



Postcolonial Feminist Readings of Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire*: Representing Iraqi Women in Post-Occupation Theatre

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Abstract in English

This study analyzes Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire* (2003) using postcolonial feminist theory, concentrating on the depiction of Iraqi women's experiences amid the U.S. presence of Iraq. The study examines how Raffo, an Iraqi-American writer, emphasizes underrepresented voices while navigating the intricacies of diasporic identification, cultural mediation, and ethical portrayal. This study underscores the diverse experiences of Iraqi women, focusing on their agency, resilience, and desire under the pain of war, sanctions, and authoritarianism. The study also looks at how the play was received in Western theaters, focusing on how empathy, exoticism, and critical consciousness work together. Insights from comparisons with other diasporic and postcolonial playwrights illustrate Raffo's distinctive contribution to the global conversation on war, gender, and representation. In the end, *9 Parts of Desire* serves as a counter-archive that questions mainstream stories, supports voices that are often ignored, and shows how postcolonial feminist theater can promote moral

Paper Info

Keywords

Heather Raffo, *9 Parts of Desire*, postcolonial feminism, Iraqi women, theatre, war, diaspora, representation

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engagement, cross-cultural comprehension, and
opposition to imperial ways of knowing.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.63797/bjh>.

I. Introduction

Cultural responses to the 2003 Iraq invasion and its aftermath have been widespread, even in theatre. The Iraq War is a geopolitical crisis and a cultural lens for Western writers to investigate power, representation, and identity. The innovative drama *9 Parts of Desire* (2003) by Iraqi-American playwright Heather Raffo stands out. The English-language play took Iraqi women's voices to Western stages at a time when political rhetoric reduced them to statistics. Raffo's work combines her Western-trained acting and playwriting with Iraqi women's conflict, tragedy, and survival stories, which are rarely heard in Western theatre.

Its subject matter and destabilization of war and occupation narratives make *9 Parts of Desire* important. Raffo centers Iraqi women in Western discourse on Iraq, which has been dominated by political speeches, journalistic stories, and military tales. Her portrayals of artists, doctors, widows, and moms are based on real-life events. These voices challenge the stereotype of Iraqi women as victims or passive figures. This alternative war archive emphasizes recollection, pain, and resilience, according to Raffo. This study argues that Raffo's play can be fruitfully examined through the lens of postcolonial feminist theory, a critical framework that interrogates how colonial and neo-colonial structures intersect with gendered experiences.

Postcolonial feminism not only critiques Western representations of "Third World women" but also emphasizes the importance of contextual, localized voices that resist universalizing narratives. In the case of *9 Parts of Desire*, Raffo's dramaturgy situates Iraqi women's experiences within both the historical legacies of Western imperialism and the immediate realities of post-occupation Iraq. The play therefore becomes a site where questions of power, voice, and representation converge.

The relevance of this research lies in its contribution to ongoing scholarly discussions about the relationship between theatre and geopolitics. Contemporary theatre often serves as a mirror for social crises, providing audiences with affective encounters that go beyond factual accounts. By examining *9 Parts of Desire* through a

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postcolonial feminist framework, this study highlights how theatre can intervene in global discourses of war and gender, offering critical alternatives to dominant Western imaginaries. Furthermore, the analysis underscores how a playwright of Iraqi descent but Western training complicates the binary of insider/outsider in cultural representation. Raffo's position as a diasporic subject raises important questions about authenticity, authority, and the ethics of speaking for others.

The play's title, based on Al-Mutanabbi's ninth-century poem, acknowledges cultural legacy while addressing modern issues. Nine monologues by Raffo illuminate many aspects of Iraqi women's existence amid dictatorship, sanctions, invasion, and occupation. Mirroring war and shifts, the broken structure resists linear storytelling. It also permits multiple voices on stage, forcing viewers to confront Iraqi womanhood's heterogeneity.

This approach supports postcolonial feminist critiques of essentialism, which warn against homogenizing Global South women's experiences.

