
KRG and Statesmanship

20-04-2021

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Statesmanship particularly occurs in the face of great difficulties. While, a politician is a person skilled at mobilizing the masses, and rallying them behind his party, group. A politician looks to the next election, but the statesman looks to the next generation. Nowadays, the legislative authority (Parliament) is running by singers and tv anchors while the executive authority (government) by the politician. Having said, nothing wrong with the dichotomy of statesman and politician, although the main question is; Is it impossible to find out statesmen in Kurdistan society to task them the mission?

Statecraft or Statesmanship and the Politician

Obviously, statecraft or statesmanship is a term that indicates more than one meaning which reflects the current usage of it both terminologically and empirically. It has been said that statecraft is the art of conducting state affairs,[\[1\]](#) or the art or skill of conducting government affairs.[\[2\]](#) According to the Cambridge Dictionary, statecraft is the skill of governing a country.[\[3\]](#) Once again, it may mean wisdom in the management of public affairs, state management, or the skill of being a statesman, of leading a country well.[\[4\]](#) The skill entailed in leading a state or country.[\[5\]](#)

If the "statecraft" term is used in "diplomacy" in its present meaning for the construction of strategies for securing the national interest in the international arena, as well as the execution of these strategies by diplomats.[\[6\]](#) So, here the statecraft as a term should use in a stronger sense as it is. When we accepted to say that it is an art or skill to construct and manage the entity that represented and embodied that national interests. Apparently, when we go with the meaning of statesmanship, it turned out it's not far from the sense of statecraft. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, statesmanship is the behavior or actions of an experienced politician or a member of a particular profession, for making good judgments.[\[7\]](#) A statesman is one who versed in the principles or art of government especially one actively engaged in conducting the business of a government or in shaping its policies.[\[8\]](#)

Also, Statesmanship can roughly be defined as morally excellent leadership at the polity level. Experts and others usually ascribe it ex-post to great political figures who have led their state through times of war and crisis. Which usually frequently can be heard in the public debate, especially in times of crisis and constraint, when social demands are great and trust in government is low i.e. when the state is no longer relied on.[\[9\]](#) And there is a felt need to bring back attention to an individual political model. So, there is a practical reason to reconsider statesmanship and its relation to the KRG state and to assess the chances for statesmanship under current conditions.

The goal here is not to determine which leaders should be called statecraft (statesman) or not neither to delve into theoretical details framework of the statecraft or statesman term and deep dive in, but rather, to improve our understanding of statecraft and statesmanship as such.

To find the main characters and features which delineate the position that lead the governmental affairs and running governing matters. consequently, there is a vague line between both statesmanship and politician. "A statesman is (...) not simply a politician, but an extraordinary politician who exercises wise leadership." This also seems not precise enough, however, for statesmanship is not just wise leadership but wise leadership of a special kind. Statesmanship, thus, is not just playing the game of politics well but making that very game possible. Churchill was known for using statecraft to make decisions about how Great Britain would aid in defending other nations during World War II, while Roosevelt's proficiency in statecraft was instrumental in developing the foreign policies that allowed America to expand its global political power. Studying the accomplishments of successful statesmen like these can help us understand what proper statecraft looks like in practice.[\[10\]](#)

Presenting the above brief theoretical scope, just came as an indispensable scientific necessity to aware a reader with the basic knowledge of the topic and the issues related to it among theorists. Otherwise, we may not find solutions to the problems of contemporary political life, and we may not reach an agreement on a common concept about a "statesman", but we will lay the foundations and general frameworks that will clarify this concept and open the way for the next generation to find out about future men: Who is the true statesman? Potential features of statesman in our society? The possibility of filing out the minimum KRG's positions with true s statesman? and a slew of questions and concerns in this regard.

The Artful Management of Government Affairs.

