

An Overview of American War in Iraq and Postcolonial Ecocritical Approach in Turner's and Mikhail's Works

نظرة عامة للحرب الأمريكية في العراق والنقد البيئي بعد الاستعماري في أعمال ترنر وميخائيل

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الملخص:

يقوم البحث بعمل نقد بيئي بعد استعماري مقارنة بين أعمال براين ترنر ودنيا ميخائيل في كتبهم، هن الرصاصة، الضجيج الوهمي ، الليالي العراقية، يوميات موجة خارج البحر، الغربية بتائها المربوطة والحرب تعمل بجد ، بعد الحرب الأمريكية في العراق سنة ٢٠٠٣. ويؤكد ترنر وميخائيل العلاقة الوثيقة ما بين الدمار البيئي ومحو ثقافة وهوية الشعب العراقي ويقدمان صور صادقة للأفعال الإستعمارية التي أدت الى التدهور البيئي في العراق في العديد من قصائدهما مثل : "القافلة"، "خزانة الوجع"، "تفجير شارع المتنبي"، "حديقة حيوان بغداد"، "الحرب تعمل بجد"، "اينانا"، "أمريكا"، "نداء عاجل" و"حقول نפט كركوك ١٩٢٧" والعديد من الأعمال الأخرى.

Abstract

The paper makes a postcolonial ecocritical comparison between Brian Turner's and Dunya Mikhail's books, *Here, Bullet, Phantom Noise, The Iraqi Nights, A Diary of a Wave outside the Sea, In Her feminine Sign* and *The War Works Hard*, after the 2003 American War in Iraq. Their works emphasize the linkage between the ecological decay and the social decadence of the Iraqi society. Both Turner and Mikhail confirm the interrelatedness between the ecological destruction and the eradication of Iraqis' culture and identity. They present the truthful images of the imperial actions that

have led to the environmental deterioration in Iraq in many of their poems, such as "Caravan," "The Hurt Locker," "The Mutanabii Street Bombing," "Kirkuk Oilfield, 1927," "The Baghdad Zoo," "The War Works Hard," "Innana," "America," "An Urgent Call" and many others.

The application of postcolonial ecocriticism to Turner's and Mikhail's literary works has examined the major differences between their views about the American war in Iraq and their postcolonial ecocritical approach.

Both Turner and Mikhail objectively incarnate the plight of the Iraqi people and their ruined environment. Their works examine the process and effects of American colonization. In addition, their works resist the social, cultural, environmental and military hegemony of the colonizers.

The authenticity of their works comes from the fact that they have both witnessed the ravages of war. Turner is involuntarily involved in an illegal war because of his financial problems. He courageously presents a truthful picture of the outrageous behavior of colonizing forces. Turner's works give witness and testimony to the oppressed Iraqis who have suffered from the scourge of war. He tries to bridge the gap between the world's people and who are conquered at the time of war. In addition, Turner's works articulate thousands of soldiers who objected to the deployment of troops in war zones and had no capability of expressing their traumatized experience of war.

On the other hand, Mikhail was a victim of oppression and tyranny. She grew up in an extreme terror of the Iraqi ruling regime and in the midst of the voices of sirens and ambulances. Mikhail witnessed the horrible events of the Gulf wars. Although Mikhail had been in her exile during the 2003 invasion of Iraq out of the sounds of airstrikes and explosions, she still communicated with the people of her homeland. She brought back the bitter memories of war when she was in Iraq. Because war is one and always the same for Mikhail, she never felt a sense of detachment from the traumas of war in her exile. Her works still embody the horrible and catastrophic impacts of the last war on the Iraqi people and their environment.

Both Turner's and Mikhail's poetry are testimonial and scriptotherapeutic. Turner published two books, *Here, Bullet* and *Phantom Noise*, during and after the war. He narrates his moments of horror and depression, as a soldier participating in a reckless war. He shows his humanity and compassion for the tragedy and plight of the Iraqi people. Turner pays a considerable attention to the events of the Iraqi war, recording in his poems the colonial crimes that may be deliberately denied or forgotten by the American forces and the Iraqi people. Turner writes his poem, "Al-A'imman Bridge," as a grief over the thousands of Iraqi civilians who have drowned after falling into the Tigris due to a sudden explosion. On another occasion, in his poem, "2000 lbs," Turner laments an old woman and her grandson who have

passed away in a bomb when a terrorist suicide bomber has triggered his explosives in a town square of Mosul.

