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The Domestic Enemy in British TV Documentaries on the Iraq War

When President Bush declared 'mission accomplished' in May 2003, he obviously understood the invasion of Iraq in terms of traditional warfare, where the 'coalition of the willing' went to defeat another regular armed force and where the mission was to destroy that force by overwhelming firepower and physical manoeuvre. He thought this war had finished, but another type of war was underway. Even during the invasion the British soldiers found it difficult to identify an enemy as Iraqi soldiers melted into the population, and after the disbanding of the Iraqi army by Paul Bremner, many ex-soldiers took up arms against the occupation, not fighting for the old regime, but against the new. It became even more difficult to identify who the enemy was. Kiszely writes of post-modern warfare where "war and peace are not easily delineated [...] the contest takes place not on a field of battle, but in a complex civilian environment: 'amongst the people' and most importantly takes place where "the enemy is not obvious, nor easily identifiable, literally or figuratively, and may change on an almost-daily basis" (2007: 7). If the 'enemy' cannot be identified, it is then very difficult to know when and how they are defeated, or when one side has won, or indeed, what victory is. The problem for documentary makers becomes, how do you tell that confused and confusing story?

This chapter looks at how this framing of different enemies is constructed in British television documentaries on the British military in Iraq 2003 – 2009. I examined 21 documentaries on British network television which were specifically about the British military in Iraq. They fall roughly into three categories. Documentaries as investigations into what the British military was doing in Iraq include: *Real Story with Fiona Bruce*, BBC1 29/11/04; *Sweeney Investigates: Death of the Redcaps*, BBC2 10/2/05; *Newsnight* 19/9/05; *Tonight: Our Boys in Basra*, ITV 21/11/05; *Panorama: The Battle for Basra Palace*, BBC1 10/12/07; *Brothers in Arms*, Sky 17/11/09. The second category of programmes examined the effects of war on the British military fighting in Iraq: *Panorama: Bringing our Boys Home?*, BBC1 19/3/06; *Dispatches: Battle Fatigue*, C4 22/5/06; *When Our Boys Came Home*, BBC2 1/6/06; *Tonight: War Wounds*, ITV 30/1/06; *Panorama: For Queen and Country?*, BBC1 19/2/07; *Panorama: Soldiers on the Run*, BBC1 26/3/07; *Dispatches: Battle Scarred*, C4 7/9/09. The third category examines the legacy of the British occupation in Iraq: *Panorama: Basra – The Legacy*, BBC1 17/12/07; *Dispatches: Iraq – The Betrayal*, C4 17/3/08; *Iraq: The Legacy*, C4 13/12/08; *The*

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Fallen: Legacy of Iraq, BBC4 19/6/09. I also looked at the series *Andy McNab's Tour of Duty* (ITV, June 2008), which contained three programmes, and the BBC series *Soldier Husband Daughter Dad* (BBC1, April 2005). This series had seven programmes, and I produced one of the programmes in this series and directed two programmes.

Winston writes that "narrative is never absent in documentary films" (1995: 119), and stories seek coherence and meaning. They define causes and list consequences. The documentary makers as well as the military needed to define the main characters of the war and post-war story, the heroes, the enemy and the victims to give the war meaning and to justify its cost. The ambivalence about the justification of war, the changing nature of war, the increasing importance of emotional over a more rational truth, the change of 'authoritative' sources from experts to 'ordinary people,' and the increasing entertainment value of television documentary in a competitive viewing market all converge to offer a more complex and different enemy from that of many past wars.

1 Framing the Enemy

Framing is defined as "selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution" (Entman 2004: 5), as well as "the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue" (Chong and Druckman 2007: 2). In the traditional ideological dualistic "framing" the war is presented as a battle of good and evil, where the enemy is often simplified and monolithic: "There is always one right, justified, and innocent side – ours, even if we are committing unprovoked genocide – and the other side is always actuated by evil motives" (Hold and Silverstein 1989: 171). As a traditional war, the First Gulf War (1990 – 1991) was articulated as a struggle between two fundamental forces: "From the outset of the crisis in the Gulf, the media employed the frame of popular culture that portrays conflict as a battle between good and evil" (Kellner 1992: 62).

