

The political situation of Jews in Yemen under the ruling authorities

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Abstract

The beginning of the appearance of the Jews in Yemen. Opinions vary and differ regarding the timing of the Jews' arrival in Yemen. However, the Jewish community in Yemen is considered one of the oldest Jewish communities in the world. At the beginning of the emergence of Judaism in various regions of Yemen, some inscriptions were found that referred to Jewish rabbis and their graves, such as in the Cemetery of the Great Rabbis, which indicated the Jewish presence in Yemen. Yemeni Jews claim descent from those who accompanied the Queen of Sheba upon her return from visiting King Solomon.

Like other residents of Yemen during the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, the Jews were affected by the difficult circumstances that Sana'a experienced. Perhaps the most serious of these crises occurred in 1905, which witnessed an economic collapse that led to a major famine, affecting Jews and non-Jews alike. During the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, the Jews continued to practice their religious rituals with complete freedom. Islamic administration in Yemen developed significantly during the Imam's reign. Jews were not subjected to harassment under Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din. Rather, they were an integral part of Yemen's fabric and a key segment of society. They were skilled workers in many areas of work and commerce, particularly those unique to Jews, such as trade and other important professions.

During the reign of the Imams, the Jews were subjected to a tax, the collection of which was the primary responsibility of the Chief Rabbi of the Jews, without any resentment. Under Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, the Jews were content and uncomplaining about this matter. The Imam did not treat all Jews equally in this tax, but rather took into account the principles of age and economic status. Regarding age, only those over the age of thirteen were required to pay it. Regarding economic status, the Imam distinguished members of the Jewish community in terms of their living conditions and financial status, and worked to improve them. After 1872, the number of Jews in Yemen grew under the Ottoman presence. Some worked in trade with the Ottomans, some served as emissaries from the Sana'a community to Jewish centers in Palestine, Alexandria, and Istanbul, some supplied the Ottoman army with supplies, and some exploited new trade opportunities with the Ottomans. Other Jews served as conduits for news and events outside Yemen through their connections with the Ottomans and their work in trade, and as intermediaries between Yemeni Jews and other parts of the Jewish world. Jews had lived in Yemen for nearly two thousand years, believing themselves to be in exile. When British forces arrived, they welcomed them enthusiastically, hoping to secure political and administrative positions in the country. Therefore, Jews were staunch supporters of British rule.

Keywords: Yemen, Jews, Imamate era, jizya, Ottoman rule, British occupation.

INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth century witnessed many instances of political chaos and unrest in Yemen. This was due to the weakness of the Al-Qasim Imamate state and the shrinking of their influence in many areas of Yemen. This was due to conflicts between the Imams and their rivals, as well as conflicts between the northern tribes. This increased strife and unrest in Yemen. Considering that the Jews are an integral part of the fabric of Yemen and its people, they suffered the same fate as the rest of the Yemeni population. Yemen experienced extremely difficult circumstances as a result of these conflicts over power, which negatively impacted the conditions of the Yemeni population.

First: The situation of the Jews under the rule of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din⁽¹⁾

Historian Daniel Macklowe, in his book *Yemen*, believes that when the Imams began to rule Yemen, they began to enact strict laws regarding the Jewish population, which had accumulated there during the Ottoman occupation. A large part of the Jewish population was forced to convert to Islam, and Jews were prevented from building Jewish temples. In light of the increasing pressures exerted by the Imamate in Yemen⁽²⁾,

But that opinion is rejected, as that was not the case in Yemen, as the Jews lived in peace and security during the era of the Imams in Yemen. However, it was necessary to mention all the opinions that were mentioned about the relationship between the Jews and the Imams, especially Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din in Yemen and the period of his rule. However, what the historian (Daniel Macklow) mentioned was not correct, but it was necessary to mention everything that was said, with clarification of the whole truth.

In 1889, the Hamid al-Din family came to power in Yemen, dominating politics and establishing a dynasty of imams. The first imam was Imam Muhammad, al-Mansur Muhammad ibn Yahya Hamid al-Din. His primary goal throughout his reign was to expel the Ottomans from their strongholds in Yemen, as his predecessors had tried to do when the Ottomans occupied the Arab provinces, including parts of Yemen. Imam Muhammad resumed the revolt against the Ottomans during his reign (1889-1904). He accused the Ottomans of deviating from true Islam by oppressing the weak and drinking alcohol. The imam died in 1904, and his son Yahya Hamid al-Din succeeded him (1904-1948). Imam Yahya viewed the Ottomans as occupiers of Yemeni land⁽³⁾.

Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din assumed power when his father, Imam al-Mansur Billah Muhammad, died in 1904. As Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din began to impose his control over parts of Yemen, he asked one of the Jews who was working as an agent for the Imam in a rural area in the north to persuade the Bedouin tribes to come under his control and accept the rule of the new Imam, while explaining that the Imam would rule differently from the Ottomans, according to the Holy Quran and Islamic law. Some tribes accepted the rule of the Imam at first, and then many tribes entered the rule of the Imam in succession. Then, when Imam Yahya took control of Sana'a, he summoned the leaders of the Jewish community there and explained to them that he would rule according to Islamic standards, which bind Muslims and Jews to good relations⁽⁴⁾.

Like other residents of Yemen, the Jews were affected during the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din by the difficult circumstances that Sana'a went through. Perhaps the most dangerous of these crises was in 1905, which witnessed an economic collapse that led to a major famine, which affected Jews and non-Jews alike⁽⁵⁾.

During the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, the Jews continued to practice their religious rituals with complete freedom. Islamic administration in Yemen developed significantly during the reign of the Imam. The Jews were not subjected to harassment during

the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din. Rather, they were part of the fabric of Yemen and one of the most important classes of society in it, as they were skilled scholars in many fields of work and trade, especially those in which the Jews were distinguished, such as trade and other important professions⁽⁶⁾..

When Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din assumed power, he made some organizational changes in his relationship with the Jews compared to the era of his father. He renewed the laws in Yemen, which had set strict limits on dealing with the Jews. Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din informed the Jewish leaders that they were free in their country, and that their religious courts were free to deal with them and their own cases. At the same time, the Jews could resort to the Sharia courts if they wished to do so. The Jews felt some improvement during the era of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din⁽⁷⁾..

During the era of the Imams, the Jews were subjected to a tax, the collection of which was the primary task of the Chief Rabbi of the Jews, without showing any resentment towards this tax. The Jews under the rule of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din were content and not complaining about this matter, because the Imam did not treat all Jews equally in this tax, but rather took into account the principle of age and the principle of economic status. With regard to age, only those over the age of thirteen years were to pay it. With regard to the economic status, the Imam distinguished the members of the Jewish community in terms of their living conditions and material status and worked to improve them⁽⁸⁾..

Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din relied on the Jews during the period from 1905 to 1911, while he was engaged in wars to consolidate his rule with the tribal sheikhs, in trade, arms manufacturing, and various other Jewish industries. Jewish craftsmen minted coins and provided the agricultural tools necessary for agriculture in the country, and Jewish merchants provided money and import and export issues⁽⁹⁾..

When the conflict between Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din and the Ottoman authorities over power in Yemen occurred between 1907 and 1911, the country was afflicted during that period by weakness, wars, drought and famine. Within a single decade, all economic and living conditions in the country deteriorated significantly⁽¹⁰⁾ .

Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din appointed a group of Jewish rabbis to be responsible for their communities. They were also responsible for collecting the jizya tax throughout the lands under his control in Yemen. The head of these rabbis was Isaac Halevy, the chief rabbi of Yemen, who continued in office until his death in 1932. He was succeeded by Rabbi Yahya al-Abyad, who continued as chief rabbi from 1932 until 1935. After him, the task was taken over by the Jewish rabbi Saeed al-Jamal, who continued to hold the position until 1944. At the beginning of each year, the rabbi responsible for the Jews of Sana'a received an order from the Imam to prepare the jizya tax imposed on adult Jewish men⁽¹¹⁾..

The leadership of the Jews in Yemen during the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din reached a special status with him, to the point that the Jews exploited Islamic and Jewish occasions and holidays to hold prayers and send congratulations to Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din. This was due to the Imam's great interest in the Jews and his protection of them, and his granting them the freedom to practice their religious affairs and complete independence under his authority. Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din's mail often contained poems of praise and letters of congratulations and blessings from the Jewish leadership in Sana'a and other cities⁽¹²⁾..

Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din issued orders to gradually ease the measures that limit the positions of Jews in civil society. The Imam was firm in preventing attacks by Muslims on Jews in Sana'a. The Imam often issued orders to meet the demands of the Jewish leadership regarding any issue they informed him of, even before it was decided by the judiciary. Here, Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din wanted to suggest to the judicial authorities not to prolong the

resolution of Jewish-Arab disputes on the one hand, and not to hide his sympathy with the Jewish leadership on the other hand. Every Jew would obtain his right before the judiciary, regardless of whether he was a boy or an old man. The judiciary at that time was just and fair to everyone, and rulings were often issued to throw Muslims in prison because of a case filed against him by a Jew⁽¹³⁾..

When gas oil was lost from the Yemeni markets during World War II⁽¹⁴⁾ The leadership of the Jewish community sought help from Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, in order to obtain an exception to purchase quantities of kerosene from the Yemeni government's allocations, and the Imam agreed to this matter⁽¹⁵⁾..

The ruler of Yemen, Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, was assassinated on February 27, 1948. At that time, Jews were accused of poisoning the well water in Yemen. Jews were also accused of killing two young Muslim girls and throwing their bodies into a well. The leaders of the Jewish community were arrested in their homes, and some of them were taken to prison because they were also accused of participating in the murder of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din. However, Saif al-Islam, Hassan bin Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, sent his soldiers to protect the Jewish community and force the rioters to leave the main public places in the country⁽¹⁶⁾..

But in fact, Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din was assassinated by the Yemeni opposition (Free Yemen Movement ‘)⁽¹⁷⁾ A number of army officers and tribal sheikhs revolted against him, and as a result Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din was assassinated. Officer Abdullah al-Wazir also staged a coup against the Imam, but in the end, after a struggle for power, Abdullah al-Wazir took power as a constitutional Imam in Yemen. However, the coup and revolution failed after Prince Ahmed bin Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din carried out a counter-revolution with his supporters, during which he was able to crush the revolution and execute the revolutionaries, and Imam Ahmed bin Yahya Hamid al-Din took over the reins of power in Yemen⁽¹⁸⁾ .

Second: The conditions of Jews under Ottoman rule

The Ottomans first conquered Yemen in 1538, then in 1848, Ottoman forces led by Tawfiq Pasha reached the entrances to Yemen, in an attempt to control Yemen completely, and impose a fait accompli on Yemen. They made the first attempt to invade the interior regions of Yemen, but it failed⁽¹⁹⁾..

Then in 1849 the Ottomans tried to enter Tihama, in an attempt to impose control over Tihama and the interior regions of Yemen, but at first their attempt failed, then the Ottomans returned in 1872 for the second time to Sana'a⁽²⁰⁾ .

Then Yemen came under Ottoman control, and the Yemen province became composed of the Sanjaks of Sana'a, Al Hudaydah, Taiz and Asir. Thus, the Ottomans completely controlled the northern regions of Yemen. The Ottomans considered Yemen to be one of the best provinces they had controlled, and it had a high status in the Ottoman sphere of interest⁽²¹⁾ .

After 1872, the number of Jews in Yemen grew under the Ottoman presence. Some of them worked in trade with the Ottomans, some worked as envoys from the Sana'a community to the Jewish centers in Palestine, Alexandria, and Istanbul, some worked in supplying the Ottoman army with provisions, and some exploited the new trade opportunities with the Ottomans. There were Jews who worked as channels for transmitting news and events outside Yemen through their relations with the Ottomans and working in the field of trade, and as mediators between the Jews of Yemen and other places in the external Jewish world⁽²²⁾..

The Turks maintained a varying degree of control over Yemen. They tried as much as possible not to get into quarrels with the Jews in Yemen. Rather, they were keen on the safety of

the Jews in the country, and did not order the killing of any of them. In most cases, if one of them made a mistake, the matter ended with imprisonment, in an attempt by the Ottoman Empire not to incite the Jews against it in Yemen⁽²³⁾..

Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha took over the Ottoman rule in Yemen. He granted the Jews some organizational rights due to their relationship with the authorities in Yemen. He reappointed the teacher Suleiman Al-Qarih as rabbi of the Jewish community in Sana'a, and added to his position the presidency of the Jewish Sharia Court⁽²⁴⁾..

Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha imposed his control over the country and invaded some important cities in Yemen, and he completed the control over them, so that he and the Ottoman Empire would be fully established in Yemen, but he did not work to restrict matters for the Jews, rather he was keen for the Jews to take their rights in the country, but under the control of the Ottoman rule without leaving it⁽²⁵⁾..

The Turks often treated the Jews harshly, not usually out of mockery or religious persecution, but because of the urgent need to recruit all elements of the population into the war against the rebel groups, which gave the ever-increasing Turkish forces no rest. In October 1875, at the time of the Jewish Sukkot festival, forty Jews from Sana'a were recruited to transport wounded soldiers from Sana'a to Hodeidah. The Turks then mercilessly expelled them, and three of them died⁽²⁶⁾..

The Ottoman Empire implemented the ideal role of sheikhs in Yemen, as they were obedient employees of the Ottoman government in Yemen, accepting its orders, bearing the hardships of rule and their essential role in establishing security in the country, and enduring abuse from their superiors, similar to the bureaucracy that was implemented in the Ottoman system of government⁽²⁷⁾..

The Ottoman Empire followed in its relationship with the Jews and their presence in Yemen the link to the application of the jizya system in the country on the Jews, especially since the Jews, after the return of Ottoman rule, had refrained from paying the jizya to the tribal sheikhs, who were taking the jizya for their protection. However, the Ottoman rule and administration spread in Yemen due to the spread of the phenomenon of bribery and corruption, and the arbitrariness in collecting money, with the increase in the amount of taxes that were imposed on both Jews and Muslims, which burdened the citizens of Yemen⁽²⁸⁾..

There were restrictions imposed on the Jews in Yemen, and therefore the Ottomans at that time had to implement organizational reforms in Yemen, removing the legal restrictions that were imposed on the Jews in Yemen. However, the fragile situation of the Ottoman Empire in Yemen, especially with the opposition of some Muslims to Ottoman rule in Yemen, made it difficult to change the status of the Jews in Yemen under Ottoman rule. The Jews in Yemen were unable to repeal some decrees that prevented them from expanding in some businesses. Perhaps the Ottomans saw these restrictions as a good thing, as they considered these restrictions and policies necessary for their efforts to firmly control all of Yemen. This ultimately resulted in chaos in Yemen, as the situation of the Jews did not improve much under Ottoman control. Perhaps the Ottoman Empire did not work to change the status of the Jews in Yemen for fear of provoking the anger of the Yemeni Muslims. The Ottoman Empire followed a policy of interfering in Jewish affairs in Yemen when it saw fit. However, the Ottoman period in Yemen witnessed tension between Muslims and Jews, especially as the country went through periods of drought. and increasing political instability in the country⁽²⁹⁾.

Jews in Yemen were considered to be protected by the Islamic government in exchange for paying the jizya, a poll tax imposed on adult males only. This situation did not change under the various regimes in Yemen, including the period of Ottoman rule in Yemen. Then, at the beginning of its presence in Yemen, the Ottoman Empire abolished the jizya imposed on Jews.

This was part of a series of comprehensive reforms introduced by the Ottoman Empire to the provinces under its control, which aimed to grant equal status to minorities, including Jews. However, it reimposed taxes on Jews again as it had been before⁽³⁰⁾..

Although the conditions of the Jews in Yemen under the Ottoman presence were steadily improving, some Jews were resentful of the Ottoman presence in the country, and accused it of corruption. They were never satisfied with Ottoman rule in Yemen, and they were always resentful of it⁽³¹⁾..

However, the Ottomans introduced a variety of changes to the situation in Yemen, pertaining to Muslim relations with non-Muslims, including Jews and others. The goal of these changes was to ease restrictions on Jews in Sana'a. However, some of these reforms were met with resistance from Muslims, which led the Ottomans to back down on these changes. The Ottomans eventually imposed more financial demands and taxes on Jews, including increased mandatory flour milling for the army and Jewish labor in transporting soldiers during battles .
(32)

The Ottoman Sultans imposed a liberal level of civil law on Christians and Jews in the provinces under their control, most notably the province of Yemen. Jews enjoyed some rights freely, like Christians in the country, and they interacted freely, practicing their religious rituals more than before⁽³³⁾..