Raffo's Western reception makes it ideal for postcolonial feminist interpretation. After premiering in New York in 2003, *9 Parts of Desire* was presented across the US and UK to critical acclaim. The drama reached audiences saturated by media depictions of Iraq as a combat zone. Raffo broke the divide between Western viewers and Iraqi subjects by combining intimate accounts of regular Iraqi women with the political context. Audiences saw Iraqis as multifaceted people with feelings, wants, and agency, not just war victims. This perspective shift shows theatre's political potential as a tool for empathy and critical reflection.

Postcolonial discourse is further complicated by Raffo's American-Iraqi identity. Raffo has had a personal relationship to Iraqi culture, unlike Western playwrights. She recognizes the advantages and disadvantages of her Western upbringing and education. As a cultural mediator, she can translate Iraqi women's voices for Western audiences while avoiding appropriation. Postcolonial feminist theory highlights voice, agency, and representation in cross-cultural encounters, making it useful for evaluating this tension.

This study uses careful reading of Raffo's text and postcolonial feminist scholars like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, and Trinh T. Minh-ha's theories. Given its focus on war memories, the play draws on trauma studies, but within a postcolonial feminist perspective. Reviews, interviews with

Raffo, and scholarly assessments of *9 Parts of Desire* will add background. The goal is to place Raffo's play amid war theater and postcolonial feminist cultural creation. Ultimately, this study contends that *9 Parts of Desire* is more than a play about Iraq; it is a theatrical intervention that challenges Western spectators to rethink their relationship to global conflicts and to reconsider the narratives through which those conflicts are mediated. By amplifying marginalized voices and foregrounding the gendered dimensions of war, Raffo's work contributes to a reimagining of both theatre and politics. The analysis that follows will demonstrate how a postcolonial feminist reading reveals the layered complexities of Raffo's dramaturgy and underscores the ongoing importance of theatre in making visible the human dimensions of geopolitical crises.

Theoretically, Postcolonial feminism critiques gender, power, and colonial histories. It stresses local settings of gendered oppression rather than generalizing women's experiences, drawing from postcolonial theory and feminist critique. While mid-20th-century Western feminism claimed a shared "sisterhood" across cultures, postcolonial feminists have shown how such universalizing discourses suppress or mislead women in the Global South. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, and Trinh T. Minh-ha have argued that Western academic, political, and cultural frameworks co-opt "Third World women" voices, creating the "subaltern who cannot speak" problem.

Representation critique is central to postcolonial feminist philosophy. Western culture has always portrayed the "Oriental woman" as docile, exotic, or oppressed, confirming colonial rescue. Modern discourses about humanitarian military interventions revive this dynamic. The 2003 Iraq invasion was justified by the promise of freedom for Iraqi women. Postcolonial feminism challenges this argument by showing how those women were silenced politically. It challenges how women express their subjectivities and the mechanisms that mediate or distort them.

In theatre, postcolonial feminism helps analyze how plays portray women from colonized or occupied regions. Theatre produced, contested, and recreated identities as well as a cultural artifact. When an Iraqi-American dramatist like Heather Raffo exposes Iraqi women's stories to Western audiences, representation becomes more complicated. She gives disadvantaged voices a place in Western theater. However, her diasporic status requires asking whose voice and cultural filters are being heard.

Thus, postcolonial feminist theory helps us understand Raffo's empowerment and the challenges of mediating two cultures.

Hybridity and intersectionality are also important to postcolonial feminism. Nationality, class, religion, and diaspora shape women's identities, not just "victim" or "survivor". Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire* features nine female protagonists whose experiences span gender, war, politics, and culture. This dramatic choice supports postcolonial feminist goals of opposing essentialism and highlighting variation. This study highlights Raffo's dramaturgy's political and cultural implications by placing *9 Parts of Desire* in a postcolonial feminist context. The essay she wrote strongly challenges mechanisms that have suppressed or abused Iraqi women. Thus, postcolonial feminism provides a theoretical perspective and an ethical responsibility to examine women's voices in war and occupation and the power dynamics that shape them.

