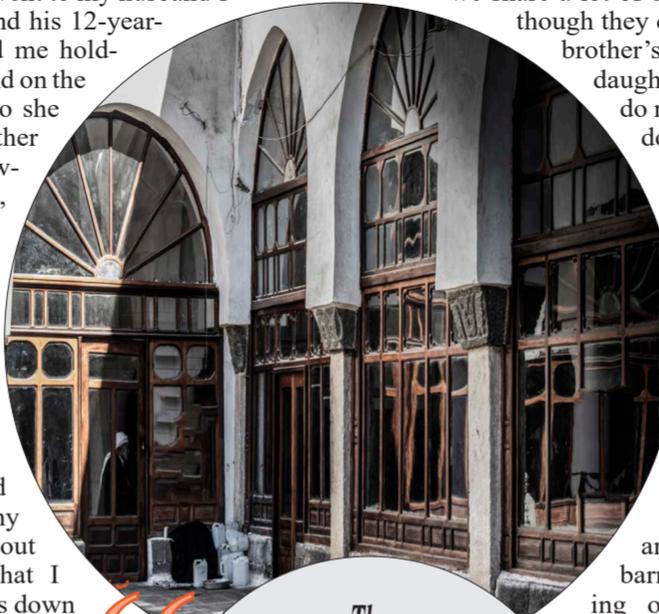
The Public Interest Overcomes Doctrinal Differences

The visitor of the markets of the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, is not satisfied about buying its goods, and goes without being astonished by the merger of the Yemenis with each other. In Bab Al-Salam market, you find the Bohra merchant dealing with another Salafist merchant, and it is not surprising that he runs their Sufi trade!

Faisal Muhammed, a mosque tutor, explains to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) that, in the first place, the Yemeni society is a coexistent and peaceful society. Religious doctrines have not negatively affected this coexistence and fabric, in addition to the Yemeni opinion that the public interest lies in coexistence and brotherhood with community members, leaving aside their religious doctrines and beliefs.

He added that there is a small percentage of Ethiopian Christians in Yemen, who coexist with the Yemeni society to a large extent, even some of them work for Yemeni merchants, stressing that the Yemeni Jews also represent an integral part of Yemeni society and have integrated in it a lot to the extent of intermarriage. But the difficult living ways in Yemen drove the majority of them to emigrate.

He explains, “The Yemenis were among the first to convert to Islam, and many mosques were built in Yemen, including the Great Mosque in the old city of Sana'a. It is the first mosque built in Yemen, and the third mosque in Islam, and this mosque is still full of God's remembrance to this day; all Yemenis of different doctrines enter it, and pray the same prayer, except for Ismailis who pray in their own mosques”.



The
Yemeni Street Is
Witnessing A Remarkable
Merging Of Its Members, From The
Various Religious Doctrines



The Role Of The Civil Organizations.. In Spreading Sectarian Tolerance And Acceptance Of Others

“There are many civil society organizations, in Yemen, that have implemented interference and coexistence to restore the societal fabric and mitigate the manifestations of racism among the multi-sectarian and religious community, even if in a limited way, in order to achieve peaceful coexistence in the society”. With these words, Ashgan Shuraih, the political and human rights activist and the president of Alf Ba Civilian and Coexistence Foundation explained to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) the importance of the role of community organizations in promoting peaceful coexistence between sects and religions in the Yemeni society.

By: Manal Ameen
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

The role of civil society organizations lies in promoting concepts of peace and peaceful coexistence among different sects, doctrines, classes and societal groups, in an effective and clear manner, and contributing to the activation of international decisions that deepen the principle of racist chains by organizing campaigns, activities and programs aiming at coexistence and acceptance of the other.

Yemen Represents 0.5% of the Religious Minority

The book “Minorities in Yemen: Reality and Challenges” of INSAF Center for Defending Freedoms and Minorities in Yemen, which was co-authored by Dr. Mohammed Al-Mahfali and Eman Homaid, indicated that “Yemen is home to religious and sectarian minorities who represent about 0.5% of the total population”, and that there are five minorities, four of which are religious minorities (Judaism, Christianity, Baha'i and Ismailism), and the fifth is the Muhamasheen (marginalized) minority, according to a number of historical sources and scientific research, and reports published by international and local organiza-



Khulaidi

tions concerned with defending minorities and fighting for their rights.

