

## Postcolonial Reading of George Packer's Betrayed

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### Abstract

George Packer's play Betrayed (2008) is considered as an anti-war play which depicts the betrayal of the Americans for the Iraqis who collaborate with its forces especially the translators. A Post-colonial reading of the play also shows the recurrent image of the Oriental man in the Western literature ( of course here the Iraqi people who are depicted as either naïve, simple, and stupid or extremists, fundamentalists or terrorists). The study also shows the contradictions in the text. the play is , on the one hand, a propaganda and a justification of the war and on the other hand it reveals the false claims of the Americans of liberating the country and reconstructing it making it a democratic country.

### المستخلص

تعد مسرحية المخذولون (2008) للكاتب الأمريكي جورج باكر من المسرحيات المعادية للحرب التي تصور خذلان الامريكان للعراقيين الذين تعاونو معها وبالأخص المترجمين. أن دراسة المسرحية وفق نظرية النقد الادبي ( ما بعد الاستعمارية ) يظهر ايضا ان المسرحية تبين الصورة المتكررة للانسان الشرقي في الادب الغربي ( وبالطبع هنا صورة الانسان العراقي التي ظهرت اما شخصية ساذجة, بسيطة, وغبية او انها شخصية متطرفة, او ارهابية. وتظهر الدراسة التناقضات الموجودة في النص فمن ناحية فأن المسرحيه تعتبر دعاية وتبرير للحرب ومن ناحية اخرى النص يفضح زيف الادعاءات الامريكية بتحرير العراق واعادة بناءة ليكون بلدا ديمقراطيا

Rudyard kipling's poem, " The Ballad of East and West" (1889) , is often quoted on all occasions as a proof of a permanently unbridgeable gap between the East and the West , " *OH, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.*" <sup>1</sup>

Postcolonial literature is a category devised to replace and expand what was called Commonwealth literature. It deals with the writings from countries that were once colonies of the European powers. In 1980s and 1990s, it developed under the influence of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). The prominent figures of postcolonial studies have been, in addition to Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bahabha.

Said, in his book *Orientalism*, examines the place of the Orient in the European thinking. He defines Orientalism as, " *a way of coming with the Orient that is based on the Orient special place in European Western experience.*" <sup>2</sup> He states that, "

*European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self."*<sup>3</sup>

Then he explains the relationship between the Westerners and the Easterners , a relationship that is based on domination and submission, "*There are Westerners, and there are Orientalists. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated....*"<sup>4</sup> Ernest Renan , the nineteenth century French philologist and historian, states:

*Every person, however slightly he may be acquainted with the affairs of our time, sees clearly the actual inferiority of the Mohammedan countries [ .....] All those who have been in the East, or Africa are stuck by the way in which the mind of the true believer is fatally limited by the species of iron circle that surrounds his head, rendering it absolutely closed to knowledge.*<sup>5</sup>

Aime Cesaire in, "*Discourse on Colonialism*" states that '*a nation which colonizes, that a nation which justifies colonization .... is already a sick civilization, a civilization that is morally diseased*'<sup>6</sup> . He cited few incidents from the colonial expeditions which claimed their aim to civilize the barbarians. He quoted Colonel de Montgnac, one of the conquerors of Algeria saying, "*In order to banish the thoughts that sometimes besiege me, I have some heads cut off , not the heads of artichokes but the heads of men.*"<sup>7</sup> and Count d' Herrison , "*It is true that we are bringing back a whole barrellful of ears collected pair by pair , from prisoners , friendly or enemy.*"<sup>8</sup>

Cesaire describes the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized saying:

*Between colonizer and colonized there is room only for forced labor, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation, theft, rape, compulsory crops, contempt mistrust, arrogance, self- complacency, swinishness, brainless elites, degraded masses."*<sup>9</sup>

Kerstin W. Shands states that John Mcleod has pointed out that postcolonialism is not the same as ' after colonialism' as if the colonial values are no longer to be reckoned with. For her postcoloniality is a time period marked by challenges of difficult change and complicated continuity within unpredictable mix of pre-, anti ,post-, and neo-colonial elements.<sup>10</sup>

