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## Post-9/11 Iraq in Context: Reading American and Anti-American Politics in Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter*

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**Abstract:** This study seeks to delineate the representation of post-9/11 in Iraq through employing a range of ideas and conceptions from Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's formulation of Empire to Agamben's theorization of the state of exception so as to reveal the real cause of the US invasion of Iraq, the real significance of fundamentalism which arose in the wake of the violence resulting from the invasion, and the resistance role that fundamentalism played in Iraq. The study seeks to demonstrate how Islamophobia, terrorism, fundamentalism, and Empire are inextricably intertwined and the way they are represented in Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter*. The findings of the study reveal the fact that the main intentions of the invasion arise out of the Empire's attempts to spread its supranational sovereignty to the entire world, along the way giving rise to fundamentalism, which stands as the antithesis of the Empire and which does not have anything to do with going back to the roots of Islam but rather serves the losers of the process of globalization as the means through which they can contest its winners. The novel, thus, is an attempt at giving a narrative mode to the events that led to the fundamentalist renaissance in Iraq as a form of postcolonial confrontation and indicating how fundamentalism has been a form of resistance.

**Keywords:** Empire; Fundamentalism; Post-9/11; Resistance; US Invasion of Iraq.

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## 1. Introduction

*The American Granddaughter* (2008), winner of the 2024 International Prize for Arabic Fiction, by Inaam Kachachi attends to the question of political Islam and its resistance to the US's War on Terror after the events of 9/11, 2001, which brought a sea change in world politics. Recounted mainly through the vantage point of Zeina, a thirty-year-old Iraqi immigrant to the US, the novel is her unstoppable engagement with post-9/11, not from the same outlook adopted by the Western and the American writers and characters, but from the perspective of real losers of the war that would include the normal Iraqi citizens who, out of their disillusionment with US policies in the Middle East, stopped hoping in the future that was going to be built by the US and its emancipatory power; at the other end of the spectrum, some Iraqis engaged in activities that would undermine the strategies of the Empire and hinder its pursuing supranational sovereignty ambitions in Iraq. In *Out of the Blue: September 11 and the Novel*, Versluys had wondered whether one day will come when writers other than Caucasians will start dealing with the question of 9/11 (183) and now Kachachi, as an 'other' who does not endorse the white American narrative regarding 9/11 events, has engaged the issue from a totally new perspective in which she offers a new, different portrait and definition of fundamentalism in Iraq.

The novel offers a new interpretation of the efforts of the anti-American political resistance groups that are normally stigmatized as terrorist, fundamentalist, and anarchist merely to conceal the workings of the American expansionist ideologies around the globe. Kachachi, rather than romanticizing the War on Terror or the fundamentalist resistant practices, embarks on reimagining the post-9/11 atmosphere in the US and Iraq although what she does more skillfully is divulging the real intentions of the US lurking behind its War-on-Terror excuse. Despite the fact that many works, such as Jay McInerney's *The Good Life*, Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*, and John Updike's *Terrorist*, have sought to portray the events of 9/11 and its complications, there has always existed a lacuna left unfilled by non-American writers revolving around the nature of 9/11 events and that of the terrorist and fundamentalist currents that started to pervade the Middle East after American invasion, which could have afforded readers a "different order of responsibility in which we comprehend the forms of global power from the perspective of the 'other'" (Butler xii; emphasis added). Apart from offering a counter-history of what has so far been said about mapping post-9/11 and its following Islamophobia, the novel also engages in a conversation held among literature, globalization, the expansionist dreams of the Empire, immigrants, usual Iraqi people, and most importantly fundamentalism and its practitioners. Therefore, this study strives to see how these conceptions relate and

what lies at the center of the US invasion of Iraq. Furthermore, placing fundamentalism along with postmodernism as “the two sides of the same coin”(Edwards 17), the article seeks out to define fundamentalism practiced in Iraq, in breaking with its usual meaning, as a postmodern phenomenon which is, in effect, the direct corollary of the US invasion of Iraq in stark contrast to the common, mainstream view that US invasion of Iraq must be seen as response to fundamentalism in the Middle East. The novel serves as a kind of counter-history which maps how Empire’s attempts to spread its imperial aspirations forge a war in which the US becomes the winner, and the occupied community becomes the loser, necessitating fundamentalism as the only legitimate, possible answer.

