

## **The civil protest movement in Iraq in 2019 (A geopolitical study)**

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**Abstract:** October protests in Iraq were in 2019, it reflected in terms of political, social and intellectual repercussions, the prominent events that marked a new turning point in the awareness of the street of the need to bring about change and reform in the structure and structure of the political system in Iraq after 2003, the civil protest movement, and its peak in 2019, was in its deepest causes only one of the manifestations of the crisis of the state-building project in Iraq. This state has failed to carry out the tasks and functions entrusted to it, it thus lost the support of its mass social incubator, came out in 2019 to strip legitimacy and legitimacy from the political elites that have proven their failure to manage the paths of the political process in Iraq. The events of the October protests in 2019 have been subject to many interpretations and analyzes, most of which are of a political nature, research for reasons, demands and goals, but within the limits of this research - we tried to rely on another approach to such an event that depends on the perspective of the geopolitical study.

**Keywords:** The civil movement, the geopolitical field, the Shiite geographical field.

### **Introduction:**

The civil movement in Iraq, one of its dimensions and prominent manifestations, was embodied in the angry mass movements and protests, especially in 2019, the most important turns and transformations that the political system in Iraq went through after 2003, such a movement - regardless of the nature of the circumstances and complications it went through (has imposed for the first time a new reality facing the system of ruling power in Iraq). The repercussions of such a shift appeared not in terms of changing the government, not in terms of resorting to early elections within a new electoral system. Rather, this reality has imposed new equations related to the removal of political awareness in the Iraqi street. The emergence of a new generation of youth mobilized with revolutionary energy, capable of mobilizing the Iraqi street, taking the initiative to claim the rights and legitimate demands to live a decent and stable life, in a country where security and stability are strengthened, it becomes inclusive of all its segments, categories and components within a comprehensive national identity.

The protest civil movement in Iraq has its dimensions that appear after 2003 in two main ways: Sometimes he expressed an "event" that falls within the context of a larger problem related to the state-building crisis, at other times, this civil movement was described as a "phenomenon" that had its demographic extension and its geographical/political scope in which it appeared, it took "centers" and spatial foci that formed the features and characteristics of the dimensions of this phenomenon.

If the civil protest movement in Iraq was approached and its dimensions analyzed at the level of the first dimension (an event), it necessarily refers to the Philosophical Readings XIV.4 (2023), pp.140-154. 140

study of its roots, causes and repercussions by analyzing the political, social and intellectual contexts that contributed to the making and explosion of this event. The second dimension of the civil protest movement in Iraq after 2003, which is no less important than the first dimension, (will be dealt with in the context of this research - is the one who will care), specifically, with a geographical/political analysis of the phenomenon of the civil movement, the nature of its extension in the central and southern governorates, and whether such a geographical area is Shiite, it has contributed to stereotyping and curtailing the movement with a (sectarian) or national dimension. The nature of the age groups participating in such a movement will also be addressed, to determine their backgrounds and intellectual and class affiliations, the significance of this affiliation, and linking it to the nature of the demands and goals of the protest movement, in addition, the geopolitical analysis will also reveal a fundamental issue, it relates to the extent of the agreement between the “coordinating committees” of these governorates in terms of unity of decision, demands and goals, did the geographical disparity and the political and social formation in each of the central and southern governorates affect the disparity in the demands of the protest movement?.

On this basis, the basic problem that the research will revolve around becomes based on an attempt to answer a central and fundamental question that determines the nature and dimensions of the angle of view and treatment of the geopolitical approach to the protest civil movement in Iraq in 2019, and this question is represented by the extent of the demographic impact and its role in determining the features and characteristics of this movement? In a more specific sense.. Did the Shiite geographical area from which this movement was launched - especially in the central and southern governorates - affect the definition of the identity of this movement by making it move in a "local" space subject to a geographical definition that reflects its factional and constituent nature? Or did this civil protest movement, which reached its climax in 2019 and through its demands and purpose, transcend the boundaries of the geographical identity that tried to frame and limit it within its space to the borders of the national identity that it tried to represent and express as a frame of reference for it, which determined its basic goals and demands for change and political reform?.