Although the Iraq War was also initially portrayed and fought as a traditional war where the coalition forces were going in to fight military forces loyal to Saddam Hussein, the discourse which ultimately gained dominance was one of intervention in Iraq for humanitarian reasons (Hoskins and O'Loughlin 2007). The Iraq War can also seem to be framed through an orientalist lens where the West was seen to be morally superior and acting from the best motives in contrast to 'the other,' which is morally degenerate. Coverage of wars in the Middle East has been notable for the emerging narratives that construct a form of ‘Muslim terrorism’ (Karim 2003: 81). These reinforce the orientalist view of Islam noted by Edward Said, where “malicious generalizations about Islam have become the last acceptable form of denigration of foreign culture in the West” (1997: 12).

In the Gulf War and Iraq War, the US media positioned the Iraqi people as victims of the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, with Iraqi society being fragmented and separate from the regime, which is also defined as a threat to its own people (Carpentier 2007: 107), but by late 2003 the people that the soldiers had gone to help had become those fighting the occupation, and the understanding and representation of the causes of war, and of the aggressors and enemies in the war became confused. The defining of who was evil and who was good was becoming less clear. 179 British service personnel were killed in Iraq. The war of liberation quickly became a messy war of occupation, and as the occupation became a counterinsurgency and other ambiguities became apparent, the simple master narrative seemed to come unstuck.

Beck argues that in a risk society relations of definition are to be conceived as analogous to Marx’s relations of production. Risk becomes a mathematicised morality and becomes a socially constructed phenomenon: “This discourse carries the power to define and set the risk” (Beck 2000, qtd. in Shaw 2005: 97). The construction of a value in the willingness of the soldier to die was held not to be equal to the perceived poor treatment that the soldiers were receiving. The price and value of this risk in earlier wars was balanced in that the cause seemed morally equal to death, but with the growing realisation that in Iraq the cause was not worth the deaths being paid, the risk had to be re-defined and the narrative re-framed. For some the narrative began to eat itself.

“Why are we always fighting? Because we always have enemies. How do we know we always have enemies? Because we are always fighting” (Chernus 2006: 211). With doubts about the worth of the causes of war, the value of the deaths must be re-aligned. Death remains the same, but the reason for the sacrifice must have equal value to society. So, new enemies must be found to justify the fight, and new causes sought to compensate the nation for the loss of lives.

It is not just wars and their framing that are changing, but also society and soldiers. King notes that state authority over the armed forces seems to have been attenuated, and soldiers no longer die for their country. The structure and form of the obituaries from Iraq and Afghanistan are the same, and the dead of Helmand are “primarily commemorated as personalities, defined through their unique professionalism, not honoured as individual sacrifices for a collective national cause” (King 2010: 10). The state now acts through identifiable personalities and families (King 2010). Chouliaraki also notes a transformation in the understanding of war and the identity of soldiers in that “warfare is itself constituted as meaningful and legitimate precisely through the soldiers' own performance of the self, […] and the development of the empathetic self be this in relation to a fallen fellow soldier or an ambivalent connectivity to suffering locals" (2016: 69).

If wars are fought for personal and domestic values then arguably the enemies have also changed to be those who oppose these values; that is the bureaucrats who break up families by the injury or death of the soldiers, or those who fail to let them achieve their potential as professionals or family members. In a humanitarian war the Iraqi who is being helped by the soldier is now seen as a sympathetic body, who is also a victim of war, facing the same enemy as the soldier. The ambivalence comes when the sympathetic local starts laying IEDs to blow up the helping soldiers, but the enemy is still the same. The two-dimensional framing of the enemy is thus no longer sufficient in this complex war where the old enemy is both enemy and friend, where the justification for fighting is no longer clear, but death and suffering still has to be paid for, so a different enemy must be identified.

2 Defining the Enemy

The definition of an enemy is someone "harmful or deadly […] seeking to injure, overthrow, or confound an opponent" (Webster's dictionary). However, in war the definition and construction of an enemy is more complex. Like the military, documentaries and the media need an enemy to justify what the soldiers are doing. As story-tellers, journalists and programme makers frame war in a way that evokes a previously established story line, or scripts that depict war in mythic terms, westerns, fairy stories telling narratives of victimisation, heroism and villainy (Aalai 2014). The mythic structure is not just one of good and evil, but of issues which are seen to be forces of good. The British forces were heroes because they were helping the Iraqi people overcome the tyrant Saddam Hussein. The narrative frame of good against and overcoming evil is a fundamental justification for war, familiar to all cultures and not just presented by the media. A corollary to being good is to be seen to *do* good, which constructs the humanitarian discourse, but if the soldiers' purpose is to 'do' good, then as seen above, arguably the enemy becomes those who try to prevent them from doing good.

