

Orientalism in Bush administration and its influence over military intervention in Iraq

Abstract

Master's thesis focuses on the presence of orientalist elements in the Bush administration and their influence over the justification and execution of the military intervention in Iraq. These elements are orientalist construction of identities, civilizational mission, concept of oriental Muslim and concept of oriental woman.

For this purpose, three research questions were formulated. 1) How the identity of Iraq was constructed to justify the intervention? 2) How the identity of USA was constructed to justify the intervention? 3) Whether the Bush administration carried elements of orientalism, how did they present themselves and what amount of influence did they have over justification and execution of the military intervention in Iraq?

The Fairclough three-dimensional model of critical discursive analysis was chosen in order to answer research questions. Analysis was focused on official speeches of three key representatives of Bush administration (G.W. Bush, D. Cheney, C. Powell) within the time period from the terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001 until the actual military intervention to Iraq on March 20th 2003. Based on the analysis the presence of orientalist construction of identities and civilizational mission were identified. Research also showed that element of oriental Muslim was in the justification of the intervention present only partially. It cannot be said that the administration officially worked with the classical concept of oriental but despite administration claims to the contrary Bush administration implicitly merged Islam with terrorism. Orientalist element of oriental woman did not occur during the justification of military intervention in Iraq.

Keywords: orientalism, discursive analysis, Cheney, Bush, Powell, intervention, Iraq, Hussein, terrorism