First: The geographical distribution of the protest civil movement in the Iraqi governorates

#### 1- The Shiite geographical area of the civil movement

The study of the protest civil movement in Iraq from the perspective of political geography is one of the most important basic entrances that appear to us through the analysis of data and aspects that reveal the contents and dimensions of such civil movement, which may not be shown by other approaches, because if we take the directions of the protest movement in general, and we try to classify it according to specific standards and foundations, so we see that it will be subject to several criteria, including:

1- The criterion of the subject or cause of the protest, which may be political, economic or cultural, and may be global, regional, national or local in each of them.

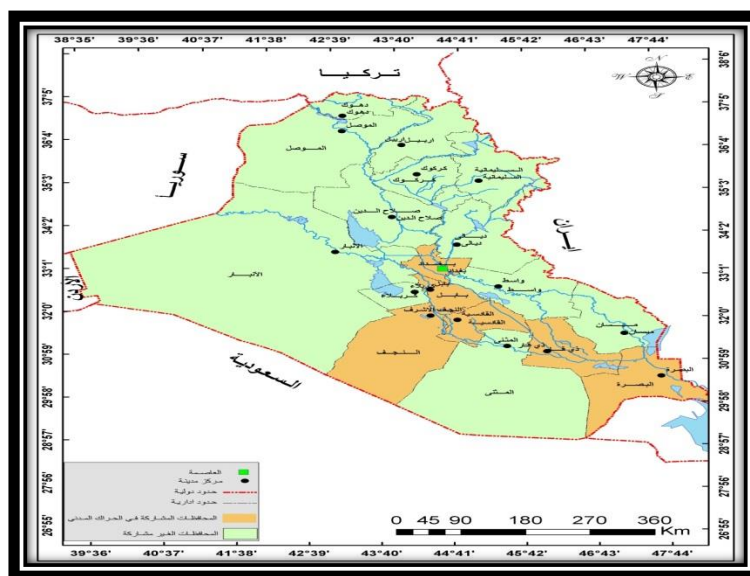
2- The criterion of the borders or geography of the protest, which may be national, international or local.

3- The criterion of the legality of the protest may be a protest within the legal and constitutional frameworks, or it may be outside it.

4- Criterion of the nature of the protest, and it may be a familiar protest within his environment, as it may be out of the ordinary in his environment (1).

And if we stop at the second criterion - specifically - and make it a guide on which we rely on in determining the geography of the protest civil movement in Iraq - we will find, through the data of Map (1) related to defining the participating and non-participating Iraqi governorates in the protest civil movement - that its geographical space, extensions and escalation are concentrated in the governorates Central and southern Iraq, that is, in the Shiite geographical area, and this matter will raise and open several problematic questions related to the identity of this movement: Was it a manifestation or an expression of the crisis of the relationship between the Shiite public and its political elite in particular? Or that his identity - through his demands and goals - exceeded the local "geographical" borders that framed this movement, to open up and then be an expression of the broad national space.

Map (1) Iraqi governorates participating and not participating in the civil movement.



Source: The researcher, relying on Hussein Karim Al-Amel, "Collecting and Documenting," the events of the Iraqi October Uprising, Dar Al-Mada, Beirut, Lebanon, 2021, pp. 59-61.

The concept of the geographical field, which we will try to benefit from employing its dimensions, is different from the natural field, as it is born from the human initiative and expresses the purposes of each society, and it does not adapt to the natural environment, but rather is the product of using this medium. Therefore, the geographical field transcends the natural system. To dissolve a system in which the spatial dimensions have a human-social formulation, and accordingly, the first feature of the geographical field lies in its being a social production, which takes a

way into existence by virtue of the dialectical relationships that man has and continues to hold with his natural surroundings (2).

On such a level, two approaches emerged in an attempt to define the identity and dimensions of the civil movement, whether in terms of its expression of a component crisis, or a political identity crisis related to the form and content of state-building mechanisms after 2003. The first approach: with a geopolitical dimension, bases its hypothesis on the fact that the Shiite geographical domain - Which is represented by the central and southern governorates - it is a vital area in terms of its human and material stock, and in its depth it represents an electoral "asset" to give the Shiite force legitimacy in its continuation in power. According to "population estimates for the various governorates of Iraq, we find that the cities of southern Iraq occupy a percentage of ( 59% of the size of the parliamentary seats, as they total 194 parliamentary seats out of 329, without denying that there are different cities in which others have a share in these seats. According to what was mentioned by the Independent Electoral Commission, the city of Baghdad comes at the forefront of these cities with a number Its seats amount to 71 seats, Basra second with 25 seats, and Dhi Qar third with 19 seats, which is an important classification that shows us the size of the real competition in these three cities, which can be said "they constitute the most important urban areas that influence the entire Shiite heart of Iraq." (3).