Returning to the 2003 Iraq invasion, it stands as a geopolitical turning point and a profound culture rupture that reshaped global artistic expression. For Western writers and viewers, Iraq became an influential signifier—a center where concerns of war, democracy, imperialism, and human suffering intersected. To comprehend Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire* in this setting, one must explore the historical and political environment that formed the play's subject matter and Western theater reception.

Western opinions regarding Iraq have always been paradoxical. It was once the birthplace of civilization and home to Mesopotamia's empires, as Rahid Khalidi (2004) argues in *Resurrection Empire* that today it is associated with authoritarianism, instability, and violence. After 9/11, U.S. foreign policy shifted military and ideologically toward the Middle East, intensifying this contradiction. Western discourse presented the Iraq War as a moral mission to liberate the Iraqi people and a war against WMDs. Iraqi women symbolized oppression and hope, and their lives were used to justify military action.

Western perceptions of Iraq were shaped by this discourse. Media coverage often simplified Iraqi culture by dividing it into victim against aggressor, liberator vs tyrant. Western theatre responded to these discourses by exploring the human effects of war and their own representational politics. Dramatic plays about the war's decision-

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making, troops' experiences, and Iraqi residents' problems emerged in the early 2000s.

David Hare's *Stuff Happens* (2004) and David Greig's *The American Pilot* (2005) reflect Western concerns over the legitimacy and morality of intervention by dramatizing the political and human consequences of the Iraq War. In *Stuff Happens*, Hare reconstructs real political dialogues among global leaders—Bush, Blair, Powell—to expose the manipulation and moral ambiguity underlying the decision to invade Iraq. Conversely, Greig's *The American Pilot* shifts focus to a small Middle Eastern village, using the story of a downed American pilot to explore miscommunication, cultural misunderstanding, and the human cost of occupation. Through these contrasting lenses, both playwrights criticize political authority while restoring emotional depth and moral complexity to those who suffer the outcomes of imperial decision-making.

Political theatre flourished in the US and UK after 9/11. Staged alternative narratives provide critical distance from prevailing political discourses in a setting of increased nationalism and securitization. According to Baz Kershaw (2004) and Janelle Reinelt (2001), political theatre during this time served as criticism and opposition, allowing spectators to challenge the “War on Terror.”

In this revival, the Iraq War was central. Hare's *Stuff Happens* dramatized the diplomatic conversations and manipulations that led to the invasion, using documentary footage and invented speech to show political decisions' variability. Greig's *The American Pilot* examined cultural difference, communication, and power asymmetry in a small hamlet affected by Western military presence. These plays critically examined the conflict from Western views and focused on Western viewers' concerns about their governments.

Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire* changed theater. Raffo did not study political leaders or geopolitics like Hare or Greig. She focused on Iraqi women's daily lives. Her piece addressed the same historical era by emphasizing rather than policy. marginalized perspectives that were often ignored in Western narratives.

Western portrayals of Iraq are rooted in Orientalism and imperialism. Edward Said (1978) showed how Western culture has portrayed the Middle East as foreign, backward, and in need of assistance. Post-9/11 Middle East depictions of violence

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and religious fanaticism revived these stereotypes. The persecuted Muslim woman became a significant symbol in Western politics and culture. The discourse of “saving” Muslim women often concealed their structural suffering and denied them agency in choosing their futures, according to Lila Abu-Lughod (2002).

Representing Iraq in Western theatre risked repeating similar patterns.

Western plays portraying Iraqi subjects were regularly criticized for representing others or promoting biases. It was difficult to dramatize Iraqi experiences without exploiting them. Being an Iraqi-American writer provided Raffo's work legitimacy and complexity. She wrote in English for Western audiences, drawing on her heritage and friendships with Iraqi women. Her play balances insider and outsider perspectives, making it a rich postcolonial feminist work.