As regards Mikhail, she published many books of poetry, such as *The Iraqi Nights*, *The War Works Hard* and *Diary of a Wave Outside the Sea*. She confronts her traumatic memories through the act of putting her negative feelings into words to advance recovery and relieve her suffering and pain. Mikhail resorts to poetry as a possibility for survival. Thus, her poetry is scriptotherapeutic. Her poems are focused on war, loss and exile. She also emphasizes that poetry is an X-ray, but she also believes that poetry is not medicine as it does not heal the wounds. In her poem, "An Urgent Call," Mikhail unveils the bestiality of the colonizing forces towards the Iraqi people concerning the scandal of Abu Gharib prison. In her poem, "The War Works Hard," Mikhail personifies the war as a brute force, annihilating everything in its path. In addition, the war brings the humanitarian disasters and tragedy to the Iraqi people.

Both Turner and Mikhail condemn the brutal American war, confirming its illegitimacy in their works. The two poets expose the imperial expansion of the U.S. forces. The two poets also refute the U.S. justification of supporting human values like justice, liberty and democracy in Iraq. They declare that the invasion is the major cause of the decline of the moral, social, political and ecological conditions of Iraq. In his poem, "Caravan," Turner politically taunts the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the lack of reverence for the Iraqi victims

who go in vain. He claims for the principles of reciprocity and honoring the Iraqi dead. Unfortunately, he realizes that his country does not care about these victims. They are not transported to the "White House lawn," to be buried under the "green sod" and the "rich soil" in America (30-32) because of the negative racial stereotypes of the Arabs as being uncivilized or barbaric. He ends his poem with subversive sarcasm. He calls upon the American people to participate in the proclaimed freedom for Iraqis by sharing their tragedy and giving them their land. He says: "our own land given to these, / to say if this is freedom, then we will share it" (36-37).

On the other hand, in her poem, "America," Mikhail explores the manifestations of social and environmental evanescence. She condemns the invasion of Iraq that has led to the detachment of the Iraqi people from their country. At the end of her poem, Mikhail rebukes and confronts America with a fundamentally essential question: She says: "What good is it to gain the whole world / if you lose the Soul, America?" (49-50). In addition, Mikhail reveals that the Iraqi ruling regime and the Ba'ath party are also responsible for the criminal practices towards the Iraqi people and their ecosystem in addition to their impulsive decisions that has led to the conflict and war.

In Turner's and Mikhail's works, no one wins in war. In many of Turner's poems, he depicts the traumatized moments of the American soldiers who encounter murder at the hands of the Iraqi resisters. The researcher observes that Turner, as

an American soldier, has racist views. He regards both the American soldiers and the Iraqi resisters who defend their land as victims, or in other words, he does not differentiate between the killer and the killed. His racist views are also apparent in his depiction of Iraqis as dancing over their enemies' bodies. On the other hand, Mikhail accuses the colonizers of sadism and sardonic behaviors, as represented in their dancing over the prisoners while being tortured. Mikhail adopts Turner's view, considering the killed and the killer are equal because the killed dies physically and the killer dies morally.

As for Turner's postcolonial approach, He examines the deteriorating conditions of the millions of the Iraqi people during and after colonization. He considers the moral and social extent of conflict. Turner concentrates on the themes of violence and military occupation. In addition, he incorporates his concentrated themes within the geographical, historical, and cultural aspects of Iraq. As a colonizer representing the colonial authority, Turner has the difficulty of addressing the Iraqis because there is no context to appear as one of them. So, he adopts a literary style depending on emasculating the power of his Americanism. He also minimizes the narrator's white military subjectivity to articulate the experience of Iraqis. Moreover, he adopts many other literary strategies such as "narrative descriptions," "a focus on exteriority and smallness," "evocations of Iraq's ancient history" and "reliance on the surreal" (Najmi 57). The

researcher notes that Turner does not use his colonial authority to empower the military and cultural hegemony of his country and to annihilate the Iraqi identity. On the contrary, he aims to restore the obliterated identity of the Iraqi people in the face of the authority of his invading country.