*The American Granddaughter* has been the subject of analysis by different scholars. In “Diaspora Reversed: A Postmodern ‘Third Space’ in ‘The American Granddaughter,’” the focus has been on Homi Bhabha’s concept of hybridity and the third space in terms of Zeina’s position while in “Writing the self/Writing the Other in Thomas Keneally’s *The Tyrants* Novel and Inaam Kachachi’s *The American Granddaughter*” the authors focus on identity formation in the context of diaspora. The essays “Identity Crisis in Inaam Kachachi’s *The American Granddaughter*,” “The Translator as a Traumatized Protagonist in Inaam Kachachi’s *The American Granddaughter*,” along with “Beyond Victims and Perpetrators of September 11: The Implicated Subject in Inaam Kachachi’s *The American Granddaughter*” all focus on issues related to identity, identity loss, and trauma regarding Zeina. None of the works written about *The American Granddaughter* has been able to contend with the novel’s relationship with the larger political milieu and its engagement in the conversation on 9/11, globalization as the driving force of the twenty-first century, and fundamentalism, all of which seem to be Kachachi’s central concerns in writing the novel; the present essay seeks to fill out this existing gap.

## **2. 9/11: Context and Theory**

The modern world in which the West and Islam had become its cornerstones came to be dismantled the moment when the Twin Towers were toppled down. Therefore, with the rupture in the US’s “organizing principle” role of the West in the modern world, “a simultaneous dismantling of both ‘Islam’ and ‘the West’ as the mirror image of each other and the evident emergence of a new mode of imperial domination and revolutionary resistance to it” starts to appear (Dabashi 2). In the transition from modernity to postmodernity, however, all relations change, and the West and Islam, which had established the cornerstones of the modern world, start to occupy opposite ends; religion now works through fundamentalism “in reaction to the present social order” (Hardt and

Negri 149). Islam now finds its true self in its opposition to the US and West, which have now collectively fashioned a set of relations called Empire (with a capital E). On a similar note, the US finds its real ambition as destroying all the fundamentalism that it finds in Islam substantiated in George Bush's "sloshy metonymy" return to "the invidious distinction between civilization (our own) and barbarism (now coded as 'Islam' itself)" (Butler 2).

Regarding the causes of the occurrence of 9/11 attacks on the US, many scholars contend that they arose due to the interference of the US in the affairs of countries as diverse as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Israel along with its imperialistic ambitions around the globe (Eisenstein 9) and others, like Smith, opine that the events are a direct outgrowth of silencing all those the US and its policies had tried to assimilate rather than being the result of "any irreconcilable cultural difference or antagonism, and still less from any condition of pure evil" (Smith 7). Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri contend, in their 2000 masterpiece *Empire*, that religious fundamentalism is a mark of transition from modernity to postmodernity. They define Empire as the "regime that effectively encompasses the spatial totality, or really that rules over the entire "civilized" world" (Hardt and Negri xiv) and thus tie Empire to all resisting groups that seek to stop its reign, including fundamentalist movements which are formed to contest and challenge the Empire's ambition of colonizing the whole world through dismantling all national sovereignty to forge a new sovereign, Empire. Although Empire is a conception, the US "does indeed occupy a privileged position in Empire" (Hardt and Negri xiv) and, on a similar note, Hardt and Negri "trace the special relation [of Empire] to the peculiar character of the United States in particular the U.S. Constitution, which, they say, provides the model for the networks that constitute the spaces of Empire". (Laffey and Weldes 133-134)

Building on these ideas regarding the questions and tensions between the West and Islam, the novel *American Granddaughter* contests all the formal narratives on 9/11 and post-9/11, theorizing the role that the US had had from the very inception in the formation and reproduction of terror, fundamentalism, and radicalism before seeking to "indict the war on terror" (Scanlan 277) by the end of the novel. In place of that, the novel shows War on Terror as the continuation of American imperialism in the form of Empire, depicting, along the way, its ambitious trajectory from empire to Empire.