At the beginning of his rule, Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din refused to recognize the Ottoman rule in the country, and the borders that they and the British had set in Yemen in order to define their influence and the influence of the Imam. However, the Imam accepted a temporary truce with the Ottomans between 1908 and 1914. However, when Hassan Tahsin Pasha sought⁽³⁴⁾ The Ottomans imposed a new system in Yemen by imposing new taxes in the country, and increasing the military presence more strongly than before, and this was a new era for Ottoman rule in Yemen⁽³⁵⁾..

North Yemen faced fierce opposition to Ottoman rule during the early twentieth century. Jews were at the forefront of those who opposed Ottoman rule in the northern Yemeni regions. The opposition increased during the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, and the Yemenis staged several uprisings against Ottoman rule during that period⁽³⁶⁾..

Until 1910, Jews were forced to grind grain for the Turkish forces without compensation, a condition that made life unbearable for women and made it difficult for them to bear all this pressure. Among the measures issued by the Ottoman Empire to tighten its control over the Jews was that it prohibited Jewish courts from hearing financial cases, but restricted them to religious and marital matters only. After the intervention of various factors from outside Yemen and the pressures that the Ottoman Empire was subjected to from various Jewish calls inside and outside Yemen, this system was abolished, and Jewish law in Yemen was reviewed⁽³⁷⁾ .

As opposition to Ottoman rule in Yemen increased after years of rebellion, the Ottomans granted Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din autonomy over a large part of northern Yemen in 1911⁽³⁸⁾ .

The Yemeni Jewish community, which was living through a period of instability that the country witnessed during that period, showed that between 1912, 1913 and 1914, many conflicts broke out among the Jews over Jewish Kabbalah, between Dur Da' Dardaid and Iqshem, with the Yemeni Jewish Enlightenment movement called Hexala. Their opponents, the Iqshem group, who refused to accept Dur Da's ideas and who supported Kabbalistic literature and customs, succeeded. Meanwhile, the Dur Da' movement was the most famous movement in the history of the modern Yemeni Jewish community. As a result, the Jews were divided as a

result of the conflict over Kabbalah into two competing groups in Sana'a and central Yemen. Yemen was then under the control of the Ottoman Turks. When the Treaty of Da'in was concluded in 1911 between the Ottomans and Imam Yahya, who controlled the northern regions of Yemen, the Jews then engaged in dialogue with the Ottoman government in order to get rid of the rule of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, which they did not succeed in despite their arrangements. With the Ottomans in this matter⁽³⁹⁾.

However, after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, it was finally forced to evacuate Yemen in 1918⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Third: The conditions of Jews under British rule

The Jews in Yemen supported any interference or control in Yemeni affairs by any foreign power, whether Britain or other European countries, in the hope of getting rid of the political, social and economic conditions that they saw as deteriorating for them at that time⁽⁴¹⁾..

When the Jews heard about Britain's desire to control Aden, some Jews in Aden expressed their willingness to cooperate with the British forces, by conveying news and information to them, to help them impose control and rule Yemen⁽⁴²⁾..

The Jews played a role in helping the British forces enter Aden and impose control over it, hoping to free them from the current situation in Yemen, as they saw themselves as persecuted in Yemen..

Jews lived in Yemen for nearly two thousand years, believing they were in exile in Yemen. So when the British forces arrived, they welcomed them very much, hoping to obtain political and administrative positions in the country. Therefore, the Jews were the most ardent supporters of British control⁽⁴³⁾..

The British forces entered Aden and imposed their control over it in 1839, and then there was an Ottoman and a British presence in Yemen, along with the Zaidi rule led by Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din in Yemen. Thus, we see Yemen scattered during that period between more than one control over its lands⁽⁴⁴⁾..

When Britain occupied Aden in 1839 AD, it appointed Captain Hanes as its first British resident in Yemen. Then its influence began to spread in the Arabian Peninsula after that, as it considered it a strong starting point for its military forces. Then it established many forts in Yemen, in order to defend its forces that were now present on the ground in Yemen, in order to protect them from the Arabs, and from any European intervention that could disturb the British presence in Yemen⁽⁴⁵⁾..