The mid-2000s political context influenced US and UK reception of Iraq plays. The U.S. conflict was framed by patriotic language; therefore, critical theater viewpoints were met with opposition. However, audiences in New York and Washington, D.C., were eager for opposing opinions in plays like *9 Parts of Desire*. Theatre fueled war debate in the U.K., where public opinion was more divided. The Royal Court Theatre and National Theatre produced plays that challenged viewers to rethink intervention and occupation.

Western audiences liked Raffo's play because it mixed emotional intimacy with political urgency. Using nine people with their unique stories, Raffo developed a diverse set of experiences that defied classification. Iraqi women were seen as people with desires, anxieties, and contradictions. Dramaturgical interventions fostered empathy and required critical reflection on power structures that influenced these women's lives.

9 Parts of Desire must be placed within post-occupation Iraqi culture. Western literature, film, and visual art explored pain, displacement, and cultural memory beyond theatre. This work often reproduced imbalances in power from external views. Raffo added Iraqi voices to this cultural repository, questioning prevailing narratives and broadening Western audiences' perceptions. Her piece was part of a counter-discourse that reframed Iraq as a living space inhabited by complicated, resilient people rather than a geopolitical struggle.

Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire* (2003), a major play in modern political theatre, shamelessly centers Iraqi women's voices at a time when Western cultural

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discourse almost completely ignored them. The play is written in English but based on Iraqi oral histories and testimonies. A single actress performs nine monologues as diverse Iraqi women whose lives have been impacted by oppression, sanctions, and war. Through its dramaturgy, characterization, and thematic themes, the play not only humanizes Iraqis for Western audiences but also interrogates the power systems that mute or misrepresent their tales. The text, interpreted via postcolonial feminist theory, shows how Raffo destabilizes occupation discourses, reclaims neglected voices, and stages gender and identity in post-war Iraq.

Its fragmented structure reinforces these themes and theories: instead of a continuous plot, Raffo weaves a series of vignettes that portray the diverse realities of Iraqi women. Each monologue captures a distinct aspect of loss, endurance, and desire, reflecting the broken nature of Iraqi society after decades of conflict while resisting essentialist portrayals of a single “Iraqi woman’s experience.”

A doctor operating under terrible conditions, an exile burdened by survivor's guilt, an artist facing censorship, and widows grieving are characters. Each monologue shows how war affects women personally and systemically—political repression, economic penalties, military occupation. Raffo juxtaposes these stories to show how gender, class, and national identity connect to show Iraqi women's experiences are not only victims.

Raffo's dramaturgy emphasizes language. Raffo incorporates Arabic cadences, rhythms, and idioms in the English play to reflect her diasporic identity. This hybridity lets Westerners hear Iraqi voices while reminding them of cultural differences. Postcolonial feminist theory illuminates this strategy's ethical implications: Raffo negotiates the delicate balance between representation and appropriation by not simply “translating” Iraqi women for Western consumption.

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A frequent issue in postcolonial feminist discourse is who speaks for whom. Spivak (1988) famously asked, “Can the subaltern speak?” Work by Raffo confuses this question. She is honored to bring these stories to Western stages as a diasporic Iraqi-American. She understands that she mediates Iraqi women's experiences, not represents them. Her choice of several voices over a single protagonist shows her knowledge of ventriloquism's hazards and her desire to promote diversity.

A detailed reading of the play shows that the female body is both traumatized and resistant.

Several monologues center on physical suffering: bombing scars, depleted uranium poisoning, and siege caretaker exhaustion. These bodies represent the nation's invasion and ruin. Raffo shows the body as resilient and desirous. The title *9 Parts of Desire*, based on an Arab poet's belief that God gave women nine desires and males one, emphasizes female subjectivity's diversity. War victims, Iraqi women are creative, sexual, and resilient.

