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IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CONDITION ON THE SOCIAL LIFE IN IRAQ DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Abstract:- The economic variables had put a greatest impact on the social situation of the country not only in Iraq but also in all Arab country . In Iraq the tribal class in dominated the population. after the second half of the 19th century, due to economic changes and penetration in terms of foreign interests, particularly the British and the development of transportation routes in Iraq the prosperity of foreign trade contributed to the social changes in Iraq.

the arrival of the governor Medhat pasha in the state of Iraq had a biggest impact in bringing about social and economic changes, because he was one of the most important social reformers in the ottoman empire.

Keywords: Economic condition ,Social Life , social situation ,foreign interests.

INTRODUCTION

During the first half of 19th century, Iraq did not witness major changes in the economic, social and political conditions. The Iraqi society was divided into two classes. The first class was a clan, which included 80% of the total population of Iraq. It was linked to chief clan which represented the President of the absolute ruler. The Ottoman(1) government was as a judge to take decision in all matters of the tribe. It did not promote any kind of development of the tribes in Iraq. Description of the Iraqi society was referred to as a tribal society. The second class consisted of 20% of the total population of Iraq. They were a minority that they excelled the front-runner in terms of education, economic status and health status. In comparison with the minority clan, the first clan did not know the meaning of education and school. They did not have any opportunity of education and were engaged in agricultural activities. The head of the clan and his family were the only one, who were able to send their children to schools to gain knowledge. This class was also unaware about hospitals and health centers due to which the health of masses was deteriorating. They relied mainly on "Arab medicine" and medicinal herbs as they belonged to tribe's clan who were experts in the field of herbs. This was the social scenario of Iraq in the early of nineteenth century.(2)

The woman in Iraq during the Ottoman rule did not have the right to go out of the house due to which they could not attend school. Women were one of the oppressed sections of the society. Girl's early marriage was a common trend, which also led to social violence against girls. Women always faced injustice which and had to suffer on every aspect of life.(3)

Adopted the researcher in the study is based on secondary data, which have been collected from different sources, special about the Economic condition and Social in Iraq

1.1 The Social Situation in Iraq after 1857 :

The economic variables had put a greatest impact on the social situation of the country. The tribal class in Iraq dominated the population. After the second half of the 19th century, due to economic changes and penetration in terms of foreign interests, particularly the British and to tie Iraq to market capitalism, 60% population of the country contributed to the creation of a new class of workers, righteousness to beginning the new ideas about political changes. The arrival of the governor Medhat Pasha in the state of Iraq had a biggest impact in bringing about social and economic changes, because he was one of the most important social reformers in the Ottoman Empire.(4)

In the late 19th century, an emergence of missionaries opened a new stream influenced by Western civilization which took multiple flocking to Iraq. They founded foreign schools including American, British and French which later proved the landmarks of Western civilization in the Iraqi society. And also due to the spreading of political ideas, religious thoughts and the development of transportation routes in Iraq brought the people close to the world. Thus, the prosperity of foreign trade contributed to the social changes in Iraq.

1.2 The Most important of these variables were :

1.2.1 Uniforms and Clothing :

The Iraqis used to wear "kaffiyeh" headdress and a lid are placed on it because of European influence on the social status of Iraq. Through expansion of trade and opening of the Suez Canal, which led to shortening of the distances between the countries, especially people in Baghdad changed their dress style and began to wear trousers and jacket like Europeans but the Iraqis continued their fezzes and did not wear hats. The students in school used uniforms in European style but the women did not change their traditional costume and continued to wear the "abaya" according to Iraqi culture.(5)

1.2.2 Cafe, Casinos and Club :

Until the early twentieth century, the meaning of café or casino or discos or club was not known to Iraq because of social traditions, customs and religious nature of the country that refused to accept these things. In 1908, the first club was begun, which was owned and staffed by people from Syria and Egypt. It did not bring any economic changes in the Iraqi society in any regard because the traditions and customs of Iraq were stronger than the Western European influence on them.