In *Here, Bullet*, Turner tends to reconcile his white American military presence in Iraq with the identity of a normal American poet documenting his experiences there. He intentionally conceals his character while making his observations to maintain neutrality. In addition, Turner's literary styles are harmonious with the subject-matter of his poems. So, his style is not artificial and sophisticated. It is like an uninterrupted conversation.

On the other hand, Mikhail's works are a powerful resistance against the social, cultural, and military colonization during and after the invasion. Her works expose the criminal practices of the colonizing forces, revealing the exploited identity of Iraqis. As a colonized representing the vanquished side of conflict, Mikhail uses many techniques to condemn and resist the invasion, such as protest, satire, personification, invocation and intimidation in many poems, including "Bag of Bones," "I was in a Hurry," "The War Works Hard" and "Iraqis and other Monsters." In spite of the fact that Mikhail's poetic style is characterized by coldness, fragility and delicacy, it is potentially subversive. It is also worth noting that most of Turner's and Mikhail's poetic styles

are characterized by the lack of emotive power, allowing the reader to be sympathetically involved in the events of the poems.

Both Turner and Mikhail write in free verse. They avoid using traditional poetic forms because they are not appropriate for the chaos of the modern world. Thus, they adopt new poetic forms that are identical with the real images of war and the events of their poems. As a result, the music of their poetry is the music of violence and death.

With regard to Turner's postcolonial traits like mimicry, it is apparent that in spite of his being a colonizer and has a colonial authority, he is highly impressed with the cultural and linguistic norms of the indigenous people. So, his works are characterized by 'reverse mimicry.' Turner is intensely interested in supporting the cultural relations between the Americans and Arabs. He attempts to change the racial and cultural stereotypes of the Arabs in the American and world culture. In addition, he eagerly tends to restore and increase the Iraqis' perception of their ancient history and identity.

In reference to Mikhail's mimicry, the researcher assumes that most of what she wrote, as a political activist, is related to her new environment and mimicry of the colonizers' culture. Mikhail, who had studied English literature in Baghdad and spent most of her life in America, was extremely impressed by the literary genre known as 'literary activism.' In her exile, Mikhail was worried about her new experience. She was afraid of using that genre because of

her previous painful Iraqi experience. But later, she used it for the sake of her homeland as she wrote fearlessly about the plight of Iraqis during the American wars.

Concerning Turner's and Mikhail's use of hybrid forms, Turner writes his poetry in the hybrid forms of American and Arabic culture. He seeks to open up a rich field of investigating the Arab and Islamic world. Moreover, he tends to make the American or even the Arab readers recognize the glory and civilization of the past decades of the Middle East whose reputation has been damaged in the recent age. At the same time, he looks for a better future for the next Arab generations who have been the victims of war and oppression. In many poems, he shows his respect and consideration to the Arabic language, regarding it as a language made of "blood," "sand" and "time" (A Soldier's Arabic 1-2). Turner uses linguistic hybridity, incorporating the Arabic words within the English ones as in the titles and contents of his poems: "Sadek" (friend) and "Ashbah" (ghosts). In his poem, "Ashbah," he quotes some Arabic and Islamic words from the Arabic culture like "Ashbah," "Balad," "date palms," "minaret," "Mecca" and "a soulful call."

As for Mikhail, the notions of linguistic and cultural hybridity are obvious in her works. She resists the cultural, linguistic and political supremacy of the colonizers. Mikhail's writings are characterized by conscious and unconscious hybridity. Mikhail's unconscious hybridity comes from the fact that she is really an American citizen. She lived most of

her life in exile. Mikhail admits that she sticks to her native language. So, the effects of her second language are not overriding. In many of her interviews, she explained her struggle with her hybrid identity and language. She admits that she struggled with English and Arabic was the language she desired to write in. In her poem, "Tablets," Mikhail depicts the Arabic language as having "long sentences and wars" and that's the language that "weeps over ruins" (80, 81, 84). Moreover, Mikhail says that in writing Arabic, she is capable of hearing the music the words make or not make together. English does not play music for her, but it helps her see her text better. Nevertheless, some English phrases come in the middle of her Arabic writings due to their cultural connotations. So, her poetry has two lives, like any exile ("My Poetry has Two Lives").

