



The Power of Feminist Postcolonial through Colonial Space: An Analysis of Western Women's Works

Muhammad Nasir¹, Mulia Munir²

¹Department of English, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Indonesia
Email: mnasir@ar-raniry.ac.id

²Department of English, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Indonesia
Email : mulia.munir@ar-raniry.ac.id

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Abstract— *This article explores the influence of Feminist postcolonial perspectives within the framework of colonial space, particularly in regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia influenced by British and American colonization. The concept of "colonial space" in this context refers to establishing Western feminist colonies among Saudi women within the narrative of space exploration in novels. The study reveals that this notion is scrutinized in speculative works, where authors exercise creative freedom in placing characters within fictional settings. Postcolonial feminists argue that women in the Saudi palace experience oppressive and unequal treatment compared to men, experiencing both personal and institutional discrimination. They assert that the structure of this space predominantly favors men over women. The research findings suggest that Western postcolonial feminist works intentionally feature palace family figures to persuade and engage readers globally, influencing their perspectives.*



Keywords— *The Power, Feminist Post-colonial, Colonial Space, Saudi Arabia*

I. INTRODUCTION

In this article, we aim to delve into the portrayals of Saudi Arabian women, particularly princesses, by Sasson and Carmen bin Laden. These depictions, shaped by oriental clichés in the eyes of Western feminists, provide a comprehensive representation. We focus on exploring the intersections of feminist post-colonialism by examining themes related to hijab, education, and violence against women. Given Saudi Arabia's significance in U.S./British foreign policy, we acknowledge its role as a strategic ally in the Middle East due to longstanding cooperation and its status as the world's largest oil producer.

Cook (1988) highlights the implicit influence of Western feminism, seeking a 'global sisterhood,' emphasizing European rule. The article analyses the gendered nature of colonial space, drawing on theoretical frameworks developed by feminist geographers and anthropologists. Rather than relying solely on psychoanalytical models, we

aim to fuse spatial relations within postcolonial literary and cultural theory, fostering a more feminist postcolonial theory/practice.

Examining the confinement of women within spatial frameworks, we consider Joseph's assertion that violating family space risks accusations of disloyalty. Autobiographical accounts often provide profound insights into Arab family life. The gendered nature of colonial space is crucial, and we explore spatial relations at both ideal and experiential levels, particularly in Mary Louise Pratt's 'contact zone' where disparate cultures interact in asymmetrical relations.

Mikhail (2004) contends that women's issues in the Arab world extend beyond education, equal opportunity, and reproductive freedom. This work aims to amplify the voices of Arab women as agents in history, literature producers, and cultural contributors. The relationships between Sultana, Sasson, Carmen, and Yeslam reflect

Western and Eastern representations. As the Saudi princess, Sultana embodies colonization through issues depicted by Sasson/Carmen, revealing the ongoing impact of colonialism.

Carmen, experiencing similar constraints, exposes the strict rules in the palace, illustrating how she, as a 'colonizer,' shapes space within her household and the Bin Laden extended family. The Arab Women Writers series seeks to unveil alternative stories, breaking the silence around Arab women's experiences of being treated as second-class citizens.

Sultana and Carmen's efforts for reform, representing the "colonizer," have influenced Saudi Arabia's domestic policy. Traditionally, gendered power hierarchies rooted in patriarchy have been challenged. Socialization and connectivity contribute to gender hierarchies, but the push for reform has led to changes, evidenced by national elections and the formation of human rights organizations. This shift signals a change in Saudi Arabia's perception of human rights, previously considered incompatible with Islamic teachings.

The historical significance of national elections in Saudi Arabia is noted, marking a departure from established norms. Anwar (2006) underscores that the politics of sexual difference, rooted in religious and social-cultural constructs, extend beyond Islam, impacting non-Muslim Arabs as well.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Researchers generally use the descriptive method to conduct research or research from literature or literary works such as books. The researcher will first look for some books relevant to the topic under study. Then, read them one by one to get the necessary data.