However, such legitimacy itself - and according to this approach - is disputed within this same field by many forces, the most important of which are: the religious reference, the forces of the traditional Shiite Islamic parties - which coalesced among themselves after 2019 with what was known as the coordination framework, and the power represented by the Sadrist movement, And a force that was created after the fatwa of jihad against ISIS and represented by the popular crowd, and if we exclude the armed factions because they have their own project for resistance and are linked to what is known as the front of resistance and resistance, then the rest of the main parties - according to this approach - are the main players who, with their influence and ability, can mobilize and mobilize the Shiite incubator in the provinces The center and the south, from creating the required balances or setting new equations on which this balance is based (4).

The Shiite field here becomes subject to the stakes of these forces, but the interaction of these four forces and the nature of their response to the variables of the political reality and the internal and external challenges have proven that such bets are different, because despite the fact that these four main parties are involved in the state-building project in terms of influence or political representation It has, but its vision about the basis and foundations of this building and its starting points are different, in addition to the civil protest movement that emerged as a new variable - and according to this approach from within the Shiite field has contributed to deepening the differences and repositioning within new axes and alignments" (5).

This means that the protest civil movement, its repercussions, has contributed to revealing many of the contradictions that exist between the Shiite forces, and at the same time it has redrawn a new map of the political scene from within the circle of

actors in the Shiite field, so the religious authority - which is the most important party within the borders of this field - supported The demands of the civil movement and gave legitimacy to it insofar as it is the result of internal factors - political, economic and social - and not external, and therefore the most important points that the supreme reference focused on on such a level, and in all Friday sermons and statements, were the following points:

- 1- Preventing the interference of foreign parties in Iraqi affairs.
- 2- Formation of independent judicial committees to investigate and follow up the progress of the demonstrations.
- 3- Rejecting violence towards demonstrators.
- 4- Restricting weapons to the state.
- 5- The legitimate demands of the protesters should be met (6).

One of the positives of the geopolitical approach is its diagnosis of the roles of the main actors in the Shiite geographical field, and the disclosure of the dimensions of conflict and competition between these actors in terms of hegemony, influence, distribution of roles, and the nature of each actor and his vision for building the Iraqi state. The Shiite environment - in particular - and therefore considering it as a manifestation of the disintegration of the "Shiite house" makes this approach subject to criticism on more than one level (7).

This is because the geopolitical approach is mainly centered around defining the nature of roles, functions and tasks within the game of political balances for the main players in the Shiite geographical field. Such an approach is paralleled by another division that is no less important and dangerous than has been absent. It is represented by the public or the Shiite bases, which this approach considered to constitute the human strategic stock of the actors in terms of investment, mobilization and equipment. Partisan or political, with the interests, orientations, and agendas of the parties or the active forces in the Shiite field, and another audience of the younger generation - which constitutes the majority, its political awareness began to form in isolation from the sectarian, ideological and partisan determinants(8).

Which means that the audience of the protest movement was originally in its Shia sphere - which I want it to be a product of a division within the boundaries of this identity - it lives a kind of political rejection and alienation in its political environment, and it tries to break the limitations of this environment by opening up to another horizon that accommodates its concerns and aspirations, and this horizon For him, it was represented by the Iraqi national identity (\*) (9), and therefore the fundamental turning point brought about by the masses of the protest civil movement was that it revived the national tendency after this dimension was absent from the basics of political practice among most of the Shiite or Sunni political elites, due to quotas, consensus, and the frantic struggle for monopoly. With power and political leadership, and with a perspective that recreates for us sub-identities: regional, ethnic, factional, and sectarian at the expense of the Iraqi national identity, and on this basis "the protest movement that began in July 2015 constituted a turning point among large segments of youth, as the lines of sub-identities were crossed towards the Iraqi

identity , and demanding equality in rights and duties, and that the slogans raised embody the issue of citizenship and stem from it, and that the demonstration arena is not closed to any protester, but rather be open in various meanings, to all citizens regardless of religious, sectarian, national and regional affiliation or intellectual orientation and religious belief, and so on Demonstration squares brought together the diversity of the Iraqi people, and a high patriotic spirit prevailed, especially with its adherence to general national demands, which transcended the power of conflicting ethnic identities(10).