The concept of the statesman starts mainly not in terms of his importance as a power man only, but rather it stems from bearing responsibility towards others and unconditional solidarity with the subjects, which is considered one of the most prominent distinguishing signs that distinguish a statesman from a power man. The statesman is able to lead the state at all times, especially in difficult periods that witness political and economic crises, through his ability to impose the prestige of the state and manage crises by developing rescue strategies that help to get out of the impasse with the slightest damage. He is a personality also known as distinguished relations with the external milieu that makes him a leader who is recognized inside and outside his country diplomatically, economically, and politically, and all possible resources of cooperation are affordable for him to assume the leadership of the country under the name of the statesman. Shedding the light on KRG's status will lead to say that the essence of this chaos is that the reality of the situation, the Kurdistan political environment, lacks the presence of statesmen, and is filled with politicians. Moreover, sometimes we touch a bitter truth when the rival intensifies among the political figures within the ruling particular political party, awarding a governmental position act as disengagement and avoiding internal political crises.

Apparently, statesmanship particularly occurs in the face of great difficulties.[\[11\]](#) While, a politician is a person skilled at mobilizing the masses and rallying them behind his party, group, or sect, and he is fluent in criticism and showing flaws, and has high skills in rhetoric and agitation. In essence, he works to achieve the interests of his party, his group, his personal interests, or all of these interests together. A politician is a master at the maneuver.[\[12\]](#) Thus if we accept that the statesman possesses the skill and art of managing the state, then the politician possesses the skill and art of managing power.

Unfortunately, this is what we touch from the governing realm in Kurdistan. Furthermore, the race to power, not to state crafting, legalized what is illegal and legitimated what is illegitimate. Putting fire in all day.

The statesman is the man of politics plus all the higher values of the state, all the great ideals of politics, and all the esteemed standards of the law. Nations rise with statesmen, parties succeed with politicians, and governments need both, especially in countries that follow a system of party competition and democratic pluralism. But the need for statesmen is more, as political and developmental sustainability depends on statesmen. Therefore, we find in Western democracies an amazing role-exchange process. In election periods, a politician appears, and when he reaches power, he becomes a statesman. But in Kurdistan, the politician stays a politician even when he became a statesman. Moreover, the politician who took a governmental position will work more to implement his political agenda in a way the KRG became a battlefield and a place to aging political disputes rather than settle it. Instead of statecraft, there is party craft nay even group craft. In such a mess, of course, finding a statesman would semi impossible.

French President Rene Coty to distinguish between the two personalities, said: The statesman wants to do something for his country. And the politician wants his country to do something for him.[\[13\]](#)

As the weakest faith, I'll go with the saying above and accept whatever the politician wants from the KRG for the interest of his political party. But the essence is there no more political party interest but on the contrary, there is the grouping and personal interests.

Mechanisms and Challenges

Comprehending the slight differences between statecraft and politician requires closely reviewing the core objectives of both fields from a practical standpoint.

Politics and statecraft differ, however, in two critically important respects: in their temporal orientation and in their motive. Temporally, politics focuses almost exclusively on the here and now – or, at most, the immediate future, invariably with election cycles and opinion polls in mind. Consider this near-sightedness or short-sightedness. Statecraft focuses on the long-term, the long view. Such far-sightedness or “fore-sightedness” calls to mind the old English proverb: “The difference between a statesman and a politician is that the former looks to the next generation and the latter to the next election. Politics is motivated by egoism – pure (dare one say, raw) self-interest. The Self comes first, always, though never admittedly; then The Other (society, then – if ever – humanity). Statecraft is motivated by altruism: first The Other, then The Self.”[14]

The statesman is formed, and his consciousness is formed in a complex and varied process. Most of the time the ancient institutions are carried out in countries that begin with deep intellectual education that instills the concepts of the state and national security in consciousness, then think-tanks carry out training and training, and after that, the party undertakes political upbringing. And skills training and experience in the various political institutions undertake the process of refining all of this within the framework of the concepts of national security and civilized identity.[15]

As for the politician, he would have a different path, taking a popular path away from state institutions, starting with, for instant student unions, then trade unions, and joining opposition groups, then parties, and thus remains outside the state institutions until he reaches power. Then, he exercises it for a partisan, sectarian, or personal interest and he often misses the skills and capabilities of the statesman.