### **3. The Intentions Behind the United States' Invasion of Iraq**

Whereas most of the works on 9/11 and the American responses to it grow out of the patriotism characteristic of US literature, *The American Granddaughter* questions the

validity of the military response of the US under the pretext of War on Terror and offers the counternarrative that it was not fundamentalism or terror that effected 9/11 events but the other way around. For Lawson, “the presence of terrorists in Iraq *following* the US-led invasion” does not precede the American invasion of Iraq but it “was due almost solely to the ‘war on terror’ itself,” thus accounting for all “the chaos created by the Iraq war”. (93)

Building on “the Juridical-economic structure of the expanding global capitalist order” logic of Empire (Leitch 2507), globalization necessitates universal expansion of the capital and sidestepping the modern phenomena of nation-state sovereignty towards the supranational sovereignty of Empire, functioning in all spaces national, cultural, and social and spreading horizontally. Therefore, the nature of Empire necessitates the invasion of Iraq not to exterminate fundamentalism, terror, poverty, despotism, or sectarianism but to spread its global imperial order across the globe, starting with the nations the invasion of which could be easily justified in the name of War on Terror as a perfect *Casus Belli* like the case of Iraq. The fact that the US employs the word ‘war’ in its attempt to fight ‘terrorism’ is also controversial as fighting against terrorist groups is usually labeled ‘security measures’ or ‘police action,’ a point made by Alain Badiou in his “Philosophical Considerations of Some Recent Facts,” but the Empire favors war over any other term to make sure its invasion of any country will inevitably lead to the assimilation of that country to its net of supranational sovereignty, that is “a strange form of imperial federalism, where Iraq is treated as just another American state”(Appadurai 79).

The post-9/11 US experienced a “state of denial” and for the US to regain its “sense of purpose, political order and prevention of its social collapse,” it needed a stronger anchor that could bring back “something more meaningful than nostalgia for the past grandeur and the past sense of stability” which calls for the pursuit of Empire in an intensified manner (Haidar 215). It accounts for one reason why the US decided to occupy, colonize, and assimilate Iraq and the Iraqi people regardless of the violence that may go into this enterprise:

It was in this atmosphere of fear ... that the case of Abu Ghraib dropped on us ... Fox News was on, and I saw the footage without sound ... I felt much like I’d done on the day I’d seen the attack on New York ... We looked at each other, as if we were seeking reassurance that we were far away from that prison and had nothing to do with what was happening there. (Kachachi 105-106)

Zeina experiences the same feelings when she witnesses the US being invaded on 9/11 and when she sees the treatment of prisoners by American soldiers in Iraq; in

essence, they demonstrate the same kind of violence, along with the same kind of humiliation that Americans felt after 9/11 and Iraqi people experienced after the invasion and occupation of Iraq; however, both 9/11 and occupation of Iraq were both the consequences of US invasion and/or occupation of many countries in the world, specifically in the Middle East. Zeina equates the feeling she experiences when she sees the scenes of torture by American agents in Abu Ghraib with those she had seen when she woke up one morning, reached for the remote control, and witnessed 9/11 events firsthand on TV, so the invasion of Iraq and Abu Ghraib case seem to be the vengeance of the US for the events. However, to date it has not been proved that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction or that it supported in any possible manner extremist groups such as Al Qaida; for Zeina, the news of “weapons of mass destruction, about Bin Laden, about a bomb that would finish off Israel” as well as 9/11 events were “waiting for a scapegoat,” justifying the reason why “we bought it all. You believed us, and we believed them” (Kachachi 124).

Furthermore, since the US had no reason to invade Iraq and even the United Nations did not approve of US invasion of Iraq on the basis of lack of documents regarding Iraq’s involvement in 9/11 events, invading Iraq is not a response by the US but “a permanent war against the states and the people of the recalcitrant peripheries, a war begun already in the 1990s by the deployment of military control over the world by the US and its subordinate NATO allies” (Amin 134) and a simple act of aggression against a country that does not move in lockstep with countries that are allied with the US policies declared by Bush as ‘either you are with us or against us[US]’ (here “us” stands for the US and the Empire) and thus called a country in the ‘axis of Evil’.

