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POLITICAL SECTARIANISM IN IRAQ 1921-1958

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Abstract :

Our research entitled (**Political Sectarianism in Iraq 1921-1958**) summarizes the first historical roots of sectarianism in Iraq by explaining its problems, linguistic and idiomatic concepts, and how it emerged from the Ottoman and British occupation until the beginning of the republican rule in 1958 and past its jurisprudence of political variables that were linked to the specificity of Iraqi society and its internal challenges. And foreign affairs under the rule of the military, which was one of the pillars of the political system and the structure of the state in Iraq in terms of political practice that characterizes individuals in belief and sect, as well as all the rights and duties that everyone enjoys, especially since social identity in all its subtypes, national, ethnic, religious and family types is A necessity and an inevitable product of the individual's desire to belong to a social entity, from which he derives security, status and respect, because society in general represents a social fabric with many components and sects, since the establishment of the Iraqi state in 1921 and the announcement of its formation as a modern state with multiple social and economic potentials despite the negative effects of the Ottoman and British occupiers, which formed a factor A weakness of the emerging Iraqi identity.

Keyword: Polit, Sectarianism, Iraq, social, economic potentials

Introduction

Those who follow modern and contemporary Iraq the history will find that it is full of many events and political developments, which cast a shadow in one way or another on the political scene, and on Iraqi social realism, and thus led to the creation of political instability in Iraq and the emergence of the so-called political sectarianism that made some of those who ruled Iraq possess a sense with the politicized sectarian discrimination that continued and evolved through long historical periods, started from the Ottoman and British occupation until the republican rule in Iraq took another form, which is ... moderation ... and rejects and combats sectarianism and seeks to find a political system that has democratic approach and participation in the decision-making process. He rejected the quota based on the components state, as the republican regime sought during the rule of Abdul Karim Qasim to overcome the ethnic divisions that prevailed in the monarchy ... and the absence of political formation and lack of knowledge of what is good for serving the country and the trend towards building a state with a project and a fair constitution that serves society in all its spectrum away from societal and social distinction and the divisions that create conflicts, political instability and monopolization of power that weaken the foundations of the modern state and the absence of its institutional system and weaken its democratic strength based on the path of wealth distribution and social justice that was lost ,this is despite being an important social and economic force and represents one of the basic conditions for eliminating sectarianism and the multiplicity of its various concepts and mechanisms. From this our entitled research comes ,**The political sectarianism in Iraq (1921-1958)** to shed light on political sectarianism in three requirements as well as the introduction, conclusion and results, the title of the first requirement: the general concept of sectarianism, which includes firstly sectarianism linguistically and secondly sectarianism as a term, while the second requirement is the general origins of political sectarianism in First: The first roots of political sectarianism in Iraq. Second: Sectarianism in the royal era, and the third requirement is titled the repercussions of sectarianism in the Iraqi political system, first: during a period of the British occupation, second sectarianism in republican rule,

then conclusion and results, and the most important sources and references used in the research.

The objectives of the study:

The study comes to explain the first roots of political sectarianism in Iraq by explaining its linguistic and idiomatic patterns and how they originated since the beginning of the Ottoman and British occupation and the launch of the republican rule, i.e. the period in which the ruling Abdul Karim Qasim and accompanying fundamental changes associated with the privacy of society and its internal and external challenges under military rule, which formed one of the pillars of the political system in contemporary Iraq.

The importance of study:

The importance of the study stems from ... the state of sectarianism that the political system in Iraq was experiencing and which was reflected in one way or another on the institutional reality of the Iraqi state at that time while preserving ... the authority despite widely spread during the Ottoman and British occupation until the coming of the rule of King Faisal I and with all the structural challenges and problems experienced during his reign, defined the tribal, social and cultural makeup of Iraqi society at the time, after years of political tyranny.

The problem of the study:

The problem of the study lies in many questions, the most important of which are;

1. 1.What is the policy followed by the Ottoman and British occupation that led to the emergence of political sectarianism in Iraqi institutional work?
2. 2-Is the policy of divide and rule a policy pursued by the British was the first sign of the emergence of sectarianism?
3. Is political sectarianism different from religious sectarianism.
4. 4.Does sectarianism differ linguistically from the idiomatic concept.
5. 5.How different sect and sectarianism in the society.