The enemy thus becomes not only those 'militia' (not soldiers) in Iraq who are fighting the British soldiers, but also the forces at home who can be identified more easily and held to account. The narrative demands payment from those who do wrong to the soldiers and achieving this from recognisable groups is easier and gives sight of a clearer way to resolve the problem than from a force whose wrong doing is morally uncertain. The domestic enemy is impeding the military from carrying out their duty to ‘do good,’ as well as being seen not to provide the funding or the adequate strategy which leads the soldier into danger and to failure in war. The suffering soldier who is prevented from doing good becomes a victim of war:

> The increasing celebration of victimhood within British society and public disquiet over the use of force, coupled with the nature and objectives of conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, have ensured that the soldier is easily pigeonholed as a victim of poor strategy and underfunding of the Armed Forces. (McCartney 2011: 43)

The image of the soldier as victim deprives them of agency and thus responsibility. They become less the perpetrators of violence against ‘an enemy,’ but the recipients of poor policy, lack of planning and care by the government, which can then be condemned, while the troops continue to be supported (McCartney 2011). Kleykamp and Hipes’ study on the US media coverage of veterans of the Iraq and Afghan wars finds that as in the Vietnam war, veterans are portrayed as victims ‘emphasizing the harm done to them by combat abroad and bureaucracy at home’ (2015: 351). If the bureaucracy that caused the soldiers suffering can be held to account, the enemy is defeated and the war is won.

Juergensmeyer identifies a constructed enemy as an abstraction, and writes of the “faceless collective enemy” (2003: 179) where in many religious wars the ordinary people are targeted as representatives of a collective that is a corporate foe: “The amorphous foe asserts the triumph of order over disorder” (179). He notes that in conflicts where religion plays a part there is often a primary and a secondary enemy: “The primary enemy is the religious rival or local political authority that directly threatens the activist group […] the secondary enemy is a less obvious threat […] a governmental authority who is trying to be fair-minded” (179).

It is difficult to argue that the MoD/Government is a direct threat to the soldiers in the documentaries examined in this chapter, but they are clearly identified as a group which impedes ‘our boys’ from winning a war which heroes, and especially heroes with such technical advantages, should be able to win. In June 2005, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced that “this insurgency is going to be defeated not by the coalition – it is going to be defeated by the Iraqi security forces.” Paul Rogers comments that it is an astonishing moment when “one of the war’s leading architects, publicly accepts that the world’s most powerful military forces […] cannot counter 20,000 or so determined insurgents backed by a minority of the population of Iraq” (2006: 255). Failure of coalition soldiers is a difficult concept to swallow, but failure partly due to the ineptitude of an amorphous, bureaucratic MoD/Government body is easier to accept.

Allied to the incomprehension that the biggest, most advanced army in the world was being defeated by a group of insurgents was the problem of the changing nature of the war in Iraq. Fighting was moving from traditional to asymmetric warfare, with the involvement of different groups and players, which meant that the identification of an enemy became equally shifting. In wars which involved nations, the enemy is perhaps easier to identify. In 2005 General Sir Rupert Smith, who had been Deputy Supreme Commander Allied Powers Europe in 1998 – 2001, wrote that "we fight amongst the people" (2005: 278) who are "an entity but not a monolithic block [...] they form entities based on family, tribe, nation, ethnicity, religion, ideology, state, profession, skill, trade and interests of many different kinds" (2005: 279). The fragmentation of war meant a fragmentation of the enemy. This fragmentation can perhaps be broken down even further to the individual. King writes in his study of obituaries that "The dead are remembered for their individual professionalism" (2010: 20). They have personalities and families. If these are today's heroes, the villains are perhaps amorphous bodies, the collective who impede the individual's path to winning, again the faceless bureaucrats in the Ministry of Defence, or 'the Army.'