Organizations Have an Effective Impact

Here Ashgan Shuraih confirmed that despite the challenges facing the country, in various fields and aspects of life, the role played by civil society organizations in restoring the societal fabric, reducing the manifestations of racism, sectarian and doctrinal discrimination, and spreading the values of coexistence had effective impacts on mitigating, even in a simple, but noticeable way, the manifestation of racism and the achievement of peaceful coexistence among different religions and doctrines in a single society, by targeting the influential groups, parties and political, social and other societal components, to join effort in restoring the Yemeni social fabric, which rejects all forms of discrimination.

We Ignore the Meaning of Sectarianism

The young university student at the Faculty of Arts in Aden, Salah Muhammed says, “Community organizations play a fundamental role in correcting wrong concepts and cultures which have spread among the community, about the distinction in life treatments between doctrinal and religious sects, especially in the city of Aden, after it was, less than ten years ago, a model for societal, doctrinal, and sectarian coexistence, as we used to ignore, and still do, the meaning of sectarianism or racism in dealing with the followers of minorities or sects, mainly because they are largely integrated into our lives

Promoting the Principle of Coexistence

Majid Al-Khulaidi, Head of Youth without Borders Organization in Taiz governorate says, “Since 2018, some community-based organizations have started implementing their programs and activities to promote peaceful coexistence among all sects and doctrines without discrimination, despite its difficulties in this exceptional period that the country is going through”.

Al-Khulaidi assured to “Sawt Al-Amal”

(Voice of Hope) that it takes great cooperation to shed light on such programs that reinforce the principle of coexistence and tolerance, target followers of doctrinal sects and minorities in Yemen, and work to highlight the historical stages, which confirm the integration of all the segments of society, among themselves, without discrimination, in order to achieve the peaceful coexistence known for thousands of years in Yemen.

Al-Khulaidi believes that the reasons for the emergence of some discriminatory practices in some regions came as a result of the difficult economic situation, poor services, and the ongoing challenges that Yemen is going through in its various regions which have contributed to shrinking the persistence of practicing doctrinal and religious customs and traditions among races, groups and doctrines in one community. This is reflected in the role of the organizations, which is supposed to keep implementing awareness programs on the importance of peaceful coexistence among members of society.

In order to contribute to the participation of all stakeholders and local authorities to re-accept these sects among members of the society and coexist with them, Al-Khulaidi reiterates on, “the importance of working on formulating national policies adopted by the state in the process of integrating sects and minorities members, in Yemen, in various aspects of life, involving them in building the homeland, and strengthening their presence in the country”.

Civil Society Is a Deep State

The practical guide for civil society organizations during crises published by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) states that civil society organizations have an important role in supporting collective action in various issues, bringing together different societies: doctrinal and ethnic, and enhancing mutual assistance. The organizations bear the responsibility not to cause any harm, and must take the necessary measures to respond to the crises of all target groups including those belonging to eth-

nic, linguistic or doctrinal minorities that are often subjected to discrimination and violation of their rights.

The writer, Qasem Al-Mahbashi, in Al-Hiwar Al-Mutamaden Magazine, Issue No 5840-2018, on civil society organizations and their role in building peace in Yemen, asserted that the civil society in Yemen, which was perhaps a unique case, can be likened to the deep state in terms of strength, firmness, presence and effectiveness in preserving society from falling into total chaos, as there are currently more than 8,300 organizations, associations and initiatives working on gender and promoting peaceful coexistence among different sects, races and doctrines in the society.

Organizations: A Link between Individuals and Entities

Amat Al-Rahman Al-Afory, head of the Developmental Tarabot Initiative (Joint Initiative) affirms to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) that civic organizations and initiatives have a very big role in promoting issues of peaceful coexistence. This is due to their proximity to societies with their various affiliations and sectarian and doctrinal differences. They are also considered to be the link between members of the society and the supporting bodies through which they can reach all people without discrimination. In fact, this helps in carrying out many awareness-raising activities on the principle of promoting peaceful coexistence among members of the society.

Al-Afory reviewed one of the activities of the initiative that was implemented in Dar Saad district, during the past year and said that the initiative carried out a sporting activity within the projects of peaceful coexistence, at the local level, under the slogan “Together We Coexist” targeting various groups of society in the city of Aden: the marginalized, Somalis, Ethiopians, Christians and residents of the region, and have mixed a lot of harmony in dealing with and accepting the other what have contributed to achieve the goal of the initiative in promoting peaceful coexistence among people.



