

The Role of Formal and Informal Iraqi Institutions in Consolidating the Values of Democracy Post 2003

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The basis of democracy is the belief in its principles and values as one package without compromising one principle or value at the expense of another. It is not enough to present it ready without taking into account the possibility of implementing it or not. Any society cannot be considered democratic and exercises citizenship rights on the ground unless its educational institutions and political parties are capable of preparing real citizens. As far as educational institutions are concerned, they should depend on a philosophy that frames the relationship between the teacher and the learner and the method of applying and practicing it. Therefore, education in Iraq should be based on new and modern foundations that emulate the requirements of the current era. As for political parties in Iraq, indeed the change that Iraq witnessed in 2003 and the resulting entitlements for the new era, the democratic transformation requires the presence of effective informal political institutions and an enlightened public opinion that can contribute to revitalizing the new political environment.

Key words: Democracy, Democratic transformation, educational institutions, political parties.

إن أساس الديمقراطية هو الإيمان بمبادئها وقيمتها كحزمة واحدة من دون المساس بمبدأ أو قيمة على حساب أخرى. ولا يكفي أن تقدم الديمقراطية جاهزة من دون الأخذ بعين الإعتبار إمكانية تطبيقها من عدمه. ولا يمكن اعتبار أي مجتمع ديمقراطياً ويمارس حقوقه على أرض الواقع إلا إذا كانت مؤسساته التعليمية وأحزابه السياسية قادرة على إعداد مواطنين حقيقيين. إذ يتوجب على المؤسسات التعليمية أن تعتمد على فلسفة تحدد العلاقة بين المعلم والمتعلم وطريقة تطبيقها وممارستها. لذلك، ينبغي أن يركز التعليم في العراق على أسس جديدة وحديثة تحاكي متطلبات المرحلة الحالية. أما بالنسبة للمؤسسات السياسية غير الرسمية في العراق، وبفعل التغيير الذي حدث في عام 2003 وما نتج عنه من استحقاقات للمرحلة الجديدة، فإن التحول الديمقراطي يتطلب وجود أحزاب سياسية فاعلة تهيئ لرأي عام ومجتمع مستنير قادر على المساهمة في تنشيط البيئة السياسية الجديدة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الديمقراطية، التحول الديمقراطي، المؤسسات التعليمية، الأحزاب السياسية.

Introduction

Among the peoples of the world, the Iraqis were destined to have democracy exported to them and imposed on them by the force of arms. Twice apart in time, Iraqis were able to smell the fragrance of freedom, but without touching its flower with the touch of a hand. Among the peoples of the world who struggled for a long time to reap their political rights, the Iraqis were able to reap the package of their political rights without difficulty. But in both times, Iraqis face the same problem: democracy without democrats.

On the morning of April 9, 2003, Iraq witnessed a radical political change that caused the fall of the previous political regime and the disintegration of its structure and institutions, which resulted in the emergence of cases of security and moral chaos, some of which were latent and hidden as a result of previous policies and circumstances, some of which were wrong, and the other part were fueled and imposed by some external regional and international factors. Most of the emerged cases were not common in the culture of Iraqi society, such as revenge and settling personal disputes outside legal frameworks, followed by kidnapping, murder, and organized displacement on the basis of identity, and then terrorism in its ugliest forms, and other reprehensible and unacceptable methods of violence. Because of this, there has become an urgent need for upbringing on the basic values and principles that regulate human relations among members of the society on the basis of tolerance and respect for others.

The basis of democracy is the belief in its principles and values as one package without compromising one principle at the expense of another or one value at the expense of another. It is not enough to present it ready without taking into account the possibility of implementing it or not. The experiences of peoples throughout the development of its historical path confirm that the strength and vitality of democracy is derived from the strength and effectiveness of their formal and informal institutions, including educational institutions, political parties, as well as other civil society institutions. Without that, democracy will lack the elements of its

continuity because it shall be faked and serves the interests of beneficiary societal groups.

Importance of the Study:

Democracy is everyone's responsibility. It is not enough to enforce it in a society without creating a suitable political ground that can accommodate its principles and mechanisms. It is not enough to have a democratic constitution and political system that operates according to the mechanism of separation or cooperation of powers and peaceful transfer of power, and at the same time ignoring the role of other main institutions in leading the process of consolidating the values of democracy in a given society.

