

## The Need for an Islamic Postcolonial Approach

الحاجة إلى منهج إسلامي ما بعد كولونيالي

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### Abstract:

Post-9/11 Western discourse does not just continue the traditional orientalist representations of Islam. It goes beyond it by depicting Islam as a violent and jingoistic

Religion. Such a representation of Islam is embedded in the paradigms of knowledge, constellations of power that divide the world into two poles. Islamophobia has become a postcolonial concept. Muslims are identified as violent terrorists and backward in post-9/11 Western discourse. Thus, they need to be colonized in order to be civilized. Even writers in the west, who have an Islamic background, hold views that are hostile to Islam. These postcolonial writers are Western in opinions and intellect. They do not write back to Western writers and critics who demonize Islam and Muslims. In fact, there is a remarkable dearth of reference to Islamic identity in postcolonial theory, which is still embedded in Western secular paradigms of knowledge. Thus, there is a need for an Islamic postcolonial approach that gives voice to the Subaltern.

**Key words:** Islam; (Neo) Orientalism; Muslim Subaltern; Postcolonial Approach; Islamic postcolonial approach.

### الملخص:

لم يستمر الخطاب الغربي بعد 11 سبتمبر فقط في التمثيلات التقليدية للإسلام. إنه يتجاوز ذلك من خلال تصوير الإسلام على أنه دين عنيف وشوفاني. يتم تضمين مثل هذا التمثيل للإسلام في نماذج أبراج المعرفة للقوة التي تقسم العالم إلى قطبين. لقد أصبحت الإسلاموفوبيا مفهومًا ما بعد كولونيالي. يتم تحديد المسلمين على أنهم إرهابيون عنيفون ومتخلفون في الخطاب الغربي بعد 11 سبتمبر. وبالتالي يجب أن يتم استعمارهم من أجل أن يكونوا متحضرين. حتى الكتاب في الغرب الذين لديهم خلفية إسلامية يتبنون آراء معادية للإسلام. هؤلاء الكتاب ما بعد الاستعمار غربيون في الآراء والفكر. إنهم لا يرتدون على الكتاب والنقاد الغربيين الذين يشيطنون الإسلام والمسلمين. في الواقع هناك ندرة ملحوظة في الإشارة إلى الهوية الإسلامية في نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار والتي لا تزال جزءًا لا يتجزأ من نماذج المعرفة العلمانية الغربية. وبالتالي هناك حاجة ماسة إلى منهج إسلامي ما بعد كولونيالي يعطي صوتًا للمسلم.

### Introduction:

9/11 has heralded the return of religion. Since this momentous event, many studies on Islam have flowed academia. Most of these studies consider fundamentalism, terror, and antimodernism as fundamental aspects of this religion. Islam, in the post-9/11 novel, has always been perceived as an oppositional force to Western secularism and democracy. It is seen as a religion that sets Muslims on the path of mass murder. Many Western writers and even some Arab ones vilify Muslims and their religion, and they show hatred of them. Vakil (2014, as cited in Meer) states that

Religion is 'raced', Muslims are racialised. It means secondly, that hostility to Islam cannot be separated from discrimination against Muslims in neat and unproblematic ways ... Where Islam is integral to Muslim identities, the denigration of Islam impacts on Muslim respect and self-worth, but what is primarily and fundamentally at stake in this is not a matter of the protection of belief per se, but rather of unequal power, legal protection and institutional clout, in the context of entrenched social inequalities (2014, p. 503).

In the Western novel, Islam is seen as the arch-enemy of freedom, an authoritative system that fights to push Western democracy. Said remarks (2003, p.59) that, for the West, "Islam was a lasting trauma" (*Orientalism* 59). He also notes that "the academic experts on Islam are all in concert: Islam is a threat to Western civilization" (p.144). Islam has been constructed as an object of orientalist and neo-orientalist discourse. Neo-orientalism is a continuation of the Orientalist tradition, which constructs the binary opposition to West/Islam. It views Islam as the antithesis of Western civilization. Islam is relegated to darkness and reduced to fundamentalism and terror. The West, in an attempt to dominate the rest, spreads stereotypes about the Arab Islamic world. Muslims are identified as degenerate and backward in Western discourse. Thus, they need to be colonized in order to be civilized. Despite its attempts to give voice to the Subaltern, the Postcolonial approach failed to defend the Muslim Other. Thus, it is in need of further theorization.