Therefore, we find the utter failure in the countries that got rid of the old corrupt regimes, after politicians came to power, as we see it in Iraq.

There is a schizophrenic nature in governing in Iraq in general and in Kurdistan in particular. A leader is expected to have a partisan or even a religious faith, but he is not supposed to let it influence him in his duties. But what we see nowadays is far from that principle and the opposite of it is being exercised completely.

We might say, in seeking to come to grips with its essence, that statecraft is the craft – skill, competence, expertise – of managing and leading the state in the effective conduct of its affairs – both domestic and international.

Statecraft requires immense – surpassing – skill; it is craftsmanship worthy of a master craftsman. Four skills, in particular, seem to distinguish statesmen from non-statesmen – politicians, in other words. [16] The first and singularly most important of these is an *intellectual skill*.

Second, beyond intellectual prowess, statecraft also requires *emotional skill*. Call it emotional intelligence. It is, in the first instance, a call for an empathetic sense that enables one to see (or try to see) things through the eyes of others, to feel (or try to feel) things through the emotions of others

Third, Statecraft requires *interpersonal skill* as well – the ability to interact with others confidently but not arrogantly, firmly but not antagonistically, reassuringly but not to the point of being taken for granted, in order to build confidence, maximize cooperation, and enhance the prospects of compliance.

Statecraft, finally, requires *communicative skill*. While it is perhaps too much to expect the statesman to be truly eloquent, it isn't too much to expect him to be articulate, capable of elevated, inspiring rhetoric, able and inclined to exploit the bully pulpit to its fullest, and fully attuned to the importance – the strategic importance – of imagery and the practice of (non-contrived, non-superficial) image-making.

Having said, nothing wrong with the dichotomy of statesman and politician nowadays. Although the main question is it difficult to find out above four mentioned skills in our society. Personally, I don't think so. Just a minor pacifying and reducing personal and political greed is needed tentatively.

As determining people, in our society, who are with the ability to generate strategic plans makes it possible to coordinate the affairs of large populations, is not impossible. Serve as leaders to massive numbers of public citizens, establish and sustain productive relationships with their subordinates, constituents it is possible. How successfully they administer the government and intergovernmental affairs, is applicable.

However, the term "statesman" remains ambiguous. Not everyone who has worked in politics is a statesman, and not everyone who has assumed a legislative or executive position is a statesman. The statesman is not a position but a position just as the businessman is not money and wealth, but rather a project and vision.

The Main Issue: Corruption and Partisan Governing

Corruption, partisan governing, and distrust are among the challenges facing KRG and plummeting public trust is sweeping KRG. It is infecting relations among people, between people and their government, we sense this erosion of trust in social media and domestic politics, in our community, and even in the Kurdish diaspora. Lack of public trust infuses public rhetoric and political debates, obstructing action in the public interest. All of these, in fact, made the task for the Kurdish statesman very difficult but not impossible.

For that, the trust is gained by the government as a result of its performance during a certain period and its ability to respond to the needs of the citizens. It also indicates the extent to which citizens believe that the government is operating in a manner that is consistent with their expectations which mainly can be extracted in two core issues; fighting corruption and separate the political party from the government. Group capture and grand corruption fuel citizen distrust and apathy, reinforcing the corrosive perception that KRG doesn't work for the people. Beyond feeling heard, citizens need to feel that government is responsive to their voice.