#### **4. The Emergence of Fundamentalism: Fundamentalist Zeina and Muhaymen**

Fundamentalism is usually equated with “historical backflow, a de-modernization” or “resurgences of primordial identities and values” (Hardt and Negri 146) for many people who live outside Third World countries; however, many political scholars, specifically Michel Hardt and Antonio Negri, offer their new rendering of the concept of fundamentalism as an attempt “really directed in reaction to the present social order” (Hardt and Negri 149) and consider it to be “a symptom of the passage to Empire” (Hardt and Negri 147). In this postmodern sense, fundamentalism and “[f]undamentalist movements offer meaning where there is none, hope where it has been extinguished by poverty, and a sense of direction to those disregarded millions whom capitalism has rendered superfluous” (Spencer 253).

In *The American Granddaughter*, Kachachi attends to this neglected dimension of the concept of fundamentalism through this subtle view which centers on the dichotomy that is effected by the Empire and its strategy. Although the term fundamentalism is applied to Muhaymen, the group in which he is a member, many people in Iraq, and even Zeina herself, the term has nothing to do with the extremists that are generically called ‘terrorist’. The first time Zeina mentions ‘religious fundamentalist’ is when she sees some of her comrades doing silly actions of which Zeina is not able to make sense. However, she finds out that having a patrol in Kadhimiya on the day Ashura was remembered, they have seen people doing Ashura mourning rituals and some American soldiers have started imitating them in a manner which seems to be deriding. Not able to control her anger though she is not a Muslim herself, Zeina contends, “So I acted like any religious fundamentalist” (Kachachi 80). She starts criticizing all those who have been mocking Ashura though she claims her voice seemed like that of “my father, the TV presenter, or maybe the voice of Tawwoos” and when she is finally asked by a comrade “whose side are you on, anyway?” she chooses to be on the side of fundamentalists like Muhaymen, her father, the TV presenter, Tawwoos who are not ‘morons’ but ‘fundamentalists’ by hating Americans and being resistant to them (Kachachi 80-81).

Zeina and Muhaymen seem to be occupying an “adversarial space” (Huyssen vii), when they first meet, considering each other as the dangerous ‘Other’ since Zeina is serving the US for money and Muhaymen is fighting for Iraq’s independence from the US for his people. However, their minds get closer to each other in finding the US responsible for all the chaos and fundamentalism widespread in Iraq. The years that Zeina works in Iraq as an interpreter are characterized by her disillusionment with the idea that the US can bring about freedom and prosperity for it “tasted like vinegar” (Kachachi 133) by her now-Iraqi-centric attitude that fundamentalism is rooted in American invasion and not the other way around, and by her alienation from an American identity informed by “the curse of Bush” (Kachachi 135) and distrust of the American dream which is founded on war, killing, and colonialism. Zeina’s fundamentalist identity stems from the same root as that of Muhaymen and is in line with the idea that fundamentalism does not have anything to do with going back to the roots of Islam; Zeina counters Americans and the American way of seeing the situation when she recounts the story of the Wolf Brigade:

A new Iraqi army force, the Wolf Brigade, was created to bring the situation under control. . . They chased insurgents from street to street in the hope of returning order to the city. We called them insurgents, or rebels, terrorists, criminals, troublemakers—anything to avoid using the word ‘resistance’.  
(Kachachi 103)

Zeina is Christian and though she has lived in a society mainly occupied by Muslims, she sympathizes with the fundamentalists and insurgents, not because they are dangerous and kill Americans but because she has the exact same outlook towards the nature of fundamentalism as anti-American.

To a much larger extent, Muhaymen looks like a usual person with whom Zeina can locate so many common grounds. First, he had been a prisoner of war in Iraq following the Iran-Iraq war and during his time in Iran in prison, he had composed poems which “were gentle in parts, and in others they were mysterious, more like prayers or riddles, talismans designed to mislead the prison guards” and he and Zeina even start having a poem debate as “direct flirtation was not allowed” (Kachachi 99). In describing him as a “communist by birth” and later on a “religious man,” Zeina is seeking to pin him down to one and any fundamentalist group, but Muhaymen describes himself a fundamentalist in the postmodern sense when he opines, “[T]he one thing that stayed the same was my hatred for Americans” (Kachachi 94). In fact, Muhaymen’s claims of hating all Americans arise out of his experience of war as “a weapon of Euro-American hegemony” (Hardt and Negri 149) and can by no means be reduced to a desire to go back to past social forms and values, an idea posited by the US government as a tool to justify its invasion, toppling down, and changing governments across the globe which challenge the Empire and its reigning paradigms. Muhaymen’s hatred derives from “a sense of injustice, a sense of being ignored, marginalized, disenfranchised, and undifferentiated” (Smith 7). The United States promotes a kind of freedom and democracy that all countries aspire to though the country itself has never succeeded in living up “to the very ideals he preaches to ‘us’” substantiated in

