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State and Society Under American Imperialism

Deconstruction Iraq's "Nation-State"

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Abstract: The Article deals with evaluating of so-called "Rebuilding Iraqi State" in the aftermath of U.S invasion of 2003, which was in fact a process of deconstruction Iraqi State and society alike. On the stare level, US occupation administration dissolved state institutions and security apparatus, as well as established a weak authority based on ethno-sectarian formula and enumerated it in new constitution of 2005. As for society, the America occupation policies enhanced ethno-sectarian fault lines, which provided the opportunity for emergence on non-state actors that compete with state in its power and legitimacy. Consequently, these policies have damaged relations between state and society in one hand and among societal communities in other hand.

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الدولة والمجتمع في ظل الإمبريالية الأمريكية

تفكيك "الدولة القومية" في العراق

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الخلاصة : يتناول البحث تقييم عملية مايسمى بـ "إعادة بناء الدولة" العراقية في أعقاب الغزو والاحتلال الأمريكي للعراق لعام 2003 والتي كانت في الحقيقة عملية تفكيك للدولة والمجتمع العراقي على السواء؛ فعلى صعيد الدولة عملت على حل مؤسساتها وأجهزتها الأمنية وأسست لسلطة ضعيفة قائمة على أساس المحاصصة الطائفية العرقية وكرسته في دستور جمهورية العراق لعام 2005 لينزلق البلد في أتون فوضى شاملة. أما على صعيد المجتمع فقد عملت سياسات الاحتلال الأمريكي على تكريس خطوط الصدع الطائفية- العرقية والتي أتاحت الفرصة لظهور الفواعل اللادولتية التي تنافس الدولة في سلطتها وشرعيتها، الأمر الذي أشكل العلاقة بين الدولة والمجتمع من جهة وعلاقة المكونات المجتمعية مع بعضها الآخر من جهة أخرى.

الكلمات المفتاحية :

- الاحتلال الأمريكي
- الدولة القومية
- الهويات العرقية والطائفية
- الدستور العراقي لعام 2005
- الفاعلون من غير الدول

Introduction

The US invasion of Iraq of 2003 has represented a decisive stage in modern Iraq history, since it put Iraq's "nation-state" entity at a dangerous crossroads. Rather than relying on already existing institution in rebuilding State in Iraq, the US imperialism deconstructed the foundations of "nation-state", which have been established since early 1920s by serious of decisions including dissolution of Military and security institutions, and imposing the radical economic shock therapy. This explains why U.S. occupation did not looked more like those of Japan and Germany after World War II.

The process of rebuilding New Iraqi state was faulty, as well as it indicated the US decision maker's lack of knowledge to realities on the ground. They treated with Iraqi society through Ethno-Sectarian lens. Consequently, they sought, in foundational stage, to institutionalize the Ethno-Sectarian Identities, as demonstrated in Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) 2004 and establishing Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) 2004. This formula became as a guide to draft of new constitution of 2005, which enumerated many articles that enhance Ethno-Sectarian formula. As a result, three years later, the Iraqi government, sponsored By U.S occupation, riddled with visible corruption, despised by its public, and tied to sectarian warfare, had lost the brightness of democracy.

In the light of dystrophy of National Identity, the Ethnic and sects communities sought to invent symbols to carve out its own Identity, and they have tried to look for historical differences to support its sectarian narratives in the context of its struggle with other groups in society. This lead to enable Non-State Actors to play prominent role in Iraqi politics to fill the vacuum left by weakness of institution, and as Iraqi communities have transnational ethno-sectarian connection, these Non-State Actors sought to get support from regional and international actors, which found Iraq viable battleground to settling accounts. This lead deep cleavages, civil conflict, and social unrest.

Hypothesis

U.S occupation administration actions in Iraq after 2003 deconstructed the foundations of the state and divided Iraqi society according ethno-sectarian lines.

Problematic

Instead of building viable state and a new democracy, U.S occupation produced weak and failed state and deconstructed Iraqi society. Coherence with that, the paper seeks to explore how American Imperialism deconstructed Iraq's Nation-state in the context of rebuilding post-colonial state process? How the new state organized on ethno-sectarian divisions? And What are the consequences of that on Iraqi state and society?.

Methodology

In order to address the deconstruction process to Iraq's state and society adopted by U.S occupation, I used a mixed method research based on system approach as a major approach, with historical and comparative approaches.