Study Methodology

The research entitled (Political Sectarianism in Iraq (1921-1958) adopted the historical approach within a historical political framework for the events covered in the study not to mention the use of the analytical approach in developing a political vision that frame the events in a scientific manner

personifying the events with realism parallel to the change witnessed by Iraq in that period.

First Requirement

The general concept of sectarianism

First: Sectarianism at the linguistic level

Sectarianism has taken several names in the language, including the group, the band and the plural groups, the roamer who roamed and roamed on and roamed in , and group is from the thing (part of it) and it is a group of people is explained at least two men. three were said to be from a group of individuals who share common denominations such as creed or a point of view or opinion and all that is consistent in visions.¹ It mentioned in the holy Qur'an (Surat Al-Hujurat verse (9), the Almighty saying: "If two parties of believers fight, reform between (Great truth of God them) believers."²

Second: Sectarianism as a term;

There are many concepts and designations that have been termed sectarianism as a concept .. Sectarianism means linguistically, the number, group , people , tribe and league. These designations are the first beginnings, .. of the formation of groups that bring them together between language, ethnicity, and may be distinguished by privacy, they are of two types;⁽³⁾

The first type:

Ideological sectarianism, which works to employ religious knowledge through its general framework.

The second type:

political sectarianism, which is mainly derived from the ideological sect, and is represented by the political practice that distinguishes members of society in terms of belief and doctrine, as well as rights and duties, and may be of a religious nature and is a reaction to political, social and cultural crises in the Islamic world, especially since social identity in all its sub-national in all its shapes , ethnic, religious, family and sectarianism is an adaptive necessity and an inevitable outcome of the individual's desire to belong to a social entity from which security, status and

(1) Ibn Manzūr Lisân al-'Arab

(2) The holy Qur'an (Surat Al-Hujurat verse

(3) <https://www.iasj.net/iasj/func=fultext&ald=103092>.

respect are derived⁽⁴⁾. This is due to the fact that society is a multi-component social fabric, which has become known to all.⁽⁵⁾

Second Requirement

General origins of political sectarianism

First: the first roots of political sectarianism in Iraq

The sectarian roots (*) in Iraq go back to a historical legacy that began from the occupation of Iraq by the Seljuks, as Iraq was the scene of the conflict between the Turkish Seljuks and Persian Buyids, when the Seljuks seized power in Iraq, they persecuted all the Islamic groups that violated their beliefs until they established the saying of the other thought⁽⁶⁾, And the situation continued until the coming of the Ottomans and the British who followed the policy of sectarian isolation, during the reign of Medhat Pasha in 1869 divided Iraq into ten Sanjaks (State and Governorates) whose affairs are managed by administrators managed by the governor of Baghdad and Sanjaks are the system of Ottoman states, according to what was reported by Al-Zawraa newspaper at the time, the most important of which are Sanjak of Baghdad, Shahruzar, Sulaymaniyah, Mosul, al-Dulaim, Karbala, Mosul, Diwaniyah, Basra, Amara and Al-Muntafik. It became more clear when King Faisal I crowned as king of Iraq in 1921 through the Cairo conference and put preference for officers who graduated from Turkish schools. Perhaps what was mentioned in the 1925 constitution, specifically Article (18) of the Royal Constitution, which confirmed that all Iraqis are equal in rights and entrusted with government jobs each according to his qualifications and ability, and not to use foreigners for these jobs.

Second: Sectarianism in the royal era.

When the state was established in Iraq in 1921 and announced its formation as a modern state with many possibilities for political, economic and social participation, it tried in one way or another to determine the degree of integration or non-integration with some groups in society and in governance, which created a

⁽⁴⁾ Bayan Salih and Others, Iraq of Conflict and Reconciliation, Dar Al-Shorouk, Baghdad, 2007, p. 21

⁽⁵⁾ Ibid, p. 57

* The name of a sect is called on some Islamic groups to perpetuate the transformation of the sect into a religious group. See more: Hadi Al-Alawi, The Historical Roots of Sectarianism in Iraq, New Culture Magazine, Issue (275), 1997, p. 3