1.2.3 Cinema and Theater :

Iraqi people were unfamiliar with cinema and theatre. In 1880, the theatre existed only in schools. But this phenomenon did not spread much because of the strong traditions of the Iraqi society. The Iraqi society was very conventional and so was the art movement in Iraq. The role of the woman in the arts was almost absent because of traditions of the society.(6)

1.3 Education :

Education in Iraq was confined to cities and centers of Baghdad, Basra and Mosul. Iraqi people were unknown of modern schools and education before Medhat Pasha took over the charge.

After Medhat Pasha came to Iraq, various types of schools according to the need of education were formed. The most important types of schools were :

1. Civil School
2. Military School
3. School of qualified teachers
4. School of Trades for the character and occupations
5. School of Law
6. School for Girls
7. School foreign
8. Private Schools

The official language of education was Turkish. Girls only from rich families and foreign families could take education in Iraq. The schools were proliferated by missionaries in the late 19th century.

The economic development in Iraq caused to increase the number of public schools. There was need to create a class of intellectuals, graduates so that they could master a number of languages to work in the area of trade.(7)

1.4 Health :

Iraq was suffering from poverty, lack of knowledge and disease due to poor economic conditions, which led to the deterioration of overall health status. The doctors working in Iraq hospitals were all foreigners. They did not pay attention to the health of the Iraqi citizens, and as a result, there was a spread of epidemic diseases such as sickness, plague, smallpox and cholera in Iraq. In 1831, the spread of epidemic disease cholera was widespread. Many people including traders died, which had a strong impact on the economic condition of the country.

Medhat Pasha was one who paid attention to the health status of Iraqis and collected donations from people to build a hospital in Baghdad called 'Al ghrabih', which means 'The strangers' and called the doctors from Istanbul. The hospital was opened in 1872 and at the same time, an army hospital was also opened, which was called as 'Majidiyah'. After him, Namik Pasha took charge in 1901. He opened the hospital called 'Al Rusafa' in Baghdad, and in 1908, another hospital in Karbala was commenced named as 'Al Hamidiya'.

The number of hospitals in Iraq was not sufficient to enhance health awareness and to provide treatment to all citizens. The Iraqi farmers continued to suffer from poverty, lack of knowledge and diseases.(8)

1.5 Culture OR(Modern Printing and Publishing):

The culture was divided into two major parts :

1.Printing :

Medhat Pasha was the first governor, who introduced modern printing technology to Iraq which was brought from Paris in 1870. The increased use of civil and governmental books, magazines, newspapers had a strong impact on cultural awareness among the citizens.

2.Press :

Iraq had only one newspaper, which was officially belonged to the Ottoman government. It was distributed in Istanbul. However, when Medhat Pasha took over the charge as governor of the state, he published a newspaper called Al Zora. It was the first official newspaper in the country, published in Arabic and Turkish languages in 1869. After 1908, the newspaper ceased publication in Arabic, but continued in the Turkish language, because of the fall of Sultan Abdul Hamid II and the capture of the ruling Union of the government in Istanbul. The number of newspapers in Iraq was 37 and magazines was 16 as well as religious magazines were published.

The economic change in the country made an increase in the elements of culture in Iraq. It caused to the emergence of an educated class of politicians and contributed to the development of the country's political, cultural and social awareness in the country.(9)

1.6 Classes of Iraqi Society :

During the second half of the 19th century, Iraq witnessed political and economic variables which affected the social status. There was an emergence of new classes in the community like class of traders and workers, who emerged as a class after the important social-economic changes experienced by the country. Earlier, there was only a farmer class that existed in the Iraqi society.

The details of each class, such as, farmers, workers and traders that existed in Iraq and the important changes that took place regarding these classes are as follows :

The farmer class :

This class was divided into two parts:

The first one included the indigenous farmers, who were engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry. The farmers who belonged to this class were inherited to continue the profession of their parents and grandparents. They were closely associated with the president of the clan, which represented the farmers and was entitled to give judgement in every aspect.