Aden became a British colony and served as an important international port, at the crossroads of sea routes between Europe and Asia. The British built a modern port, which became a center for surrounding development, and the headquarters of civil and military authorities and foreign consulates⁽⁴⁶⁾..

The British East India Company ⁽⁴⁷⁾ In Aden, he concluded several treaties with a number of local leaders in the country, in order to protect its trade on the coast of the Arabian Gulf. The Ottoman government at that time was suspicious of the plans and intentions of Britain and its trading companies, which had begun to conclude treaties in Yemen⁽⁴⁸⁾..

When Britain took control of Aden, the Jews were in a good situation. They had suitable huts and were better off than the rest of the inhabitants of Aden. Their huts were similar to the huts in which the Arabs who lived next to them lived⁽⁴⁹⁾..

Faced with the deteriorating situation in Yemen, Britain, which had no choice in 1900 but to initiate constitutional reforms aimed at providing meaningful representation for the Aden communities in government bodies, began, at the forefront of these reforms were the Jews, the majority of whom were known to live in isolated areas in the northern mountainous region near Saudi Arabia, and were widely spread around the small, poor towns and villages, especially in Saada, Barat, Amlah, Jabal Amr, Saqin, Raydah, Shaghra and Haidan al-Sham. Because of the poor situation of the Jews in Yemen at that time, despite their work in trade and their profit from it, their situation was extremely difficult, especially with the Muslims, from the British point of view, which made the social and political situation of the Jews in Yemen difficult, but Britain tried to deal with them in any way, in an attempt to improve their deteriorating situation⁽⁵⁰⁾..

From the British point of view, the British government believed that it had created in Aden a haven of religious equality unparalleled anywhere else in the Arabian Peninsula during the period from 1904 to 1930. On the other hand, the Jews in Aden were granted extensive rights in accordance with the rights issued by the British administration to the Jews, and they were given access to new economic and commercial opportunities, which had not been available before. Thus, the Jews of Aden under British rule were able to communicate with the Jews of Egypt, Palestine and Europe to a greater extent than before⁽⁵¹⁾..

Many Jews in Aden joined the British merchant navy, establishing large communities of immigrants in the port cities. Many of them gained access to new types of trade other than those they had previously engaged in, and achieved great financial gains. On the other hand, the British administration did not impose any restrictions on their work inside or outside Aden⁽⁵²⁾..

The people of Yemen lived in harsh climatic conditions, including the Jews in 1932, and it was very difficult for the Yemeni Jewish immigrants. The Jewish immigrants who arrived without property had to wait for immigration permits to Palestine for months, and sometimes even years. Some of them lived in extremely crowded housing conditions, with poor sanitation. The refugee problem in Aden was a very difficult matter for the British government and its authorities in Yemen and the local Jewish community in Yemen. Britain feared that an influx of Jewish refugees, greater than the current numbers, would constitute a financial burden on the budget of the city of Aden, who were mostly working as migrant workers, which would harm the rest of the local Jewish population in Yemen⁽⁵³⁾..

From 1932 to 1934, the refugees in Aden suffered from poor health and substandard conditions at all levels. They feared the spread of diseases and epidemics in Aden. The British authorities were concerned about the growing hostility in Aden towards Jews, exacerbated by the conflict in Palestine, as well as the continued presence of Jewish refugees in Aden. This could cause the Muslim population to launch attacks against Jews. A few incidents occurred in 1932, when some Jews desecrated a Muslim mosque. On the other hand, the Jewish community in Aden feared the presence of a permanent refugee community in Yemen, as job opportunities in the city were very limited and could not accommodate everyone, leaving the refugees in constant need of support. Wealthy Jews in Aden hired refugees to work as servants. The British administration in Aden tried to make a greater effort to evacuate the Jewish refugees to areas other than Aden, claiming that they had failed to obtain immigration permits. Britain urged Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din to monitor the borders more closely, and decided to Britain and the Jewish community in Aden are working to limit the number of Jewish refugees arriving in Aden⁽⁵⁴⁾..