Structure of Study:

Our research divided into three parts, the first one deals with the process deconstruction Iraq's state and society after 2003 invasion, while the second concern with highlighting rebuilding of New Iraqi state by U.S occupation and how established it on ethno-sectarian identities, finally, the third Section explore the consequences of U.S policy on State-Society relations.

1. Background

When US-British armies invaded Iraq on March 2003, the totalitarian regime collapsed within three weeks, creating terrible security vacuum and a shattered society. The plans of imperialists, before the war, focused on, establishing a

democratic system based on a market economy, this plan was derived from its experience in Japan and Nazi Germany after World War II. The details of the plan for governing Iraq can be summarized as a follow:

1. Establishing direct military Rule.
2. Transition to a civilian administration controlled by US-led coalition.
3. Establishing of a transitional government.
4. All must be done within a period of 4 to 5 years.

The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was established on June 1 by: "UN Security council Resolution 1483, on May 22, 2003". After that inaugurated direct US rule, Which exacerbate the already exist Ethno-Sectarian fault line. Although the American imperialism did not invent these lines, they contributed to provide a favorable environment for their aggravation.

1-1: Deconstruction Of The State Institutions

Unlike British colonialism in early 1920s, the American counterparts embarked on a comprehensive deconstruction of remaining state institutions, in particular the decision of dissolution of military institution, rather than reform it .Accordingly the deconstruction of Iraq, in awake of U.S. invasion in March 2003, had been Implemented through three of action taking by Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), administrated by Ambassador Paul L. Bremer, Order 1 and 2 May 2003 Including and Dissolution of the military and security services, De-Baathification, and radical economic shock therapy.

1-2: Disbanding of Iraqi Army and Security Services And De-Baathification

Disbanding of Iraqi Army represents one of the most prominent aspects in deconstruction of Iraqi Nation-State is disbanding military and security services,

which left 500,000 well-trained (and well-armed) youngsters jobless and bitterest. De-Baathification[1] fired 85,000 official from the government[2]. The U.S. occupation had nothing to offer former Iraqi soldiers and (particularly) officers, who had once enjoyed privileged positions in their society. By abruptly disbanding the military and security services, the U.S occupation turned as many as 1000,000 Iraqi men lose their job with no money, no way of aid their families, and no skills other than how to use a gun. Unsurprisingly, many of officers, rank-and-file, and other operatives in other security services, were quickly recruited by insurgency, militias, and organized crimes [3].

In the other hand, U.S. occupation did not compensate sever deficiency in the security forces by troops from occupation forces[4]. As Tobby Dodge Arguing " For the US occupation troop numbers were one of the central problems initially fuelling the security vacuum that came to dominate the country. A technocratic study on state-building published just after the invasion concluded that occupying forces would need 20 security personnel (both police and troops) per thousand people. It estimated that coalition forces should have had between 400000 and 500000 soldiers to impose order on Iraq. Even this figure compares unfavorably with the estimated 43 per 1000 that sustained Saddam in power. Instead, the USA had 116000 soldiers in Iraq during the invasion, with 310000 personnel in the theatre as a whole. At the peak of post-war deployment, following the elections of January 2005, they had 155000 troops on the ground. These figures demonstrate the size of the resource gap faced by the occupation as it struggled and then failed to impose order on the country"[5]. This leads to insurgency and

wave of violence. Between 2003 and 2006, 601,000 more people passed away in Iraq as a consequence of violence – that is, bombed, burned, stabbed, shot and tortured to death[6].

1-3: Radical Economic Restructure

The third, most important and often overlooked, aspect of U.S. imperial's deconstruction to Iraqi nation-state, was neoliberal economic restructuring "known as a shock thereby" [7],which based on introduction a series of free-market oriented remedy, thorough, privatizing state-owned corporation; deconstructing the state sector; and removing a large network of subsidies of state for food, oil, and other goods[8]. So, the vast majority of state-owned companies were shuttered (with the oil sector the notable exception).[9] In one assessment, these procedures "limped the huge part of Iraq's non-oil economy, threw hundreds of thousands of workers into the streets [10].