3 Documentaries about Iraq

Specific genres have their own requirements which influence the way stories are told, and thus the representation and portrayal of the enemy. Genre may be defined as a "system of codes, conventions and expectations" (Ekström 2002: 277). For Corner, the documentary has always been defined in a "loose, contingent kind of way" (2001: 125), and Nichols claims that documentaries "adopt no fixed inventory of techniques, address no one set of issues, display one single set of forms or styles" (2010: 21). However, the codes and expectations of documentary can also be divided into the categories of 'current affairs' and documentary films. Both forms are documentaries in the traditional sense of being actuality, or factually based films, but as Michalski and Gow (2007) write, current affairs documentaries are treated separately because of the increasing short term focus they have. In the BBC current affairs documentaries are also commissioned from the News and Current Affairs department, thus have a more journalistic intent, and often draw on reporters and producers from news (Schlesinger, Murdock and Elliott 1983). Hill classifies current affairs and investigations as a broad category which "encompasses both long form journalism, political debate, consumer-based stories and investigative journalism" (2007: 5). In current affairs programmes the reporters are frequently news journalists who often present themselves as “populist spokesmen articulating what they take to be the prevailing fears and preoccupations of ‘ordinary viewers.” They base their questions on “some supposed common sense consensus on the issue” (Schlesinger, Murdock and Elliott 1983: 40). The question of who is the enemy is thus the product of discursive practices (Tagg 1988). Nichols states that these practices are the “vehicles of domination and conscience, power and knowledge, desire and will” (1991: 3). So the documentary maker constructs and makes sense of events, and tells stories about conflicts, of winning and losing through an organising idea, often drawing on cultural texts and ideology to do so.

Similar to the structuring of news into narrative frames, stories are intrinsic to documentary. Knudsen writes that a story has no inherent form: “it can be a series of feelings and emotions, a cluster of memories [...] the underlying emotional currents of someone’s life, a series of events imagined, historical events communally remembered, or even a history of ideas” (2012: 91). It is in the selection of these that the documentarist tells her story, and tells it through tools of fiction such as character, dialogue and plot. The selection of facets of the events or issue is also noted by Nichols, who argues that the “post-structural critique of Western humanist thought [...] relegates all discourses to the category of master narrative [...] [i. e., to] accounts that subsume all that they survey to one controlling story line, leaving little if any room for anomaly, difference of otherness” (1991: 207). In films about war, this ‘master narrative’ leaves little room for an exploration of the other, and perhaps contributes to the lack of a satisfactory portrayal of ‘the enemy.’

Aufderheide (2007) categorises US documentaries on Iraq into three types; the “Why we are in Iraq” films which are essay films that analyse and extrapolate motives for the US government’s decision to invade Iraq; the “grunt docs,” where the enemy is mostly faceless, and the “Learning from Iraqis” ones, which are overwhelmingly civilian stories. The television documentaries on the British military in Iraq fall mainly into the second category, where the “usual choice for narrative structure is to follow the course of a deployment” (Aufderheide 2007: 57). She writes that, unlike in the UK, television is off-limits for much of this material in the US, but what makes it on to public and cable television is marked by very powerful emotional narratives. Stories of the grunt soldiers are also a feature of the cinema. Luckhurst notes that of the twenty-three Hollywood films released between 2004–2009 that focused directly on the Iraq war, many were “structured around the model of a returned veteran suffering post-traumatic stress, building toward the narrative revelation of a repressed event from the war” (2012: 714). This is also a feature of the British TV documentaries, where a third of those examined are about the returned suffering soldiers.

The majority of the documentaries examined are part of news and current affairs output, with news journalists as presenters: *Panorama*; *Sweeney Investigates*; *The Real Story with Fiona Bruce* and *Newsnight* from the BBC; *Dispatches* from C4; and *Tonight* from ITN. The underlying remit of these programmes is investigative journalism: "These popular, long running series have, at various points in their history, acted as the 'conscience of the nation,' seeking to expose social injustice, investigate misdemeanours by the powerful and take on venal or corrupt vested interest" (McQueen 2011: 677). The format therefore requires a villain whose misdemeanours must be revealed.