George Bush’s 2004 inauguration speech, in which his call for freedom from tyranny around the world clashed with the continuing narratives of America’s own tyrannical and unabashed disregard for the freedom of others; or by the obvious discomfort caused by the democratic election of Hugo Chavez and Evo Morales in Latin America and, even more, of Hamas in Palestine. (Smith 7)

Muhaymen is not preaching to Zeina about going back to the roots of Islam, living in a way people in early Islam did, living by the same rules where the Islamic community was at work, or establishing an Islamic identity, but he is condemning “classical modernism as a purely Westernizing force” and arguing for a kind of outlook—fundamentalism—that “its basic elan is anti-Western” (Rahman 136), calling for a hatred that is “directed against the US—the state—and America—the country” which has “complex roots and sources,” the most important of which can be “the long record of American military

violence during the past century” (Appadurai 102) and in the new one in the form of Empire which furthers its imperial and domineering force into one Americanized united world in the name of War on Terror, fighting terrorism, and protecting American lives though the main responsible force for all the chaos and the problems has been the US itself. In other words, there is no question that “the fundamentalist reassertion of an authoritative national identity is the product of neocolonial globalization” (Gamal 10) and thus Muhaymen is anti-American and a fundamentalist only in its postmodern sense.

### **5. Fundamentalism as Resistance**

All writers after 9/11 started depicting the horrors that shocked the whole world, the consequences it may bring to America, and the people hurt mentally or physically in the catastrophe, but almost all of them were “strangely incurious about . . . the origins and appeal of political violence” (Mishra 22). Kachachi provides a distinctive, realistic, and genuine portrait of the US invasion of Iraq from the lens of the losers of war in an effort to shed light on not only the reasons of the invasion of US but also of the fundamental movement as “a "symbolic" response to American invasion of Iraq and its single-minded pursuit of global financial and political power that emerged in Iraq” (Jones and Smith 944).

The novel examines and thus exposes the unofficial history and accounts of ordinary people living in Iraq who experienced almost the same situation under American occupation as they did under Saddam, a fact also asserted by one of the comrades of Zeina after they have seen the Abuh Ghraib prison tortures as, “Guys, this is nothing compared to what used to happen on the Baathist prisons” (Kachachi 106). In effect, the crimes Americans commit in the novel correspond to Agamben’s notion of ‘the state of exception’ by which he points to the fact that, in emergencies, some specific acts which are not recognized in law can be enforced though they are essentially against the stance and force of law, and which suspend some people’s rights even to live. These people have to be kept in a ‘camp’ that “delimits instead a space in which ... the normal rule of law is suspended” and at the same time “in which the fact that atrocities may or may not be committed does not depend on the law but rather on the civility and ethical sense of the police that act temporarily as sovereign” (Agamben 41); the phenomenon ends up in denying individual’s citizenship and reducing them to the level of ‘bare life,’ indicating their being stripped of any “right to life” (Foucault 136). Because these people are assumed to be threats to the rights of Americans, the residents of the ‘camp’ are prone to any and all manners of violence as they reside in an exterior space outside the law although the exterior itself is established by the same law in the first place.