2. Rebuilding New Iraqi State: Institutionalizing/ Politicizing Ethno-Sectarian Identities

After the deconstruction of foundations of Iraqi state (military and security services, governmental institutions, and economy), the American Imperialism sought to embed ethno-sectarianism in new Iraqi state through:

2-1: Iraqi Governing Council IGC (12July 2003 -30/June /2004)

The formation of IGC July 2003 according the order issued by Paul Bremer –the Administrator of Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)[11], considered one of the earliest signs to divide Iraqi society on ethno-sectarian basis and laid the

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foundation for many of Iraq's current political woes[12]. Although the IGC did not have real powers, but the membership in this council have profound symbolism, since it organized on Ethno-Sectarian affiliation. IGC (as shown in table 1) consists of 25 members; they represent all Iraqi communities (Shitte-Sunni-Kurd) according to numerical proportion close to its population weight. Accordingly, the Shiite members 13, Equivalent to ratio 52%, Sunni members 5 equivalent to ratio 20 %, and the Kurd 5%, equivalent to ratio 20%, and one member per minority, Christian and Turkmen equivalent to ratio 4%.

Structure of Iraqi IGC of 2004

Community	Number	Proportion from Iraq population
Shiite	13	52%
Sunni	5	20%
Kurds	5	20%
Christian	1	4%
Turkmen	1	4%

The essentials of a great many of Iraq's problems lay in this configuration. The IGC set the method for subsequent Iraqi governments[13].

2-2: Transitional Administrative law (TAL) March 8, 2004-October 15, 2005.

The Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period represent as a provisional constitution , drafted by U.S Occupation and signed by IGC on March 8, 2004. TAl Included many of Articles which adopted openly ethno-sectarian formula. These articles can be summarized as a follow :

Article 2/B/1: stipulates on "the formation of a fully a fully sovereign Iraqi Interim Government that takes power on 30 June 2004" "with a process of extensive deliberations and consultations with cross-sections of the Iraqi people[14]"

Article 3 which enumerated that "No amendment to this Law may be made except by a three-fourths majority of the members of the National Assembly and the unanimous approval of the Presidency Council". That mean any community cannot amend the Law without of the consent of three major communities (Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds).

Article 61/C: "The general referendum will be successful and the draft constitution ratified if a majority of the voters in Iraq approve and if 2/3 of the voters in three or more governorates do not reject it"[15].

2-3: Iraqi Constitution Of 2005

The IGC and TAL became the foundation of the later constitution, the later, in turn, transfer some of these problems[16].Consequently, Iraqi constitution of 2005 represent another most serious aspect of deconstruction Iraq's Nation-State. Follow are main Articles that implies ethno-sectarian formula:

2-3-1: Composition of Armed Forces and Security Services

Article 9/ first/ A. provide that (the Iraqi Armed Forces and Security Services will be composed of the components of the Iraqi people with due consideration given to its balance and its similarity without discrimination or exclusion)[17].

Thus, the ethno-sectarian formula became the cornerstones of selection of high ranks officers in military institution[18] Quotas or power sharing henceforth determined the appointment of every post in the armed forces and other security services, goes against to the meritocratic principles necessary to an effective military [19] ,and this lead to dangerous consequences on the performance, professionalism of these services. Also, this Article weakens the values of patriotism, and it has dangerous effects on homogeneity of Iraqi society, at the same time it promote to wane the fighting spirit and military discipline in confronting potential threats, since the military institution must be far from minor loyalties and must be professional and neutral.

2-3-2: The Flag, National Anthem

Article (12) / First: (The flag, national anthem, and emblem of Iraq shall be fixed by law in a way that represents the components of the Iraqi people).[20] This indicates the weakness of national Identity, since this article suggest that the Iraqi people did not agree on a unified symbol represent them.

2-3-3: The Amendment Of Constitution

The mechanism of constitutional amendment also based on ethno-sectarian base since the constitution will not be amended unless approved by: A majority of voters and is not rejected by a two-thirds majority in three or more

governorates. (Article 142/ forth) [21].That means any major ethno-sectarian community have the veto power on any amendment. It worth noting that the origin of this mechanism enumerated in TAL.

2-3-4:Federalism

Although that Article 4 from TAL stipulated that "The federal system shall be based upon geographic and historical realities and the separation of powers, and not upon origin, race, ethnicity, nationality, or confession[22]", the federalism in Iraq organized on ethno-sectarian formula, like the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Moreover, the Article 110 enumerated the powers of federal government and leave the rest to regions and the governorates that are not organized in a region. That left the federal government with limited powers, as well as its give rise to many of disputes between federal government and KRG (like managing natural resourced, internally disputes areas IDPs, and Regional armed forces), which soon followed ethnic nature.

