

Queen of Sheba

The Islamic History of Yemen has witnessed the interest of historians when coming to speak about the Arab-Islamic history in general and allocated for the history of Yemen before the advent of Islam chapters full with great events and linked them to the Himyarites.

A long time passed where Yemen was isolated and the Yemenite civilization sites were beyond the interest of archaeologists who studied the sites of oriental ancient civilization.

The first scientific expedition which is known as Carsten Niebuhr expedition took place the beginning of the second half of the 18th century and this in fact is the true beginning of the knowledge of ancient South Arabian civilization " Yemen" despite the advanced results of the scientific endeavors which were exerted by the Orientals by getting to know the aspects of those civilizations, the ancient Yemeni language and its alphabet which is written in Mousnad Writing but the excavation works at those civilizations sites have not yet begun and they are still intact and still the biggest envisaged Yemeni ancient towns covered under earth.

Till the recent past there is a lost chain from pre-historic ears. After the publication of the results of many archaeological studies like Cadion (14) , it was possible to say that the people have lived on this earth named Yemen as old as can assumed by archaeologists and anthropologists on a constant basis till now .



Khoca Virgin Beaches in Al-Hodiedah

The Yemen archaeological museum exhibit the tools used by human beings over a span of tens of years that belong to all the period of the Stone Age. Also it has been found that there are areas on the eastern highlands of the Yemen plateaus at the altitude of 2000-2300 above sea level which have witnessed developed civilizations during the Bronze Age. At one of the sites of Bronze Age's archaeological sites the oldest proof of this kind of civilization was found and that is the Fertility Goddess let alone that to the people of Bronze Age reverts the site of the oldest Yemenite dams but those people left those settlements suddenly and may be moved towards mountain feet settlements towards the end of Bronze Age which extended till the beginning of the Sabean Era.

The German Mission which conducted Geomorphologic studies for one of the old dams which preceded the Great Dam of Marib, declared that the construction of that dam was the last stage of previous trials and before the construction B, F, C, F, D. Therefore the construction of that dam should have taken place before the great dam a period of 1000 to 2000 years. The Beginning of Ancient Yemenite Civilization Prosperity: Till the Recent Past there were contradicting views about the date of the beginning of prosperity of ancient Yemenite civilizations but recent studies show the contradicting viewpoints together with what was reached through studies and research via Radio Carbon.

Given the similarity or likeness of circumstances, natural, social and economic conditions in the areas of the ancient State in the Southern part of the Arabian land. The report of the mission says that the prosperity of civilizations in South Arabia dates back to the first millennium B.C (or that the Iron Age has extended from 1200 B.C till 332 B.C). The Sabean Era: It has been termed the Sabaic Era because Sheba is the greatest , strongest and longest in time and is considered the column of history for those states or is the mid of chain as described by Dr. Yousef Moham,ed Abdullah.



The Order of the Ancient Yemenite States is as follows:

Sheba-Maeen-Qataban-and Ausan, which is the least in importance, then Himyar that forms an extension of Sheba at a later date. Within the General Framework of Ancient Yemenite History this era is divided into two stages:

The first Stage: It rotates about the date of the states which were founded at the watersheds of the valleys in eastern Yemen as of the date of prosperity of those civilizations till the deterioration of Civilization Centers towards the end of the millennium B.C because of the change of Trade Route (Olibanum Route) from land to Sea.

The second Stage: It extends from the first Century AD till the Sixth Century AD and the transfer of central State to Dhofar the Capital of Himyar which is near to ports made it witness prosperity after the change of land route to the Seas till the demise of the Himyarite State in 225 AD The Periods of prosperity and independence of Ancient Yemenite States through discovered inscriptions up to -
Sheba: from 715 B.C till the second century AD (Marib) - Maeen from the fourth Century B.C. till the first Century B.C. - Qataban, from the fourth Century B.C till the Second Century AD - Hadhramawt: From the fourth Century B.C. till the last quarter of the third Century AD - Himyar: Towards the end of the Second Century B.C till 525 AD.

Through Archaeological and Anthropological studies for many archaeological sites it has been confirmed that the archaeological findings which belong to the Stone Age do belong to Stone Age in Yemen and the tools used By Homo Sapiens in other sites were contemporary to those eras in the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula and the same applies on the Bronze Age. During the period of prosperity the Yemenite Civilization had good relations and contacts with capitals of ancient Oriental Civilizations and was influenced with its surroundings and contributed modestly to the accumulation of knowledge and prosperity of Human civilization.

In the Domain of Architecture the Yemenites had a good contribution as seen in the temples, walls of towns and remnants of castles and roads.



In the Domain of irrigation and Dam Constructions ancient Yemenites were pioneers and the Great Dam of Marib is a good witness in addition to the channels , water cisterns , tunnels and braided wells.