⁽⁶⁾ www.alh:kmehi.org

set of ethnic problems of racial diversity.⁽⁷⁾ It was a factor of weakness for the emerging Iraqi identity and its development, as the influence of Ottoman and British colonialism and the ruling nature at that time, in addition to the reflection of the unclear policies towards the diverse Iraqi society, which led to the development of two concepts of identity (Iraqi and Arab) that were a main cause of political divisions and societal instability since the Ottoman era, which caused a problematic real weakened loyalty to a clear collective national identity.⁽⁸⁾ From this standpoint, the decisions taken from abroad and the interference in the Iraqi regimes represented a variety of diverse ethnic problems. Since the advent of King Faisal I in 1921, he sought to build a highly centralized state clearly contradicts the diverse demographics of Iraqi society, which paved the way for the redistribution of ethnic religious groups that did not participate in governance, which led to the creation of an ethnic and sectarian crisis at the same time,⁽⁹⁾ as sectarianism as a general concept may take political tendency that has nothing to do with religious or doctrinal beliefs, and sectarian differences were exploited for purposes of interest far from religion, then these differences developed and took a more fanatic concept .. much like tribal intolerance.⁽¹⁰⁾ In order to maintain influence and power⁽¹¹⁾, sectarianism here did not come because of the difference in doctrinal and jurisprudential issues as many see it, as it does not relate to a religious or juristic source⁽¹²⁾ ... and this happened when Iraq divided in the period of monarchy into three main religious regions, One of these regions and the most densely populated was and remains the homeland of the Shiites and by extension this region covers all the governorates south of Baghdad and from the geographical point of view it is regions composed of irrigated plains , swamps and marshes near the confluence of the Tigris and

⁽⁷⁾ Dr.. Farhad Ibrahim, *Sectarianism and Politics in the Arab World, A Vision on the topic of Religion and Politics in Contemporary Arab Society*, 1st Edition, Madbouly Library, Cairo, 1996, p. 12

⁽⁸⁾ Mahmoud Abdel-Wahid Mahmoud, *Tradition and Modernity*, edited and presented by: Kikos Kay, Misr Mortada Foundation for the Iraqi Book, Baghdad, 2010, p. 13.

⁽⁹⁾ Farhad Ibrahim, previous source, p. 14.Dr.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Dr. Saeed Al-Samarrai, Previous Source, p. 45

⁽¹¹⁾ Dr.. Abdul Khaleq Hussain, *Political Sectarianism and the Problem of Governance in Iraq*, 1st Edition, Mesopotamia House, Baghdad, 2011, p. 166 .

⁽¹²⁾ Ibid ,p 17

Euphrates rivers⁽¹³⁾, while the second religious region includes the valleys of the Euphrates of Arab residents north of Baghdad and valleys of the Tigris between Baghdad and Mosul, all of which are inhabited by Sunnis, and the third religious area with the alignment of the Kurdish mountain crescent fueled by rain of northeast of Iraq.⁽¹⁴⁾

From here we see that this evaluation gave the Iraqi community the feature of the difference between the sects and according to the geographical region that was the first reason in which the Ottoman occupation, and perhaps the problem of Mosul in 1925 was one of the motives of the geographical and sectarian conflict, which was within the realm of the map of Iraq and the continuation of the Ottoman Empire demanded after Entering the fact-finding committee and collecting economic, social and ethnic information⁽¹⁵⁾ that reached Iraq's right to Mosul.

Therefore we say that sectarianism gave its features a great deal during the period of monarchy. The memo of King Faisal I, which was presented to Iraqi politicians, said Naji Shawkat, as he mentioned in his memoirs, "The government should strive to reduce the influence of religious scholars, but rather to annihilate it completely, adding I advise the government." Do not advance or raise these Shiites in one step.⁽¹⁶⁾

That is, the society at that time did not know the feelings of nationalism or patriotism, but the religious tendency represented by sectarian fanaticism prevailed, meaning that the citizen looks at the state that is from his sect and consider as executing it, and this depends on the extent of his connection to the region.⁽¹⁷⁾ Therefore, and on this basis, the association of sectarianism with ethnic origins was not the only factor that showed the new state in the nature of weakness since the end of the twenties, that is, after the death of King Faisal I on September 3, 1933, as the struggle over the division of power between the

⁽¹³⁾ Dr. Saeed Al-Samarrai, Previous Source, P66.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Rashid al-Khayun, previous source, p. 79

⁽¹⁵⁾ Dr. Fatima Saloumi, Iraq ,Title of a Series of Historical, Political, and Media Studies, 1st Edition, Dar Al-Arqam, Baghdad, 2008, p. 4

