The Rhetoric of Otherness and Humanitarian Imperialism in McCormick's *Sold* and Grennan's *Little Princes*

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Abstract

The paper examines the rhetoric of otherness and humanitarian imperialism in Patricia McCormick's Sold and Conor Grennan's Little Princes. It centers on the politics of otherness and the narratives of humanism that reinforce white Americans' perceived colonial duty. As the texts portray heroic American protagonists risking their lives to rescue Nepali children from trafficking, McCormick and Grennan subtly perpetuate the white man's burden and legitimize imperial intervention. The authors depict America as the savior confronting monstrosity, savagery, barbarity, and inhumanity, exoticizing Nepal in the process. Accordingly, the paper addresses three key questions: Why do the writers depict America as the protector of trafficked children? What do they aim to convey through their portrayals of otherness and humanitarian stories? And how do McCormick and Grennan sustain the imperial legacy? To answer these, the paper employs Renato Rosaldo's idea of imperialist nostalgia and Edward W. Said's concept of Orientalism. It argues that McCormick and Grennan mourn the harm done to Nepali society, show empathy for the suffering, assume moral responsibility for the damage, and naturalize imperial intervention. They exploit the Oriental gaze over Nepal, justify American superiority, and establish a fundamental East-West divide, with the West positioned as savior and the East as in need of salvation.

***Keywords*:** Humanism, imperialist nostalgia, orientalism, trafficking, white Man's burden

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Introduction

Patricia McCormick's Sold (2006) and Conor Grennan's Little Princes (2011) reflect the implicit emblem of American politics and aspiration through literary discourse. The narratives of these texts reproduce colonial mentality, employing colonial duty to humanize the inhuman Nepali society, where child trafficking is haunting. McCormick and Grennan essentialize American interference as the path to salvation because they regard Nepali agency as inherently impotent in protecting itself from savagery. To do so, first, the authors create rhetorics of otherness that validate their monopoly in the rescue mission, and second, they turn sympathy into responsibility so that they can normalize imperial interference. In doing so, McCormick and Grennan expand the colonial legacy, substantiating the white man's burden for the redemption of Nepal.

McCormick's *Sold* narrates the story of a thirteen-year-old girl, Laxmi, from a remote village in Nepal. The story unfolds Laxmi's journey from Nepal to India after being sold by her stepfather for sex work because of the family's dire poverty. Interestingly, in Laxmi's nightmare of sexual slavery in India, ultimately, she is rescued by an American journalist. Similarly, Grennan's *Little Princes* illustrates the journey of an American who risks his life to rescue the children being trafficked in Nepal during the Maoist insurgency. The memoir uncovers Grennan's unprecedented saga from a carefree vagabond to a savior of children from brutal consequences. In this connection, this research explores McCormick's *Sold* and Grennan's *Little Princes* from a postcolonial perspective, employing Renato Rosaldo's notion

of 'imperial nostalgia'. In *Culture and Truth,* Rosaldo points out that the Western mindset is engrossed with the ambivalent notion of progress and modernity. They mourn over what they have formerly disrupted, which Rosaldo calls 'imperial nostalgia.' In his seminal work "Imperial Nostalgia," he claims, "the peculiarity of their yearning, of course, is that agents of colonialism long for the very forms of life they intentionally altered or destroyed" (107-108). Moreover, he clarifies, "Imperialist nostalgia thus revolves around a paradox: a person kills somebody and then mourns his or her victim" (108). In addition to Rosaldo's notion, the research draws on Edward W. Said's *Orientalism*: "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (2). Said's notion of *colonial perpetuation* is crucial to comprehending the relocation of the colonizer and the colonized.

The study unfolds the American imperial mission and its narrative in literary discourse. Exploring the politics of articulation in the text, the research unravels how the imperial legacy implicitly normalizes the colonial mission and perpetuates the domination instigated by the East-West dichotomy. The research reveals a darker face of imperialism that is persistently having an enormous global impact. At its core, the study demonstrates the narratives of progress that hide the imperial faces and politics of colonialism.