The second one consisted the farmers who appeared during the reign of Medhat Pasha. He handed over the plots of land to these farmers to cultivate as they originally belonged to nomads and Gaza. Medhat Pasha took a decision by passing the Law of Land issued by the Land Registry during his reign to rehabilitate the nomads who were involved in robbery with a condition that if the nomads did not cultivate the land, he would take back the land from them and hand over the land to the state. In spite of such attempts made by him, some nomads did not obey the central government and quickly sold the seeds given them for cultivation and returned again to a life of theft and tribe. While some nomads cultivated their farms and enjoyed benefits from the industry. The chief of the clan used to collect a specific amount from the profit gained by these farmers. Medhat Pasha made provision to promote Chairman (or chief) of the clan by giving him monthly salary of nearly 2500 lira from Ottoman Empire. However, after the departure of Medhat Pasha, these tribes lost their lands and their social and economic condition again deteriorated. Some of the governors who came after Medhat Pasha tried to withdraw the lands from farmers and hand over it to senior staff and officers of the Turkish army.

The farmers cultivated their land and transformed it into a productive land. However, the ownership of this land was transferred to Turks, who created a new class called 'Zamindar class'. They had a control over a wide area of land and wealth. This change occurred due to a political change in the country, which was responsible for the emergence of this class. Zamindari system affected the Iraqi minorities socially and acquired enormous wealth.

2. The working class :

In the early of 19th century, the workers did not had an important role to play in Iraq. During this era, a few people were working in the fields of carpentry and blacksmithing. They did not have the latest technology in their shops. They had simple traditional shop, however, after the mid of 19th century, the picture began to change as the major political changes took place in the country. It was a turning point in the history of Iraq when Medhat Pasha who took over the charge as a governor of the state. He brought enormous economic changes during his administration, such as, the construction of shops and factories. Medhat Pasha gave stimulus to the spinning and weaving industries for the economic development of Iraq. Due to his attempts, employment opportunities were made available for a large number of Iraqis. After the beginning of these industries, the demand for wool and fabrics increased. The wool was used to roll together and was packed carefully in the boxes and was exported to European countries. It was used in factories to produce t-shirts in Baghdad, Mosul and Basra. They also had plants for the production of ice, soap making, pottery, pasta and flour. Moreover, there was an establishment of industrial workshops in the industrial schools to teach carpentry and blacksmithing for the manufacture of furniture. In spite of these developments, the workers in Iraq could not develop their financial status and remained unstable and volatile like peasants.

3. The Traders class :

An impact of economic changes in the country resulted into the emergence of the Traders' class in the 19th century. This class was richer, more educated and culturally developed layer of Iraqi society. Iraqi traders had good trade relations with foreign companies. They played an important role in the prosperity of commercial transport industry of Iraq, which later increased exports and imports of Iraq. As an inevitable part of the business and trade, the Iraqi traders often had to travel in the country and in foreign countries with an intention to expand the horizon of their trade activities. However, this trend greatly affected the upbringing of their children as they had to send them to

foreign schools. The students went outside the Iraq to study. They learned new technology in foreign universities, which helped them to bring modern techniques of production to improve economic condition of Iraq. Thus, the traders' class played a vital role to generate wealth.

This class was affected to a large extent by the fluctuating demands from European market. It was possible to reap huge profits, while there was also a possibility to lose all the money in such condition. The changing political conditions in the country also had a positive or negative impact on the social and economic situation of the traders' class. This class was one of the best class among these three classes in Iraq in terms of education, health awareness, financial and cultural development. Prosperity of this class was primarily dependent on the hard work which was being carried out by the farmers and workers. The traders were engaged in the local markets of food grain as well as export of the food grain to foreign countries, especially European countries. However, the farmers needed to produce good amount of agricultural produce, so that the food grain would be available for the export purpose after meeting the local.(10)

CONCLUSION:

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the condition of the trade in Iraq remained same for many centuries. However, from the year 1908, the fall of Sultan Abdul Hamid II and the spread of a new constitution gave the individual freedom which encouraged citizens to establish clubs, cafes in Iraq. Moreover, a large number of books, magazines and newspapers were published in Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish. Iraqi people began to use modern type of clothing like T-shirt and jeans. The drama theatre and the cinema theatre were introduced in Iraq. A large number of private schools and foreign schools were begun. It helped the emergence of an educated class of people, which was responsible for the spread of awareness of intellectual and cultural cooperation among the different sections of Iraqi society. In addition to the above development, the economic changes played significant role in changing the social scenario of Iraqi society. In short, various changes took place in Iraq in the beginning of 20th century that affected the Iraqi society to a great extent.

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