Mikhail uses conscious and cultivated hybridity with the deliberate disruption of homogeneity. She aims to reverse and subvert the structures of domination and supremacy of the colonial situation. Mikhail explains that she wrote each poem first in Arabic and then in English. She did not regard them as being translated as she allowed herself to reformulate her poems. Accordingly, it is obvious that the English copy of "The War Works Hard" is slightly different than that is written in the Arabic one. Therefore, Mikhail deprives the colonial language from its authenticity. She creates transcultural forms in which there are not only conflict and contestation, but also accommodation and co-operation. In

addition, she addresses the colonizers in their own language to speak more sincerely about the illegal reality of war. The notions of cultural and linguistic hybridity are clearly apparent in her poem, "Santa Claus," which is originally written in her native language. Mikhail quotes the character of "Santa Claus," which has no relevance to the Arabic language and Eastern Christianity, from the Western culture. Thus, she revives the tragic memories of war and loss.

Turner's and Mikhail's approaches are not only anthropocentric as they pay great attention to the Iraqi ecosystem. The two poets closely examine the Iraqi landscape which was violated and conquered by the colonizing forces. In most of their poems, Turner and Mikhail depict the images of the Iraqi landscape as a victim of the negative actions of colonizers. In his poem, "The Hurt Locker," Turner emphasizes that the Iraqi environment has been distorted, containing nothing valuable, except "bullets and pain" and "all the fucks and goddamns" (2,4). Turner deduces that its peaceful and fruitful status has been degraded and transformed into a barren and desolate one. Therefore, the Iraqi environment is always associated with ruin and death. That is obvious as he figuratively declares in his poem, "A Soldier's Arabic," that when anyone mentions "death" or "Maut," he will hear "the wind driven him into the veil of the unknown" (9-11). Turner also confirms that the Iraqi environment itself becomes a means of killing and destruction for Iraqis as in the

images of the bombs implanted into the bodies of the dead animals, flying bullets and the explosive missiles in the desert.

As for Mikhail, she strongly reveals the disintegration and devastation of the Iraqi ecosystem after the American colonization. She combines the suffering of the Iraqi people with their environment which has been destroyed, transfigured, and distorted as a result of the American war. In her poem, "The War Works Hard," Mikhail closely examines her ecological approach. She argues that the environmental elements have not instantly been destroyed, but they have gradually been deteriorated. Thus, the Iraqi environment falls into ruin, being a deadly place that "provides food for flies" (36). She further writes that the Iraqi land always contains new houses for the orphans (44-45) and upon which the death industry is flourishing, like the "coffin making" and "grave digging" (46-47). In her poem, "Iraqis and Other Monsters," Mikhail emphasizes the degrading conditions of the Iraqi environment and people as "they live in darkness with no water or electricity". In addition, they eat "dust" and "clay" (14-17).

A striking environmental element in Turner's poetry is the desert. He stresses the importance of the desert, as a figurative symbolism of spiritual, historical and ideological authenticity of the nation. Turner confirmed the value of the desert on the cover of *Here, Bullet*. He captured himself as a soldier standing alone in the midst of the Iraqi desert. That scene implies the bleakness and desolation of the Iraqi

landscape. Some voices argue that the image of Turner, as a white soldier standing alone in the absence of the natives, represents U.S. military and political hegemony on the Iraqi desert as it symbolizes the geographical, religious, and cultural identity of the Iraqi people.

In his poem, "Caravan," Turner clearly refers to the issues of environmental racism and the superiority of colonizers' colonies. He presents two contradictory images: The first image is the American soldier who can not survive in his colony without modern weapons, insecticide and junk food made in his country that reflects the affluence of materialism. The second image is the Iraqi citizen who fights to live among deadly insects, diseases, bombs and the holes in the streets (9- 11). Turner also refers to the major differences between the exploited lands of Iraq and the civilized lands of the United States which are green, stable, peaceful and rich in its valuable resources (31-32).