The other documentaries on the British military in Iraq also had a traditional documentary theme of finding alternative voices and raising issues of social concern. The BBC output has a public service remit of social concern and providing information. The publicity for the BBC documentary *When Our Boys Came* home states that the film "captures the suffering of three men who served our country when we sent them to Iraq, but whose voices are seldom heard when the rights and wrongs are discussed" (BBC 2009). The BBC series *Soldier Husband Daughter Dad* brief was also to tell the stories of the military in Iraq and the concurrent experience of the families in the UK. The BBC4 documentary *No Plan no Peace* was an investigative documentary directed by Fiona Bruce, a producer for Panorama.

4 The Enemy in British TV Documentaries

To research the programmes I undertook a qualitative research approach, as this can "reveal underlying themes and contexts of the messages" (Wimmer and Dominick 2013: 422). I examined the "concepts, metaphors and themes" (Jensen 2013: 277), and transcribed all the speech and commentary from the documentaries. From this I noted who was directly spoken of as 'the enemy,' over what visuals, and who was accused of being to blame for an issue, or who was responsible for a particular event or problem experienced by the soldiers and their families to assign the identification of an enemy.

The enemy is not often directly named, but three major opponents for the British soldier are identified. The first are the British government and politicians. This is a major theme in half of the documentaries (*Real Story with Fiona Bruce*, BBC1 2004; *Sweeney Investigates: Death of the Redcaps*, BBC2 2005; *Tonight: Our Boys in Basra*, ITV 2005; *Panorama: Bringing our Boys Home?*, BBC1 2006; *Dispatches: Battle Fatigue*, C4 2006; *When Our Boys Came Home*, BBC2 2006; *Tonight: War Wounds*, ITV 2006; *Panorama: For Queen and Country?*, BBC1 2007; *Brothers in Arms*, Sky 2009). The second is the 'army,' a confused amalgam of senior officers and the Ministry of Defence, and the third, as Basra descended into violence and the British lost all control in the south, is the 'militias,' an amorphous collection of armed people who are given no nationality until 2009, when the British forces had withdrawn from Iraq.

In accordance with traditional representations the enemy are those people killing or harming the friend (that is the British military). In visual media, having pictures to illustrate the enemy is obviously vital, but this presented a problem with films made after the invasion. Part of the difficulty for those documentaries studied is the lack of footage of the Iraqis. Programmes resorted to archive footage of Fedayeen soldiers marching before 2003, and this is used to represent the enemy as when Jane Corbin states in *Panorama: For Queen and Country?* (BBC1 2007) that "the enemy the British army was sent to fight had been defeated." After the invasion, 'the enemy' is often referred to in the passive mode, in that they are not identified visually. Commentary which mentions 'the enemy' is placed over pictures of British soldiers, as in "these men are also a target for their ever watchful enemy […] Insurgency comes to Iraq by many routes […] the enemy is doing it with the help of the Bedouin on 'the other side'" (*Tonight: Our Boys in Basra*, ITV 2005).

After the invasion, when most journalists had left Iraq and the security situation deteriorated, it became more difficult to film on the street. Before the contribution of social media to programmes on war, getting pictures of any Iraqi opposition was problematic. When I was in Basra in 2004 I obtained a militia DVD which pictured various insurgents firing RPGs and AK47s. The tape was obviously also bought by news outlets in Basra and the footage became ubiquitous in most reports from southern Iraq.

The third type of naming the enemy is commentary over pictures from this DVD, where the 'enemy' is again clearly bent on killing British soldiers: "The enemy are changing […] the ever watchful enemy […] the enemy is doing it (insurgency) with the help of the Bedouin" (*Tonight: Our Boys in Basra*, ITV 2005); "in a conflict like Iraq, where the enemies are often numerous and often invisible" (*Tonight: War Wounds*, ITV 2006); "the lads were facing an enemy that didn't know when to stop" (*Andy McNab's Tour of Duty*, ITV 2008).