In the wake of 9/11 events and during the invasion and occupation of Iraq, the policy of Bush government allowed committing crimes against Iraqi civilians in the name of preserving their own people, policies that allowed capturing, torturing, and, as in the case of Abu Ghraib, killing people without having any evidence regarding their being criminals and without any consequences for the American offenders. The continuation of the state of exception in Iraq for several years made it possible for the US to subject all lives in Iraq to ‘homo sacer’—that is, bare life—through which innocent civilians may be killed for no specific reason when Bush in 2001 argued for the possibility of keeping all people suspected of terrorist attacks to indefinite time in prison and torture by using the old functional work ‘other’ (Bostdorff). Furthermore, as Agamben notes, in order to justify imprisoning, torturing, and killing those whom the US labels the enemies of the rights of people, the US government has to first strip them of their being ‘citizens’ in Iraq—the same thing Adolf Hitler did to the Jews prior to sending them to be killed in concentrations camps—and then convict them to bare life. Stripping special Iraqis of their citizenship rights is majorly carried out by the US government’s creating a label called fundamentalism, which means the US deploys the fundamentalism card against all those who resist the horrors and want their human rights back. The main question, Agamben remarks, is not “how it could have been possible to commit such atrocious horrors against other human beings”; instead, it requires “to investigate carefully how ... human beings could have been so completely deprived of their rights and prerogatives to the point that committing any act toward them would no longer appear as a crime” (Agamben 40). In the novel, the answer to the question simply lies in ‘fundamentalism’ although it itself is the product of the US imperial aspirations and, at the same time, the means through which “every juridical protection” of the people whom Americans claim to be defending “had disappeared” (Agamben 40). Violence as a “grotesque piece of compensatory drama” (Scarry 28) against Iraqis committed in “a space in which the law is completely suspended”(Agamben 39) gives birth to the same fundamentalism Americans claim to dismantle, thus making Iraq, its cities, and its prisons “the laboratories in the experiment of total domination, for human nature being what it is, this goal can be achieved only under the extreme circumstances of human made hell” (Arendt 240).

The perennial tensions that have haunted the Middle East between the US and the countries that ‘are not with us[US]’ have continued to bedevil the twenty-first century and this portentous conflict is still continuing with the US occupation and leaving Afghanistan as well as occupation and staying in Iraq, but all overshadowed by what they call the War on Terror, as “[t]errorism becomes a convenient justificatory cover for US

interventionism. Anti-'terrorism' rhetoric then protects US empire building while creating the very conditions that spawn true terror and terrorists" (Eisenstein 8). However, it is the same terror the US planted in the Middle East in the postmodern world with their expanding the global social order along with moving towards supranational sovereignty though these principles and worldviews are "no less religious and fundamentalist than the millenarian fantasies of al-Qaeda and bin Laden" (Spencer 251). The novel depicts war, the same war waged by the US to occupy and colonize any country or group they favor in the name of War on Terror which is basically "an inextricable web of deceit with a covert imperialist program" (Haidar 229) in seeking to regain its political and social stability and a sense of purpose after its humiliation in the 9/11 events, but it is now recounted from the lens of the real people who were doomed to experience the war and two dictators, one Saddam Hussein and the other George W. Bush.

The globalization techniques that seek to enable the Empire get rid of all the national sovereignty characteristic of the modern world can be met, according to Muhaymen and many other Iraqis, only with the multitude, the amalgamation of the resisting power of individuals and groups that stand in tandem "against New Yorkers, Londoners, or Sydneysiders," which "is either the rational reactions of those most alienated from the projection of American, Anglospheric imperialism or a deliberate fiction of the liberal democratic order to justify an assault upon human rights at home and weak states abroad" to contest the present social order in which the Empire reigns the day (Jones and Smith 944).

Worldwide acquiescence of all countries to American domination in the form of Empire necessitates non-governmental resistance and, in that light, resistance, which was a tool practiced by numerous individuals along with organized resisting groups such as Al Mahdi, could be the multitude or "the collective oppositional subject poised against" (Leitch 2507) the US, least of all in the case of Iraq. This multitude is predicated on the co-joint resisting activities of all "singularities" which function in "an inverted mirror image of Empire" neatly fitting the definition that needs to be given to the resistance groups (Leitch 2507). The multitude, the resistance, the war, and the fundamentalism all stand in stark contrast to the logic of Empire which effects terror, fear, killing, torture, and death in the name of democracy and prosperity.