Shuraih

Zaydism in Brief: A Journey in the Great Mosque with Shaykh Al-Rahi

By: Rajaa Mukred
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“On a visit by “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) to the most famous religious master in the Great Mosque, in Sana’a, we met the Mufti Shaykh Abdullah Al-Rahi who used the newspaper to introduce the Zaydi doctrine, which is followed by some northern governorates in Yemen, so let’s immerse in the details:

The visitor of the Great Mosque in Sana’a, which is decorated with orange sun threads that cross the windowsills and doors to illuminate the mosque, finds several sessions of dhikr (remembrance), memorization of the Quran, and religious lessons, especially for men, run by specialized imams among them are the Mufti of the Great Mosque the Shaykh Abdullah Hassan Al-Rahi and other sessions of dhikr for women.



The doctrine does not impose a law on anyone, except for the law of justice derived from Islam

A Brief on Shaykh Al-Rahi

Shaykh Al-Rahi was born in Old Sana’a, and received his religious education in Al-Malama (places of study in the old days are called the Katateeb) by many the ulama (scholars) of the Zaydi doctrine, such as Abdullah Al-Haimi, Muhammed Hussein Amer. He studied Sharia sciences at Shaykhs Hamoud bin Abbas Muayad, Ali Abd Al-Hamid Al-Wajih, Mutahir Uqabat, Muhammad bin Muhammad Ismail al-Mansur, Ali bin Ahmad Al-Shami, and also with the former Mufti of the Republic Muhammed Ahmad al-Garafi and the Imam of the scholars Muhammad bin Ahmed Al-Kabsi and Bahr al-Ulum Ahmad bin Lotf al-Dailami.

The Zaydi doctrine appeared in the middle of the second century AH, and is one of the Islamic religious doctrines that is attributed to Zaid bin Ali bin al-Husain bin Ali bin Abi Thalib.

It is sometimes called the Hadawiya, and it is a special designation for the only remaining division within Zaydism, in relation to Imam al-Hadi ila al-Haqq Yahya ibn al-Husayn al-Rassi al-Hashimi, who fought the Qarmatians and established his imamate in Yemen.

by people’s words, thus there are rules, such as whoever spoke according to them, was considered whether it was Imam Zayd, Abu Hanifa, Malik, Al-Shafi’I, Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, or Daoud Al Dhaheri.

And he adds that the scholars of the Zaydi doctrine rely on a rule: Whatever the Noble Quran agrees upon before is accepted, and what contradicts it is rejected by whomever source it was, no intolerance towards one side without the other because the first and last of mankind are in the wrong and right place, except for the prophets.

Al-Rahi explains, “You will find an example in fatwas, issues, choices and jurisprudence.

Mufti Abdullah Hasan says that the Zaydi doctrine is not hardened

Some doctrines find this true in their opinion, thus it is not, and this is a favorable hadeeth, and another is sufficient for the predominance of conjecture and according to this, these issues branched out, and the Zaydi doctrine says, “This is my opinion, with what I am convinced that it is more correct; whether it is with Abu Hanifa or al-Shafi’i, and so on, the Zaydi doctrine does not disgrace anyone”.

The Mufti al-Rahi represents the role of the doctrines in the project, for example: the water project, an artesian well that pumps; one is with him from this side, and another is with him on the other side, and all of them are headed to one resource, which is from the Messenger of God (PBUH), and all are taken from this book, and what is true of the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, but the purification of the hadiths should refer to the Noble Quran.

The Mufti al-Rahi continues his speech, “The Zaydi doctrine calls for mercy, except

in three principles on which it places red lines namely justice, monotheism, and lack of daring to God, neither representation nor simile”.

On whether the Great Mosque is specific to the Zaydi doctrine as a religious landmark or not, Al-Mufti Al-Rahi replied, “The mosques are for God, and are to enlighten people, whether for worshipers, people seeking knowledge, shaykhs, many pioneers of knowledge, thought, history, philosophy, literature, poetry, language, and the original principles of jurisprudence and the principles of religion, and for all people because this mosque was built by the order of the Prophet. It is a historical landmark for all the people of Yemen from all regions and from all groups, and it is not limited to anyone”.