Hence the importance of educational institutions '*formal institutions*' at their various stages and the political parties '*informal institutions*' as the arenas through which work is carried out to consolidate the values of democracy and democratic behavior in which the citizen will rely on in his practices and dealings with the society that surrounds him.

Research Hypothesis:

The Iraqi political scene post April 9, 2003 witnessed dramatic changes. There was a change in educational curricula at all levels, on the one hand; and on the other hand, the political scene was filled with many political parties, movements, and voluntary organizations in a remarkable way. But most of them remained carrying within them and in their depths many of the previous residues and features of traditional societal institutions, which was reflected on their practices and organizational structures on both the social and political scenes.

Research Methodology:

In dealing with the research topic, the researcher relied on the structural-functional approach.

Research Structure:

Through this research, the researcher seeks to diagnose the problem with democracy in Iraq by highlighting the role of formal and informal institutions in leading the transition towards democracy.

In order to cover the topic, the researcher has divided it into four sections. The first section dealt with a conceptual framework for the meaning of democracy and democratic transformation. The second section dealt with the role of educational institutions, while the third section dealt with the role of political parties in the process of consolidating democratic values. The fourth section dealt with the reality of educational and political party institutions in Iraq post 2003. Finally, the researcher concluded with discussing what resulted from the formal and informal institutions in building a democratic society in Iraq.

I. Democracy and Democratic Transformation

1. Definition of democracy

There are many definitions that deal with the term '*democracy*', and perhaps we are not exaggerating in saying that this term has the largest share among the vocabulary of political science that writers, researchers, and scholars in general have dealt with research and scrutiny. Therefore, every definition presented for democracy is seen by the person looking at it. As a result, democracy was aligned and classified on the basis of the ideology of the political spectrum, based on meanings and contents derived from the ideological premises of its observers¹.

The difference in outlook on democracy generated intellectual and ideological differences, and this was most clearly reflected in its applications. There are many political parties that claim that they are more deserving of the status of democracy. Indeed, there are political systems that call themselves democratic while their practices are not devoid of tyranny and waste of human rights and freedoms. There are countries that have added the word democracy to their official name, but they are far from it in form and content.

There is no doubt that the absence of a comprehensive, agreed-upon concept of democracy does not mean that we are facing a real problem. The concept is not a ready-made theory, as much as it is a living construct and a tool that changes according to the change in reality. Therefore, it is not our intention to review what has been previously considered of democracy and the definitions formulated for it, but rather we will start from where democracy began to take its globally and humanly agreed upon form since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of its system. In order to be on the safe side, the best method lies in adopting the simplest acceptance of the concept, provided that it does not violate the essence of democracy and its true content, which is based on respect for the other opinion and recognition of the right to disagree.

On this basis, our democracy, as it appears at the present time, is *a method of governance based on respecting the principles of freedom and equality and employing them within the framework of a constitutionally enshrined relationship between the rulers and the ruled that regulates peaceful competition for power*. Which means that democracy is a way of life that regulates the relationship between the two parties, the rulers and the ruled, on the one hand, and the ruled among themselves, on the other hand. It is democracy that can only be achieved with the consent of all concerned parties. One of its most prominent conditions is that all societal forces and parties participating in it adhere to the conditions of the political process that resulted from it, whether with the authority or among themselves. The rulers, for their part, must commit to not using democracy as a means to gain power and then monopolize it in any way.

Democracy is a shared responsibility, and should not only mean the right of the opposition to criticize the authority and undermine its prestige. Likewise, democracy should not be reduced to the exercise of the right to vote. Rather, it must be viewed as the optimal method that achieves general political consensus that expresses the opinion of the majority, and at the same time respecting the opinion of the minority produced by the electoral counting².

2. Meaning of democratic transformation

The term '*Transformation*' is the transition from one state to another as a result of interaction among groups of different elements under multiple atmospheres and conditions that constitute inputs to reach a new state that did not exist in the first place³.

The transition to democracy means: a process of rebuilding both society and the state to achieve general acceptance and satisfaction of citizens with the political system and its new institutions⁴.

Democratic transformation is a conscious and voluntary process that requires immediate individual sacrifices in order to achieve immediate and future collective gains for all components of the society concerned. Therefore, it must be agreed upon in principle between those who address the transformation process and the groups that seek transformation and want it to occur. It is a gradual process that begins when a general feeling prevails among members of the concerned society, regardless of their origins, ethnic, sectarian, or ideological affiliations, of the urgent need for compromise solutions provided by democratic application. In this description, it means establishing a new era and removing all the undesirable aspects that prevailed during the previous era. It requires dismantling the previous structures and foundations and adopting an intellectual and value program in which the channels of change are open to all political forces to participate in the democratic process without marginalizing or excluding any party at the expense of another.