## 2. The Islamic Voice as Subaltern in Postcolonial Studies

Many novels by Western writers are not appreciated by Muslim readers because they represent Islam as radically at odds with Western civilization and a major threat to its safety and stability. Majid (2000, p.6) states that “Muslims continue to be represented as noble Bedouins, decadent court officials, turbaned fanatics, or oppressively shrouded women; in any case, they remain the villainous other”. Muslims are viewed as villainous others. They are seen as the new barbarians who should be kept out of the gates of the civilized West. Islamophobic sentiments abound in the post-9/11 novel. Meer states that Islamophobia can “be best understood as a postcolonial concept” (2014, p.501). In the Western post-9/11 novels. Muslims are represented as terrorists, shivering with rage, vowing to destroy the West. They are depicted as savages drained of humanity.

The post-9/11 novel on Islam has a great impact on how Western readers understand Islam and Muslims. Since 9/11, a lot of ink has been spilt on the religion of the others. Books on Islam became bestsellers in the West because people wanted to learn about this religion. Among the famous post-9/11 novels which try to define Islam and Muslims for Western readers are John Updike’s *Terrorist* (2007), *Falling Man* by Don DeLillo (2007), and *Netherland* by Joseph O’Neill (2008). These novels and others give a bad image about Muslims, and they confirm the existence of an inherent cultural dualism between Islam and the West. Thus, Muslims become victims of rejection and social marginalization.

Muslims are silenced in postcolonial discourse, which casts a blind eye on the importance of Islam. As a touchstone for determining people’s identities, postcolonial writers and critics, in the West, who have an Islamic background, often absorb Western values and lose their distinctiveness and identity as Muslims. In other words, they are prone to the dangerous assimilation of the subaltern voice to the position of Western writers. Their works strongly resonate with the novels written by Western novelists, and they hold and confirm the same assumptions. Some of their works even achieve a kind of canonicity because of their misrepresentation of Islam. In fact, Western publishing houses also impose enormous pressures on these writers.

Writers of Muslim background did not defend their religion. While some of them cast a blanket of silence over the Western novels, which negatively represent Islam and Muslims, some of them share Western writers’ view of Islam as a very violent and strict religion. In this regard, Aldalala’a and Nash write: "we can say that since the late 1980s important postcolonial writers, often with connections to Islam,

have been mainly antagonistic to Islam as a religion, siding with the West in its celebration of secular freedom and characterization of Islam as a province of rigid thinking, strict practice, and outmoded dogma" (2017, p.228). These writers fail to resist the temptation of the culture of the host country, and they ultimately lose their identity. Majid states that: «Cultural hegemony is real, and the presence of the Third World intellectuals in the West - despite the proverbial exceptions and other conscious complicities - is a stark manifestation of this reality" (200, p.44). In fact, immigration results in confused elites who often write with the intention to satisfying the Western reader. However, some of them subside into inaction, preferring to remain silent.

Postcolonial writers, in general, did not make a satisfactory response to the Western antagonistic discourse against Muslims after 9/11. In this regard, Aldalala'a and Nash state, «If we ask what response postcolonial intellectuals have made to the onslaught of post-9/11 discourse against Muslims, the answer must be, not a significant one" (2017, p.232). In fact, Postcolonial texts express an overt hostility of Islam. This is likely to aggravate the tension between the Oriental and the Occidental cultures and make it impossible for them to flourish side by side. So, the question that is worth asking is this: Is the postcolonial secular intellectual qualified to speak for Muslims? Many postcolonial texts reinforce the ossified notions of us and them, and they reproduce a neo-Orientalist discourse, which stokes division, misunderstanding and hatred.

The representation of Islam is embedded in the paradigm of knowledge constellations of power that dissolves the world into two poles. Aldalala'a and Nash point out that "Postcolonial theory remains singularly slow to expose and condemn the othering of Muslims in the discourse spawned by 9/11, which perhaps is unsurprising given its embedding within an epistemology that remains Western and secular" (2017, p.228).