On the most important points that distinguish the Zaydi doctrine, Al-Rahi said, “The Zaydi doctrine does not coexist with injustice, such as if someone uses evidence from the Quran which is against it or from Islam while it is against Islam. As well as it urges people to say no to injustice and to be with the truthful people who seek for justice”.

On the coexistence of the Zaydi doctrine with the rest of the doctrines, the Mufti Al-Rahi says that the Zaydi doctrine, his eminence, has been known for more than a thousand and 200 years.

On the Zaydi doctrine’s view of dealing with others, the Mufti Hasan says, “The doctrine does not impose a law on anyone, except for the law of justice derived from Islam. As for the personal aspect such as prayer and other acts of worship, everyone has absolute freedom”.

As for marriage customs in the Zaydi doctrine, the Mufti Abdullah Al-Rahi says that in the Zaydi doctrine, there must be witnesses upon marriage, the guardian, and the woman must be satisfied, and be someone who has been permitted by the Sharia, and these are all mentioned in the Quran.

Before leaving, the Mufti of the Great Mosque of Sana’a confirms that the two most common doctrines in Yemen are Zaydi and Shafi’i, then Hanafi and Ismaili.

He says that all doctrines in Yemen were co-existing because they did not deviate from the book and the Sunnah of the Prophet.





Rajaa Mukred

A Call for Tolerance

The nature of life dictates diversity, as customs, traditions and norms differ between people, and races, professions and religions differ, which causes people to make judgments based on the outlook that is built into their mentalities by virtue of diversity, so tolerance was an obligation for humanity.

In order for people to coexist, tolerance which meanings are evident is the acceptance of the opinion and the other's, the acceptance of people's character and customs of, not to build self-convictions and adhere to them, as it is followed by intolerance, discrimination, racism, and non-acceptance of the differences of others.

The values of tolerance are manifested in patience with others, objectivity, rejection of intolerance, and acceptance of the other party despite its differences. Everyone has the right to express ideas, opinions and behaviors, in a manner that preserves their human rights and promotes the idea of peace.

Tolerance must be an education that accompanies a person from his childhood. It is necessary for parents to start establishing it at home, for the father and mother are the moral school of the child, and when they are open and receptive to others, their behavior will be reflected on the child and will help him to accept the idea of cultural differences in the future and how to coexist with them.

The role is not limited to parents only, as the school curriculum is supposed to provide educational lessons on tolerance, and how to accept other people of different races, sexes and beliefs. Wherever there is tolerance, there is an environment conducive to talent, innovation and economic prosperity. Instead of people focusing on ethnic or religious differences, they focus on economic development activities that contribute to improving the status of society and the state.

Tolerance creates comfort and reassurance in the souls of people. A tolerant person accepting others' lives with a heart free of hatred and detestation, and feels pride and dignity when he pardons others. Likewise, tolerance facilitates and eases many interactions between people such as economic, commercial, social and others.

The result and goal that tolerance seeks is the rejection of discrimination, the call to brotherhood, and coexistence. Ensuring that there is no poverty in societies, and that the strong supports the weak, advice and guidance, justice among people in life affairs such as work, and the attainment of legal rights, so that the society appears fraternal and interdependent, concerned in promoting development and preserving human rights.



التنوع المذهبي والديني في اليمن
Religious tolerance in Yemen

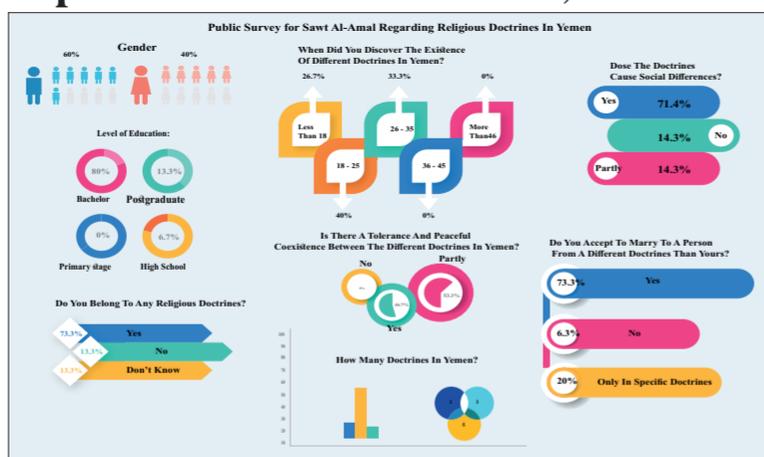
In a special poll of Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Citizens Affirm the Importance of the Civil State; For the Freedom of Doctrines!