The "humanitarian war" (Boyd Barret 2009) continues into the occupation, where the nation-building role of the British Army is also highlighted. Five of the documentaries (*Soldier Husband Daughter Dad*, BBC1 2005; *Sweeney Investigates: Death of the Redcaps*, BBC2 2005; *Tonight: Our Boys in Basra*, ITV 2005; *Panorama: Bringing our Boys Home?*, BBC1 2006; *When Our Boys Came Home*, BBC2 2006), made before the major violence became apparent, all give reasons such as "training, and keeping the peace" to explain why the military is there. It is significant that an enemy is seldom actually named even by the soldiers. The ambivalence towards the Iraqis and hence the role of the soldiers and the nature of their enemy is apparent when looking at these documentaries over time. The early programmes reflect the dominant framing of the Iraq war as being one of liberation, where the Iraqis are represented as needing the help of the British, and of being unable to help themselves. They are mostly described as “locals, Iraqis and people,” as in *Sweeney Investigates: Death of the Redcaps* (BBC2 2005). As the British military loses control of the south, the term ‘enemy’ is seldom used, and descriptions of the Iraqis change to ‘militia’ and ‘insurgents,’ implying their illegality and thus the irrational nature of their fight against the ‘humanitarian’ occupiers.

In 2004, 16,800 civilians were killed; in 2005, 20,200 and in 2006, 34,500. By October 2006, 3,709 civilians were murdered in a single month (O’Hanlon and Livingston 2010). By the end of 2005, the country was descending into civil war and the term ‘insurgent’ was being used in the television programmes (*Real Story with Fiona Bruce*, BBC1 2004; *Tonight: Our Boys in Basra*, ITV 2005). The Iraqis also become “heavily armed home grown militia” (*Dispatches: Iraq – The Reckoning*, C4 2005) when it has become clear that the aim of improving the lot of the Iraqis was not being achieved, and the justification for the war becomes increasingly ragged. By early 2006, those attacking the British are identified as the ‘militia,’ as well as the ‘Shia population,’ which is then categorised as “Shia insurgents or militia” (*Panorama: Bringing our Boys Home?*, BBC1 2006).

As the situation deteriorated in Basra, the enemy of the British military becomes the Iraqi militias, who are mostly portrayed as religiously fundamental maniacs who are represented as impossible to defeat because they are the irrational ‘other,’ playing to Orientalist stereotypes of the Middle East. They fight each other as well as the British (*Panorama: For Queen and Country?*, BBC1 2007; *Panorama: Basra – The Legacy*, BBC1 2007; *Andy McNab’s Tour of Duty*, Episodes 1, 2 and 4, Sky 2009; *Iraq – The Legacy*, C4 2008; *Brothers in Arms*, Sky 2009). Brigadier Marriot states that “heavily armed home grown militia are waging a vicious battle with each other and with the coalition troops” (*Dispatches: Iraq – The Reckoning*, C4 2005). He talks about the evilness of the previous regime which “made it more difficult to give them democracy and give them their freedom because they don’t know how to use it yet.”[1]

Part of the problem for both programme-makers and the military is also that of identifying the enemy generally and especially as time progresses, the wider ignorance of who is the enemy. One of the officers talking about the situation in Al Majar asks: “How do you identify someone who was a gunman and someone who was just in the crowd with a weapon?" (*Sweeney Investigates: Death of the Redcaps*, BBC2 2005). Brigadier Marriott talks about the violence in Basra to Jane Corbin in 2006:

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[1] See Butler’s comments about the Iraq war being fought as a ‘civilizing mission’ (2009: 14).

> […] the direct attack against the British could be for a lot of reasons. It could be that we have arrested a member of the political militia and that's reduced their power, it could be that they want us out, it could be that orders from afar have come, just to poke them in the eye. There are so many different reasons. (*Panorama: Bringing our Boys Home?*, BBC1 2006)

Phil Hindmarch, a former Sergeant in the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers says that "There's more than one enemy in Iraq, whether that be the locals, the terrorists, or keeping an eye on the Iraqi police as well" (*Dispatches: Iraq – The Betrayal*, C4 2008). The question of whether the violence in Iraq was nationalist, religious or tribal was heavily debated, both by the military, media and by academia (Hashim 2006). Peter Galbraith, for example, states that "the fundamental reality of Iraq is that there are not very many people who consider themselves Iraqis" (*Dispatches: Iraq – The Reckoning*, C4 2005).