Even before 9/11, Islam and despite playing a very important role in the colonial period, it was neglected in postcolonial studies. Postcolonial theory is based on secularism and unlimited freedom, which do not tally with Muslims' beliefs. Thus, it fails to defend the religion of the other, and it cannot be very useful when reading literary texts, which stigmatize the Muslim Other. King is in full agreement with Linda Alcoff who "challenges postcolonial writers to consider the material effects of their statements by asking the crucial question-does your narrative enable the empowerment of oppressed groups?" (2000, p.214). The grim reality is that

postcolonial writers fail to defend the Muslim Other. Thus, there should be a regeneration of postcolonial studies.

Anouar Majid, Aijaz Ahmad, Anne, McClintock, Ella Shohat, and Arif Dirlik assert the Eurocentrism of postcolonial studies. According to Majid, (2000, p.3) postcolonial discourses "are heavily colored by Eurocentric biases". Thus, not all postcolonial critics and writers are adequate speakers for the Islamic world. In fact, postcolonial theory is vehemently criticized for acquiescing to Eurocentric knowledge and ordering of the world.

Among the critics who have drawn attention to the absence of religion from postcolonial studies are Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffins. They state that

Since the Enlightenment, the sacred has been an ambivalent area in a Western thinking that has uniformly tended to privilege the secular. While the 'sacred' has so often been relegated to primitiveness and the archaic, analyses of the sacred have been one of the most neglected" areas in the field of postcolonial studies (2002, p. 212).

Significantly, in the first edition of *Post-Colonial Studies* (2000) by Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, religion does not appear in the list of key concepts. However, it is included in the second edition (2007).

In the same vein, Malak, in his book *Muslim Narratives and the Discourse of English*, remarks postcolonialism's

Resistance to engage with religion as a key category pertinent to the debate about contemporary neocolonial reality. Such an inattentive or deliberate marginalization of religion as a force or factor with its own complex dynamics, if my observation is right, reflects privileging a secular, Euro-American stance that seems to shape the parameters of postcolonial discourses. This skewed point of reference stems from the hegemony of the Euro-American academy with its efficiency, superior resources, and pervasive means of dissemination (2005, p.17).

Thus, religion is excluded from postcolonialism because of the prominence of Western secularism, which has dominated the field. In fact, postcolonialism often draws boundaries between the religious and the secular. It prioritizes secular forms of resistance over the religious ones despite the fact that religion plays a very pivotal role in the constitution of postcolonial identity.

The most distinguished postcolonial theorist Edward Said avows his hostility to religion, which he views as an immoral and demoniac force. He believes that religion has something in common with culture. He states: “Like culture, religion therefore furnishes us with systems of authority and with canons of order whose regular effect is either to compel subservience or to gain adherents. This in turn gives rise to organized collective passions whose social and intellectual results are often disastrous” (1983, p.290). Despite its ability to bind people together, religion, from a Saidian vantage point, is an authoritative system and a negative force that leads to irrationality and unreasonable thinking. Its emotional heft might be destructive in its effects.

For Said, religion is a construct and not a natural fact. He believes that people create their own version of the truth or reality. He writes:

No one lives in a direct contact either with truth or with reality. Each one of us lives in a world actually made by human beings, in which such things as ‘the nation’ or ‘Christianity’ or ‘Islam’ are the result of agreed-upon conventions, of historical processes, and, above all, of willed human labor expended to give those things an identity we can recognize (1997, p.45).

So, for Said, Islam, or any other religion, is created by humans and it is endowed with a plethora of meanings depending on the culture or community where it is interpreted. For Said, the interpretation of Islam is dependent on the communities of interpretation. Opposed interpretations of Islam in different communities may even result in wars. The West’s misinterpretation of Islam is meant to justify the depredation of the West on the rest.

For Said, people’s views of Islam are situational. They depend on where and who interprets/represents this religion. He writes: “ This is to say that the media’s Islam the Western scholar’s Islam, the Western reporter’s Islam, and the Muslim’s Islam are all acts of will and interpretation that take place in history, and can only be dealt with in history as acts of will and interpretation” (1997, p. 45). Therefore, for Said, Islam is something that is given a lot of interpretations by different people. It is not a fact or truth. In fact, knowledge and power are interrelated in the sense that the production of knowledge about Islam in Western discourse often serves the powerful countries, and it is often biased against the weak countries. Knowledge, in this sense, legitimates the Western occupation of the East and the inferiorization of the latter. Said states that “underlying every interpretation of other cultures- especially of Islam-is the choice facing the individual scholar or intellectual: whether

to put intellect at the service of power or at the service of criticism, community, dialogue, and moral sense. This choice must be the first act of interpretation today” (1997, p. 172). Said’s vehement criticism of religion is evident in *After the Last Sky*. Where he states that behind the "veneer of religious cant" in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions, "a seething cauldron of outrageous fables is revealed, seething with several bestiaries, streams of blood, and innumerable corpses" (1999, p. 78). Said’s fierce criticism of religion is on the ground that it incites violent acts. Thus, he excluded it, viewing it as another.