As for the second approach, which worked on explaining the phenomenon of the protest civil movement in Iraq within the Shiite geographical field, it can be described as a geo-political approach, and its most important theoretical starting points on which the following is based:

1- Underestimating the importance and impact of geopolitical conflicts at the regional and international levels as main factors in the growth and escalation of the civil protest movement in Iraq, which means relying on internal causes, especially those related to the failure of the state-building project in Iraq after 2003.

2- Not reducing the protest civil movement in Iraq to the fact that it was a product of a crisis of “Shiite” bases and thus reducing it to a specific component, which means that this civil movement with its goals, principles, goals and identity takes on a local character, and therefore such an approach stresses the upholding of the national character of the protest civil movement, And that his demands and goals transcended factionalism and sectarianism and were included in the framework of the inclusive Iraqi identity of all spectra and components.

3- This approach separates the process of political employment of the protest civil movement in Iraq, which reached its upward peak in 2019 by entering the agendas of local internal forces in order to ride its wave or try to empty it of its content and goals, and the process of questioning its identity, motives and timing, by including it within the agendas of the "conspiracy theory". Aiming either to create a Shiite/Shiite division, or to strike the unity of the national ranks and bring Iraq into strife and internal crises, the “vision that goes to consider the civil protest movement, especially what happened on the first of October 2019, as stemming from prior planning adopted by the” intelligence departments It is related to regional or international countries, trying to rely on several evidences or data produced by the protest behavior in Iraq, and presenting them as if they were irrefutable criminal "evidence" in order to prosecute and condemn the protest civil movement, and thus challenge its legitimacy and justify confronting it by all legal and illegal means.

Among the most important of these evidences and clues provided by the determinants of this vision are the following:

Setting the date for the demonstrations on October 1, 2019, for their launch, a period of months or perhaps a year before, confirms that someone made the decision to start the demonstration, and knows that he is able to mobilize the demonstrators on this date, and that he has prepared equipment and financial and logistical support.

□ The spread of the news of the date of the demonstration more than a month ago confirms that it was not a result of coincidence or a reaction to a specific issue, whether it was political or service, but rather it was a movement with immediate and temporary goals.

□ The start of the demonstrations in Baghdad and nine provinces: Babylon, Wasit, Najaf, Holy Karbala, Diwaniyah, Muthanna, Maysan, Dhi Qar and Basra, in one day and one hour, with determining the location of the assembly confirming the existence of high planning.

□ Preparing the flags of the demonstrations, such as the hundreds of interactive Facebook pages, that receive directives from the leaders of the demonstrations and publish them in the same image, font and content, confirming that they were not born at that time.

□ It was confirmed that the website (Mount Uhud) was established on Facebook in August 2018, and it is the same name that was given to the Turkish restaurant opposite the Freedom Monument, after the demonstrators occupied it on October 25, 2019, 25 days after the start of the demonstrations.

□ The demonstrators raised banners and one picture in Baghdad and the provinces bearing the same slogans, evidence of the existence of a thinking mind that proposes, prints and distributes banners (flexes) the price of one of which is not less than (25) thousand dinars, which is an amount that the poor protester or the unemployed graduate cannot afford to pay from one week to the next There must be someone who finances and pays large amounts of money to spend on the flags of the demonstrations.

□ Mobilizing the masses and transporting them from their regions to the places of demonstrations (Tahrir Square in Baghdad, Al-Haboubi Square in Nasiriyah, Education Square in Karbala, Al-Eshreen Square in Najaf, and others), and preparing cars and buses is a logistical work that is not easy, and requires experience, effort and funds.

Equipping the demonstrators with clothes and protective masks against tear gas and masks is not an individual or spontaneous act, especially since many of these equipments were imported specifically for the demonstrations, as they are not usually available in the local markets, except for blankets, mattresses, household utensils, lighting and heating materials, loudspeakers, and others.