She mentions Bart Moore- Gilbert's perception of postcolonialism as a 'reading practice' related to a multi- dimensional continuum of past and present colonialist and imperialist- inflicted power relations with analysis of cultural forms which mediate, challenge or reflect upon the relations of domination and subordination which have their roots in the history of modern European colonialism and imperialism that continue to be apparent in the present era of neo-colonialism.<sup>11</sup>

George Packer's *Betrayed* ( 2008) is based on his article, "*The Betrayed: The Iraqis who trusted America the Most*", which appeared in the New Yorker in March 2007. In the play, Packer expresses the betrayal of the Americans for Iraqis who choose to collaborate with them proving that the Americans are not only just incompetent occupiers but also unreliable allies and indifferent friends. Richard Adam states that Packer was one of the vocal of the countless American liberal journalists who justified and encouraged the 2003 neo-colonial invasion of Iraq in

the name of democracy and human rights but later he adopted a critical look at post-Iraq for he witnessed the country suffer the horrible consequences of the policies and actions he advocated and for which he shared responsibility.<sup>12</sup>

A lot of critics dealt with the play and most of their approaches were limited to the emphasis on the betrayal of the Americans for the Iraqi people who chose to support and help them. Marc Pitzke, in " *Betrayed: From Hope to Despair for Iraqi translators*." Wrote:

*Thousands of Iraqis saw the U.S invasion of Iraq  
as their opportunity to help rebuild their country.  
Many of them signed up with the U.S military to  
work as translators.*<sup>13</sup>

He concludes that the play depicts the real – life suffering of the translators and their betrayal at the hands of the Americans.<sup>14</sup>

Sirkku Aaltonin analyzed the play as a depiction of a clash of ethical codes. He states that as the title suggests, the theme of the play is betrayal so the attitude of the American military and politicians is regarded as unethical. He adds that translators are mostly seen as potential traitors. They are also seen as outlaws who are neither punished nor protected by laws of any state.<sup>15</sup>

A Postcolonial Reading of the text shows how it could be seen as propaganda and a justification of the war as it depicts Iraqi people who are disgusted with their lives waiting for a saviour even if that saviour would bring destruction to everything. It also emphasizes the old-new Western image of the Eastern man. Such an image which shows Iraqi people as either naïve, simple, stupid, uncivilized and easily deceived or extremists, fundamentalists, and terrorists.

The Western representation of Muslims and Arabs is not a new fabrication but it had been rooted deeply in the Western mentality ever since the first contacts with Arabs and Muslims. Since the Middle Ages along the Arab expansion in Europe until the very days of the third Millennium, the West promotes the same stereotypes for Arabs and Muslims as an alien "other" or rather "enemy". Driss Ridouani states that :

*In the past Arabs and Muslims were largely recognized  
in the west as "erotic", "primitive", "ignorant", "slave  
traders" ..... lately the terms such as " terrorists",  
" fundamentalists" and " blood- thirsty" are the terms  
that are over- generally ascribed to the Arabs and Muslims.*<sup>16</sup>

Dawlat Yassin in " *Representation of Muslims in Early Modern English Literature*" states that English theatre produced a lot of plays in which Muslims are presented as a source of lechery and barbarism. She gives examples like Thomas Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West* which presents English people as morally superior and more civilized than Muslims. In the play the character of Mullisheg is barbarous in the way he seeks power and sexual pleasure. He raises his fortune by giving orders to seize Christian merchants' ships and goods to enrich his state treasury. He plans to buy sexual pleasure with his money by purchasing concubines and trying to hire the fairest Christian damsels. In this play, Muslims are openly presented as pagans whose main interest in life is sexual pleasure whereas Englishmen become the synonym of virtue, modesty, and beauty. Another example of such plays is Philip Massinger's *The Renegado*, in which Muslim characters are portrayed as completely debauched while Christian characters as having the religious and spiritual fortitude to

withstand all temptations and preserve Christian virtue.<sup>17</sup>

In George Packer's *Betrayed*, the image of Arabs and Muslims is not different. The play starts with Adnan who talks of his dreams when he was a school boy and how he loved the English language and used to listen to English songs. When the Americans came to the country, it seemed to Adnan that new horizons have been opened for him. The most notable aspect in the prologue is that *A Cursing man* is shown on the stage. He is ill-dressed and poor looking, waving at a photo of Saddam:

*Saddam, you dog, you destroyed my life!  
You sent me to fight the Iranians and see  
What they did to me!  
(He holds up his shirt to show a wound)  
For what? For you? Now I'm old, my life  
is finished. I spit on you., I step on your face!  
May the Americans catch you and cut you into  
a thousand pieces! May they destroy your son  
and their sons forever!*<sup>18</sup>

A sober analysis of this speech would reveal a justification and a propaganda of the war on Iraq. It not only gives the Americans the right to use force to overthrow a tyrannic regime headed by a dictator but makes it a moral duty for a great power like America to use such force to save helpless people from this dictator even if such war would bring destruction to everything. In fact George Packer himself is a liberal journalist who encouraged such war. Commenting on the role of media in our age, Mirza Asmer Beg states that in our age it is the master and sometimes it is the demon master. He adds that yesterday Saddam was the moderate Arab par excellence, the next day he was the greatest threat to the civilized world. He confirms that the influence of the media is central to the understanding of power and domination and that images broadcast on television can be as devastating to a country as a volley of missiles falling on it.<sup>19</sup>

In the next scene, Adnan and Laith are seen in a hotel room in Baghdad discussing the dangerous situation in the country and the risks they face. Each one of them try to give the idea that armed groups control their areas and the image of these different groups is definitely that of murderers:

*Adnan: there was fighting in Amiriya between Americans  
and Al Qaeda- they beheaded a teacher on my street- so I had to keep returning  
home. then I got stuck at my sister's.*<sup>20</sup>

While Laith states that he receives a different threat every day and he knows these threats come from " Al Mahdi Army", he discloses that he tries to escape from Iraq but the police stops him because his " passport is a fake" and his " passport fixer" takes six hundred dollars and sells him a garbage but he is lucky for they don't arrest him.<sup>21</sup>

Then Laith and Adnan started to remember when the Americans first came to the country in 2003:

*Laith: .... Every Iraqi who wanted a job was here.  
Journalists were here, soldiers were here,  
Everyone mixing freely. It's sad to remember.  
After the invasion -*<sup>22</sup>

Here Adnan declares that he "was totally against the word invasion" for he was always saying that, "America was here to make a change".<sup>23</sup> so people were dreaming

of a change and Adnan was among thousands of people who wish to find a job with Apple or Microsoft. Laith says bitterly, *"But there were no Apple or Microsoft here. There were Marines."*<sup>24</sup>

In the next scene, some Iraqis are introduced. Stage directions give the reader that these people are standing in line and they make chaos. The American soldier is trying to control this chaos. There is a dialogue between an old Iraqi man and the American soldier. The old man speaks in Arabic telling the soldier that his sons had disappeared during Saddam's time and he wants to know their fate, the soldier couldn't understand Arabic:

*Soldier: Just give little English.*

*Come on, don't cry.*

*Old man: No English.*

*Soldier: I don't know what to tell you, man.*<sup>25</sup>

Laith interferes and translates the old man's speech:

*Laith: He wants to find out what happen to his four sons. They disappeared during Saddam's time.*

*Their names are on this paper.*

*Soldier: Dude! Where'd you learn to talk like that?*<sup>26</sup>

The dialogue goes on to reveal how Laith has learned English Language by listening to American music, mostly from Metallica. In an answer to a woman who asks for electricity, water, a job for her son and pleads the Americans to arrest the criminal gangs in her neighborhood, the soldier replies, *"yeah, sure. Do I look like Superman?"*<sup>27</sup>

Another Iraqi is introduced in scene three, he is given no name, but the "Dishdasha Man". This man has come to search for his brother (a banana merchant) who has been arrested by the Americans. Though he tells the American soldier that his brother has done nothing, the soldier treats him with suspect and questions him:

*Soldier: Bananas. That's just beautiful. So your brother*

*didn't shoot that RPG at my patrol last week?*

*Didn't try to blow up captain Prior's vehicle?*

*He didn't kill specialist Hunter?*<sup>28</sup>

In a previous speech, the American soldier asks Laith to come and work for his unit, Alpha Company. He states that their mission is, *"We do patrols, raids, checkpoints. We definitely could use some interpreters."*<sup>29</sup>