Achieving credibility

It's always easier to persuade someone if they trust you if you have credibility. Each of the challenge points that have been raised in this article illustrates a way to gain credibility. Understanding the means to achieve those goals lets KRG adopt an appropriate strategy. Aiming for consensus helps the KRG to mobilize the resources necessary to implement that strategy. Acting rather than waiting and neglecting lets KRG have some influence in how that implementation will occur and acting at the right time ensures that the efforts won't be wasted. The sum of these results is credibility: the perception that

you are striving for achievable goals in a way that is consensual, not manipulative, and that leverages existing momentum to cause a change instead of attempting to force change to happen.^[17] For instance, rebuild the trust in the Peshmarga recent failures of the KRG military, in Kirkuk and other disputed areas on October 16, 2017, make the need for stronger statesman governing policy urgent for KRG to earn a reputation as a trustworthy entity and achieve credibility.

General Awareness

In our poor political cultures, the general public has not guided a general vision to understand and limit the characteristics of state man, and we have not touched any awareness of what are the functions, tasks, and duties adopted by the man of the state among those who are ambitious and self-taught.^[18]

This is exactly, we can touch it in our society recently. Just a quick comparison between the first session of Parliament in 1992 and the recent last three sessions, the bitter truth can be tested easily. The same thing can be said towards the governmental cabinet. The selfishness and short-sightedness of Kurdish political parties led to fill the parliament seats with singers, cults, tv anchors... etc. paralleling those definitely do not mean any offense. Just simply, they are suitable professionals, but they had been put in an inappropriate place by political parties through the mass.

A politician before the general public should recognize that the political parties were established as a reaction to the new modern concept of a state which is the state of institutions and law. Or, at least to let them know that the political parties are links to deliver their demands and respond through the state whenever the political party gets power at each election cycle. Otherwise, in case the politician has failed to do so, which is, unfortunately, the most likely in our area, we will not find for these parties any achievement recorded in the history of societies and their growth, and the men of these groups and parties are characterized as investors of positions to achieve individual and personal goals and not for the sake of advancing the supremacy of societies according to well-established and purposeful principles.

Publishing such an awareness of course cannot be achieved through the political party itself or even the government. Just simply cannot imagine authority to eradicate its power. Nay could be ascribed to the universities and think tanks to do their part.

The Italian philosopher and historian Giorgio Agamben describes partisan governing, in writing "The State of Exception," as the state in which the authority disrupts the rule of law and the separation of powers and other principles on which the institution of the "state" is based on the grounds that there is some danger in an exceptional moment, and accordingly the people of this authority build a narrative. A complex, multi-level network of relationships, and a punitive mechanism that goes beyond the idea of institutionalization, aiming to extend the validity of this exception to make it normal and natural. Accordingly, for now, The Government of Exception would be the suitable title for the KRG if it continues on such a method of governing and governmental positions running by mere political persons constantly.

[1] <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/statecraft>

[2] <https://www.learnersdictionary.com/definition/statecraft>

[3] <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/statecraft>

[4] <https://www.definitions.net/definition/statecraft>

[5] <https://www.yourdictionary.com/statecraft>

[6]

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/world-politics/article/abs/an-introduction-to-the-strategy-of-statecraft/93B08D519095BF35958AA7B77E4B66C5>

[7] <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/statesmanship>

[8] <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/statesman>

[9] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10457097.2016.1229563>

[10] <https://online.norwich.edu/academic-programs/resources/diplomacy-and-statecraft-essential-differences>

[11] Ibid.

[12]

<http://gate.ahram.org.eg/daily/News/203127/4/726310/%D9%82%D8%B6%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A1/%D8%B1%D8%AC%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A9.aspx>

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[14] <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/statecraft-strategy-and-ethics-a-noetic-trinity>

[15]

<http://gate.ahram.org.eg/daily/News/203127/4/726310/%D9%82%D8%B6%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A1/%D8%B1%D8%AC%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A9.aspx>

[16] <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/statecraft-strategy-and-ethics-a-noetic-trinity>

[17] <https://www.geoff-hart.com/articles/2009/statecraft.htm>

[18] <https://www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=261281>