Religious discourse, in Said’s view, creates solid grounds of authority. It “serves as an agent of closure, shutting off human investigation, criticism, and effort in deference to the authority of the more-than-human, the supernatural, the otherworldly. Like culture, religion therefore furnishes us with systems of authority and with canons of order whose regular effect is either to compel subservience or to gain adherents” (1983, p. 290). For Said, religion is an impediment to human inquiry. It triggers emotional associations, which unite people, providing them with a sense of identity, but its effects are often disastrous. Since it is an authoritative system, it is likely to create opposed dichotomies and erect walls between the East and the West.

Said denies his religious Islamic background. He states “I myself am neither religious nor of an Islamic background” (1997, p.45). Said admits that in childhood, he was hurled into an environment that instilled in his mind negative views of Islam. He states:

I am ashamed to admit that a great many of my early memories of friends and family expressing religious opinions are harsh and unpleasant. ‘Moslems’ I was told in 1954 by a great friend of my father ‘are dust. They should be blown away’ Another good Christian, a prominent philosopher and former Lebanese foreign minister, frequently denounced Islam and the Prophet Mohammad to me, using such words as ‘lechery’, ‘hypocrisy’, and ‘degeneration’ (1999,p. 173).

Despite his hostility of religion and his negative views of Islam, Said’s defense of Islam can be explained by the fact that Islam is a part of Arab and oriental identity. Thus, he is defending Islam against the orientalist misrepresentations. Said criticizes the Orientalists’ misrepresentation of this religion in the Western discourse and in literary texts. For instance, he harshly criticized Dante for his blasphemous representation of the prophet Mohammed PBBUP.

In his book *Orientalism*, Said writes: “Maometto” – Mohammed – turns up in canto 28 of the *Inferno*. He is located in the eighth of the nine circles of Hell, the ninth of the ten Bolgias of Maledbolge, circle of gloomy ditches surrounding Satan’s stronghold in Hell [...] Mohammed thus belongs to a rigid hierarchy of evils” (2003, p.68).. According to Said, “there is a consensus on ‘Islam’ as a kind of scapegoat for everything we do not happen to like about the world’s new political, social, and economic patterns” (1997,p. iv). Commenting on the world’s view of Islam after 9/11, Said states: “Invidious commentary about the world of Islam after 9/11 has made it popular wisdom that Islam is by nature a violent, intolerant religion, much given to raving fundamentalism and suicidal terrorism” (2004, p. 51).

Though Said criticized the misrepresentation of Islam in Orientalist discourse, he tilts the balance towards Christianity when discussing the importance of Islam and Christianity in the East and the West. He seems to emphasize Christian hegemony in his writings. For instance, he states that Islam "drew on the Judeo-Hellenic traditions, it borrowed creatively from Christianity" (Said, 2003, p. 74). Mellor takes Said to task because he belittles the social and cultural significance of Islam (105). Mellor states:

Even with regard to the Middle East, and in contrast to the apparently great influence of Christianity in the West, Said seems keen to play down the impact of Islam upon the lives of people. Said criticizes Gibb, for example, for stressing the importance of Islam in relation to life in the Middle East (2004, p. 105).

Said makes it clear that his postcolonial approach is secular. He describes himself as a “stubborn secular intellectual” (1993, p.107). For him, the act of interpretation should be devoid of religious views and beliefs. He states:

In the secular world-our world, the historical and social world made by human effort-the intellectual has only secular means to work with; revelation and inspiration, while perfectly feasible as modes for understanding in private life, are disasters and even barbaric when put to use by theoretically minded men and women" (1993, p.88).

Said is in favor of religion’s retreat to the private sphere. He believes that religion must be excluded from the critical task, and he disparaged all intellectual efforts that try to defend religion.