The relationship between the Americans and Iraqis is not that of equality but one that is between dominants and subjects. The purpose of the invasion is not to establish democracy and reconstruct a country destroyed by long-term economic sanctions, but to control it and subject its citizens. In scene four, Laith complains to his friend Adnan that he had asked the snipers to cover him up while he was in his way out, and a few nights later, he met one of them, *"I said thanks for covering me."*<sup>30</sup> the sniper started to laugh because it was just a story to trick Laith and the soldiers didn't want to deal with it. Laith comes to the conclusion:

*Laith : ...I was naïve. I believed the Americans wouldn't*

*Lie to us. We were friends. Yeah, but they didn't*

*trust us. That was my first shock-nobody is looking*

*out for you. You are on your own.*<sup>31</sup>

At the embassy, Prescott, a state department official, interviews Adnan who comes to have a job. Prescott asks Adnan about his previous jobs and Adnan admits that he had been selling books in Al- Mutanabi Street in Baghdad. When Adnan expresses his view that when the war erupted, he told himself that he would start to live, Prescott hurries to ask him:

" *So you see it as a liberation? Not an occupation?  
Because our polling shows a split in Iraqi public  
opinion.*"

Adnan: *I see it as a chance. Only that. We were living  
in this great prison.*<sup>32</sup>

Adnan should have the polygraph test before he gets his job and he meets Intisar there. They exchange dialogue and the Regional Security Officer (RSO) orders them to relax with no lying because polygraph measures anxiety. The most important thing the RSO is up to is to know whether these translators are involved with any kind of plot against the lives of the Americans for they are not trustworthy:

RSO: *Have you ever been involved in a plot on the  
Life of any Americans in Iraq?*

Adnan: *Never.*

RSO: *Ever had any contacts with insurgents of any kind?*

Adnan: *They live on my street but I don't talk to them.*<sup>33</sup>

Intisar states that in the region where she lives, there are a lot of people who look at her with hatred and suspicion. She says that she hears one of them threaten, "*This is our area and our rules must be followed.*"<sup>34</sup> Intisar declares that she never cares about them and Prescott becomes curious to know why:

Intisar: *I don't want to do anything someone obliges  
me to do. I hate that. I won't do it. I was forced  
to do many things in Saddam's regime. I don't  
want to do that any more.*<sup>35</sup>

In a previous speech, Prescott states that, "*our job is to build institutions of democracy that will fit the Iraqi context after the last American soldier goes home.*"<sup>36</sup> It is obvious that the play from the very beginning tries to make the belief that there is a great difference between the time of Saddam and the time of Americans. Everything was prohibited and Iraq looked like a great prison during Saddam's reign while people nowadays are free to think and do whatever they see it true. The irony is that the interpreters, among others, who support the American project in Iraq are the first people to realize the false claims of the Americans. Laith expresses his disgust after an experience with the Americans.

*Laith: Last week they took me out on patrol in Sadr  
City even after I told them it was dangerous for  
me to be seen in my own neighborhood. I had  
to put a bandanna across my face.... And they  
gave me a cheap vest that does not protect  
against a kalashnikov.*<sup>37</sup>

Then laith comes to realize the situation and tells his friend Adnan:

Laith: *..... Iraqis don't trust me. Americans didn't  
trust me from the beginning. I'm like a person  
in between.*<sup>38</sup>

Then the three translators are seen together listening to the RSO who gives a security briefing. The RSO addresses them, "*the enemy is trying to penetrate the Green Zone perimeter, and only has to succeed once.*"<sup>39</sup>

It is obvious that the RSO uses the word enemy for all those who oppose the American existence in Iraq especially insurgents. Throughout his speech the RSO keeps repeating the Green Zone and the Red Zone. Intisar asks him:

Intisar: *What is the Red Zone?*

RSO: *The Red Zone ... It's what's outside the Green*



*Zone.*

Intisar: *You mean Iraq?*<sup>40</sup>

So it is very clear that with the coming of the Americans, Iraq has become a Red Zone, a dangerous place to live not only for the Americans but for Iraqis as well.

In the coming scene, Intisar tries to explain the risks she faces everyday on her way to the embassy even when she is standing in the line waiting to be allowed to enter. She hears nasty things from men who are also waiting in the same line. She also says that whenever she hears shooting in her street, she feels terrified thinking that "alaasa" have come to kill her. She gives the meaning of alaasa as the men who sit on the street looking for enemies and traitors.

