

Introduction:

Britain and the Kurdish issue When the colonial interests controlled lives of a people

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When colonial interests rule the lives of a nation, Britain played a main role in the foundation of the modern Middle East, drawing its lines that later became the borders of those countries that are founded by Britain over rescuing the properties of the Ottoman Empire after the end of the First World War. Britain, the superpower that is not absent from the sun, was not enough to manipulate the destinies of the peoples of the region, starting with the Arab people in the Gulf and Egypt, as well as the Kurdish, Armenian and Assyrian peoples in Anatolia, ending with the division of these people among several countries. It created the well of national and religious conflicts so as to remain in the Middle East throughout the twentieth century and perhaps the next century.

It was Britain that fought Czarist Russia so as not to expand in the Middle East, fearing its possessions in India, as well as its unlimited colonial appetite. It fought Russia in the Crimean War of 1853-1855 and in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877, which were the most prominent colonial players at the conference in Berlin in July 1878. Besides, Britain and through the Sykes-Picot-Sazanov Convention in May 1916 and the Balfour Declaration of November 1917 then ripped the nations of the Middle East and found with its ally France as countries that came to light for the first time in history, these countries have become a burden on their people so far like Iraq and Syria.

But, at least, other people have found countries to live under their shadows, countries that express their national and religious identity, countries

that embraced their history and culture, such as Iran in which Britain has pledged not to compromise as a result of its positions in World War I, besides, Iraq, Jordan and most of the Gulf states, which were founded under British patronage despite the partition but they retained their Arab identity, Turkey, which imposed British recognition of its borders in Lausanne 1923, and despite the tragedies of the Armenians in World War I, at least, they reserved their national and religious identity in the region of Yerevan, on whose territory the Armenian state was founded.

There was an exception among these nations that is the Kurdish people, who, based on historical sources, are one of the oldest people to emerge in the Middle East. Kurds did not have an independent state that preserves their identity like the rest of the others in the region. Kurdistan was divided among four countries (Iran, Turkey, Iraq and Syria), and each of these countries defined the Kurds on their national identity adopted by these newly formed countries. The Kurds in Turkey are Turks, and in Iraq and Syria, Kurds are descendants of the Arab tribes and there is no doubt in their Arab origins! Iran has undoubted theories! The origin of the Kurds is Persian and Kurdish language is one of the Persian dialects.

Britain left the Kurds in Turkey, Iran and Syria at the mercy of their rulers, who did not hesitate to oppress them whenever they revolted against these racist governments. In Iraq, Britain took control of itself. It is the primary responsible for the creation of the modern Iraqi state. In addition, it is another responsibility of southern Kurdistan in Iraq, which was named in the historical sources later as an Iraqi Kurdistan, which guaranteed Baghdad to adapt the Kurds to recognize the new identity is the Iraqi identity created by Britain after the First World War. The one who launched the war against Sheikh Mahmoud AL-Hafeed between the years 1919-1931, Sheikh Ahmed Barzani 1931-1932, and Mullah Mustafa Barzani 1943-1945, was Britain, which without the air force that was the influential factor in striking these Kurdish movements. Baghdad could not beat them. These revolutions and Kurdish movements were rejecting the new identity - that is: Iraq - and demanding their Kurdish identity as well as land that is Kurdistan.

After 1958, following the July revolution that was led by Abdul Karim Qasim, everyone thought that British influence had receded in Iraq and Kurdistan, but in the entire region, after the Gulf countries gained their independence in 1971, and Britain handed over its military bases to United States in order to replace Britain in the face of the former Soviet Union, therefore, we see dozens or hundreds of studies and documents focused only on US policy towards Iraq, Kurdistan, the Gulf, Iran, etc., and the British policy is disappeared in the region or become marginal and can be treated as dealing with French policy in the region. Thus, Britain became such in the Kurdistan of Iraq, then, Kurds are dealing with America, plus, the best proof of this is the

revolution of September 1961-1975 led by Mullah Mustafa Barzani, which relied entirely on America, especially in the seventies of the last century.

But it seems that Britain has not completely withdrawn from the Middle East, specifically from Iraq and Kurdistan, and fixed to the threads of politics and economy however behind the scenes, what happened to the Kurds in Kirkuk on October 16, 2017, is the best proof. When the Iraqi army with Hashd Al-Shabi forces took control of Kirkuk city and Peshmargah forces got out that are affiliated to Kurdistan region of Iraq, it took no longer only several days, Iraqi government invited the British Petroleum Company (BP) to develop the oil fields in Kirkuk and the to receive its administrations, it became so clear that Britain had a major role in the removal of the Kurdistan Regional Government and its Peshmargah army in the region as well as to hand them to Baghdad As Britain and its oil company have only the right to dispose of Kirkuk oil and the future of the region, because, it is the one who founded the modern state of Iraq, and its company is the one who extracted oil from Kirkuk for the first time in 1927, so those who approach their interests in this region have full right to respond to those who threaten those interests.

But the question here is why does not Britain embrace Kurdish politics just as it embraced Arab, Turkish or Iranian politics? Is the problem in the Kurds as a nation that they do not know the administration of the state as confirmed by Britain in many of its documents and studies? Or the problem is in Britain, which was not with the Kurds one day. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Britain took the Turks and the Ottoman authority in Istanbul against the expansion of the Kurdish Emirates in order to prevent the Russian transformation in the Middle East. During the Armenian era between 1878-1920, Britain took the Armenian side against the Kurds, in the days of the founding of the national states after the First World War; Britain turned its back on the Kurds and divided Kurdistan between four countries. In the era of the Iraqi state of the Arab character, Britain took the side of Baghdad and fought everything that is Kurdish one.

Therefore, the aim of holding this conference was an attempt to have a new reading of the British policy in Kurdistan, to return to history first and uncover the circumstances of the new perhaps to benefit the present and future of Kurdistan. The Kurds should be aware of the international positions towards their legitimate national cause. Historians and Kurds have always affirmed that the great powers were the biggest sellers in an inability of the Kurds to establish their national state. Therefore, it needs to be aware of dealing with these forces and building new policies accurately by Kurdish centers of powers; it aims to know how to deal with these great powers in the future so as not to make the Kurdish issue a victim of their interests again.