This is what prompts us to say that the process of transition to adopting the democratic approach to managing power depends on the availability of profound basic conditions without which there is no chance to assume the possibility of the transition occurring.

The most prominent of these conditions is the establishment of a new political culture among the leaders of the transition that allows for building a new awareness of the political field and power relations within society, by which we mean the '*culture of democratic transition*'.

The culture of democratic transition expresses itself in two basic points⁵: *First*, making the process of struggle for power a peaceful social competition that takes the principles of harmony and consent as the basis for political competition between political forces. Thus, you have liberated the concept of politics from its brutal meaning that identifies it with war, or that view that depicts the contradiction between interests - which is the basis of all... Political action - a justification for practicing violence and annihilation in defense of interest in order to restore the concept to its normal state, which describes politics as clean civil competition that seeks to obtain rights and manage the balance between interests in a peaceful manner.

Second, it is what gives the culture of transition the character of novelty, in that it surrounds the instinct of exclusivity and monopoly in politics with the duties of taking into account and recognizing the interests of other parties in the political process, and making some objective concessions when necessary.

The basic value around which the culture of democratic transition revolves is acceptance of others and recognition of their interests. Therefore, it assumes a strategy for transition in which relativism in political consciousness replaces totalitarian conflict, and consensus, compromise, contracting, and mutual concessions replace the rules of tyranny, monopoly, and abolition... which opens the political space for natural participation. To the community, and with it the authority is opened to the management of peaceful circulation over it.

II. The Educational Institutions in Consolidating Democratic Values.

Preparing a good citizen represents one of the most important main goals of education, and the importance of this goal increases in light of the technological revolution and the resulting revolution in communications and the rapid transmission of information that the world is witnessing, as well as the multifaceted cultural openness and purposes to which the individual is exposed, and an education

institute is the means of society to prepare its citizens to ensure their belonging to it, preserving its identity, developing it, and providing them with the values and skills necessary to cooperate with others and actively participate in making decisions and solving problems, provided that this preparation takes place in light of the students' knowledge of their rights and duties⁶.

Therefore, educational institution can be expressed as the vessel in which all processes and activities take place that include generating information, extracting knowledge, using and transferring it, as well as developing abilities and skills, including those that constitute a healthy personality. Indeed, the role of higher education may reach its highest level in building a personality that interacts with the environment in which it lives.

The concept of socialization has been used in the human sciences to denote the processes through which an individual acquires the knowledge, skill, and capabilities that make him, in general, a member capable of exercising an appropriate role in society. The term '*socialization*' or social normalization (anthropology), psychology, and sociology has been known since the 1930s to describe The processes by which an individual becomes an effective member of a society. The view on this science differs from one scientist to another, as anthropologists focus on the transmission of cultures, those who are concerned with the theory of personality focus on man's control of his impulses, and those in sociology focus on learning his roles. In general, what concerns us with socialization in general is: *the process through which individuals acquire knowledge, skills, and capabilities that make them generally capable in their society.*

The matter becomes more accurate when socialization is linked to politics. In this case, the individual's awareness is loaded with the political perceptions he needs about the political system and what helps him in taking reactions to the political phenomenon. This requires training the individual to be aware of what surrounds him in the social, cultural and economic environment and the impact of this on his political positions and values.

In other words, political upbringing represents the political dimension of socialization and is therefore the basis for building the individual's personality in the political field and training him to carry out the political roles that he assumes as a citizen with rights and duties towards society and the political system.

Researchers summarized the goals of political socialization as follows⁷:

1. Loyalty, belonging, and conscious, deep, and unshakable pride in the nation, its thought, heritage, ideals, and values.
2. Loyalty, belonging, and pride in the homeland, its land, its people, and its system.
3. Respect the state's constitution and adhere to its laws and regulations.
4. Commitment to the principles of democratic freedom and social justice.
5. Freedom from intolerance and bias in all its sectarian, denominational, ethnic and regional forms.
6. Belief in human brotherhood based on truth, justice and equality.
7. Belief in the scientific method as a means of addressing human issues and political society at the national level.
8. Belief in equality between men and women.
9. Belief in equality among members of society, regardless of their sub-affiliations.
10. The appropriate political culture that enables the citizen to play an effective and influential political role.

