

Teaching in Ancient and modern history (teaching in Mesopotamia)

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Abstract

It is necessary for everyone concerned with education and a specialist in teaching regardless of his specialization or trends to extrapolate history to take lessons from experiences of the past nation and people. Regardless of nationalism, race or religion, he or she must be objective to take such experiences that full of bright images and rich characteristics in various types of sciences and knowledge to add a lot to his culture and knowledge. How wonderful of knowledge is when mixed with the experiences of the ancients and their sciences to formulate later in mature way and draws more sophisticated and to be open to the rest cultures and scientific and human trends.

In this study, we review the education and teaching systems of the first civilization known to the mankind in Mesopotamia. To the present time, this civilization stands with proud to what it has of different sciences in the various fields and it left immortal history full of achievements in the face of the continuous development in the world now.

We notice that the policy or culture of quality that the different institutions of the world countries try apply and promote it today was there in the educational system of Mesopotamia as will be shown in this research. No wonder of that amazing scientific achievements Mesopotamia people who live from seven thousand years B.C and left cultural heritage full of values, principles and different sciences. There are still lots of their sciences and experiences which are not be discovered till now and it is wished to be discovered to add them to what is discovered before which be exposed in museums of many states. The research has been divided into two sections, the first is titled: the education in Mesopotamia while the second is the education in the late Ottoman era and in the British mandatory 1921-1932 in addition to the introduction. Conclusion, references and bibliography

Key words: teaching, writing, clay tablets, Ottoman era, British forces, Sumerian language.

Section one

(Education in Mesopotamia)

Emergence writing dawn in Ancient Iraq

The ancient Iraqis were the first who invented writing via wrote their ideas and knowledge acquired from applied practices. Writing was just like the boat in which this knowledge transferred to the next generations and to others places as well.

The writing which invented by ancient Iraqis known as cuneiform writing was not invented in particular year but it is thought that the first human being attempt is about 4000 years B.C when the first clay tablets having pictorial signs are used to transfer ideas to others. These attempts are passed in many stages till crystallizing the writing thought and stenograph the shapes and numbers of pictorial signs. (1)

At the first stages, man used lot of signs who drew to express his wants, which were drawings of material things only, and probably are set some numbers to signify their numbers and so on. The second stage is the symbolic one in which the pictorial signs are used to indicate on more than a meaning and symbolize to the actions related to the material things. While the third stage of writing is called the phonic or syllabic stage which is similar to the alphabetic writing. (2)

In the pictorial stage, they drew fish to indicate to its meaning (3) while in the third or in the last stage, which tis called phonic or syllabic, they write for example (kal) which means great and (lu) means man; they pronounce for example (lu-kal) which it is obviously the literal meaning (the great man) (4).

After the cuneiform symbols are encoding, scientists called this age (semi-writing age) (protoletral) which the cuneiform writing had been completed between 4000 and 2800 B.C. (5). The Sumerians have the merit of inventing writing and using it as a mean of writing about 4000 years B.C as clay tablets. (6)

No wonder of using clay tablets in writing, due to the southern land of Iraq witnessed floods during winters therefore; people who live in this area used the only available material which is clay. They make small pieces as soap bars then

drew the signs of their writing using read of sharp head on the tender clay, then dried it in the sun. they considered it letters of writing than more drawings; every letter contains many arranged lines with different curved ends because the head of reed is just like nail therefore this writing is called cuneiform writing. (7)

Writing appeared at the end of fourth millennium B.C and documented about third millennium B.C and witnessed changings in the middle of second millennium B.C. in the first millennium, the writing becomes two, the first is Assyrian and the second is Babylonian. It is worth mentioning that the surrounding countries of Mesopotamia like Hittites and Elamite use cuneiform writing except Phoenician who used it in diplomatic letters. It is known that the typical cuneiform dated to the seventh millennium B.C (8).

The Sumerian language is considered the ancient language in Mesopotamia culture written in cuneiform in the first stages of Al-Warkaa era about 4000 B.C which is called cultural era (Jimdat Nasir) (9).