The dual image challenges Western preconceptions of Middle Eastern women as submissive or subjugated. Instead, Raffo's characters express their needs, frustrations, and survival techniques. This radical postcolonial feminist intervention challenges the narrative of "saving Muslim women" by revealing that Iraqi women are already speaking, fighting, and negotiating their surroundings, even in severe conditions.

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The way people in the US and UK reacted to *9 Parts of Desire* shows how politically powerful the play is. People who were used to seeing Iraqis in news headlines or military briefings were faced with personal, emotive experiences that made them think and feel. Many reviews talked about how the play changed people's lives, saying that it made the war more personal and gave a voice to people who were silenced in the mainstream media.

From a postcolonial feminist standpoint, the play's significance resides in both its content and its method of communication. Raffo breaks the usual pattern of representation that favors Western points of view by getting Western audiences to hear Iraqi women's views. She also does not make these ladies into symbols of being a victim. Instead, she believes that they are multifaceted, have free will, and are full of contradictions. This ethical interaction with the audience demonstrates how theatre may serve as a platform for international conversation and resistance.

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Finally, *9 Parts of Desire* can be understood as a form of counter-archive that preserves marginalized narratives excluded from official histories. While political speeches and military reports frame Iraq through the lens of strategy and security, Raffo's play documents the intimate effects of war on everyday lives. This counter-archive challenges the epistemic violence of dominant narratives, ensuring that Iraqi women's voices are inscribed in cultural memory.

It reminds us that the effects of war are not just seen in changes in government or control of land, but also in the scars that people, families, and communities carry.

By staging these stories, Raffo shows that personal testimony can be a powerful way to get involved in politics. This adds new voices to the record of the Iraq War that might not have been heard otherwise.

Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire*'s reception in the West, particularly in the US and UK, sheds light on how Western audiences dealt with tales that challenged Iraqi norms. The drama launched in 2003 during the height of U.S. military involvement in Iraq as an alternative cultural text when Western media mainly ignored or dehumanized Iraqis.

The play's emotional impact "humanized Iraqis" for American and British audiences, according to The New Yorker, The Guardian, and The New York Times. Raffo's piece generated empathy and connected spectators to Iraqi women's stories. However, such a response risks perpetuating "exoticist empathy" that portrays Iraqi women as faraway, tragic Others whose pain exists only to awaken Western conscience.

Postcolonial feminist philosophy illuminates this tension. According to experts like Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003), Western audiences generally view non-Western women as victims, reinforcing global power disparities. Raffo portrays Iraqi women as resistance fighters and war victims, but Western audiences sometimes simplified this complexity to a moral message. Thus, the play's reception shows the promise and limits of cross-cultural politically involved theatre.

Setting Raffo's work in context with other diasporic playwrights helps us understand its distinctive contributions and recognize postcolonial and feminist theatre movements. The Lebanese-British dramatist Hanan al-Shaykh uses fragmented dramaturgy to challenge linear nationalist narratives and emphasize women's perspectives from war-torn places.

Iranian-American writer Niloufar Talebi uses poetry, music, and monologue to examine exile, identity, and war.

Raffo explicitly negotiates her dual positionality as an Iraqi-American insider and outsider. She may bridge cultural barriers by showing Western viewers Iraqi women's life while being mindful of her mediation position. Raffo resists Orientalist language and diasporic nostalgia by emphasizing subjectivity and multiplicity, unlike Western journalists and officials who claim authority to talk about Iraq.

Similar to Wole Soyinka's investigations of Nigerian identity or Ariel Dorfman's *Death and the Maiden* in post-dictatorship Chile, *9 Parts of Desire* is part of a worldwide testimonial theatre tradition. It challenges official histories and highlights disadvantaged voices with personal experiences. Raffo's production addressed the Iraq War as it progressed, turning theatre into an urgent political action rather than a delayed judgment.