On the other hand, Mikhail does not explicitly state these issues. In her poem, "Airplane," she implicitly hints at the departure of the colonizing forces without paying any attention to the scale of destruction they have left behind. Hence, the American forces view that the world's environment has to be conquered and controlled according to their "superego" (Memmi 104). The colonizers also consider that the environment of their native country combines only positive values, good climate, harmonious

landscape, social discipline, and exquisite liberty, beauty, morality and logic" (104)

Turner and Mikhail examine the physical and spiritual damage of conquering the Iraqi land and thereafter the social, moral and cultural issues that resulted from. Representing the actual intentions of the colonizers who invade Iraq for their economic seeks, Turner's postcolonial ecocritical approach is examined in his concentration on the issues of the plunder and exploitation of Iraq's natural resources in two of his poems, "Caravan," and "Kirkuk Oilfield, 1927." In the first poem, he refers to the economic gains for the colonizing troops staying in the colonies, as represented by "the long queue of container ships" that come to Iraq loaded with a lot of soldiers and the tools of death and destruction (4, 7, 8). In the second poem, Turner hints at the impact of petroleum industry on the conflicts between Iraqis and Americans or between Iraqis themselves.

Shifting to the other issues of postcolonial ecocriticism, Turner alludes to the impacts of the environmental devastation on the moral and social collapse of the Iraqi society in his poem, "The Hurt Locker." He mentions that the teenagers carrying grenades are involved in a gang war to defend their land while others snipe at the American soldiers causing deep holes in their skulls. In his poem, "What Every Soldier Should Know," Turner continues to depict the cycle of violence and counter-violence between the opposing sides. That finally leads to the crippling of the Iraqi

infrastructure which is overloaded with bombs and explosions. Environmental ruin extends to the domestic things that instead of being used for development, such as "trashpiles" and "bricks," they are used for murder and destruction (13, 14). Therefore, the objects of the environment have been distorted, becoming fatal weapons directed to the Iraqi people.

In addition to Turner's perspectives, Mikhail reveals the imperial practices of the colonizing forces in destroying the Iraqi ecosystem. In "Bag of Bones," she reveals the distortion and disfiguration of the Iraqi landscape that has been transformed into a dreadful place full of mass graves for Iraqis. Mikhail also handles the social issues related to the occupation of the Iraqi land. In "The War Works Hard," she discusses the issues of social decay in the Iraqi society. She claims that the only flourishing and prevailing industry in Iraq is the industry of death and serious injuries, as represented in "the production of prosthetic limbs" and "building houses for orphans" (35,36,44,45). In "America," Mikhail argues that all Iraqis are spiritually dead in their homeland. They forsake the glamour of their country and lose the contact with their environment. Mikhail also searches for the geographical identity of Iraqis, as they live alienated and isolated from their environment. In "Airplane," Mikhail figuratively depicts the devastation and corruption in her country. She compares the destruction of her country to the content of Pandora's box that represents the origin of the evil deeds in the world.

Regarding the emergence of lone wolf terrorists or 'Daesh' due to the lack of interconnectedness between the Iraqi people and their environment and as an indirect result of colonization, Turner does not refer to them in his discussed works. On the other hand, Mikhail powerfully confirms their role in devastating and destroying the ecological and cultural heritage of Iraq. In "My Grandmother's Grave," Mikhail depicts these terrorists as "barbarians," accusing them of 'genocide' and 'cultural cleansing' (46). She declares that these terrorists have come to the city of Mosul to destroy the ancient graves and the "clay tablets" (47-48). These ancient monuments represent the landmarks of the Ancient Near East civilizations. Mikhail also reveals that those terrorists have smashed the priceless and ancient statues of Iraq, such as the ancient Assyrian "winged bull sculpture" (49). These statues have been designed by the Assyrian people as a symbol of protection against enemies.