Literature Review

McCormick's *Sold* drew worldwide attention immediately after its release in 2006. Readers around the world praised the novel for its powerful story and realistic portrayals of global issues, human trafficking, and women's slavery. Scholars have analyzed the novel from various angles, including sexual slavery, women's injustice, trauma, and human rights. Moreover, some researchers have focused on traces of colonial legacy, which aligns with the current study. For example, examining the novel's political themes, Manika Subi Lakshmanan explores "American social activism and moral leadership in 'third world' developing countries" (76). In doing so, she claims, "the latent message is that South Asian society offers little potential for positive change. Instead, the American abroad is at the center of a transformative discourse on literacy and the articulation of individual identity" (85). According to Lakshmanan, the novel is a discursive tool that promotes American social activism in developing countries. She sees America's heroic responsibilities as extending beyond its borders to uphold humanitarian values through the novel. Similarly, Binay Subedi explores "how the text constructs the relationship between gender oppression and human rights, and also how the plot of the text advances U.S. exceptionalism" (2). In doing so, he illuminates the colonial stereotype embedded in the text as he argues, "*Sold* reinforces the liberal human rights discourse on the need to save the Other and endorses the view that oppression in the Third World is culturally sanctioned" (3). For Subedi, *Sold* lacks an impression of human rights, consolidating the American project of liberal humanism and weakening the social strength of the Third World country.

Similarly, Dipak Raj Joshi analyzes interdiscursivity that legitimates colonial dominance in literary discourse. Joshi argues, "The interdiscursivity highlighted in the text creates a photographic and static society rather than society in dynamic and living form, the society beyond transformation, and hence prone to colonization and victimization" (19). For Joshi, interdiscursivity is not merely a collage of variegated pictures in the novel, but a means through which colonization is legitimized. In a similar vein, Binod Sapkota assesses the novel from a decolonial perspective and argues, "The novel minimizes local agency by positioning an American as the primary catalyst for Lakshmi's escape, thereby underrepresenting Nepali-led anti-trafficking efforts" (42). Moreover, he points out that "such portrayals often depict those represented as miserable, wretched, and dejected, reinforcing a hierarchical contrast between the depicted subjects and the dominant Western perspective" (42-43). For Sapkota, the novel deliberately depicts a wretched overview of the East to create a sense of urgency

that entails Western intervention in Eastern countries.

Most researchers have discussed the novel as a depiction of colonial subjectivity. While their research concentrates on 'what,' this study is rooted in 'Why' and 'How.' Indeed, Subedi, Joshi, and Sapkota serve as key examples because they occupy a similar space to my research area. However, instead of concentrating on what the novel reveals to showcase Western superiority, this study examines how Americans pursue the white man's burden, which reflects imperialist nostalgia. Additionally, by emphasizing the colonizing fanaticism of the writers, the research underscores the colonial mentality that drives them to humanize their efforts in perpetuating the imperial legacy and in universalizing the American understanding of humanism.

On the other hand, Grennan's *Little Princes*, a widely acclaimed memoir, has made a remarkable impression on the reader. Reviewing the best part of the book, Paula Schuck writes, "If asked to use only one word to describe this story, it would be quite simple: passion. A passionate nonfiction story doesn't always translate as well on paper. Yet, here it does" (1). Moreover, she adds, "Grennan's passion is sparked when he first visits the orphanage. It continues to grow after he leaves and is nearly all-consuming by the time he returns to his second stint at *Little Princes*" (1). Moreover, Grennan's memoir not only caught the attention of the audience but also welcomed scholars and researchers from diverse locations. Praising Grennan's effort, Christina Ujj, for instance, writes, "*Little Princes* takes the reader on a journey to Nepal and back again. It is an inspirational story about what can be done by one man . . . . Grennan's adventure leaves the reader with a sense of empowerment that one person can do anything if he or she puts his or her mind to it" (19). However, some critics point out Grennan's work as a projection of humanitarian conventions, as the author shows an exceptional character with heroic strength. Jolena Zabel, for example, criticizes Grennan as anti-humanistic and reveals the darker side of the reviews that praise Grennan's work in the following ways:

> It [reviews that admire Grennan's work] shows a tremendous disregard for the fact that real humans are suffering in the context that gave rise to Grennan's adventure. These are not fellow adventurers, but rather non-consenting people from the community whose plights provide a backdrop for Grennan's heroism. Their experiences and role in Grennan's success are neglected by the narrative, reviewers, and, as a result, readers. (53)

For Zabel, Grennan's heroism is based on several factors; however, he fails to attribute those supporting hands that paved the way for Grennan. Perhaps that is why Zabel remarks, "It is far too simple to say Grennan is bad or ignorant for his privileged intervention; it is just as it is too simple to say he is uncomplicatedly good" (55). In other words, it is an intricate topic to discuss whether Grennan's attempt is good or bad because the layers of implicit faculties may hinder his ability to decide on his political correctness.