In addition to books, we can also rely on research results and studies with a similar discussion theme. We did this research using the literature study method. We also used various references in libraries, newspapers, and other scientific journals in private libraries and internet access to complete this essay.

The study used the text study method, in which four novels by Western authors, namely Sasson and Carmen Bin Laden, were selected. Sasson and Carmen wrote three of the novels studied. In addition, the author also refers to various reading materials generally found in libraries related to the concept of Postcolonial Feminist (PCF). In postcolonial studies, the concept of colonial space generally refers to the physical, social, and cultural spaces shaped and influenced by colonial powers during the era of colonialism. It involves examining how colonial powers

imposed their cultural, economic, and political structures on the colonized regions and how these spaces were contested, negotiated, and transformed by both colonizers and the colonized.

Apart from referring to existing textbooks, the author also uses the website as a reference source because not all reading materials available in the library can provide a clear review of the literary works studied. After all, these works are new. Therefore, using Internet sources helps us find information related to the two authors.

We also obtained articles related to the texts and works of the two authors above through sources other than libraries, websites, and newspapers in the West and East.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. FPC's Power on Women/men as the attacking space

A society cannot thrive with only one gender, whether comprised solely of men or women. The realization of this truth hinges on the collaborative efforts of both men and women, fostering a strengthened bond of brotherhood between them. However, as social structures become rigid and inflexible, women often find themselves marginalized within the confines of their homes. The relationships between men and women become orchestrated, discouraging interaction and leading to the emergence of two distinct groups, each grappling with diverse situations and issues. According to Reda-Mekdas (2004:266), from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, there was a notable increase in the publication of short-story collections by women, focusing on various themes, with women's problems being a common thread.

Such a divided society is fraught with conflict, as one group may antagonize another. This stands in contrast to a unified community led by a single leader, which typically faces minimal opposition. In many instances, such division poses challenges to shared interests. Observing men's attitudes toward women in royal palaces and the predominant male influence in Saudi Arabian politics, where the majority of power rests in the hands of men, underscores the gender disparities. Women receive less attention and inclusion in the development and governance of the kingdom. The prohibition and coercion, exemplified by rules such as the mandatory wearing of the hijab, highlight the challenges faced by women in adhering to outlined regulations. The ongoing debates about the right to divorce, both among and outside Muslims, reflect the controversies surrounding established norms.

The hijab controversy is seen as a societal response to the abandonment of old cultural traditions. Presenting the philosophical underpinnings of hijab rules is crucial for

their comprehension and acceptance by women. Lewis and Mills (2003:2) note that current feminist postcolonial theory continually emphasizes the need to consider gender issues within mainstream postcolonial theory.

As a divine religion, Islam seeks balance and prescribes patterns for achieving perfection in individuals and society. The hijab, delineated as an individual rule, holds significant meaning and contributes to the sustainability of society and civilization. Acting as a bond of obedience to God, implementing hijab rules significantly strengthens community bonds.

From the perspective of Saudi rulers, the hijab is perceived as a tool for attaining goals related to purity and family strength. It is considered a rule binding every woman, with the responsibility resting on women and encompassing the male rulers within a family. This perspective is grounded in references to the holy book Al-Quran, specifically surat al-Ahzab verse 53, where the term hijab means veil. Hisham (1988:8) asserts that neo-patriarchy values are prominently championed by a specific social class in the Arab world: the petty bourgeoisie. Sharabi explains that the petty bourgeoisie embodies the most representative values of neo-patriarchal society and culture, characterized by contradictory values and tendencies. This perspective on responsibility aligns with the interpretations derived from the Quranic reference to hijab, emphasizing its significance as a veil, as stated in Surat al-Ahzab verse 53.

"Every time you ask for something that should be asked of them (the wives of the Prophet), then ask from behind the veil." (QS. al-Ahzab: 53).