The resistance groups, thus, can by no means be reduced to Muslim terrorists suggesting "an irrational and dangerous Other" and in need of subjection to "the techniques of 'extraordinary rendition'" (Haidar 227) but real resistance against an

invading force which is trying to get the rich natural resources in Iraq in the name democracy and prosperity. The Empire has carried out “a bloody military takeover, the overthrow of a democratically elected government, or the violent seizure and occupation of a people's land,” examples of which can be seen in Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine and the violence that goes into it is

an intrinsic part of colonial and imperial power. Equally, it is important to realise that the violence of intervention and the more visible horrors of an Abu Ghraib or a Guantanamo are buttressed by an insidious and pervasive Western arrogance that posits the non-Western other as immanently inferior, albeit susceptible to advancement with the proper guidance. (Slater 1373)

Having stayed on the verge of destruction for almost from the inception of Iraq after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Iraqis are now given the chance to dissent through fundamentalism although the origin, the method, the nature, and the outcomes of this kind of fundamentalism are unique and unprecedented as it is considered a response to the unjustified and illegal invasion in the name of War on Terror aiming supranational sovereignty; in this regard, Chomsky remarks that 9/11 was “a gift to the harshest and most repressive elements on all sides, and are sure to be exploited . . . to accelerate the agenda of militarization . . . and undermining democracy in any meaningful form (Chomsky 51). Depicted in this manner, Kachachi makes the reader see fundamentalism not as the barbaric killing and destruction of all new and modern, but rather as a resistance that reaches far beyond its initial aims of exposing the machination of Empire.

Given the ubiquitous nature of the Empire with its domineering activities in a globalized world in which national sovereignty is forced to be abandoned, Ania Loomba, building on the fact that Iraq has been one of the few countries where resistance is constantly practiced, contends that there exists an emergency in uncovering “the long history of empire, of learning from those who have opposed it, and of identifying the contemporary sites of resistance and oppression that have defined postcolonial studies” (1). Iraq is globally known as the one of the most chaotic places in the always tumultuous Middle East where fundamentalism and terrorism seem to be fueled day after day, a fact that has more to do with the potential for resistance rather than fundamental violence of the people and the country. *The American Granddaughter* is a substantiating example which uncovers the roots of fundamentalism, terror and terrorism, decolonization struggles, and War on Terror on the part of the losers of the postmodern Empire as a counter-history to the 9/11 events, along the way challenging US invasion of Iraq for endangering the lives of millions of people in Iraq and killing many innocent civilians.

Although the US had been “an ally in an earlier period” with Iraq before the Gulf War (Garner et al. 424), the Soviet Communism gave cede of place to “Islamic Terrorism” as “America’s enemy” (King 683) after 9/11 events, and in *The American Granddaughter*, as a response to 9/11, Kachachi offers her unofficial account of the personal and social dilemma faced by all Iraqis, specifically Zeina and Muhaymen, who are forced to see War on Terror not as occupation, colonization, and mass killing but as an introduction to democracy. The novel, thus, records Kachachi’s treatment of fundamentalism and terror, and the novel tracks her efforts in pinpointing the role that the US may have had in fueling them after the US invasion of Iraq.

## 6. Conclusion

The inhumanity of the War on Terror and many other atrocities committed by the US in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere in the name of national self-protection and Americas’ preventive measures are not wars between Islam and the West, civilized people and the barbarians, or right and wrong but attempts by the Empire to enforce its supranational sovereignty, one of the goals of the US in the twenty-first century. In effect, it has been the same inhumane treatment of ‘others’ along with its intervention in the affair of countries that characterized the twentieth-century American policy, giving rise to events such as 9/11. Kachachi, on the other hand, exceeds any other writer in arguing for the same issues stated by resistance groups in Iraq in indicting the US for both 9/11 events in the US and US’s response to the events in Afghanistan and Iraq during the prime time of Empire in a novel that is historically, politically, and culturally verifiable. Furthermore, since most literary representations of post-9/11 Islam and Muslims have sought to normalize their association with terrorism and thus to create the state of exception in which the Empire acts beyond the usual practices done to guarantee security and thus in turn to underwrite the Empire’s reach to colonize the entire globe, Kachachi occupies a pivotal role in undermining the American myth of having the role of the savior by showing how the US has been utterly responsible for all fundamentalism prevailing Iraq and that it is has been the US that has halted all humane treatment of ‘others’ by resorting to abduction, torture, and killing of many civilians. Consequentially, the widespread fundamentalism in Iraq symbolizes the widespread resistance against the US interventions in the Middle East, contesting its implementation of the state of exception in Iraq, so fundamentalism serves as a site or space where national identity is protected and the Empire’s inexorable struggle to elide national sovereignty in seeking to employ supranational sovereignty is challenged.

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