In the second era of dawn dynasties about (2800-2700 B.C), the using of Sumerian language on clay tablets had been increased where it was found in Ur city what is called (Archaic tablets) then they found tablets in Fara Hill (the ancient city of Shrubak) in the third dynasties in which there are writing of rules and kings, this means the development of cuneiform and dominion of Sumerian language at that time in Mesopotamia. (10)

The Sumerian language was the language of literature and sciences in Mesopotamia due to the cultural and political domination of Sumerian. It left huge linguistic heritage in the history of Iraq and in the languages of people who settled respectively whether in direct or indirect way where the Akkadians (Assyrian & Babylonians) borrowed lot of Sumerian words after modified them to adapt their language forms. (11)

The Sumerian language is considered now the ancient language in the world after the scientists encoding their codes. (12)

Stages of education and appearance of schools

The people of Mesopotamia had interested in teaching during different historical and cultural stages in Mesopotamia. The all data in cuneiform texts revealed the invention of cuneiform in Sumer in the third millennium B.C, had contributed in establishment of schools (13). It can be said that teaching system appearance has coincided with invention of writing (14). With writing, it can be written and registered all the activities related to economical and religious life (15). It can be also established the educational schools and libraries to receive students and teaching them different sciences and public knowledge accumulated since inventing writing (16). In this frame, the excavation and search have revealed more than thousand small clay tablets written in pictorial language in Al-Warkaa city.

Most of these tablets are about the economical and administrative sides, some of them contain subjects related to the linguistic words written by students themselves where using as educational means (17). It can be noticed that the lines of discovered tablets belonging to different levels, some of them are written in bad manner calligraphy while the others in good manner; that means they belong to students have different levels. (18). This is natural things due to acquiring the skill of writing and reading passes in trial and error.

These tablets are school exercises because they contain one text copied many times with different calligraphies or contain a literary text on one face while we found mathematical exercise on the other face (19) or we find writing done by the teacher and imitated it by his student on the other face (20). The one, who examines the contain of discovered tablets prepared by students, notices that they give us enough information about methods of teaching. The surprising thing that excavators find tablets prepared by teachers about school (21).

The paved factors of schools' appearance

Due to difficulty, signs diversity and meanings and phonetic values, the cuneiform requires a long time to be acquired. (22).

First: the religious factor

It is considered one of the important factors to establish schools, people of Mesopotamia has made rooms in temples dedicated to teach and spread religion, where the monks play a great role in educational process and spread different sciences (23).

The duplication between the Sumerian and Akkadian languages which are different, plays essential role in forming writing. Yet, the Sumerian language was the only and official language of administrative, religious, cultural, literary and scientific sides, the Akkadian competed it (24). One of results of this competition, the Akkadian became an official language and retreated the Sumerian to be used only in hymns and religious texts. The duplication between two languages made the Akkadian borrowed lots of words from the Sumerian (25). To know the terms and linguistic meanings, the Akkadians established educational institutions and books to explain the cuneiform signs and synonymies. (26).

All these factors besides motives of writing appearance above-mentioned led to establish the first educational schools in the world by the Sumerians and developed later by the Babylonians.

What are the concepts and terms of the schools and teaching in the Sumerian era and what are the places of schools?

The term (E. Dub.Baa) is the Sumerian word which means school, and moved to mean (literature) or house of tablet (28), this word moved to the Akkadian in this form (Bit-tuppi) which have the same meaning (29).

The archaeological and confirmed texted findings of educational schools

The archaeological findings confirm that there are schools and educational institutions during the Sumerian era about 4000 years B.C which pass slowly to transfer in the middle of third millennium B.C -just like writing- to a mean of spreading science across Sumer lands.it is enough to read some written documents connected to this topic to detect the range of interesting in science.

As the different school text discovered in Dhrubak area between 8906 and 8904 B.C which date to 6400 B.C indicate that educational schools contain lists of gods and animals besides set of words and different phrases.

Excavations revealed many texts indicating to exist the educational schools like this following text:

A house with foundations like sky

House looks like standing goose on pedestal.

The one entered with closed eyes

And get out with open eyes

Types of schools

Temples

Temples in Mesopotamia were a center to do rituals and religious sacraments besides prayers, gods worship, and scarify or immolate. It can be said, it is the heartland of society in Mesopotamia and the center of different daily, social and cultural activities. (30) moreover, the temple was the center of juridical courts in which the judges practiced the observation authority and trials besides supervising on the economical, political and social life in addition to register the temples' income (32). The temple's institution controlled and issued the land ownership deeds seeking help by group of workers and farmers to work in the agricultural field. This contributed in harvesting lots of crops where the archaeologists discovered in temples of cities set of texts related to economical sides and epistemological sides like literature and dictionaries and so on. (33)

The temple institution kept its central position in managing people affairs (34) where each city has its own temple in which the cultural activities are organized besides has particular privileges such as taxes exemption, receiving gifts and donates sent by rulers in purpose of satisfying gods, therefore; temples became center of intellectual sides and religious rituals (35), thereby, temple institution was in urgent need – on the contrary of other institutions- to educational group

managed its affairs (36). Then no wonder that temples in the first ages embrace schools and consider education as one of the important priorities. From this reason, schools are considered an attached part with temples to teach priests those who run the temples' affairs (37) to become clerks or workers in temples or palaces after their graduation (38).