Examining the cultural Issues that emerge from Turner's and Mikhail's postcolonial ecocritical approaches, the researcher notes that Turner and Mikhail wrote about the same accident, which was the bombing of the Mutanabii Street. Turner's poem "The Mutanabii Street Bombing" reflects his social sense of ecology as he traces the interrelatedness between the cultural geo-historical dimension and the concept of land. In his lines, Turner examines the cultural and historical impacts of colonization as a result of destroying the Iraqi land. Strictly speaking, he

emphasizes the spiritual significance of the land. In his poem, Turner explores the the ruin of the cultural and historical buildings of Iraq, such as "historical buildings," "cafes," "stationary shops" and "Renaissance Bookstore" that includes the books of "Al-lsfahani's book of songs," "the elegies of Khansa" and "the exile poetry of Youssef and Al-Azzawi" (7-8). He also mentions that such a bookstore includes the foreign "transaltions of Homer," "Shakespeare," "Whitman" and "Neruda" (10-14). Therefore, Turner confirms the cultural diversity of Iraq and its openness to the world.

As for Mikhail's approach, she highlights what Turner yearned to state. In her poem, "A Half-burned Page on Al-Mutanabbi Street," which is more specific in its title and events than Turner's, she asserts that colonizing forces are not just associated with imposing hegemony on Iraq and its natural resources; they aim to eradicate the Iraqi heritage by facilitating the distortion and destruction of its cultural centers. Consequently, the colonizers contribute to the loss of identity and culture of Iraqis to legitimize their aggression in the final outcome. Therefore, Mikhail, like Turner confirms that the postcolonial ecocriticism is interrelated with the eradication of culture and identity of the colonized people. Strongly traumatized by bomb attack on Baghdad's al-Mutanabbi Street in 2007, Mikhail has found a half- burned page from the book of "The Pigeon's Ruff" or "Tauq al-Hamama" of Ibn Hazm Al andalusi in the midst of torn bodies and shredded books (9-11). She considers that incident an

assault on Iraq's cultural life. So, her work comes as a resistance to colonialism with all its forms and shapes.

Both Turner and Mikhail strongly advocate tracing the modern contemporary Iraq back to its great geographical and historical glory. They confirm the ranking civilization of Iraq and its effective contribution to the world. Therefore, their postcolonial ecocritical approach broadly examines the concept of land that is not excluded from its geographical, cultural and historical contexts.

In his poem, "Highway 1," Turner investigates the degrading conditions of the Iraqi landscape in the modern age during the events of the Persian Gulf War. Then, he incorporates some of the Iraqi towns like "Najaf," "Kirkuk," "Mosul" and "Kanni al Saad" (4-5) within his lines to enhance the reader's recognition of the historical and geographical territories of Iraq. He asserts the importance of these towns as an opposing force against the degrading conditions of modern Iraq's ecology. He recalls the glorious history of these territories in the ancient age. They have been a source of peace, prosperity and flourishing trade of many valuable and precious goods, such as "Egyptian limes," "sultani lemons" and "silk" (8,9,12).

In his poem, "Alhazen of Basra," Turner meditates on the bright and cultural history of ancient Iraq and the means of prosperity that has been settled on its land. Those moments of meditation bring some relief from the bitter sense of loss and disappointment experienced by every Iraqi in that war.

In addition, Turner tends to present a glimpse of hope that Iraq might return back to its previous shining era. In that poem, Turner arouses nostalgia for witnessing the Islamic Golden Age that has traditionally been dated from the 8th century to the 13th century. That age has been characterized by many fascinating advances in science, technology and medicine. Turner wishes that he could travel a thousand years back to meet Imam Al-Hasan Ibn al-Haytham who belongs to that Age.