Consequently, the federal government, under the Iraqi constitution of 2005, has no authority to tax in regions if the latter object, no clear power to demobilized militias, and no exclusive authority to regulate Iraq's hydrocarbonic sector. Security forces in Kurdistan region are explicitly recognized (apparently enabling the KRG to retain the Peshmerga) at the expense of national military authority in the north. the regional law have the supremacy on Iraqi Federal government law if there are any inconsistencies between the two. Also (unusual for a parliamentary democracy), the premier cannot dismiss cabinet without the

approval of the parliament. Arguably, "Iraq's federal government, on paper and in reality, is possibly the weakest of any federal model in the world".[23]

Furthermore, secessionism also becomes more functional with Iraqi federalism. Since, the growth of minor identities minimize the national unity sense, diminishing the relationships between the regions and the governorates that are not organized in regions. Moreover, because the state is weak, groups easier to profess arms successfully and challenge the state. However, In Iraq the KRG see federalism as a tool to secure their racial rights and want Kurdish-populated areas to be under KRG control[24].

3. Consequences On State – Society Relations

3-1: The Politicizing Ethno-Sectarian Identities

The Elections weather in the constituent election January 31, 2005 (to draft new constitution) or National election of December 2005.(to elect first Iraqi parliament according to new constitution of 2005), witnessed active pursued by political parties, to politicizing ethno-sectarian identities in order to obtain larger share in power and resources. The minor identities (ethnic-sectarian- religious) became as a tool of mass mobilization.

The main reason behind ethno-sectarian mobilization lies in the electoral system closed list proportional representation (PR) •, imposed by Coalition Provisional Authority administrator L. Paul Bremer on June 15, 2004, since, according to this system, the candidates are not tied to a specific district, but rather to a party list. Instead of being responsible to a town's voters, representatives will be loyal

to party leaders[25]. While the other candidates have no chance to win, Iraqi voters obliged to vote along with their ethnic, sectarian, and tribal affiliation which lead to dominant of ethno-sectarian political parties on Iraqi political landscape as well as enhance cleavages within society.

Consequently, this lead to that the numerically larger ethnic-sectarian groups used elections and other legitimate democratic procedures to ensure its ascendancy. Liberal democracy depend on the expectation of an constantly changing majority to avoid such tyranny. Different coalitions of individuals, united tentatively on the grounds of common political purposes, economic benefit, social interests, and other factors, ensuring that all demands are eventually meted—or at least have the potential to be meet. "Majority rule works when the majority changes from election to election", as it does repeatedly in the modern democracies like united states and western countries. however, In Iraq, voting alliance are more static, and majorities are less likely to change. The largest ethno-sectarian group -according to electoral system - never lose power, because ethno-sectarian group communities often vote as a bloc. Consequently, Iraq democracy, under these circumstances, lead to "illiberal outcome".[26] In other word lead to democracy without democrats.

3-2: Militarization of Ethno-Sectarian Identities

Although the occupation administration poured, for six years after invasion of 2003, “extensive blood and treasure” into training and equipping new military and security forces, [27]but the recruitment of these forces based on ethno-sectarian formula through Amalgamation of militias into nascent security services. The US

occupation sought to amalgamation of ex-combatants of past military institution and militias formed by exiled political parties[28]. For example, the "36th Battalion of the National Guard" became the major prominent force of the Iraqi security institutions. However, this section of the Guard had been heavily recruited from the militias which belong to ethno-sectarian political parties of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the Kurdish Democratic Party(KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan(PUK) [29]. Not surprisingly, that leaders and members of ethno-sectarian militias, for many years after U.S invasion of 2003, were able to permeate state institutions by their membership in political parties, remove the line between state and non-state actors[30]. The speed of this mobilization and deployment promotes the issue of the loyalty of these forces. Through recruiting heavily from political parties which organized along ethno-sectarian basis this raises the danger of incorporation of a divisive ethno-politics into the nascent armed forces[31].

Conclusion

American imperialism produced, dysfunctional, failed state with a hybrid regime, characterized with supremacy of minor identities (ethnic, sectarian, tribal, religious) at the expense of National (comprehensive) Identity. The non-state actor play vital role in shaping it policies and the political competition among elite turned to identity conflict, since the line between state and non-state actors have been blurred. The societal groups from its part sough to take refuge with its own identity as long as the Iraqi state did not the legitimate coercion in society, as Max Weber suggest.

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