Raffo's play affects political discourse, cultural memory, and representation ethics beyond the stage, as it is mentioned in his *9 Parts of Desire* counters the Western narrative of the Iraq War as a clash of civilizations or a liberation endeavor by providing Iraqi women's testimonies. By centering women's testimonies, the play transforms the abstract notion of war into a tangible human experience marked by loss, perseverance, and survival.

postcolonial drama actively resists the epistemic aggression of imperial knowledge systems that erase or marginalize non-Western subjectivities. It claims that Iraqi women's experiences are crucial to comprehending occupation's human effects.

It also challenges victim-oppressor dichotomies by illustrating how women survive institutional violence, exercise agency, and retain cultural continuity.

Theatre becomes a form of resistance. It gives silenced voices a voice, unsettles audiences, and preserves cultural memory outside official archives. This function is crucial in Iraq, where decades of authoritarian suppression and foreign occupation have erased subaltern narratives. Raffo stages Iraqi women's stories in English to challenge Western media and Iraqi governmental discourses. Despite its successes, *9 Parts of Desire* poses major representation and mediation ethics.

Raffo's nine voices avoid reducing Iraqi women to a single identity, reducing these risks. Translating stories—from Arabic to English, Baghdad to Broadway—

inevitably entails cultural mediation that alters their arrival. The play's popularity comes on foregrounding these ethical dilemmas, forcing audiences to consider their role as observers of pain.

The key of *9 Parts of Desire* is its ability to move beyond empathy to relational solidarity. It asks viewers to listen, think, and understand their own role in global power structures, not only feel for Iraqi women. The piece shows the radical potential of postcolonial feminist theatre to rethink cultural myths, challenge imperial discourses, and acknowledge the humanity of repressed voices.

Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire* is one of the most powerful plays to emerge following the Iraq War, highlighting perspectives omitted from Western media and Iraqi governmental narratives. The play's fragmented dramaturgy, polyphonic structure, and emphasis on Iraqi women's complexity make it more than a portrayal of sorrow; it shows perseverance, agency, and desire.

This study has recognized that postcolonial feminist theory is necessary to understand Raffo's work. This paradigm shows how the play examines and participates in global representation systems. By performing Iraqi women's experiences for Western audiences, Raffo destabilizes essentialist Middle East portrayals and offers a diverse set of voices.

The investigation shows that *9 Parts of Desire* counters imperial discourses, maintains minority memories, and engages audiences ethically. It humanizes Iraqi women by highlighting their subjectivity, inconsistencies, and agency.

The implications of Raffo's play extend well beyond the immediate context of Iraq. At a methodological level, the play exemplifies how theatre can serve as a medium of testimony, enabling subaltern voices to enter public consciousness. Theory-wise, it emphasizes the need for a postcolonial feminist perspective to analyze images of women in war zones, especially diasporic voices.

Theatre's function in political crises is one implication. Theatre can show war's human side, unlike journalism and policy debates, which focus on strategy, resources, and geopolitics. *9 Parts of Desire* confronts war's effects via everyday lives, family relationships, and personal wants in ways statistics and headlines cannot. It appears that theatre is important in forming social memory and moral imagination.

Another implication is intercultural dialogue. The play shows how diasporic artists may bridge languages and cultures. The analysis shows that mediation poses

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ethical problems about representation and appropriation. Diasporic playwrights must speak for their communities and create spaces for varied viewpoints. By developing nine diverse characters with their own stories, Raffo resists the homogeneity of Iraqi women into a stereotype.

Raffo's piece shows political theatre's pros and cons from a postcolonial feminist perspective. It shows how theatre may challenge imperial narratives, highlight subaltern voices, and rethink cultural memory. However, it raises representation dilemmas: Who can speak? How do civilizations share stories? What hazards come with trauma-to-performance?

Playwrights and actors must recognize their privileges and limitations.

Audiences must also be encouraged to critique their cultural story consumption.