III. Political Parties and Consolidating Democratic Values

Political parties are the institutions in which citizens are trained to exercise their rights and perform their duties in a democratic

manner. Therefore, it is concerned more than any other private institutions in practicing democracy within its organizational structures and in its relationships among them, because in the end it bears a major responsibility in spreading democracy in the life of society in general. This means that these institutions cannot be effective and influential in their surroundings unless they are framed by a cultural framework that helps consolidate the values and principles of democratic practices⁸.

Based on the above, political parties and non-governmental organizations in general all contribute an effective role in the process of democratic transformation through the political skills that members acquire, receiving a political culture commensurate with the requirements of the democratic situation, and practicing social and political work methods, such as nominating candidates for elections, engaging in electoral campaigns, voting, monitoring leaders, and holding them accountable. And the use of enticement and persuasion mechanisms⁹. Therefore, it is not possible for political parties to be active simply because of the existence of organizational structures, as these structures have no value unless they are supported by a suitable political culture that stresses the need for public authorities to adhere to certain limits in their dealings with citizens, whether individuals or groups, and not limit the matter to mere knowledge of these rights. Rather, knowledge is associated with adherence to moral values and patterns of behavior consistent with them. This group of elements has become known as the “*participation political culture*” which is based on equality, fairness, acceptance of other opinions, and willingness to participate and at the same time getting prepared for defeat without being accompanied by a feeling of humiliation.

This type of culture does not coincide with traditional culture, which glorifies inherited customs, traditions, and customs, and glorifies the authority of adults, whether in age or in position, to provide constructive criticism or accountability. It is undoubtedly a traditional culture, and therefore it is undemocratic because it is based on patriarchal authority, which fosters a spirit of subservience, compliance, and obedience. The head of the family,

the employer, the party official, the tribal sheikh, and the religious leader are all examples of patriarchal authority in traditional culture, and each of these in Eastern society must not be criticized or questioned by those under his authority. The basis of this line of culture is the perpetuation of values of reverence, awe, and fear of those who are greater or of higher status.

But we must always remember that democratic culture is not legislated or formulated in laws, but rather is obtained and consolidated as a result of gradual accumulation through the example represented by the conscious elite, especially those who stand up to the leadership of the democratic transformation represented by the political parties and training on the part of citizens, resulting in the democratic person who is able To express his opinion and at the same time be open to accepting the opinions of others out of respect for their personalities and appreciation for their efforts, and to seek help in rejecting their opinions through dialogue that deepens mutual respect and does not lead to discord, disagreement or conflict¹⁰.

IV. The Reality of Educational Institution and Political Parties in Iraq Post 2003

1. The reality of Educational Institutions in Iraq

Iraq witnessed a sharp historical turn after April 9, 2003, which led to the educational institution taking on a new role consistent with the requirements of the new political system. The educational curricula that dominated throughout the previous era were replaced, and study subjects that were concerned with political recruitment and mobilization in favor of the previous political regime were abolished, and they were replaced by new curricula that simulated the new regime. But there is an important question that must be raised: Do educational institutions in Iraq today really exercise their role in instilling and consecrating the values of citizenship, democracy, and civic culture and working to strengthen them in the souls of successive generations of students? Or is it still facing social constraints that prevent it from exercising this role and push

it towards continuing to promote traditional practices and values that are still largely prevalent in society? In other words, has the educational institution in the new Iraq begun to play an active and renewed role in the level of citizenship values at the school and university level? Or is it still operating under the influence of prevailing social values? An institution that produces and reproduces existing traditional social values, practices, and activities?

At the school level, we find that it is still working according to a curriculum that dedicates the relationship of power to the patriarchal system, which is based on social control instead of devoting the freedom resulting from knowledge, and to generating compliance and obedience instead of cultivating the spirit of creative, constructive rebellion. The school still relies on the indoctrination method. This method is very close to the process of brainwashing, due to the repetitive method that it involves, which relies mainly on stuffing the heads with a dense, heavy substance that is forcibly implanted in the students' memory stores, as a "revealed" or "sacred" substance that is not subject to discussion. They are required to memorize and recall it without objection, and the successful person is the one who is able to store in his memory the greatest amount of information. The important thing is not whether he understood it, assimilated it, or believed in it, but what is important is that he remembered it at the time of the exam in the manner in which the storage process was completed.