Education at that period was limited on teaching language and training employees to undertake positions in the state and temples as well (39). But with the middle of third millennium B.C, the interest of teaching had been increased due to move the authority from the religious class to the political one which helped to spread religious teaching in attempt to polarize people (40).

Education in Babylon

Concerning with education in Babylonians, (41) there are no specific information about organization of schools and Assyrians as well. The development of their civilization reaches to high position and this makes us suppose that they knew different types of schools. With them, knowledge was necessary which gave to their people happiness, prosperity and reputation comparing to the other people. The practical education is limited to magicians and high classes. Yet, the brilliant child can reach to high level of culture which permits him to involve in the official jobs. Education was technician and practical in the first degree whose aim to qualify merchants and writers. However; free studies had appeared which made to appear specialists in the religious literature, astronomy, astrology and history. It is interested deeply in trade sciences and people knew a skillful system of accounting engraved by cuneiform. The finding of written schools' books of students helped to know closely the civilization of those peoples. The learning of cuneiform writing is a tough and difficult process, and those who learn it, have a high appreciation and respect. Excavators found a clay brick on which it is written this following sentence:

(who succeeds in writing on clay brick, the counterpart of the sun will be glittered) (42).

The education stages of Babylonians

The education stages of Babylonians and Assyrians consist of two stages: (43)

A. The primary stage: the study methodology contains religion, mathematics, history, geography and grammar and teaching methods are primitive depending on repetition and they use clay tablets in writing. (44)

B. The high stage (45): different specializations are there in the high following schools:

- Keesh school (Tal Al-Uhaimer): Keesh is a city of Akkad kingdom, about 20 km to north-eastern of Hilla city. This school is very ancient belongs to Essen age in which student was obligated to go to it to learn whatever he likes from knowledge. It is found lots of religious, literary, grammatical and linguistic clay tablets in house dated to Essen age. In the rooms of schools, the students receive literary knowledge and sciences besides they write economical articles and trade documents.

- School of Nappor (Neffar): Nappor is about one hundred miles to the south of Babylon city. It was discovered through its walls clay tablets on which is written all what is taught of religious, theoretical sciences in the schools of that age. The most distinguished findings are the synonymies, math numbers, multiplication table, names' lists of mountains, countries, plants, stones, and historical tables of kings' names and events that happened in their age besides the invocations, prayers, hymns and spellings.

- School of Sippar (Abu Habba): the ruins of Abu Habba are located west of Mahmoudia city and about 20 miles of Baghdad city. It is the first organized school in the world. The archaeologist French Vincent Shell found school tablets, writing signs tablets, linguistic syllabics, conjugations, composition exercises, measures tables and multiplication tables besides the astronomical, historical and literary clay tablets like invocations and prayers who received those who want to

be in the clerical institution. The school was big and with wide-yards besides its students were from both sexes and it is regarded as the first organizational school in the reign of the great king Hammurabi (1792-1750 B.C).

- School of Borsippa: it is located south -eastern of Hilla on the structure of Nabu, the god of knowledge and inventor writing and letters discovered by the archaeologist, Auber. He found lots of tablets containing different sciences. This school was the cynosure of students from the east and west studying all sciences just as theology.

- School of Babylon (46): city of Babylon was an intellectual ample activity, the king himself was the patron of high school in which languages, natural sciences, astronomy and math had been taught and the period of study was three years funded by the state. When the students finish study, the king will test them precisely to be sure of their intelligence and wisdom. In this school, the prophet Daniel and his companions received sciences. The modern excavations in Iraqi ancient cities have revealed lots of texts related to the human knowledge sides like math, astronomy, astrology, law, medicine, natural sciences and geography, yet, medicine is not prosperous due to their believe that diseases caused by the evil spirits and cured them by spellings and religious rituals.