For Said, one should apply secular criticism that is supposed to resist religious temptations. He lavishes praise on Salman Rushdie's the Satanic verses because it is the best example of freedom of speech. Said writes:

Uncompromising freedom of opinion and expression is the secular intellectual's main bastion: to abandon its defense or to tolerate tampering with any of its foundations is in effect to betray the intellectual's calling. That is why the defense of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* has been so absolutely central an issue, both for its own sake and for the sake of every other infringement against the right to expression of journalists, novelists, essayists, poets, historians (1993, p. 89).

For Said, Rushdie has the absolute right to write what he wants. However, Muslim readers received Rushdie's novel as blasphemous work, which deeply hurts Muslims' sensibilities. Rushdie's work is read as an offensive novel that misrepresents Islam and insults Muslims. When reading the novel or any other work of fiction that misrepresents Islam, Muslim readers find it impossible to ignore these in-dwelling feelings of belonging. In fact, Said's approval of Rushdie's novel makes postcolonial seems antagonistic to Islam

Though Said criticizes orientalism, which creates a rigid division between East and West, he creates another dichotomy religious/secular. This distinction is similar to the orientalist's dualistic and Manichean thinking. In this respect, Hart states that

Said rejects the Orientalist distinction between Western rationality and Eastern mysticism only to readmit and valorize this distinction under the rubrics of secularism and religion. The religious secular distinction is Said's Orientalism, the way he produces otherness for his own uses. My point is that, in arguing against binary, dualistic, and Manichean thinking where East and West are concerned, he reproduces such thinking elsewhere (2004, p.86).

### **The Islamic Postcolonial Approach**

Postcolonialism aims at deconstructing hegemonic discourses. Thus, postcolonial writers, critics and also the reader can deploy their pens to dismantle Islamophobic stereotypes. Thurfiell states: "The core of postcoloniality is the ambition to decentralize 'the West', or Western modernity. Islamism has successfully managed to provide an alternative center of moral, political and ontological focus among its adherents. This, arguably, makes it one of the most obvious examples of a subaltern postcolonial voice today" (2008, p.160). The Islamic voice (not Islamism) has become subaltern, ghettoized and marginalized since the dramatic events of 9/11. Thus, Islam should be put at the heart of postcolonial studies.

Postcolonial theory is based on the assumption that knowledge is constructed. Therefore, postcolonial critics, writers, and readers should question, evaluate and criticize knowledge about Islam, which they find in Western discourse. In fact, there is a need for an Islamic postcolonial approach that includes within its scope religion because it is a very important component of people's identity. In this regard, Aldalala'a and Nash state that

if postcolonialism is to continue to be serviceable in our reading of minority literatures that arise with ever-increasing rapidity in the metropolitan centers - and in which much Anglophone Muslim writing must be situated - its orientation will have to be reassessed and reread, and one important area is the stance it takes on secularism (2014, p.230).

For the postcolonial approach to preserve its cardinal importance in academia after 9/11, it should include religion as a very important postcolonial concept. A secular view of postcolonialism makes it impossible for postcolonial writers to write back to Western novels, which depict Islam as a violent religion that stirs violence and terror. Even Muslim readers find it difficult to suppress their feelings when reading a text, which misrepresents them and their religion. Said, and despite being a secular critic, admits, "There is no such thing as a neutral or value-free reader. Every reader, in other words, is both a private ego and a member of a society, with affiliations of every sort linking him or her to that society" (1997, p. 164).

Since postcolonialism calls for heterogeneity and diversity, it has to deconstruct the binary opposition secular/religious. A secular postcolonial, approach is congruent with the West's value of secularism, but it is opposed in the Islamic world in which Islam is integral to all aspects of people's life. According to King, "postcolonial approaches must remain sensitive to context. It is important to pay attention not only to what is said and by whom (the social location of the speaker) but also where such speech goes and how it is received" (2001, p.214). A secular postcolonial approach cannot give voice to the subaltern in the non-secular cultures like the Islamic one. The voice of the other must be heard from its place; i.e., the Islamic world. The latter has to tell its own version of the truth.

Religion is a very important aspect of Muslims' identity. Hence, the suppression of this defining aspect of the Muslims' self is a denial of their identity. In this respect, Majid writes: "Because secularism is originally a Western idea born out of specific historical circumstances, its rejection in the Islamic world is part of

Muslims' struggle for self-definition" (2000, p.42). Thus, Islam should be accorded a great importance in the postcolonial agenda because it is a very important identity marker. Esposito points out that.

