



The Impact of US' Neo-Orientalism
On the
Future of Nation-State in Iraq in the light of IS crisis

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Abstract

First, this study intends to inquire into this question: does the US support a unified Iraq? If we look at the historical discourse of US policy towards Iraq, the answer would be: Yes. But to an adequate answer, my methodology tries to understand how far knowledge and power can meet to give us a clear answer. I was so confused till I read Edward Said's Orientalism. When I started reading this book a realization has grown in my mind that Said methodology will help me answer my question. But still this methodology is not sufficient to address the recent political dynamics whether in Iraq itself, or that shapes the relationship between the US and Iraq. Thus, there was a need to adopt other paradigm. This is Mohammed Salama's work of *Islam, Orientalism and Intellectual History*. To reach a detailed answer to the above guiding question I go through various methodological approaches, and each of them matches a supportive question. At the same, these concerns tell us that it's difficult to study how Iraq is perceived in the US without studying the themes about Arab and Islam in the same periphery.

However, I find it relevance to demonstrate the significance of this study. This study is a scientific attempt to test the hypothesis which presumes that the US Orientalism can directly affect the political future of specific country (Iraq as a case study). Thus, I was keen to read as much as possible works that have been done about the implications of Orientalism on politics. The first chapter demonstrates the relationship between Orientalism and politics but what is significant is that I was eager to understand the implications of Orientalism on strategy-making process. Some concepts are presented for the first time in this study such as 'soft Orientalism' and 'Hard Orientalism'; a twofold distinction is clearly set out between the political view of neo-orientalism and the old definition of the concept on one hand, and between the old type of orientalists and the new one on the other. In that sense, the thesis is designed to fulfill the methodological requirement to tackle this question in one hand. While on the other, it is designed to inquire into the question that concerns the impact of neo-orientalism on the US strategy towards a unified Iraq. It is important to explain why I chose Iraq as an object of contemporary American Orientalism? I believe that Iraq has occupied central core of American interest in the Middle East since Gulf War in 1990, even before, and after September 11th in specific. We can notice that before 2003 Iraq was linked to terrorism, despotism, tyranny and accused of possessing weapons of mass destruction. In addition, Iraq was also perceived as a major source

destabilizing the region. It is this image that has guided the US foreign policy towards Iraq for more than a decade where it has invested soft power to legitimize its hard power which was demonstrated through its invasion of Iraq in 2003 to remove the regime of Saddam Hussein and to initiate the political project of Democratization.

Although, the most important obstacle this study faces is that how methodologically a link can be established between Orientalism, which mostly perceived as linguistic or literature studies, and strategic analysis regarding the future of Iraq. Conclusions about Orientalism cannot be circulated on various political peripheries. Because the first think orientalism deals with is power. Thus, the impact of orientalism on foreign policy should be analyzed in the light of state's capacity to apply its themes. Orientalism has different implications on politics from case study to another. In some countries, its impact is limited to the domestic politics since the political trends of that country has no intention of playing a major role in international politics.

This study promotes two essential arguments:

1. Orientalism's findings and themes in the US have sophisticated implications on the future of a state like Iraq.
2. The US supports a unified Iraq if it meets its strategic expectations as will be discussed later in the seventh chapter.

The hypotheses will be proven by qualitative methods of primary and secondary sources. The analysis of recent literature on Orientalism, Islamophobia, and its impact on US foreign policy will be undergone in Arabic, and English. Also, recent press will be observed and included. In addition, the primary sources written by international and intergovernmental institutions, national governments, Iraqis institutions, foreign policy reports, and think tanks will determine a main part of the analysis. Further, the analysis of strategies towards Iraq focusing on the policy area of the so-called Islamic State in the region will be conducted.

This study will be structured into seven chapters. Each one will tackle sub-question listings to fulfill the methodological requirements. This study is a scientific attempt to test the hypothesis which presumes that the US Orientalism can directly affect the political future of other state (Iraq). in that sense, the thesis is designed to fulfill the methodological requirement to tackle this question in one hand. While on the other, it is designed to inquire into the question that concerns the impact of neo-orientalism on the US strategy towards a unified Iraq.

Preface Transliteration

Arabic terms are transliterated according to the International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES) transliteration system. Frequently used words such as Muslim, Muhammad (the Prophet), Quran, Sunna, Sharia, fiqh, madhab, umma, ijtiḥad and jihad.

Translation

All the translations from Arabic are mine. Arabic original titles are provided in brackets when they are first referred to, and the subsequent citations from these titles are to the English translation, for ease of reference.

Bibliography

Listings of bibliography are designed according to Harvard style. Also, Harvard style is used to cite information sources in the body of the text.

Key Words

Orientalism, Islamophobia, Iraq, Political Liberalism, Occidentalism, Perceptions on Islam in the West, Secularism in Iraq, Political dynamics in Iraq, Non-State Actors in Iraq, Sectarian strife, Nation-state in Iraq, The self-proclaimed Islamic State, Democracy, the US strategy towards Iraq, the Middle East.

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To my father;
Mother;
My wife Dr. Reem Azzez Jaber;
To my beloved country Iraq.

List of Abbreviations:

NME: New Middle East

GME: Great Middle East

IS: The so-called Islamic State

ISIS: The self-proclaimed Islamic State in Iraq and Sham

ISF: Iraqi Security Forces

US: United States of America

CDA: Civic Democratic Alliance

CPA: Coalition Provisional Authority

INA: Iraqi National Accord

INC: Iraqi National Congress

IGC: Iraqi Governing Council

SCIRI: The Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq

UN: United Nations Organization

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigations

WSJ: Wall Street Journal

NYT: New York Times

CNN: The Cable News Network

VP: Vice President

PTSD: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

TMT: Terror Management Theory

TEC: Temporary exclusion orders

WWI: The First World War

WWII: The Second World War

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

PKK: Kurdistan Workers' Party

PYD: Partiya Yekîtiya Democrat

IHRc: Islamic Human Rights Commission

TWP: The Washington Post

MSNBC: Microsoft and NBC Cable Network

Iraq NIE: Iraq National Intelligence Estimate

UNMOVIC: The United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

WMD: Weapons of Mass Destruction.

CENTCOM: United States Central Command