Priests role in education

Priests practiced teaching job from a long time ago where they erect schools within the large and small temples respectively. They attached them to be near in purpose of teaching the wisdoms, religious teachings and different sciences, they write also texts requiring great importance of helping student and enlarging their knowledge. (47) Lots of priests as well as their sons correlated with large temples where they live in and have completed education in their schools. There was a senior priest (48) called "Shanga" and there was a group of writers and employees who helped him in temple administration and the head of temple was called "Egreek". So, the priests were the first who learnt writing to run the economical affairs in the temple. (50) Hence, they have the merit in establishing the first

schools besides teaching (51) and run them each one of them has its own work in the temple. (52)

They take care of students and teach them different sciences; they depend primarily on legends as a source to teach wisdom and a mean to control them besides legends deepen love of patriotism within them (53). We can conclude that temples were the first curdle of teaching (54).

The second section

Education in Iraq in Ottoman late era and in British mandatory 1921-1932

The importance of this topic lies in manifesting the educational process in Iraq and discussing the most obstacles that educational process suffers from; and what are the active ways to set solutions that successive governments try to develop?

The research depends on the historical methodology. In the light of this methodology, it has tackled the following topics related to education in Iraq from the period of the Ottoman late era and the period of the British mandatory 1921-1932.

The educational developments in Iraq in the late Ottoman era and in the British mandatory 1921-1932

Through the research, we follow the history of education in Iraq within the above-mentioned period. The education in the late Ottoman era 1863 was limited to mosques, schools and clerical circles in Baghdad which they took their role in teaching calligraphy and religious teachings, however; they did not offer remarkable achievement but made country pass from worse to the worst. The clerical circles remained dominated which based on teaching children some verses of The Holy Quran and what are inherited from the old religious books and the clerical teacher depended on using force and severe punishments to teach them (55).

The late Ottoman era witnessed some of educational developments when the missionaries started to open schools to their religious sectarians in Iraq just like Carmelites father's school, Caldany school, Israeli union school in 1872 (56). In

the period of the Ottoman governor. Medhat Pasha, the modern education started where four schools have been inaugurated which are (military, arts, crafts, Rashidia schools) whose language was in the Turkish and their subjects are geography, math, history, and foreign languages (57).

Though the schools graduated employees but few who joined them (except military one) due to the language was Turkish and most Iraqi have no confidence with Turkish authorities besides their believe that not be appointed after their graduation and there is also nepotism rather than competency, therefore; education remained undeveloped in Iraq comparing to other Ottoman states (58). Ottoman government interested in the military schools rather than civil ones due to its frequent defeats against the European states in the last period of its era. Therefore; statesmen realized the importance of learning how organizing education to make their army able to stand against the European armies equipped with modern weapons (59).

Iraq remained receiving modest education which is restricted to the big cities like Baghdad, Mosul and Basra. It was monopolized by the employees' sons who called (Afandia), which means literarily (those who wear European clothes), the poor have no ability to join their sons to those schools. At the same time, Ottoman state suffers from lack of teachers, therefore; it has been helped by some of Ottoman army officer to teach in schools (60). With reference to girls' schools, they had not established until Namiq Bash became governor where he built school of (Rashdi Maktebi's daughters) in 1889. The reason about lacking daughters' schools is the believe of people that teaching of daughter reading and writing is just corrupting morals and ethics. In 1896 the first school in Mosul has been founded in 1896 and in Basra 1898 then another school has been erected in Baghdad in which physical education, math, social sciences, Turkish language, French and Arabic besides embroidering crafts. It is worth mentioning that Ottoman empire used the wives of Turkish officers and employees in Iraq to teach daughters (61).

Religious schools

The religious schools contained students from different nationalities like (Irani, Afghani, Chines, Indian and Turkman) and schools in Iraq until the late Ottoman era reached to (149) in which language, interpretation, jurisprudence and grammar have been taught (62).

The foreign schools have been also opened in Iraq, the Dominicans fathers' school is regarded as the oldest missionary which came to Mosul in 1751; the Dominicans were skillful in practicing medicine and education. It is worth mentioning that they received financial help from the French government (63).

With reference of Jewish schools, Israeli Alliance Association whose location in Paris had opened a school in Baghdad in which some of sciences and foreign languages especially French, English and Turkish (64).

It can be said that though the Ottoman governors have the wish to achieve reforms in different levels, but their attempts have not succeeded due to deterioration of the economical situations and increasing the greediness of European states in Ottoman empire properties besides lacking of decentralization which it cannot follow the execution of those reforms in the time bribery, nepotism and decline of health care have been prevailed. All these have reflected on education. In other word, the Ottoman educational policy witnessed retardation and failure in the educational process which continued its affect to the recent time. The Ottoman education characterized with military than to be educational process.