□ Providing the demonstrators with foodstuffs, water and juices permanently and for several weeks is not an easy matter, as several thousand meals are provided in the morning, noon and evening, bearing in mind that the background of the demonstrators in general is not with the Husseini processions that provide food, drink and services to visitors on the occasion of Arbaeen, yes processions were established similar later.

□ Equipping certain groups of demonstrators with communication devices, binoculars and weapons.

□ It was said that citizens made material and financial donations in support of the demonstrations, and this is normal and good, but there is information about daily

financial transfers that reach the demonstrators from inside and outside Iraq, and according to security information, the cash is transferred to the Turkish restaurant by tuk-tuk, or by hand (11).

4- This approach confirms that the protest civil movement in Iraq has proven that "the political system is incapable of effectiveness and allowing participation, which makes the political process threatened with collapse, especially with the insistence of political Islam parties and traditional parties, as this discourse is no longer convincing to the masses, which led to Widening the gap between him and her, this gap was filled by the presence of violence in all its forms, which was a compensation for the absence of a national project adopted by political parties and forces, as it is always based on a zero-sum game in the relations between them and takes on a conflictive nature as a result of its pursuit of full profit, and in the end the movement revealed The protest is about the fragility of the structure of the system and its ineffectiveness, and it was diagnosed with its sublimeness about service demands, on the grounds that the problem is greater than the problem of governance, but rather the problem is a problem of a political system" (12).

Geographical distribution of the age groups of the civil movement audience.

The audience of the protest civil movement in Iraq after 2003 was distinguished by the fact that the majority of its audience belonged in terms of their class origins to the segments of the lower and middle class, but in terms of the age group, it can be said that "the category of youth under the age of thirty is the mainstay of this movement, as it amounts to about (60%) and this The percentage is lower than that of this age group in society (67%), and they are similar, and this is the case of most young people in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. The upward social mobility of these young groups in Iraq, as in most Arab countries, depends on the public sector in terms of job opportunities and promotions. They share with all classes of society the dependence on public services provided by the state, but they are distinguished from other generations by contact with the modern liberal global culture, and the ingenuity of using developed social media with a distinct intensity (the Internet, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube), in addition to that this segment is characterized by Strong inclination towards international art and culture, and communication with the global ideas market, especially the ideas of civil liberties, in great openness and continuous interaction" (13).

Stopping at analyzing the nature of the age groups that participated in the protest civil movement while linking it to the nature of the intellectual backgrounds of such groups, passing through defining the nature of their social and living situation - albeit through approximate numbers and statistics - is what will lead us to an objective determination of what this audience is and highlighting its characteristics and attributes. Thus knowing the motives and reasons behind his protest movement.

According to such a perspective, most of the field studies carried out by a number of researchers by examining different samples of the protesting civil movement audience according to the criteria and determinants of age group, gender,



academic achievement... and others have reached through statistics and approximate ratios to the following results and data :

□ The majority group in terms of numbers in the sample is the youth group at the age of (21-30) years, as their percentage is (49.10%), while the percentage of those aged 30 years or less is about (69.60%), with an average age of 26.29 years. The percentage of celibacy is particularly high among young people (30 years and under) to reach (73.70%), while its rate in the total sample is (60.54%). The unemployment rate also rises to reach (68.70%), compared to its counterpart. In the total sample of (60.59%), and in the educational field, the percentage of university students among these young people rises to reach (30.19%), compared to (50.13%) in the total sample, while the percentage of those with a preparatory certificate or higher is cumulatively higher, reaching (65.60%), which is close to its percentage in the total sample, and their dependency ratio is (60.40%), which is lower than that of the total sample, as it amounts to (70.40%), and the percentage of (60.10%) of young people. Their monthly household income falls between (251,000-500,000) Iraqi dinars, which is close to the total sample. The same applies to the number of family members and the type of housing, as the achieved percentages of young people are close to their counterparts in the total sample.