Exclusive:
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Yemeni citizens stressed "the importance of establishing a constitutional system, by defining specific laws that guarantee the freedom to practice religious doctrines of their religious rites with the participation of the leaders of these doctrines; and the establishment of a city-state that supports freedom of worship on the basis of "difference is the natural order of things."

This came during the poll conducted by Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope) on social media, about people's knowledge of the impact of sectarian and denominational doctrines in Yemen in which a sample of citizens participated in the various Yemeni governorates, of different ages and educational levels. And they emphasized the importance of combined efforts to work on rapprochement between doctrines for the sake of the citizen's interest, and to find solutions and remedies to restore sec-



tarian coexistence in a single society.

A number of citizens have defined religious doctrines which are widespread in our country as being religious frameworks, under which the citizens fall into all aspects of life. It is concentrated in two main schools, namely: the Zaydi and the Shafi'i doctrines, that have co-

existed from ancient times, and there are no deep differences between them.

Many people's opinions differed about the influence of the doctrines that are present in Yemen and their number as some asserted that they only know the Zaydi and Shafi'i doctrines and they are the most influential on the lives of

the citizens. While a few of them mentioned other sects and doctrines such as Ismailism, Ithna'ashari (Twelver), Hanafi, Wahhabism and others.

According to the survey sample, some schools are extremists, and despite this, they have been coexisting with each other in Yemen since ancient times. And there are those who know the sectarianism only in a limited way through slight differences during the performance of the prayers.

They also added, "Some doctrines remain reserved regarding marriage between them and other doctrines despite their assertion that marriage is a special case based on love and personal choice, and that it may not be subjected to sectarian or political criteria because it is a violation of human rights and dignity. But despite this, there are those who refuse to marry from a certain doctrine, instead of the other, according to old and inherited customs and traditions among members of the society!"

Diversity of Ritual Doctrines in Yemen

Manal Ameen
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Yemen has been distinguished since ancient times by the values of coexistence and religious tolerance between all religions and sects which made it an honorable model for religious pluralism and coexistence compared to the countries of the world.

As Harold F. Yaqoub confirmed in his book "The Kings of the Arabian Peninsula", "in Yemen, both sects Sunnis and Shiites pray in one mosque and get married together, and I have never seen such a rare case: a man who changes his religious beliefs quickly, as he changes his cloak".

Dr. Muhammed Yaslam Abd al-Nur, Professor of Islamic History and its Civilization at the University of Hadhramaut, says to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of

Hope), "It is known that in Yemen, there is a number of diverse religious doctrines, which have promoted since ancient times the principle of peaceful coexistence throughout the country. For example, the city of Hadhramaut is dominated by the Sunni doctrine, from whom the Salafists and Sufis are descended, which is considered prevalent, especially in the Tarim region, and they are known for their rituals mentioned in the Sunnah".

He adds, "The people of Hadhramaut have certain rituals in practicing their doctrines; before and after the prayers at various times, and while visiting graves on the morning of every Friday, and they celebrate some holidays annu-

ally with decorations and religious songs, including Mawlid al-Nabi (Prophet's birthday), the beginning of the Hijri year, the ninth and tenth of Muharram, the last Wednesday of Safar, the first of Rajab, the 15th night of Sha'ban, Ramadan eve and the sixth of Shawwal and its eighth day".

Legal Status

On his part, Judge Ahed Jamil, Director of Public Relations and Communications at the Supreme Court, indicated to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that Yemeni law does not explicitly mention, in its constitutional provisions, the freedom of minorities to practice their religious rituals ex-

plicitly. But there are some legal provisions that refer to human rights and freedom and non-discrimination, in addition to the fact that the country is committed to international agreements and treaties which stipulate respect for human rights, without discrimination, and the right to freely practice their religious and belief rites. He adds, "In Yemen, there is a great diversity of religious sectarian, doctrines and religions. Among the many minorities, we have about seven minorities in Yemen who were widespread in Yemen such as the Indians, Somalis, Jews, Turks, Ismailis and Christians, in addition to the Baha'is, and they have a great deal of freedom in practicing their rituals since the dawn of Islam. Yemen is also distinguished by the peaceful coexistence of all doctrines and sects, represented by the Shafi'i, Zaydi, Hanbali, Maliki and others".