Locating the imperatives of cultural difference and its importance in exploring the variability of literary writing, Jeffrey Scott Coker et al. discuss opportunities and challenges in studying global studies from various countries. They recount "Conor Grennan's *Little Princes* raised awareness of human trafficking and stoked interest in Nepal, India, and China" (271). For this reason, rationalizing the importance of teaching global studies, Coker et al. point out: "Conor Grennan's *Little Princes* demonstrates to students the way human reception and interpretation of the same phenomena can change with multi-cultural experiences" (276). Coker et al. consider Grennan's work a humanist endeavor of an individual to redefine humanitarian subjectivity. Although *Little Princes* narrates a broader spectrum of the human spirit of philanthropic aspirations, Grennan's effort to justify his mission draws the attention of the researcher. In this regard, considering questions such as how his dream is haunted by the notion of the white man's burden and how he oscillates between Western superiority and

Fear of the East, this research paper examines Grennan's politics to culminate in a humanist desire. This study focuses on Grennan's imperialist observation of Nepal and highlights how he essentializes Americans in Nepal through the narrative of the savior.

Methodology

The present study is qualitative research; it combines literary interpretation with historical information contingent on the literary texts. Following the content analysis and narrative analysis methods, it primarily focuses on the proposed primary text to excavate and expound upon its meaning. For a theoretical or interpretive perspective, the study embodies postcolonial studies within the textual premise. The close reading of the text will follow the postcolonial spectrum to investigate the colonial and imperial mentality inscribed in the text. While using a postcolonial perspective, the study employs Renato Rosaldo's notion of 'imperial nostalgia' for theoretical substantiation. According to him, the Western mindset is engrossed with the ambivalent notion of progress and modernity. They mourn what they have formerly disrupted, which Rosaldo calls 'imperial nostalgia.' In his seminal work "Imperial Nostalgia," he claims, "the peculiarity of their yearning, of course, is that agents of colonialism long for the very forms of life they intentionally altered or destroyed" (107-108). In other words, he clarifies, "Imperialist nostalgia thus revolves around a paradox: a person kills somebody and then mourns his or her victim" (108). Moreover, Rosaldo professes, "Imperialist nostalgia occurs alongside a peculiar sense of mission, the white man's burden, where civilized nations stand duty-bound to uplift so-called savage ones" (108). The imperial mindset is overloaded with a civilizing mission, 'The White Man's Burden,' and they are mentally indoctrinated with the dichotomy of civilized and savage. The imperialist mindset jeopardizes the life of the colonized, but instead of being accountable for the ruptures, they blame the colonized for their savagery and become nostalgic for the loss. Rosaldo's understanding of Western culture and its imperial nostalgia is employed in this research to examine the imperial mindset of the author and their nostalgia that incorporates the civilizing mission, 'White Man's Burden.' Moreover, the research applies Edward W. Said's concept of 'Orientalism' to critique the Western gaze and the colonial stereotypes encoded in the text. Said notes that "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (2). Since the binary between the East and the West remains crucial in this research, it adopts Said's notion of oriental gaze or colonial othering to corroborate theoretical consolidation.

Essentializing The White Man's Burden in Sold.

McCormick's *Sold* essentialize 'The White Man's Burden' to appropriate the imperial residue. The writer participates in Nepali society, accumulates the information, remembers what is necessary, and deliberately ignores details in transcribing. In doing so, McCormick vilifies what is uncommon for her, as Allan Laine Kagedan states, "One problematic universal human tendency is the dislike of the unlike" (11). Her fundamental assumption of otherness is cemented with a sense of difference because, as Kagedan points out, "The other side of the dislike coin is group solidarity: if you are like me, I like you—we are one community" (13). However, the distinctions become more vibrant as she illustrates the protagonist's vulnerabilities. For example, in the first chapter, "A Tin Roof," McCormick introduces Laxmi's economic insecurity and her family to categorize them as 'other' in the social platform. Distinguishing the financial fragility of the family from the neighbors about the tin roof, the novel instigates Ama, Lakshmi's mother, who is "looking down the mountain at the rice terraces that descend, step by step, to the village below, at the neighbors' tin roofs winking cruelly back at her [Lakshmi]" (7). The scenario captures the difference between their 'thatch' and their neighbors' tin roof. Interestingly, as the tin roof serves as a point of reference, portraying the destitution of Lakshmi's family, McCormick initiates othering and reinforces support.