There is no room of understanding between the colonizers and the colonized. Intisar expresses such view at the end of scene nine:

Intisar: *... Bill Prescott is a very nice man, but we don't tell him all these things. He encourages us, he says be patient, things will get better soon. But Americans cannot have the feeling what it is to take these risks. They cannot understand.*<sup>41</sup>

Americans' indifference for the lives of those who collaborate with them leads to the murder of Intisar at the hands of what the Americans call the insurgents:

Prescott: *I'm sorry. It's bad news ... Intisar's regular driver was sick yesterday. He sent two friends for her .... They drove her around Mansour and they cut off her hair and then they shot her and dumped her on the street.*<sup>42</sup>

Filled with horror, Laith and Adnan meet the American Ambassador. The meeting shows them the real purpose behind their employment. He tells them frankly that they are, "the eyes and the ears of this embassy. We couldn't do our work without you."<sup>43</sup>

In an attempt to escape waiting in the line in order not to be identified by armed groups, Adnan asks for badges that enable them not to wait. The Ambassador refers to the RSO as the person who is in charge of the badges. In fact, the Americans are unwilling to help these interpreters for they are untrustworthy. A dialogue between the RSO, Laith, and Adnan conveys such mistrust:

Adnan: *We work at the embassy, We come here every day. We are FSNs. We are easily identified- our colleague was killed.*

RSO: *You live in the Red Zone, right? That means you are under continuous threat. Someone finds out where you work, they could force you to smuggle something in here. It's happened. That's why we have these procedures.*<sup>44</sup>

The RSO informs them that he cannot change their badges into green ones because this means permission to carry weapons and such thing is against their security procedures. Laith's insistence makes the RSO tough that he declares that, "Embassy security is number one priority. I won't do anything to jeopardize it."<sup>45</sup> So the RSO is unwilling to help them because such help would mean two things the first is that the interpreters would be equally treated like Americans and secondly they are going to be trusted and such trust may lead to the destruction of the embassy one day.

It is obvious that the play shows armed groups from both sides Sunni and shia as stupid, naïve, strict and some of them are easily deceived. In scene sixteen, Laith, Adnan and Prescott are seen in a restaurant in Baghdad. They talk how they manage

to come to this restaurant without being identified by Jaish al- Mahdi . The following dialogue reveals how the members of this army are naïve and can be deceived easily:

Prescott: *What did you tell them?*

Laith: *That you are my mentally defective friend from Kurdistan.*

Prescott: *Seriously? And they believed you?*

Laith : *They are not very smart. I said some nice words about Moqtada and that was enough.* <sup>46</sup>

Besides being murderous , Al-Qaeda members are depicted as very funny and strict imposing very silly rules:

Adnan: *... And in my neighborhood, Al-Qaeda is becoming very strong and bringing their strict rules.*

Prescott: *What rules? Give me details. Like no jeans.*

Laith: *They threaten you if you have spare tire in your car because this means you do not trust in God's help.*

Adnan: *They killed a man who always sold ice next to The vegetable market because they said there was no ice in the time of the prophet. This is their religion.* <sup>47</sup>

Even jokes mentioned in the text enhance the persistent image of the Eastern man as naïve, stupid or murderous. Laith speaks of a joke that an American soldier was about to shoot a member of Al-Mehdi Army when that member pleads the soldier not to kill him for the sake of Imam Hussein. The soldier asks about Imam Hussein and the member tells him that he is the grandson of our prophet so the soldier lets him go. A week later the soldier is caught in Falluja but this time by Al- Qaida members. The soldier tells Al-Qaida member, " *No, please, in the name of Imam Hussein*". Al- Qaida member shoots him saying, " *What? American and shia?*". <sup>48</sup> Prescott hurries to ask, " *Do most Iraqi jokes involve beheading?*" <sup>49</sup> the answer comes from Adnan who says that most Iraqi jokes involve someone stupid from Falluja and he tells a very bad one that cannot be mentioned here. <sup>50</sup>

During a conversation with Adnan and Laith, Prescott expresses his surprise over the fact that they( Adnan & Laith) are still friends despite the civil war that is going on between Shia and Sunni:

Prescott: *I'm sort of surprised you guys are still friends.*  
*I mean, you know-*

Adnan: *Sunni and Shia? Don't be afraid to say the words, Bill.*

Laith: *These days it is unusual.* <sup>51</sup>

Later Laith and Adnan quarrel over who started the civil war and they exchange accusations:

Adnan: *Since Askari shrine was bombed, JAM is putting all Their efforts in killing Sunnis.*

Laith: *After Sunnis were killing Shia for three years.*

Adnan: *Shia parties are encouraging the hate and telling People this is your only chance now to survive.*

Laith: *My opinion, it started when Americans came with Shia leaders and wanted to give Shia leadership-* <sup>52</sup>



They reach the conclusion that it is not important who starts the civil war but what really matters is to end this war and find a new start because everybody is being killed. Another image of mistrust and suspect is portrayed in the dialogue between the RSO and Laith who is seated for the polygraph test:

RSO: *You're the guy who wanted the green badges, right?*

Laith: *for our security.*

RSO: *Green would have gotten you past the outer checkpoint without a search.*

.....

RSO: *Why did you send the email?*

Laith: *Because my contact asked me to do him a favor.*

RSO: *You use your job here to do favors for the enemy.*<sup>53</sup>

When Laith insists that they are friends, the RSO expresses his dissatisfaction over the idea of whether they are friends or enemies as long as they are Iraqis for such contacts are considered as a kind of exploiting his position to do favors for Iraqis, " *So you are using your official position to do favors for friends? Enemies, friends, doesn't matter just so long as they're Iraqis.*"<sup>54</sup>

In a tone full of despair and frustration, Adnan states, " *All the sacrifices, all the work, all the devotion mean nothing to you. We are still terrorists in your eyes.*"<sup>55</sup> In the next scene, both of Adnan and Laith express the dangers and threats they face every day and Laith says, " *You know what is clear to me? We are spies! We have been spies. Every day I provided information to the occupiers for money. And see what they've done to me!*"<sup>56</sup>

One of the greatest moral duties undertaken by the Americans and for which they invade Iraq is to liberate its people from the dictator and let them live in peace in their country. A dialogue between the Ambassador and Prescott reveals that there are thousands of Iraqi people who prefer to be refugees rather than staying in Iraq:

Ambassador: *A mass exodus from the Green Zone? What would be the optics of that? It would mean game over, we're on our way out.*

Prescott: *I agree we would need procedures so we don't encourage people to become refugees. But once they make the decision to leave, I believe, with all due respect, that we have an obligation.*

Ambassador: *Obligation based on what?*

Prescott: *Because we're Americans, sir. Do you remember what Ford said about letting in the Vietnamese? "To do less would have added moral shame to humiliation." This is just the same.*

Ambassador: *Except in Iraq. The president has declared his determination to win. How can we resettle large numbers of Iraqis here when we are still in the Fight there?*"<sup>57</sup>

The end of the play shows that the Americans are unwilling to grant the interpreters visa lest it is considered a failure to their so called American Project in Iraq which supposes this country to be a model for democracy in the Middle East. There is no way but Europe and Laith Questions, " *I never thought about Europe.*"<sup>58</sup>

Adnan is left behind, " *I miss Laith... I miss Intisar too, and I miss Bill..... It is strange to think of becoming Swedish. I will have to be like a child again and learn a new language.*<sup>59</sup>

Magid Shihade, in his article, *War on Terror, or Interests and Ideology? Reframing U.S. Foreign Policy Before and After 9/11*, states that U.S and its spokespersons keep accusing its opponents of being inflexible and it usually does something and accuse them of doing the same thing. He adds that this pathology of projection is:

*embedded in Orientalist and colonialist mentality that has been at work since the rise of Western modernity. For instance the U.S. occupied Iraq, killed, raped, and tortured its people, and then turned around and blamed the Iraqis for a culture of violence.*<sup>60</sup>

The play reinforces the image of the Oriental man as an opposite to his counterpart ( the Western man) and these twain shall never come to terms of understanding. Though the play is considered as an anti-war play depicting the betrayal of the Americans for those who collaborate with them, yet the text tries to show the Americans as saviors whose aim is to liberate Iraqis from dictatorship and let them live in peace. It also depicts Iraqi people as either naïve, simple, and stupid or extremists, fundamentalists, and terrorists. The play shows a lot of contradictions; on the one hand there are instances of justification and propaganda for the war and on the other hand it reveals the false claims of the Americans of liberating Iraq and reconstructing this country which is destroyed by long term sanctions.

Notes

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