Theatre should foster active solidarity—a realization of shared humanity and a commitment to structural change—rather than passive empathy. In *9 Parts of Desire*, Raffo moves beyond emotional identification by inviting the audience into moments of ethical reflection and shared responsibility. For example, when the character Layal, the artist, declares, “I paint the pain because if I don’t, no one will see it,” the play transforms spectatorship into moral participation. Similarly, the Doctor’s lament, “We treat wounds that never heal, but we keep trying,” embodies resilience rather than victimhood, urging the audience to recognize perseverance as a collective human condition. Through such moments, Raffo’s theatre enacts what postcolonial feminist critics describe as “affective activism,” where empathy becomes the first step toward solidarity and transformative awareness.

Future significance: *9 Parts of Desire* will help Iraqi voices be heard globally.

Raffo's play has given Iraqi women's experiences a place in Western theatre, but additional Arabic and English works by Iraqis are needed. These works could improve the Iraq War narrative archive and diversify international views.

Postcolonial feminist theatre should examine gender, war, and representation.

This involves promoting perspectives from Syria, Afghanistan, and Palestine and assessing global audiences' responses. Theatre can help create a more equitable and inclusive cultural discourse that doesn't silence communities that are underrepresented.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire* shows how theatre reshape the politics of representation during periods of war and occupation. The drama embodies postcolonial feminist concepts through its fractured form, multiple voices, and inability to essentialize women's experiences. It forces viewers to consider identity, agency, and resistance beyond victimhood and emancipation.

This analysis shows that theatre may challenge imperial myths, conserve minority histories, and promote ethical participation. However, they also highlight the difficulties of representing others, especially across cultural and political divides. Postcolonial feminist theatre stages these tensions to show the paradoxes and power dynamics that construct global narratives.

9 Parts of Desire is important as a chronicle of Iraqi women's experiences during and after the U.S. occupation and as a paradigm for theatre as a site of resistance, solidarity, and hope. The stage may be a venue for truth-telling, cultural memory, and critical reflection, not only entertainment. Raffo's piece shows that theatre may witness pain and imagine alternate worlds.

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Abstract in Arabic

الملخص بالعربية

يتناول هذا البحث تحليل مسرحية تسع أجزاء من الرغبة (2003) للكاتبة هيدر رافو من خلال توظيف النظرية النسوية ما بعد الاحتلال، مع التركيز على تمثيل تجارب النساء العراقيات في ظل الاحتلال الأميركي للعراق. يسعى البحث إلى الكشف عن كيفية إبراز رافو، وهي كاتبة أميركية من أصول عراقية، للأصوات المهمشة في الوقت الذي تتعامل فيه مع تعقيدات الهوية في الشتات، والوساطة الثقافية، وحدود التمثيل الأخلاقي. ومن خلال قراءة دقيقة للنص المسرحي ووضعه في سياقه التاريخي والسياسي، يبرز هذا البحث تنوع التجارب النسوية العراقية مسلطاً الضوء على فاعليتهن، وصلابتهن، وورغباتهن في مواجهة أوجاع الحرب والعقوبات والاستبداد. كما يتناول البحث تلقي المسرحية في المسارح الغربية، مسلطاً الضوء على الكيفية التي تتداخل فيها مفاهيم التعاطف والاستشراق والوعي النقدي. وتقدم المقارنات مع كتاب مسرحيين آخرين من ذوي الخلفيات المهاجرة وما بعد الكولونيالية رؤى إضافية توضح إسهام رافو المميز في الحوار العالمي حول الحرب والجندر والتمثيل. وفي النهاية، تُشكل مسرحية تسع أجزاء من الرغبة بمثابة أرشيف مضاد يتحدى السرديات السائدة، ويدعم الأصوات التي غالباً ما تُهمش، ويُظهر كيف يمكن للمسرح النسوي ما بعد الكولونيالي أن يعزز الالتزام الأخلاقي، والفهم العابر للثقافات، ومقاومة الأطر المعرفية الإمبريالية.