Laxmi lacks any agency that could mitigate her destitution. She becomes a collage of suffering as layers of suppressions hammer her. For instance, Lakshmi has a stepfather who treats her like an object. When her mother says, "You must stay in school, no matter what your stepfather says" (7), she wants to reply, "My father looks at me the same way he looks at the cucumbers I'm growing in front of our hut" (7-8). While showing Laxmi's hostile father, McCormick elevates her fragility and insecurities. Moreover, she differentiates Lakshmi from Gita, Laxmi's childhood friend, and restrains her from overcoming her familial impoverishment. In doing so, she wedges Lakshmi's potential agency to bridle her circumstances and circumscribe her into the darkness of hardship. In other words, Lakshmi is not given any alternative to rescue herself; in any case, she is condemned to suffer. While differentiating Lakshmi from her surroundings, McCormick implies the politics of difference. In other words, McCormick inculcates colonial discourse in consolidating the otherness of the protagonist. Homi K. Bhabha claims, "An important feature of colonial discourse is its dependence on the concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness" (94). The fixity of ideological others is so metaphorical that "It connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy, and demonic repetition" (94). In this sense, McCormick's protagonist is deliberately chosen to expose disorder, incapable of growing hopes, and a continuation of sterility. The othering of the protagonist is intensified to normalize colonial mentality. For instance, Laxmi has to confront gender disparity; she realizes: "A son will always be a son, they say. But a girl is like a goat. Good as long as she gives you milk and butter. But not worth carrying over when it's time to make a stew" (14). Moreover, her othering is specified not only in social boundaries but also in physical limitations. In the chapter "First Blood" as Lakshmi narrates her first menstrual experience: "For days, I have sensed a ripening in my blood, a tender, achy feeling unlike anything I've felt before. And even before I go to the privy to check, I know that I have gotten my first blood" (20). In this case, Lakshmi is put on the edge of her selfhood, making her immobile and static. Her identity is fixed as 'other' and denied to be incorporated into the communal whole.

The extension of othering is prolonged as the mother educates Lakshmi for moral and social judgments in her daily life. In the chapter "Everything I need to know," Lakshmi addresses what Ama says while enlightening her: "Before today . . . you could run as free as a leaf in the wind . . . . Now, . . . you must carry yourself with modesty, bow your head in the presence of men and cover yourself with your shawl" (21). Establishing the social position of women and ethical expectations of them, Ama says, "Never look a man in the eye. Never allow yourself to be alone with a man who is not family. And never look at growing pumpkins or cucumbers when you are bleeding. Otherwise, they will rot" (21). She adds, "Once you are married . . . you must eat your meal only after your husband has had his fill. Then you may have what remains. If he turns to you in the night, you must give yourself to him, in the hopes that you will bear him a son" (21). In Ama's instructions, McCormick implicitly presents her social commentary. She intervenes in the Nepali cultural practices and projects Lakshmi as an isolated character. Exoticizing the cultural practices, McCormick envisions the patriarchy to substantiate the fragility of women in Nepal and the need for liberating agency.

What McCormick is showing is not inaccurate, but what she has chosen to show is a gimmick. The cultural practice may seem alien and incongruent, but the indifference has to be explored in a spatio-temporal context. In the article "Ideology, Place, and People without Culture," criticizing anthropological misreading and misrepresenting cultural difference, Rosaldo argues, "Culture . . . is defined by difference. The difference both makes culture visible to observers and makes it relatively easy to separate nature from nurture. Cultural similarities could be biologically based, but differences require cultural explanation" (78).

From Rosaldo's perspective, McCormick brought difference into ignition, or the alternative cultural practices into visibility; nevertheless, instead of defining the difference as a means to suffer, she merely projected difference as a cause of suffering. In fact, McCormick distinguishes Lakshmi from every individual she is associated with. The differences are placed in such a way that the protagonist breeds empathy in the reader. However, no one could express mercy upon her in the novel except the American journalist. Interestingly, the American journalist rescues Lakshmi from the Happiness House, a brothel, and from the clutch of Mumtaz, a lady who owns (runs) Happiness House.