Britain's relationship with Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din in 1934 was bad and not good, as Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din was looking forward to unifying North and South Yemen, which Britain did not agree with, because it believed that Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din's kingdom and

rule should be limited to the Zaidis only, and at the same time his confrontations were with his neighbors such as Ibn Saud ⁽⁵⁵⁾ In the north, his hopes for the future are hindered.

Relations between Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din and Britain became extremely tense, especially after Britain restored the borders of its protectorates to what they were during the Ottoman rule of Yemen, by using its advanced military forces, which angered Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, which had a major impact on British commercial activity with Hodeidah, and with the interior, whether in the protectorates or the rest of the Yemeni cities. On the other hand, Britain saw Yemen as an area of its own influence, and for this reason Britain wanted to stabilize the situation in Yemen, provided that this did not conflict with its control in Yemen⁽⁵⁶⁾..

Yemen became a stronghold for Italian fascist propaganda, which spread throughout Yemen, especially in Al Hudaydah and Sana'a. Italy gained great influence in Yemen through the spread of fascist thought in Yemen, which angered England, especially after the declaration of World War II in 1939. Here, Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din was keen not to enter into the conflict of the world powers in that war, so he declared neutrality in that world war. The Imam had tendencies towards Italy, but after being exposed to a lot of direct British pressure, he announced the severing of his diplomatic relations with Italy in 1943. Things remained in constant tension at that time until 1945 when World War II ended in 1945⁽⁵⁷⁾..

As for Britain's position on the Yemeni revolution during the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, the British government remained silent and neutral towards the 1948 revolution. Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din was seriously ill at the time, and Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din was assassinated in the same year, 1948, after returning from a visit to the Beit Hadir area. He was assassinated by a group of revolutionaries led by Al-Qardaei, who shot him in his car, leading to his death. This coup was known as the constitutional coup⁽⁵⁸⁾..

In the end, it can be said that Yemen was the most complex country in the Arabian Peninsula, due to the disorganized political situation in the country, since the nineteenth century. The British occupation of Aden and the imposition of its control over it made the political structure not only in Yemen but in the entire Arabian Peninsula more complex, and Yemen and its population, whether Jewish, Muslim or Christian, suffered from the existence of different ruling systems that were almost simultaneously the Zaidi Imamate (Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din) in the north, the Ottomans in Sana'a, and the British in Aden⁽⁵⁹⁾..

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, it can be said that Yemen was the most complex country in the Arabian Peninsula, due to the disorganized political situation in the country since the nineteenth century. The British occupation of Aden and the imposition of its control over it made the political structure not only in Yemen but in the entire Arabian Peninsula more complex. Yemen and its population, whether Jewish, Muslim or Christian, suffered from the existence of different ruling systems that were almost simultaneously the Zaidi Imamate (Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din) in the north, the Ottomans in Sana'a, and the British in Aden.

Footnotes

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- 1) Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din Muhammad al-Mutawakkil (1869-1948), also known as Imam al-Nasir li-Din Allah Ahmad ibn al-Ghamam al-Mutawakkil ala Allah Yahya ibn al-Mansur Billah ibn Hamid al-Din, also known as Imam al-Mutawakkil ala Allah Yahya ibn al-Imam al-Mansur Billah Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn Muhammad ibn Yahya Hamid al-Din, was born in 1869 in Sana'a. His father raised him well and taught him various sciences,

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- including religious and worldly subjects. When his father, Imam al-Mansur Billah, died in 1904, Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din succeeded his father and became Imam of Yemen from 1904 until 1948. The Ottomans were forced to recognize his rule. For more details, see: Mufid al-Zaidi: *Encyclopedia of Contemporary and Modern Arab History*, Osama Publishing and Distribution House, Amman, 2014, pp. 154-156; Abdul Karim bin Ahmad Mutahhar; *Biography of Imam Yahya bin Muhammad Hamid al-Din*, entitled, *The Battalion of Wisdom from the Biography of the Imam of the Nation*, Volume 1, Dar al-Basheer, 1998, Cairo, pp. 12-14; Ahmad Saeed Dahhi, *The Economic Life of Modern Yemen: The Era of the Hamid al-Din Dynasty, 1918-1962 AD*, Al-Mithaq Foundation for Printing and Publishing, Riyadh, 2007 AD, pp. 17-20;
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