Mikhail strengthens Turner's approach, but she adopts another technique. She uses the mythologies as an attempt to revive the geo-historical features of Ancient Iraqi ecosystem. She tends to restore back the prosperous features of Mesopotamia or the area of the Ancient Near East that has geographically been placed between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. By reviving these ecological geohistorical features, Mikhail resists the manufactured beliefs imposed by colonizers that Iraq is just a barren land without any cultural or national identity. In her poem, "Your E-mail," Mikhail is imaginatively and emotionally intertwined with the manifestations of nature, which have been ornamented, to celebrate the coming of Mesopotamian goddess of love and war, 'Ishtar.' In her poem, "Am-ar-gi," Mikhail recalls the ancient Sumerian history of Iraq as an attempt to be used as a counter-force against the devastating ecological conditions of Iraq in the modern world.

The researcher draws attention to the degrading conditions of animals in Turner's and Mikhail's works. It is really significant that Turner, as a western man belonging to one of the civilized countries, pays a great interest in the animal rights in Iraq after being colonized. Turner depicts the traumatized situations of animals, paying attention to more than one side in the political struggle. The researcher notes that Turner's poem "The Baghdad Zoo" is arranged as the second poem of his book, *Here, Bullet*. It reflects his great concerns about the deteriorating status of the animal. In that poem, Turner writes about the results of the colonial practices against The Baghdad Zoo. These practices result in the escaping of animals which have run loose into the city. He uses tragic images in his depiction of "slaughtered giraffes" which are brutally slit and "eaten down to their skeletons" (9). He also examines the role of imperial activities in the ecological imbalance of the Iraqi ecosystem. He describes the moments of panic of "Dalmatian pelicans" and "Marbled teals." They are scared of the sound of "rotorwash" caused by "Blackhawk helicopters." He also depicts the status of "the baboons" which are isolated from their natural habitat and lost in the midst of the desert (13-17).

Unlike Turner, Mikhail draws a little attention to the animal rights in the postcolonial environment of Iraq; She might avoid marginalizing the suffering of human beings under colonization. Thus, the researcher observes that the devastating situations of conquered animals come accidentally

in a frenzy of violence in Mikhail's discussed works. In "An E-mail," she describes the birds as being injured and having broken legs as a result of war. In her book *Diary of a Wave Outside the Sea*, she depicts animals in the Iraqi environment as violated and burnt.

Concerning the racial stereotypes of the Arabs as barbarians and semi-human from the perspective of the colonizers, Turner's "Eulogy" explores the figurative animalization of primitive people or the bestialized non-white humans. He portrays the images of violence and oppression inflicted on the Iraqi prisoners to animalize them in the American jails. He may refer to the scandal of Abu Ghraib prison as he depicts how Iraqi prisoners are affronted with their human dignity violated. They are clothed in "burlap sacks," "blindfolded" by "duct tapes" and imprisoned behind barbed wires (5). Consequently, the prisoners are speechless, disappearing from view. Accordingly, these images emphasize the Western points of view that the subaltern or the lowest class of the colonized people can not speak.

Mikhail has much interest in imprisonment issues and terrible treatment of Iraqis. In her poem, "An Urgent Call," Mikhail is more expressive than Turner. She sheds light on the bestiality of the colonizers' behaviour towards the Iraqi people after the 2003 invasion. She explicitly starts her poem by mentioning the soldier, 'Lynndie England,' who is involved in the torture scandal of Abu Ghraib prison. The

images of that scandal are humiliating. They are regarded as an insult to the dignity of the Iraqi people. Again, in "The Prisoner," Mikhail depicts the sense of disenfranchisement that has pushed Iraqis to the edge. She criticizes the modes of oppression and tyranny imposed on them either by the ruling regime or by the colonizers. Moreover, she examines the awful places of detention where prisoners are isolated from their normal and safe life.

To conclude, Turner and Mikhail's literary works tend to present a full approach of the imperial practices in ruining the Iraqi ecosystem. The two poets lay emphasis on the physical and metaphysical impacts of devastating the Iraqi environment by the colonizers, as represented in the the social and moral degradation of the Iraqi society. That degradation is clearly obvious in the wanton killing and the emergence of lone wolf terrorists. The colonizing forces aim to eradicate the culture and identity of the Iraqi people by colluding with criminals in destroying the historical and cultural monuments of Iraq, such as Al-Mutanabbi street and the National Museum. The colonizers also tend to distort the Iraqis' identity by violating their dignity in the jails like Abu Ghraib prison.

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