From the beginning of the story, McCormick introduces Lakshmi as an agency-less character, living in hopelessness. However, when the American promises to rescue her from the darkness of sexual violence and becomes late to revisit the brothel with the policeman, she says, "It has been three days, and still the pink skinned man hasn't returned with the good policeman. How stupid I was to believe in him and his digital magic. How stupid I am to keep believing" (259). Lakshmi could not stop believing the American, no matter how hard she suppressed her emotions. Despite being a stranger, the American remains in her heart and becomes the only hope to liberate her. In this context, McCormick presents America as the only source of hope and salvation. She employs Americans as the savior of the world, light of the darkness, man with courage, heart with humanity, human beings with responsibility, and love with empathy. In doing so, McCormick appropriates the American legacy in solving global problems, their helping hands in need. She implicitly essentializes 'The White Man's Burden' in rescuing Laxmi and legitimizes imperial legacy because, as Robert Zevin points out, "Imperialism is activity on the part of any state which establishes or subsequently exercises and maintains qualified or unqualified rights of sovereignty beyond the previous boundaries within which such rights were exercised" (319). In this sense, as the American in the novel takes autonomy to implement his right to interfere in the other country, McCormick takes morbidity of the character to legalize her essential steps. Moreover, McCormick makes America a mouthpiece to announce America's duty to save the people in difficulty, which is a perpetuation of the imperial legacy that, without Americans, the world cannot protect itself from any danger that threatens their existence. When McCormick creates a fictional American character, she emphasizes the moral necessity of Westerners to rescue the East from dehumanization.

Politics of Humanity in *Little Princes*

Grennan creates a semblance of humanism for the abandoned children, but he is lost in bridging his act with needs, merely eulogizing his victory. At the beginning of the memoir, he reveals that his intention to visit Nepal is not concerned with responsibility but with pleasure. In his words, "I needed this volunteering stint to sound as challenging as possible to my friends back home. In that, at least, I had succeeded: I would be taking care of orphans in one of the poorest countries in the world. It was the perfect way to begin my year-long adventure" (6). Although his journey becomes a rescue mission, it is not deliberate. However, the more he indulges in the story of the trafficked children, the higher he places in the humanitarian prospect, which is basically a colonial motive because, as Frantz Fanon argues, "Colonialism is the work of adventurers and politicians, and the 'best representatives' keep themselves above the fray" (71-72). In doing so, Grennan resembles a colonizer who attempts to establish his humongous image for the colonized, deliberately seeing the undisturbed differences. As Albert Memmi points out, "Just as the bourgeoisie proposes an image of the proletariat, the existence of the colonizer requires that an image of the colonized be suggested" (123). Without a terrific image of the colonizer, colonized do not feel the urgency to change; thus, "These images become excuses without which the presence and conduct of a colonizer, and that of a bourgeois, would seem shocking. But the favored image becomes a myth precisely because it suits them too well" (123). In other words, if the

colonized replicate or seem similar to the image of the colonizer, the chance of establishing the colonizer's aspiration vanishes. Thus, the colonizer intentionally stratifies the social hemisphere to initiate their existential necessity. In the same way, as Grennan records the journey, he emphasizes his requisites for the Nepali people and the state.

Grennan frames his action as courageous and responsible, foregrounding the adversity of the Maoist threats. In one of the incidents, Grennan describes the Maoists' interference in the life of Humli children through Hari's message: "The children at Little Princes were potential Maoist recruits. He had met the brother Golkka, the child trafficker, who recently came from Humla" (71). Grennan realizes the politics of the Maoists and their demands from the civilians to provide their children as soldiers. However, in doing so, Grennan cast Golkka as a resolute antagonist to humanity, thereby reinforcing his own humanitarian legitimacy. Golkka is a savior for the children from the Maoists, but his political motive is to earn money from the organizations, and the children are the means of his earning. He brings children from Humla, receiving a bulk amount of money from their parents, and dumps them in the orphanages run by the international organization that merely receives children without parents. When his business is exposed, the organization stops admitting the children. As Golkka knows Grennan is speaking to the government's Child Welfare Board, he kidnaps the seven children secretly. This incident provides space for Grennan to criticize Nepal and the Nepali government. He asserts, "Why weren't Nepalis looking for these kids? These were their children, not mine . . . . Nobody cares about these vanished children" (103). Comparing the Nepali government with the American government, he boldly articulates, "If a five-year-old boy went missing in the United States, it would be front-page news for days. Entire towns would hold vigils. Millions of dollars would 82 be spent to find him. The governor would hold a press conference. In Kathmandu, seven children vanished into thin air, and nobody even missed them" (103). In the comparison, Grennan shows the Nepali government as irresponsible, uncaring, injudicious, and imprudent. In doing so, he casts his moral responsibility as more elevated than that of the Nepali people, as he is more disquieted than any other Nepali agency. He writes: "I knew in my heart that these seven children were not Umbrella's responsibility. They were mine. Umbrella [Foundation, an international organization] had done its part to rescue them and keep them safe" (104). In this case, Grennan constructs a rhetoric of compassionate humanitarianism, downplaying the efforts of the Nepali agency.