⁽¹⁶⁾ Hanna Batato, Iraq: Social classes and revolutionary movements from the Ottoman period until the establishment of the republic, 1st edition, translated by Afif Al-Razzaz, Arab Research Foundation, Beirut, 1990, p. 57

⁽¹⁷⁾ Dr.. Ali Al-Wardi, a study on the nature of Iraqi society, an introductory attempt to study the larger Arab community in the light of modern sociology, Beirut, Lebanon, 2014, P.149.

ruling groups , weakened the stability of the new state until the 1940's and 1950's ...sectarianism used as a tool in the context of the division struggles in the ruling authority.⁽¹⁸⁾

Third Requirement

The implications of sectarianism in the Iraqi political system

First: during the British occupation

In dealing with colonial peoples, the British followed their policy known as the “divide and rule” policy, as they depended on the minority in the country they controlled ⁽¹⁹⁾ in order to create a deep gap and conflicts between this minority and the rest of the people. When the British occupation came to Iraq in 1914, they tried to exclude a sect at the expense of another sect .. As the occupation authority tried to weaken by its modern schools the influence of the scholars of the Shiite community, which caused the weakness of all the scholars in Iraq, and from here sectarianism began to take another form, at the time that it was a sectarian conflict create a job vacancy.⁽²⁰⁾

Britain worked to break up the national unity that made the Iraqi people be weak and divided. In 1921 until 1947 successive rule of Iraq (twenty governments)where they tried to persecute the majority and rely on the minority⁽²¹⁾.

In 1921 to 1934, which represented the mandate period, the group of positions formed (113) positions .. there were (20) Shiite positions, and from 1932-1936 the total number of positions (57) positions, while the Shiites positions were (9) and from 1936-1941, which was the stage of the military coups, forming a group of (65) positions and the number of Shiite positions (18), while in 1941-1946 the total number of positions (89) and the number of Shiites (25) positions.⁽²²⁾

⁽¹⁸⁾ Farhad Ibrahim, previous source, p. 110

⁽¹⁹⁾ Dr. Abdel-Khalek Hussein, Previous Source, P.16

⁽²⁰⁾ Dr.. Ali Al-Wardi, Wuaath Al-Salatin, Beirut, Lebanon, 2014, p. 340

⁽²¹⁾ Hanna Batato, previous source, p. 58

⁽²²⁾ Dr. Abdel-Khaleq Hussein, Previous Source, P.125

Table (1)

Time period	Total number of positions	The second British occupation phase
British Mandate Stage	113	20
From 1932-1936	57	9
The stage of military coups (1936-1940)	65	18
The second British occupation phase	89	25
From 1947-1958	251	87

Source; Prepared by the researcher

For example, the participation of Shiites, as an example, in the political system was closely related to the policy of Nuri Said, who was in possession of state institutions.

From here it is evident that the royal era, which lasted for (38) years, witnessed a clear distinction between the components of the Iraqi people, which was followed by other components that monopolized civil and military jobs and positions.

Second: Sectarianism in republican rule

The period of republican rule was clear-cut in terms of non-discrimination in doctrine. When the rule of Abdul Karim Qasim came on July 14, 1958, Qasim did not adhere to the policy of isolation without relying on their doctrines, so he tried to find convergence between sects, as he tried to get rid of all forms of racial, religious and sectarian discrimination. That is why the leader Qasim did justice to the rest of the components of the Iraqi people, as he did not adhere to the sectarian examination of the applicants, for example, to occupy high positions in the state, but rather was dependent on the competence of the applicant, his national reputation, and his honest history. Qasim insisted on appointing Dr. Abdul Jabbar Abdullah as President of the University of Baghdad and he is from a minority of Mandaean Sabians, due to his scientific position and Dr. Mahdi Makhzoumi - a Shiite as a dean of the College of Arts for his prominent position and a prominent professor in the Arabic language, he also stressed the transgression of sectarian norms in the admission of the Military College and the Staff College.⁽²³⁾

⁽²³⁾ Ibid , P 174

From this standpoint, Abdel Karim's ruling ... was characterized by the rejection of violence, sectarianism and discrimination, and perhaps a law was enacted to guarantee women's rights. The Personal Status Law is evidence of that, as all sects were allowed to enter government institutions and to fight and reject sectarianism in public life, as groups that were somewhat excluded such as Shiites, Kurds, women, and minorities ... were thrown into some state joints such as the administrative corps and the police and thus gave way to political participation significantly, he announced the interim constitution that was drafted after the revolution of 14 July 1958 in which he affirmed that Arabs and Kurds are partners in the framework of the Iraqi state in order to create equality and enjoy freedoms. ⁽²⁴⁾