The danger of not giving the student the intellectual means to discuss, express opinions, and make him understand that his role is limited to comply with what is written, and accept what is taught without objection, questioning, or discussion, undoubtedly develops in him from the early stages of his life an acceptance of matters without developing within him the ability to criticism and analysis. His energy of creativity shall blow out, and the spirit of submission and acceptance of the status quo shall prevail. Or, as one researcher described it, *'the culture of silence'*. It does not respect the learner's subjectivity and independence, but rather places him on the sidelines, adhering to silence. He is often intimidated, avoids

questions, stays away from dialogue or discussion, and is satisfied with agreeing to everything presented to him without analysis, interpretation, or criticism¹¹.

In general, the traditional approach, or the '*culture of silence*' that is promoted in school, encourages students to accept the situation as it is, that is, raising '*adapters*' who accepts everything that is presented to him, because he does not have the mechanisms for expression, rejection or disagreement or criticism or analysis.

At the university level, the university value system still interacts with the values of the prevailing social system. This means the continued existence of a state of dynamic interaction between the university life system and its external environment, including its values, standards, behavioral patterns, and life aspects, which are rooted in the framework of social life. Students enrolled at the university, not to mention some of its professors, are usually burdened at the bottom of their sociological formation with the system of prevailing social values, and they practice patterns of behavior that are largely based on their formation, which is saturated with those values, many of which conflict with the supposed university values, which are values built on scientific foundations. It tends to promote a type of awareness and values that differ in many aspects and practices from those that prevail within the framework of traditional social life.

Moreover, the list of prohibitions in scientific research still exist since it was put during the past regime. It is still doing its reprehensible act in drawing boundaries for research thinking that researchers do not cross so as not to create a conflict between the internal environment of the university and the external environment, represented by the institutions of the official political system on the one hand, and the customs of the social body on the other hand. There is no doubt that the strictness in harassing the researcher and besieging him with lists of prohibited topics and ideas waste many opportunities for progress, and causes thought and civilization a loss that is difficult to recover.

Perhaps the nature of the historical moment that we are living in today imposes the necessity for the university to have a role and goals different from those that were in the previous regime. The process of political formation that the university should adopt in the new Iraq should stem from the concepts and topics of the new democratic system. What is meant by this is that the educational process becomes a means of forming a free, critical mentality capable of exercising its rights, possessing self-confidence, and capable of interacting with others with an open and tolerant mentality. With the diversity and difference of visions and the wide range of topics in Iraqi society, the national priority is comprehensive in analyzing pluralism and its sectional commonalities in the context of national integration, which requires Iraqi academics to work to devote pluralism not on the basis of it being an idea that leads to fragmentation of society based on its fragmented sub-affiliations of national unity, but as a fact that contributes to supporting social construction, which requires work to activate the goal of '*unity in diversity*'. In the same context, the matter in the new Iraq requires that all educational institutions strive to spread a culture of participation that honors the values of pluralism, political participation, and human rights, and to disseminate this to society as a whole, since these institutions, especially the university, are the largest field for spreading this type of political culture.

Focusing attention on the set of rights and duties within the university campus can be a means of liberating the mind of the Iraqi person from control, and a means of deepening the concepts of intellectual and ideological tolerance and respect for others. A means to develop his energies, rid his mind of illusions, sharpen his thinking towards the problems surrounding him, and then develop his awareness of the rights of his people and his role in participating and bearing responsibility.

However, paying attention to the above in its theoretical aspect is not enough, as it is inevitable that the democratic behavior of the faculty member must be present, which includes his theoretical awareness of the values of freedom, equality, and justice, and at the

same time the skill of practicing those values, whether outside or inside the lecture halls. The democratic behavior of the teaching staff in both cases is not separated from doing his job, which he must perform, combined with respect for the recipient's mind and personality, in order to achieve the desired degree of interaction between the two parties within the framework of a controlled, dynamic movement.

2. The reality of political parties in Iraq

The institutions of the democratic flash that Iraq witnessed during the monarchy era were absent, and as a result political participation was absent after successive Iraqi political regimes since the 1958 coup which monopolized the space for voluntary institutions in general, paving the way for the emergence of successive totalitarian regimes centered around the so called '*The Sole Leader*' or the '*Necessary Leader*', thus changing the course of the process towards the approach of political mobilization in favor of the ruling authority and leaving the approach of participation based on competition. The authority has become use its absolute control to penetrate into all aspects of society in order to serve the interests of the ruling class, and not in order to maximize public interests, and it has begun to classify any movement against it as political opposition or rebellion that rejects the authority of the state, or a direct threat to the existence of the regime. This prompted it to become more self-reliant and develop its own military forces, and then allocate the largest portion of the state's resources not to provide for the needs of society, but to maximize the means of besieging it intellectually and practically.