The future of Islam is about all of our futures, Islam and Muslims today are integral players in global history. They are part of the mosaic of American and European societies. In a world in which we too often succumb to the dichotomy between 'us' and 'Them', we are challenged to transcend (though not deny) our differences, affirm our common humanity, and realize that 'we', whether we like it or not are interconnected and co-dependent, the co-creators of our societies and our world [...] Islam today is not only a faith that inspires personal piety and provides meaning and guidance for this life and the next. It is also an ideology and worldview that informs Muslim politics and society. Muslim governments and opposition movements, religious leaders and laity, appeal to and use religion to legitimate their beliefs, policies, and actions (199, p. 4).

Since Muslims have been subalternized and inferiorized since 9/11, there is a need for a postcolonial Islamic approach that should be geared at recovering the Islamic voice that has been absent in Western fiction which deals with Islam and the West in post 9/11. This postcolonial Islamic approach should deconstruct the polarity Islam/West and correct the misrepresentation of Islam after 9/11. Since Islam, like the secular postcolonial approach, also calls for freedom, equality, and justice, an Islamic postcolonial approach can erode the distinction between the Islamic and the Western civilization.

Novelists and postcolonial critics have a long intellectual struggle ahead of them. They have to correct Others' misunderstandings of Islam and to help the West overstep the rigid lines of hostility put down between Muslims and non-Muslims by Western discourse. A postcolonial Islamic approach allows Muslims to represent themselves instead of being represented. It gives them a space of their own to speak for themselves and for others about themselves. However, this Islamic postcolonial approach should not reinscribe the Orientalist Us and Them dichotomy. As Said points out, "The answer to Orientalism is not Occidentalism" (2003, p. 328).

Islamic postcolonialism provides an alternative non-violent form of resistance, which is spiritual. A prominent postcolonial critic who suggests this peaceful and spiritual form of resistance is Mahatma Gandhi, who is marginalized in postcolonial studies. In this respect, Young writes: Gandhi provides the greatest example of how a spiritual alternative could be developed as a form of antiwestern political and cultural critique", but his "apparent absence from the foreground of

postcolonial theory is all the most curious given the dominance of Indian intellectuals in the postcolonial field” (2001, p.337-38).

By applying an Islamic postcolonial approach to literary texts, readers can challenge and write back to literary discourse, which misrepresents Islam. Hasan Saed Majed states:

Islamic Postcolonialism is a combination of the two terms: Islam is the supposed “colonized religion”, and postcolonial theory is what is used to identify and challenge colonial discourse. Islam, without postcolonialism, would lack an important cultural theory that was essentially created to help the colonized people to free themselves from the colonial stereotypical images that justify colonialism. On the other hand, postcolonialism, without Islam, will not be able to unmask the contemporary anti-Islamic colonial discourse due to its central belief in secularism... Islamic Postcolonialism does not have its own special aims and methods although it incorporates new perspectives. It is a postcolonial cultural movement that aims at identifying the colonial discourse embodied in literature about Islam and Muslims and resisting it using postcolonial methods. However, due to the diversity of Muslim backgrounds, experiences, geographies, and histories, Islamic postcolonialism might cover a variety of issues such as slavery, racism and Islamophobia (56-57).

In fact, there are some Muslim writers who practiced their own version of postcolonialism like Leila Aboulela and Amara Lakhous. These novelists write hybrid novels, which deal with hybrid cultures and the co-existence of Muslims and the West. They try to correct non-Muslims’ misperceptions of Islam.

### **Conclusion:**

Postcolonial theory seems to be inadequate in post-9/11 because of its inability to address the subject of religion, which is a very important identity marker. It is methodologically rooted in the West’s secular tradition, and it creates the dichotomy religious/secular, which is similar to the East/West distinction that is created by Orientalism. Since religion is neglected, downplayed, and marginalized by prominent postcolonial theorists, postcolonialism seems to be inappropriate for reading post-9/11 novels, which negatively represent Islam and Muslims. Thus, the postcolonial scope must be extended to include religion, which must be new direction

in future postcolonial studies. Significantly, there is a need for an Islamic postcolonial approach, which problematizes and challenges the misrepresentation of Islam in Western fiction. This approach will give voice to the subaltern and deconstruct the binary opposition to Islam/West.

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