□ Holders of a bachelor's degree represent the largest group in the sample of protesters (22%) within the sequences of academic achievement, and the percentage of those with a preparatory certificate or higher cumulatively amounts to 65%, or about two-thirds of the sample. In contrast, according to the Poverty Survey and Evaluation in Iraq 2018, the percentage Those who hold a bachelor's degree or higher throughout Iraq amount to (7.00%), and the cumulative percentage of those with a preparatory certificate or higher is only 20.19%, and this means a significant increase in the educational level of the protesters.

□ The largest percentage of the number of family members falls within the category (4-7) members, at a rate of (58.50%) of the sample, while (33.30%) their families consist of more than 7 persons, at a rate of (82.6) members per family. And that (40, 70%) of the protesters are breadwinners for their families.

□ The percentage of owners of a dwelling in the general sample was 56%, and the remaining percentage (44%) was distributed between rented and random dwellings, while the percentage of families owning a dwelling in all of Iraq is (71.70%) according to the Poverty Survey and Assessment in Iraq 2018.

□ As for unemployment, it reached 60.59% among the general population of protesters in the study sample, and 68.70% among young people aged 30 years or less in the sample, which is a large percentage compared to the unemployment rate of (80.13%) in the general population. Iraq 2018.

□ The category that receives a monthly family income is between (500 thousand-251 thousand) Iraqi dinars, and its percentage is about (90.44%), which is the largest percentage in the total sample, while the percentage of those who get an income of 500 thousand dinars or less is (60 .3%) The average monthly household income for all of these protesters is 657 thousand dinars, which is equivalent to about

548 US dollars (the US dollar was equal to 1200 Iraqi dinars at the time of the October 2019 protests, and by calculating that the living income of the global poverty line is (1.90) dollars per day per person according to the World Bank 2015, which is equivalent to less than (60) dollars per month or approximately (70) thousand Iraqi dinars. The monthly income of the Iraqi family, which is below the poverty line for income, is about 420 thousand dinars, assuming that the average The size of the family in Iraq is 6 members, according to the Poverty Survey and Evaluation in Iraq 2018, and this means that (35.78%) of the current sample of protesters fall below the poverty line, as the monthly income of their families is less than 420 thousand Iraqi dinars, while the percentage of young people in the sample is (30 years and under) of those who fall below the poverty line, so it reaches a similar number (35.20%), and in both cases it is a high percentage compared to the already high poverty rate in Iraq, amounting to (20.05%) of the total population 2017-2018 (14).

On the basis of these data supported by percentages and figures, it can be said that "despite the significant increase in the educational level of these protesters in comparison with the rates of Iraqi society, and the fact that they represent the youth category at a high percentage, they suffer from a sharp rise in the poverty rate, and from a severe economic deterioration on the The individual and family level. Compared with the rates of the economic conditions of all Iraqis, the conditions of the protesters (living income and job opportunities) decline by rates ranging between two and three times, with an increase in the size of their families, and the compelling of a basic percentage of them to live in housing that they do not own (rented or random), and stands out The suffering of the youth category in this sample in particular, despite the high percentage of university students and celibacy, and the percentage of those responsible for supporting their families(15).

#### Centers of polarization and attraction in the geography of the civil movement

If the field of political geography in one of its dimensions means the spatial analysis of political phenomena, then this matter - with regard to our topic specifically - is that the protest civil movement in Iraq after 2003 has become in its dimensions a political / spatial phenomenon .. And if the political manifestation of the phenomenon of civil movement became clear Excluding it due to the functional incapacity of the state and its inability to carry out the performance of the responsibilities and tasks entailed therefrom. The spatial manifestation - which we will stop at excluding it at this level of research - is related to the analysis of patterns or "forms" that left their effects on the protest civil movement as a "political phenomenon" within the circle of regions. Or the vital "centers" that reflected the center's relationship with the parties within the political administrative structure of the state, and the variable that we will monitor in such a case, which represents a "modelling" for analyzing the dimensions of this relationship, was represented at the level of the civil protest movement by the emergence of what is known as "coordination" following the growing and rising tide The protest reached its peak in October 2019 (16).