After the fall of the previous regime, the political arena witnessed a clear and a major rift due to several structural factors, sometimes objective and external (regional, international) at other times. The arena also witnessed the emergence of a large number of political parties taking advantage of the new political conditions, so the political arena was filled with many of these parties as well as political movements and organizations.

As for political parties, most of them do not have the status of a party if we rely on what is known in the literature of political science. Some of them are closer to short-term political groupings, others are characterized by a low degree of organization and representation, and organizations that resemble small fragile formations that are nothing more than a platform for a number of public or politicized figures. Furthermore, the bond that unites party members is not always conviction in common political principles, but rather it may be supportive of a relative or a traditionally influential figure, or enjoy the consent of foreign factor. Some of them appear as if they were merely family or sectarian gatherings or groups of limited people without a clear ideology. Others' behavior seemed to be approaching that of a dominant party, which seeks to monopolize power while keeping a margin for the movement of others, expanding or narrowing according to its proximity or distance from its orientations and convictions, but in any case it is a margin that is controlled by it.

These political parties came and spread while carrying within them many of the remnants and features of traditional societal institutions. Many of them were formed on the basis of sub-identities and not on the basis of the cultural description represented by citizenship, which created a severe internal crisis represented by the attempt to mix democratic culture with traditional culture. The democratic form of these institutions has become an expression of a civil culture, but the essence of the practice is an expression of a traditional culture, and therefore the crisis created by these parties in Iraq lies in adhering to the form while preserving the content and apparent respect for the rules and procedures while actually violating the spirit of democracy.

Based on the above, these institutions, despite the atmosphere of freedom that existed after the fall of the previous regime, have not yet succeeded in developing social forms or social relations capable of producing original structures alternative to traditional formations. Blood ties and religious, sectarian and national affiliation remained the basis for loyalties and alliances at the level of society and its civil institutions, and nothing is more evident than the re-emergence

of tribal society through the emphasis on narrow affiliations as a result of the weakness of national frameworks.

Conclusion

Twenty years after political change in Iraq, the need to investigate ways to achieve democratic transformation still exists. Any society cannot be considered democratic that believes and exercises citizenship rights on the ground unless its educational institutions and political parties are capable of preparing real citizens. As far as educational institutions are concerned, they should depend on a philosophy of relationship that frames the relationship between the teacher and the learner and the method of applying and practicing it. Authoritarian education produces individuals who are submissive or resentful, and permissive education may produce individuals who do not carry within them a sense of responsibility. Therefore, education in Iraq should be based on new, modern foundations that emulate the requirements of the current stage, which are based on: giving the recipient the meaning of cooperation and acceptance of the other and not denying him, belief in the relativity of knowledge, belief that the plurality of ideas, opinions and visions is necessary and inevitable for the continuation of life; Most importantly: there is no sanctity in science. Everything that is negative is subject to debate and discussion and is subject to analysis and scrutiny in order to determine the truth of matters.

In order for what was mentioned above to be achieved, this matter should not remain confined to the framework of wishes expressed in words that do not resonate with those concerned. Many countries of the world have witnessed amazing developments and mutations in all fields. It is not useful to keep up with patchwork methods or burning stages, as much as they need to develop the teaching profession, and the latter can only be achieved by developing those in charge of it to become a high degree of competence that enables them to create The desired change.

As for political parties in Iraq, indeed the change that Iraq witnessed in 2003 and the resulting entitlements for the new era, the

democratic transformation requires the presence of effective informal political institutions and an enlightened public opinion that can contribute to revitalizing the new political environment. However, the essence of the crisis of political parties is that these institutions do not have the sufficient ability that qualifies them to play their role in leading the democratic transformation. These institutions are either an extension of people who have settled in the ruling authority, or they are a shadow of foreign influence leaking from abroad. In any case, the contributions of these parties to political life are characterized by extreme weakness, as they were not founded to begin with according to the civilized description represented by citizenship. Rather, it was a reflection of the social rift that struck Iraqi society due to the American-British invasion, calling on their supporters to withdraw and entrench themselves within their narrow local communities, while at the same time reinforcing conservative tribal values and traditions that inherently contradict civil culture and the institutions of modern civil society.

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