The second 'enemy' in the television documentaries on the British military in Iraq is the Ministry of Defence, and the military itself. This discourse is clear from the first programme that was broadcast, a year and a half after the invasion. The opening introduction to the following programmes sets the theme. In 2004, Fiona Bruce asks: "Injured, traumatised and suicidal: is enough being done for British troops?" (*Real Story with Fiona Bruce*, BBC1 2004). In 2005, John Sweeney states that the Red Caps were "betrayed by equipment that didn't work and a command and control system that forgot all about them. And even when they were dead the British Army betrayed them" (*Sweeney Investigates: Death of the Red Caps*, BBC2 2005). In 2006, "tonight we tell the shocking story of an army that can't even properly care for its own wounded and a government that's trying to cover it up" (*Dispatches: Battle Fatigue*, C4 2006). These introductions accuse both the government and the army of betraying the soldiers, but the MoD is also frequently accused. Fiona Bruce reports that "the family say the MoD hasn't been there enough […]." John Sweeney reports that the British Army betrayed the Red Caps and "it failed to have the courage to admit to its own mistakes and the responsibility for that lies not with the six dead men but with Whitehall and the MoD" (*Sweeney Investigates: Death of the Red Caps*, BBC2 2005). Daniel Twiddy, an ex-soldier, says "my regiment have been brilliant […] I just feel that I think the MoD should be doing more" (*When Our Boys Came Home*, BBC2 2006).

The identification of the MoD both confuses and conflates the origin of the responsibility for this dereliction. Is the enemy the MoD as part of the government, as civil servants, or is it the senior officers in the army who work at the

MoD? This confusion allows the MoD to say in response to ITV's *Tonight* programme's accusation of lack of care "Damian has received the full support of the army" (*Tonight: Our Boys in Basra*, ITV 2005). Responsibility is handed over by the MoD to the army as a separate organisation. This also allows the army to point a finger at the Government when the discussion about equipment and funding arises. It is the fault of the MoD, that is the government, for not providing enough equipment, but it is not seen as the fault of the army for deciding how and where to spend the money, for example on what equipment to buy or not to buy. This division between the political masters and the army emerges with the arrival of General Sir Richard Dannatt as Chief of the Defence Staff in October 2006, and his criticisms of government policy and strategy in Iraq and towards the treatment of the wounded British (Ellner 2010).

However, in *Dispatches: Battle Fatigue*, the presenter Andrew Gilligan talks of the soldiers being betrayed, "failed by the government, by the legal system and even by its own leaders," and says that the soldiers "should have the nation's backing," as they made "sacrifices on our behalf' (*Dispatches: Battle Fatigue*, C4 2007). The soldiers are now also denied "our help" and "we have a duty" to support them because of the "legal contract" to do so, although technically it is a covenant, not a contract. Most of the documentaries do not specify what should be done, or who should do it, but criticise the Government and the 'army' for not doing enough in a diagnostic framework. These programmes are often framed as investigative, where the reporter's role is to uncover the failure in responsibility by the government and the 'army.' The 'enemy' in the documentaries becomes the army itself, but who exactly the 'army' is, is never specified.

The fate of the Iraqis becomes part of the discourse of betrayal, of a country betrayed by British politicians in spite of the "bravery and sacrifice of our armed forces" (Vine: *Panorama: Basra – The Legacy*, BBC1 2007). As the occupation continues, the British military is not accountable, as their withdrawal strategy claims that what is happening is now in the hands of the Iraqis, and an internal matter to be sorted out by their security forces and government. The discourse of Iraqis betrayed by the British government becomes stronger as the security situation deteriorated in Basra (*Panorama: For Queen and Country?*, BBC1 2007; *Panorama: Basra – The Legacy*, BBC1 2007; *Panorama: On Whose Orders?*, BBC1 2008; *Dispatches: Iraq – The Betrayal*, C4 2008; *Dispatches: Iraq – The Legacy*, C4 2008) but it is not the soldiers who are responsible.