Grennan's reclaiming of sole agency for the trafficked children resembles the colonizer's mentality. Memmi claims: "The colonized means little to the colonizer. Far from wanting to understand him as he really is, the colonizer is preoccupied with making him undergo this urgent change" (127). According to Mimmi, the colonizers posit themselves as the legitimate authority to transform the colonized because they consider the colonized as inherently incapable of changing themselves. Similarly, Grennan portrays every possible Nepali agency as formidable and anti-humanistic, establishing himself as the viable capacity to act. Although Gyan Bahadur, the Child Welfare Board official, rescues the seven lost children, astonishingly, Grennan even suspects his generosity, which aligns with A. J. Stockwell's claim, "Being a 'white man' was not . . . just a question of pigmentation. It was a moral condition. Belief in one's innate superiority was only half-belief. It had to be demonstrated. Superiority lay in deeds; it lay not just in power but in the way power was exercised" (46). In this regard, Grennan's position as a benevolent white man is sustained as he demonstrates superiority; thereby, his monopoly of humanity casts others as inhuman.

Grennan's savior narrative is more of a glorification that essentializes imperial humanism. In the words of Simone Bignall: "Imperial humanism in which modern European White Man is taken as a universal template for human being, value, and achievement" (296). Grennan's imperial humanism is articulated when he reconnects the lost children with their

parents. As he writes: "I was meeting parents and doing the equivalent of throwing a bucket of cold water in their faces with the news of their long-lost children, then asking them tough questions and recording their answers, all in the course of an hour or two" (193). Moreover, Grennan emphasizes, "I watched them come alive when I told them their children were safe. I watched them die a little as they realized the loss of their child to a child trafficker. It was intimate and overwhelming, and I felt, over and over, unqualified to be doing this job. But there was nobody else to do it" (193). Grennan's account advances the notion that Americans are uniquely capable of humanizing an inhuman society and taking the burden selflessly. However, in constituting his obligatory action in reconnecting the lost children, Grennan's venturing of belongingness not only becomes paradoxical but also explodes imperial humanism, picturing the superiority of the white Americans.

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Conclusion

The study demonstrates McCormick's *Sold* and Grennan's *Little Princes* as an echo of imperial motives that legitimizes the white man's burden. In McCormick's *Sold*, the portrayal of Laxmi as an exotic other, her fragile economic status, familial burden, and timidity against domination is selectively focused to necessitate agency and rescue her from irrevocable rupture. Laxmi, as a helpless character and an American as a savior, exposes McCormick's imperial imagination and colonial mentality. Similarly, in Grennan's *Little Princes,* the projection of Grennan himself, who dares to take the challenge and reconnect the trafficked children with their parents, is a depiction of an American hero who takes the burden to harmonize the human world, putting his life at stake. Displaying Nepali as a trafficker of Nepali children and an American as a bridge to rejoin the disrupted harmony between parents and children, Grennan substantiates the significance of the imperial legacy that protects humans from inhumanity.

McCormick and Grennan take advantage of the tragedy of the poor and regard the Americans as demigods, who not only rescue the innocent from the nightmare of barbarity but also prove their presence anywhere, at any corner of the world, where people need help. While showing the Americans as the protectors of the trafficked child, McCormick and Grennan aspire to prove that humanity and salvation are the subjects of the Western, especially American, obligation. In doing so, they produce a moral narrative that foregrounds American responsibility and projects others as subjects to be rescued. Indeed, they cast Americans as the hope, belief, anticipation, and desire for the East. McCormick and Grennan create the Nepali characters as 'others' and make them lonely just to initiate Americans as the most intimate individuals to the victim. In other words, they depict the victim as the other in the beginning and introduce the Americans as the only characters who understand their pain. In doing so, McCormick and Grennan naturalize American interference through a humanitarian perspective and imperial intervention; they blur imperial politics, revealing the outer fabric of embellished humanism.

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