Not to mention the second chapter of the constitution, specifically in the seventh, ninth, tenth and twelfth paragraphs, it has shown the importance of the people's role, equality before the law, freedom of belief and expression, and freedom of religion, as stated in Article (3) emphasizing equality in rights between Arabs and Kurds⁽²⁵⁾. However, the 1950s , patriots did not witness as they call themselves sectarianism or ethnic exclusion, especially since the issues of national unity, Arabism, and the second identity were not central to them.⁽²⁶⁾

This is because the military leadership led by Abdul Karim Qasim has always adopted the principle of national partnership between the various components, including religious and national, in order to create a kind of sectarian balance between the sects to manage the country's political system, especially since the multiple composition of the Iraqi people and rely heavily on consensus as a main principle depends it was to his administration of the state, and thus made the first stage of the republic away from the contradictions in Iraqi society and the state of ethnic discrimination⁽²⁷⁾, especially since political sectarianism was not a pressing concern because the majority of society is far from

⁽²⁴⁾ Eric Davis, *Memoirs of the State of Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq*, Translated by Hatem Abdel-Hadi, 1st Edition, Beirut, Lebanon, 2008, pp. 192-194

⁽²⁵⁾ Dr.. Ahmad Muhammad Ali Al-Awadi, *The Problem of Renewal in the Thought of Contemporary Iraqi Political Forces*, 1st Edition, Baghdad, Iraq, 2017, pp. 121-122

⁽²⁶⁾ Eric Danes, *op. Cit.*, P. 151

⁽²⁷⁾ Abdul-Khaleq Nasser Shoman, *Political Sectarianism in Iraq, The Republican Era 1958-1968*, Dar Al-Hikma, Baghdad, 2003, p. 10.

political Islam.⁽²⁸⁾ Also the preponderance of narrow interests and sub-loyalties over public interest.

Conclusion

In sum, that the issue of dealing with political sectarianism in Iraq within the period of our research (1921-1958) .. was one of the most difficult stages and periods in the sense that sectarianism differed with each era of the political system starting with the Ottoman and British occupation and its significant impact on the institutional system On the one hand, and on societal realism on the other hand, until the year 1958 and the advent of the republican system, political sectarianism that emerged mainly from the ideological sect represented by political practice that distinguishes members of society over the other in terms of rights, duties and belief as well as doctrine, was a topic worth studying.

From here, the concept of sectarianism and its repercussions were embodied in the frameworks of the ruling regime, starting from the reign of Faisal I of the monarchy in 1921 until the establishment of republican regime in 1958 (the rule of Abdul Karim Qasim) and the resultant determination of the degree of integration that was the reason for creating a set of ethnic problems of racial diversity .. in a period of time characterized by the weakness of the Iraqi identity that was caused by the Ottoman and British occupation through Turkification first and second the policy of (divide and rule), which divided society and paved the way to internal and external conflicts within geographical divisions subject to sectarian intolerance, which led to the weakening of the state .. in 1921, and then somewhat vanished in the period of the republican system (the rule of Abdul Karim Qasim), who sought to reject sectarian violence and discrimination by pushing the components of the Iraqi people into the institutions and departments of the state ... thus giving way to political participation and the enjoyment of freedoms and common rights away from exclusion and political ethnicity. Therefore it can be said that citizenship in Iraq was weak and partial loyalties was deeper than the loyalties of citizenship, such as the clan, sect, and others, on the grounds that sect is a social trend that has historical dimensions, unlike sectarianism, which represents a political approach, which led to the dedication of the factor of social division, which reflected on the economic reality of the citizen, which made Tribalism dominated on the behavior of

⁽²⁸⁾ Ibid, p. 15

the individual , his actions and his relationship with one another, and this reason not to build the state properly. As the sectarian standard has become the most present in the construction process, a source of tension and instability in a pluralistic society, and a disturbing factor for the general situation in terms of the policy of dealing, lack of language of communication, tolerance and coexistence with the other party according to his own needs, as well as the wrong interpretation of religion and its use to serve political interests.

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