Education in Iraq in the British occupation 1014-1914

The British forces won the war in the south of Iraq in the first year of the first world war. After post-conflict stabilization, the British military headquarter as well as the civil headquarter led by (Percy Cox), the mandator of Iraq and Arabian Gulf, in attempt to gain the confidence of Iraqi people, decided to pay attention to education and to financial affairs respectively. Cox set regulations and laws

derived from the British civil headquarter in India in attempt to annex the south of Iraq to India. He was authorized to modify laws and make reforms (65).

Due to lacking efficient teachers in Basra besides school books were in Turkish language, there was a plan to not open any primary school before suppling them with efficient teachers (66). Surely, there was not a clear idea in London or in India to the political future of Mesopotamia in the mind of occupation authority (67).

In fact, the urgent cases were tackling quickly at that time (68). For example, Percy Cox hurried to gain the agreement of his government to call (Henry Dobbs) to Basra to organize the financial affairs due to his great experience in administration of India affairs (69), so Dobbs arrived to Basra in January 1915 to become the responsible of Education besides other responsibilities (70). It is obviously that Iraqis who have modern and progressive outlook were comparing bitterly between the undeveloped education in their country and with the prosperous education somehow in Syria whose contact with the west (71) and governed by Ibrahim son of the great Mohammed Ali Pasha (1832-1840) (72) made it witness better education than in Iraq and this what is mentioned by Mis Gertrude Bill (73) and the American historian Henry Foster who also compares between two countries in the field of education (74).

It was difficult to the British authority in Basra to create advanced education somewhat, the need was urgent to stimulate the primary education and open some of the primary schools. Nevertheless, Henry Dobbs sent a memorandum in 15th of February, as being reliable of finance and responsible of education, to Percy Cox recommending with great care in establishing new system of education to prevent the previous mistakes committed in India (75).

Conclusion

In fact, this research cannot cover the reality of education in Iraq. Nevertheless, I reach through this modest study that education in the ancient history and in Ottoman era as well as in the mandatory era is there but it is undeveloped subjected to the interests of the colonized empires. Through this research, we have these following results:

1. Education and learning are the building of individual and eradication of illiteracy in community is the basic motive in development of civilizations besides it is measure of societies evolution.
2. The ancient Iraqis are the first who invent writing through writing what are in their mind from ideas and sciences reached within their applied practicing.
3. The Sumerian is the oldest language in Mesopotamia culture written in cuneiform in the late age of Al-Warkaa about 4000 years B.C which is called (Jamdat Nasir).
4. Due to the cultural and political domination of the Sumerian, the Sumerian language became the language of literature and science in the culture of Mesopotamia and it left huge linguistic heritage in the history of Iraq.
5. In the frame of education, excavators have discovered more than one thousand clay tablets written in pictorial language in Al-Warkaa area dated back to the Sumerian age.
6. The archaeological discovers and texts findings confirm that there are schools and educational systems during the Sumerian era 4000 years B.C which turn in the middle of the third millennium B.C to a mean of spreading science over Sumer lands.
7. The central position of the institution of temple has maintained in run of people affairs where each city has its own temple in which the cultural activities have organized. The temple has particular privileges among them are: tax exemption, presents and donates introduced by rulers to gain god's satisfaction, therefore' temples became centers of intellectual sides and religious rituals.

8. City of Babylon was an active intellectual center where the king himself was a patron of high school in his palace in which languages, natural sciences, astronomy and math have been studied.
9. Priests practiced teaching job since the old time where they erected schools inside big and small temples and attached schools nearby to teach wisdom, religious teachings and different sciences.
10. Iraq in the Ottoman era remained receiving modest education restricted to big cities like Baghdad, Mosul and Basra. Education was to the sons of employees only who called (Afandia). The poor could not enter their sons to these schools.
11. It can be said that despites of existing the wish to the Ottoman governors to achieve reforms on different levels but the failed to do that because of the deterioration of the economical situations and increasing the greediness of the European states in Ottoman empire properties.
12. It is obviously that Iraqis who have modern outlook were comparing bitterly between the undeveloped educational situation in their country due to the British colonialization and with the prosperous education somehow in Syria.
13. After forming the national government and beginning new era in Iraq (The monarchy era), the educational process started somehow to be developed and improved. Many intellectual personalities have been appeared in spreading education and lots of schools of different stages have been opened. Country is still in need to develop and modernization of curriculum and methods because the development of education means intellectual people.

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