In the Domain of Art, Engraving and drawing , the walls of temples keep of that much as well as the museum Halls of Yemen and other capitals of the world exhibit a lot of statues , artifacts , silverware and copperwares as well as Golden Jewelry. The Quarries which are far away by tens of Miles from the Capitals of ancient Yemenite Capitals as well as the methods of cutting big chips and their Ornamentation and their erection where each mass weights more than 17 tons is a question that calls for admiration and respect.

Concerning religious and other Rites, their temples were not alike but were distinguished from each other in a distinctive way till it makes you believe that they were houses destined for pilgrimage. Also they had holy hunting expeditions that were collective and were headed by the king the First Lady in participation of setting traps for the holy ibex. Ancient Yemenites had some activities beyond South Arabia of which Commercial Marine followed by settlements and development till they reached State Status like Axum in Ethiopia and settlements in the North and East of the Arabia Peninsula.

The Hamyarites also staged campaigns till Hira and Medain. Persia and the Romans discerned the quantity of wealth, which they shall get if either of them became able to control old commercial maritime route. The Roman Empire tried through a botched expedition that reached the Garrisons of Marib in the Year 24 B.C. to occupy ancient Yemen.



After more than Five Centuries, the Ukhdud or Trench Incident was the last episode of strife between the two creeds Judaism and Christianity and a good reason for the Roman Czar to support the Invasion of Abraha the Abyssinian of Arabia Felix and a chastisement for Dhu Nawas who ordered the burning of the christens of Najran and thus begins the Era of Abyssinian Occupation which lasted half a century ,during which Abraha destroyed the castles of Himyarite princes and this phase of occupation ended by the failure of his expedition to destroy Mecca and his Elephant fled from the arrival at fringes of the Holy Shrine in Mecca .



Almost of half a century Yemen was ruled by the Persians who were sent by the Persians king Chosroe top support Prince Saif Bin Dhi Yazan. The Ethiopian during their occupation of Yemen constructed a shrine aiming at attracting Yemenites only to be visited by the Zradicht Persians with their holy fire.

As of the date Abu Karab Asaad passed through Mecca and clothed it after his return from Yathrib (Currently Medina in KSA) after his embrace of Judaism at the outset of the fourth Century Ad, till after Dhi Nawas embraced Judaism after that by a century and a decade and as another 100 years passed, the missionaries of the prophet

Mohammed Peace Be upon Him to Yemen did not find the adherents of the two creeds or that of the Persians face them or content them while they were instructing the people the new religion and the embrace by 20 thousand individuals of the tribe of Hamadan of Islam in one day is a well known story.

After the Building of Sana'a and Janad Mosques during the life of the prophet, the mosques became places for worship and learning and they are also the most suitable places to settle disputes and exchange political point of views. The Yemenites started off with the vanguard of invading Islamic Armies and were trusted by the Chlorate in Yathrib for important tasks, Damascus and Baghdad. The Yemenites transferred during their participation in the armies of Islam many of their knowledge and know how and had clear and evident participation in founding towns and building fortresses as well as the construction of castles and other skills.

The Yemen involvement in events did not cease during the Caliphates but was in line and contemporary therewith. When the Abbaside Caliphates weakened in certain of its fringes, Yemen became more of those parts apt or convenient for establishment of independent states from that of the Caliphate. The beginning was in Zabid on the plain of Tihamah, which was adopted by Mohammed Bin Ziyad a capital for his state which was known as Ziyadite State at the outset of the 9th Century AD (819AD –1080 AD).

It extended its rule on big parts of the Yemen and expired at the outset of the 11th Century AD. Then other states followed thereafter after several decades, beginning with Yafrite in Shibam Kokaban 661-956. The Zaidite Imams State in Sadah: It was contemporary with all the states for more than one Thousand Years and its influence extended from Najran to Sana'a and sometimes forms most of Greater Yemen and sometimes contracts to the inner northeastern regions.

The Sulaihid State in Sana'a /Jiblah (1047-1138 AD) The Ayubbid State in Taiz (1174-1229 AD) The Rasulide State in Taiz (1226 –1454 AD) The Taheride State in Al Mikranah-Rada (1446-1517 AD) Those states were the strongest that left tangible relics during the periods of its rule and there are tiny states we do not see fit to mention but have been touched upon in other subjects herein. During the epoch of those states which spanned, particularly those which were capitals as well as those on pilgrimage or Trade Stations on the Plateau or on the Coastal plains.



Some Maritime Ports prospered and flourished during those eras of the Islamic Epoch. Due to the ever-present competition and battle between synchronizing states, many fields have been paid attention by those states. For example the Ziyadite State paid attention to the construction of mosques, schools, fortresses and bridges in Zabid, Aden and Hadhramawt, Also the Yafriate State in Shibam Kawkaban and Sana'a. The Zaidis were also interested in this respect in Sadah , Sana'a , Shiharah and Dhamar as well as Dhawran Anis and Yafa. The Sulaiyhide State was distinguished for its attention to certain of those fields. It was very much involved in construction of mosques and schools but was prominent allocation of many State properties and Land plots for the running of those Didactic institutions. Also it was interested in construction of roads, irrigation systems and cisterns in Sana'a , Jiblah ..etc..