The issue of the emergence of "coordinators" from within the circle of civil activists in the protest movement was dictated in its infancy by objective factors related to the increase in the magnitude and momentum of the civil protest movement, its expansion in the central and southern governorates, and the need to give it an organizational, administrative and logistical character..but with the passage of time and the escalation of manifestations And the forms of protests in the central and southern governorates - especially in the October 2019 protests - several coordination groups appeared, and each coordination is specific to a specific governorate, so there are coordination groups in Baghdad, and coordination centers in Basra, and coordination centers in Dhi Qar, Diwaniyah, Najaf, Babel, Maysan... and others. Central and southern governorates (17).

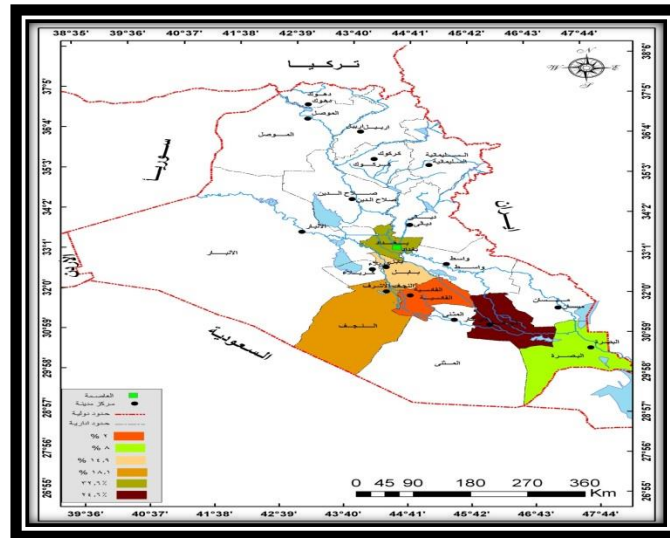
Such coordinators, after they became numerous, lost the complementary and functional character among them, which is related to controlling the rhythm and levels of the civil movement and correcting its paths, and they became foci or "centers" of control, control and leadership, which thus reinforced the nature of conflict and division among them, not only at the level of the organizational dimension of the protests, but also In terms of the declared political stances towards the demands and goals of the protest itself, there were sharp disagreements between the representatives of such coordination groups of civil activists on issues related to the protest escalation, and whether this escalation remains at the same pace and momentum in all the governorates, or is it confined to Baghdad, not Because it is the capital, but because of the historical symbolism of "Tahrir Square" that gives the civil movement a dimension and a national identity that differs from the rest of the other squares and squares in the governorates (18).

This multiplicity of coordination committees also created a division among the civil movement crowd, as each audience followed "coordinating" directives specific to its governorate, which consequently generated a kind of improvisation and decentralization in decision-making related to taking the initiative and going to squares and squares according to predetermined goals and demands, consistent with protest movements. Others can meet these goals (19).

On this basis, the pace of mass protests in the central and southern governorates - especially in October 2019, did not witness an integration of roles and directions, except for the first months that followed this date, and with the emergence of the "coordination" phenomenon, the course of the protest took a different path in the central and southern governorates. If "Baghdad" was the center of gravity in such protests - and as is evident in Map (2) which determines the intensity of participation in the civil movement for the Iraqi governorates - its influence declined in favor of other governorates that dominated the media scene, such as Dhi Qar and Basra governorates, which means that the centers of Polarization and attraction in the geography of the protest civil movement, its indicators and data changed according to the nature of the active "committees" and coordinators in each governorate, whose demands have become - sometimes centered around temporary and temporary "local" demands related to the situation of each governorate more than they are demands

related to the basic issues and principles that he advocated. The civil protest movement (20).

Map (2) the percentages of participation in the civil movement in the Iraqi governorates.



Source: The researcher, relying on Faleh Abdel-Jabbar, Iraqi protest movements from the politics of identity to the politics of issues, Middle East Center, Beirut, Lebanon, 2018, p. 15.