Both *Panorama* and *Dispatches* made programmes on the betrayal of the Iraqis. The former in *Basra: The Legacy*, where Jane Corbin "reveals the true legacy Britain is leaving the people of Basra" (BBC1 2007). At the end of the programme, the responsibility is laid in the hands of the government, again foregrounding domestic politics, with the coverage of the fate of the translators, where Corbin states that Denmark has given eleven of their interpreters asylum, but that after public outcry the UK has now promised to let some settle in Britain. One of the translators says: “We feel that the British forces are responsible for our lives,” but the juxtaposition of General Binns next to this charge refutes this argument: “the government has indicated, we’re discharging our moral obligation”. The tricky problem also arises that the lack of security provided by the British leads to the abandonment of the Basrawi citizens to the militia, and they too are made responsible for the situation leading to the betrayal. Corbin states that “now the British are bowing out, handing over to Basra and its problems to the Iraqis”, but then excuses the British forces by stating “further north the American troops took them [the militias] on, but the British army lacked the manpower and the political will back home”. So, the increasing violence in Basra is laid at the feet of the militia who forced people to leave Basra, “hundreds [...] lawyers, professors, educated people Basra couldn’t afford to lose” (all quotes *Panorama: Basra – The Legacy*, BBC1 2007).

This contrapuntal reading of the betrayal (Said 1994) is a reflection of the many and sometimes discordant voices which provide meaning together, thus enriching the discourse of betrayal. The betrayed are the soldiers, the Iraqis and the British public, who all mesh to provide a dominant discourse of general betrayal. In the following programmes analysed, it is not just the Iraqis and the soldiers who have been betrayed, but also the British public (*Real Story with Fiona Bruce*, BBC1 2004; *Sweeney Investigates: Death of the Redcaps*, BBC2 2005; *Dispatches: Iraq – The Reckoning*, C4 2005; *Panorama: Bringing our Boys Home?*, BBC1 2006; *Tonight: War Wounds*, ITV 2006; *Panorama: The Battle for Basra Palace*, BBC1 2007; *Dispatches: Iraq – The Betrayal*, C4 2008). The betrayers are mostly the government, but towards the middle of the occupation Tony Blair and Gordon Brown become the main perpetrators of this betrayal. For example in *Dispatches* (2008), which is actually subtitled “The Betrayal,” Peter Oborne states that the public have been “deceived about the reasons for entering the war and about what is left behind” and that “the Government told us that the Iraq war would make us safer, but we have brought back the cult of the suicide bomber to Britain.” This forms part of the tactic of using foreign politics for domestic political uses, in that the war forms a mechanism to criticise Tony Blair and other politicians. The Iraqis, British public and the British army are united in their fate and their betrayal by the politicians. In *Panorama: For Queen and Country?* (BBC1 2007), Sue Smith, the mother of a dead soldier, says: “I feel sorry for the Iraqi people. I sit and cry when I see how they have been massacred. Philip’s blood runs on them streets, the same as theirs.” The dead are thus united, and the guilt about the legitimacy of killing Iraqis can be assuaged.

Conclusion

In British TV documentaries, the certainties of allocating roles of enemy/friend, victim/perpetrator have become complex, much like the fog of war. In traditional war, the enemy is, on the whole, the person killing the British soldier. However, framing war as a humanitarian effort blurs the dynamics of the soldier as killer and the soldier as helper/protector. Are you shooting to kill or to protect? And who are you killing, a friend or an enemy? When the sanction of legitimised force is debatable because the legitimacy of the action is unclear, the delineation of the enemy also becomes confused. If the documentary stories need a justification for war, they also need a justified enemy. If the Iraqis are friends but they are also killing you, who is to blame? In the later stages of the war the enemy reverted to the traditional orientalist foe, the fundamentalist Iraqi militia, but the equally amorphous and generalised foe, the 'MoD' was still the enemy, not only of the heroic and betrayed British soldier, but the betrayed Iraqi civilian. Iraqis and soldiers became victimised individuals suffering from PTSD, and 'those who kill and those who are killed, by sharing a common humanity, may both qualify as victims of trauma' (Scandlyn and Hautzinger 2015: 557). Thus with the enemy positioned as an amorphous group of bureaucrats who not only betray the soldiers but who also betray the soldiers' friends, the Iraqis, the narrative proffers an enemy who can be held accountable for the military failure of the war. The sticky problem of defeat can thus be resolved without having to place any blame on the individual heroic soldiers, whose values are the same as ours. The politicians and military who work at the MoD can be voted out, questioned or submitted to an enquiry, so as the enemy is defeated, the war can be won.

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