The Ayyubide Rulers began their own tradition, which is construction of schools and their women participants with them in such interests, their entourage of slaves and servants inclusive. Then came Rasulide era which was the strongest Yemenite States during the Islamic Era and was the longest in endurance and the widest in influence and has stronger impact and its rules interest covered all the affairs prevalent in those times. Some of them were scientists in Astrology, Medicine, Farming, Linguistics, and Legislation.Etc. They built mosques, houses and citadels, roads and water channels to the extent that people revert to them all the prominent works and name them " Ghassaniyah" and that means that they belong to the Rasulide times. Their projects extended till they reached Mecca.

The Tahiride Rulers tried to imitate Bani Rasool. Thus they built schools , mosques and irrigation channels as well as water cisterns and bridges in Zabid and Aden , Yafrus , Rada, Juban, etc.. Some of the Zaidite Imams tried to imitate the Tahiride State and its precedent states and thus built schools like Al Shamsiyah School in Dhamar , AL Shamsiyah in Thulla etc.. . The Imams founded many villages that serve as didactic centers and they are too many and are

available in many northern areas and some of which are still running the same tasks. On the span of many centuries many towns in Yemen witnesses distinguished prosperity in the domain of different sciences which were prevalent at the time in prominent centers in Arab and Islamic world. Zabid , Sadah and Tarim Sana'a , Jiblah and Dhamar , cities and villages of the same status like Qairoan and Azhar. Many scientists were prominent in many arts as graduates of those centers.

The prosperity of Trade Route through the Red Sea during the Islamic era was a source of enrichment for many Yemeni States during the Islamic Era till the New Geographic Discoveries took place at the beginning of the Modern Era during which some of the Yemeni Ports were subjected to the attacks of the Portuguese in Socotra and Al Shihri and Aden. Then the Mamlukes came to fight them only to make Yemen fall under their rule in 1517 AD during which they destroyed Al Mikranah the Capital City of the Tahiride Dynasty. The Mamelukes in Yemen pronounced their subordination to the Ottoman Empire, which got rid of the Mameluke rule in Egypt.

Then the Ottomans began their rule of Yemen during the first period of 1538 A.D till 1635 A.D and there are some of the relics sponsored by some ottomans on an individual basis as the Ottomans State was not interested in Building such projects. Al Bakirriyah Domes is the prominent trace of Ottomans in Yemen. The Ottomans faced fervent and violent resistance to the extent that the Ottomans named Yemen the cemetery of Anatolia. After the Ottomans left Yemen in 1630. Yazidide state in Dhawran Anis was able to cover most of the country but only for a short period. Yemen territories then entered an era of tribalism and degradation as well as deterioration covered the country to the extent that in Sana'a alone there were five Imams at the same time during which one assigned his right to another and then receded and likewise. During the period of prosperity of Coffee Growing and Trading during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries A.D some of the tiny towns prospered as centers for Coffee Collection like Al Mahwit . Also other towns on caravan routes prospered which led to the exporting ports Like Bait Al-Fakeeh, while Mokha was the most prosperous during those times, for Mokha was the main port for the export of coffee and still Yemen coffee is known for its quality " Mokha Coffee". Before the opening of Suez Canal by two decades the British occupied the Yemeni Seaport of Aden due to its strategic location in 1839 and within a short period they were able to expand their hegemony on vast territories of southern Yemen. Then the Ottoman Turks came back to Yemen for the second time and controlled the northern areas in 1872 and then entered into competition with the British. Both parties made the first partition

delineation of the two parts of Yemen South and North. The Turks withdrew from Yemen after their defeat in the First World War 1918 and then began the last Stage of the Zaidite imams lasted till the year 1962. The northern parts of Yemen during the Imamic Rule entered a period of extreme seclusion exercised by Imam Yahya and then Imam Ahmed. That period is considered the harshest period undergone by the Yemenite people during whom it suffered poverty illiteracy and unfair rule. That seclusion was broken by 26th of September 1962 and a new era began due to the establishment of the Yemen Arab Republic. The southern parts were not any luckier under the English occupation excepting what Aden witnessed of civilization at the mid of this century. The Liberty war was waged against the British on 14th of October 1963 from Radfan Mountains till the last British garrison evacuated on the 30th Of November 1967 and the People 's Democratic Republic of Yemen was founded and thus the Ottoman-British Borders remained partitioning the two parts of Yemen till May 22nd 1990 on which the Yemeni Reunification was proclaimed and a new era began under a new state named the republic of Yemen with its capital city Sana'a , the Flower of the Arabian Peninsula cities.