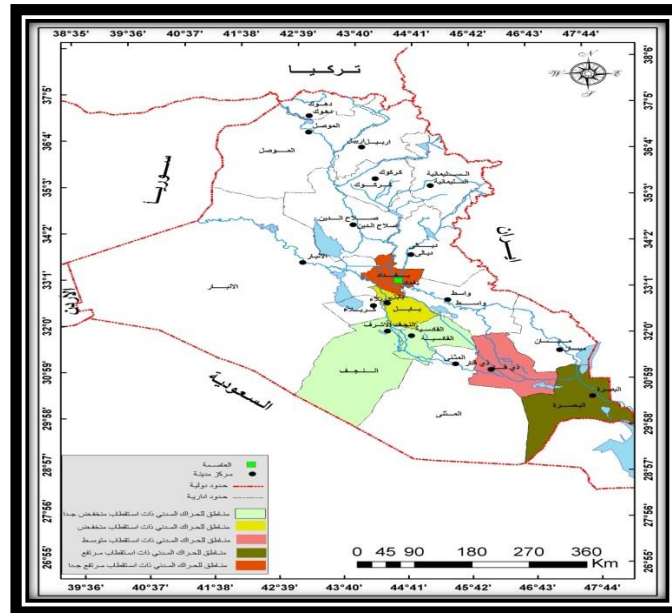
This means that such "coordinators" have contributed, as a result, to weakening the ability of the civil protest movement to have specific and unified demands and goals, despite the many calls made by a section of civil activists for the need to unify all these coordinations in one central coordination with a central committee. Which represents all the provinces in Baghdad” - specifically - that such attempts did not result in any progress in this regard, which consequently reinforced the state of division and implicit conflict between the members of these coordinators over the “leadership” of the civil protest movement and the attempt to monopolize the legitimacy of its political and media representation (21).

On this basis, it can be said that "despite the unity of goals, the geographical neighborhood of the protesters has transformed in the field of protest into sub-fields, each with a purpose and means that differ from each other, and each with its capital that establishes its social practice, and with certainty that there are multiple commonalities, including the necessity of political change, the The desire to achieve it was not by the same means and the same discourse, as it varies according to the nature of the political and socio-cultural orientation, and this is what led to the conflict between them, which took on a symbolic nature (interspersed with violent confrontations with the Sadrist movement), which led to the diminishing of their unity and the failure to achieve the main goals. which they went out to claim.(22)”.

The geography of the protest civil movement, which extended its circle in the central and southern governorates, was transformed by the phenomenon of "coordinators", whose members gave themselves powers that go beyond organizational matters to their pursuit of control, leadership and control. In Map (3), Philosophical Readings XIV.4 (2023), pp.140-154. 151

therefore, the signs of division and the absence of vision, and the nature of the contradictions produced by the civil protest movement in terms of the tensions and “schisms” that took place within it .. All these matters and others were the first signs of their emergence, starting from the moment the civil movement accepted this plurality and division In the decision-making centers according to the orientations of the actors and activists in each governorate, and this matter was therefore reflected negatively on the nature of the goals that this movement tried to achieve, and therefore what the facts of the protest civil movement ended up with.

Map (3) areas of polarization or attraction for civil movement centers in the Iraqi governorates.



Source: The researcher, relying on Haider Nizar Al-Sayed Salman, the popular history of the great protest in Iraq - from October 2019 to October 2020 - "a historical and documentary study", Dar Al-Rawafed for Publishing and Distribution, Baghdad, 1st Edition, 2022, pp. 69-100.

That the demonstrators "did not succeed in directing their compass precisely towards more rigorous and serious goals that must be achieved, and perhaps this is one of the effects of the lack of leadership, so the confusion was clear in drawing goals that were not specific or consistent, at times they demanded a change in the constitution, at others a change of government or an end to parties, and a third the enactment of a new law." for elections, and a fourth with a prime minister according to their standards.. until they finally succumbed to the temptations of changing the government and the electoral law, and both of them did not achieve the major goals for which they went out.

Based on all of the foregoing, it can be said that the protest civil movement in Iraq has gone through several waves or upward stages until it reached its climax in 2019, and it started with service demands and ended with political demands that do not call for the overthrow of the regime as much as it calls for reforming its paths and reconsidering its starting points and foundations, despite The geography of the protest civil movement in all its stages remained within the scope of the central and southern

governorates. However, such a geographical definition does not make the civil movement, with its principles and objectives, an expression of a “Shiite” component nature, as much as it expresses a popular will launched within the determinants of the geographical field. However, at the same time, it was not defined by its identity. Rather, the protest civil movement, with its discourse, demands, and slogans, transcended and transcended the ethnic, national, or sectarian discourse towards a national discourse that represented the will of the Iraqi people for reform and political change.

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