



حبر أبيض
WHITE INK



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"Arab Ahvaz... A Painful Reality and a Bleak Future"

Persian hostility to the Arabs continued from Jahiliyyah until the present time, passing through different forms and methods through the countries and states that ruled Iran, and declared their hostility to the Arabs, either explicitly or in prudent feat behind veils. Perhaps the first Arab region that was directly affected by that Iranian hostility and tyranny was in the twenties of the twentieth century, when a purely Arab sheikhdom fell on the banks of the Arabian Gulf in the year 1925 AD, which was the Arab Ahvaz that has been known since the Arab Islamic conquest of Persia with this name, in reference to the possession (Heiazat) of the land. Possession of the land means acknowledging and emphasizing its borders. The name also refers to the castles and forts built by the Arab Muslims in that region after the Battle of Al-Qadisiyah. This name in itself generated hostility as a reaction of the Persians to the Arab leadership in the Islamic era. Ahvaz region is inhabited by various Arab tribes, with Al-Muhammarah as its capital. Ahvaz today is known as Khuzestan Province (as named by the Persians). Ahvaz population exceeds two million people, according to Iranian statistics in 2006, yet some believe that they are much more than this announced number.

In fact, throughout its long history, Ahvaz was a geographical region separate from Persia, sometimes subordinate to Basra and at other times an independent emirate and sheikhdom. Pahlavi Persia took advantage of the good political relations it had with the British colonialists and its old intimate relationship therewith in the Arab Gulf, in order to achieve its desire for Persian colonial expansion in the Arab states. This was in line with the foreign ambitions, thus was the malicious plot that was hatched in coordination with Britain; a historical plot against sheikhdom of Sheikh Khazal bin Jaber Al-Kaabi (1936-1863). In April 1925, Britain planned it and colluded in its implementation with the Iranian government, which has been called Iran since that date. Among the results of this historical plot was the occupation of an authentic Arab state that belongs to the Arab world; i.e., Ahvaz, as the Persians called Ahvaz since thence the name of Arabistan (meaning the Arab states). Iranians have also called it Khuzestan, which means a state of castles and forts. By usurping the territory of Arabistan by Persian colonization, Persian authorities were expressing their deep-seated hatred towards the Arabs for the bitter defeat they gave them in the Battle of Al-Qadisiyah.

On the other hand, looking at Ahvaz geography, the huge Persian-British conspiracy against the region is evident. Iranian army entered the city of Muhammarah to defeat it and the last of its rulers, Sheikh Khazal. Its location makes it a buffer zone between Zagros Mountains and the Arabian Gulf, which includes a number of ports overlooking its waters. That is why the Persians viewed Ahzaz as one of the key strategic cities that must be under their control in any way, which is what actually happened, at the expense of the Pure Arabic people. Ahvaz is a region rich with oil and gas natural resources, in addition to fertile agricultural lands as Karun River, which is one of the largest rivers in the region, flows into it, irrigating the fertile agricultural plains.

Even today, Iranian occupier seeks to increase the percentage of non-Arabs in Ahvaz through a policy of demographic change to impose a fait accompli. That is why they sought to change the original Arabic names of cities, towns, rivers, and other geographical locations in the Ahvaz region. For example, the city of Muhammarah became (Khorram Shahr), which is a Persian word meaning into the green country. Thus, the process of changing the Arab character affected all aspects of life in Ahvaz after its Safavid occupation, with the aim to impose the Persian culture. On top of the taboos that were approved by the Iranian-Persian occupation was speaking in Arabic language in public places and whoever violates that matter would be punished, as speaking in Arabic was a crime punishable by Safavid law. Iran then decided that school curricula should be in Persian language and that no other language is permissible for the people to speak. People of Ahvaz were prohibited from naming their newborns with Arabic names or to wear in Arab fashion as they were forced to put on Persian Pahlavi dresses. The undoubted truth is that Ahvaz was only the beginning of the Persian expansionist project in the Arab region, through different regimes, governments and tools, to realize the dream of redeeming the ancient Persian empire, but in a modern fashion. Perhaps the recent events that Iran is going through contribute, in turn, to raising the dark picture about our Arab Ahvaz.