According to the cited verses, the male rulers of Saudi Arabia interpret the hijab as obligatory attire for women. However, this understanding has led people to believe that men desire to confine women within the confines of their homes, contradicting the true purpose of the compulsory hijab. The hijab is not intended to restrict women from leaving their homes; instead, its obligation for women is to protect themselves in society, especially when in the presence of unrelated individuals (non-mahram). Its purpose is to prevent women from revealing the beauty of their bodies. The implementation of the hijab has become a defining element of women's dignity in Islam from the perspective of men in Saudi society.

Consequently, Saudi men justify the hijab for women based on their interpretation of the Holy Quran. As a result, it has become a rule enforced on every woman living there, leaving them with no room for objection. This has sparked controversy and discrimination, limiting women's choices in dressing and contributing to a pattern leaning toward monastic life, social injustice, and a patriarchal culture.

Examining the historical context, the enforcement of the hijab arose from uncomfortable conditions in the past, where rulers, tribal leaders, kings, and sultans would take any woman they desired, prompting women to hide behind their hijabs. However, in the context of Islam, the reason for adopting the hijab is different. Before the time of Prophet Muhammad in Saudi society, the insecure conditions mentioned earlier did not prevail. The uncertainty of that era threatened the safety of individuals in general, not only women. The implementation of hijab in Islam is not aimed at concealing women, as was the case in palaces, but rather to protect them from the gaze of the opposite sex. Islam recognizes the natural attraction between men and women and emphasizes the purity of relationships. The idea that men's envy and competition are the reasons for women wearing the hijab, making them prisoners of men, is not justified by Islam. Islam discourages following lust, which can lead to undesirable attitudes and actions, including envy and blind jealousy. Therefore, none of the perspectives presented by men in Saudi Arabia can be considered a valid reason for wearing the hijab in Islam. The Islamic hijab, as affirmed by Allah in Surat An-Nur 30 and 31 and other mentioned surahs, is in place to uphold modesty and preserve the dignity of both men and women.

"Tell the believing men to restrain their gaze and guard their honour; that is purer for them, verily Allah knows best what they do." (QS. an-Nur: 30).

"Tell the believing women to restrain their gaze, guard their modesty, and let them not show their body adornment, except for what is apparent. Moreover, they should cover the neckline of their clothes with their headscarves up to their chests. Women should not show their jewelry except to their husbands, fathers, husbands' fathers, sons, husbands' sons, their brothers, the sons of their brothers, the sons of their sisters, Muslim women, the enslaved people they have, male servants who have no desire (for women), or children who do not understand about women's private parts. Furthermore, let them not stamp their feet, so the jewelry they hide is known." (QS : An-Nur: 31).

"O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the believing women to come close to them with their hijab so that they are easily recognized and so that they are not disturbed; then indeed God is forgiving and most Merciful". (QS. al-Ahzab: 59)

According to the translation of the surah, as mentioned earlier, it encourages men to avoid looking at prohibited things and maintain their purity. A similar admonition is directed at women, urging them not to gaze at forbidden sights and to preserve their innocence. Except for certain

groups, women are instructed to conceal their beauty, covering their necks and chests with a hijab, ultimately avoiding self-display that might attract undue attention.

The Quran emphasizes that women's attire symbolizes purity and contributes to upholding societal honor. Although various verses propose different ways to achieve these objectives, the concept of hijab is particularly emphasized for Muslim women. The hijab is a distinguishing factor, identifying those who safeguard their innocence from those who do not. The surah suggests that when a woman diligently adheres to the hijab and upholds her purity within her family and community, she shields herself from disrespectful scrutiny, earning appreciation from the community. According to Islam, the relationship between men and women is based on a unique bond that excludes the intrusion of strangers outside the couple.

In Islam, adopting the hijab and discouraging promiscuity are measures aimed at fortifying family structures and preserving a nation's dignity. The strength of family bonds contributes to the honor of the lineage, ensuring the continuity of human generations. A relationship based not solely on biological urges but on love is deemed more beneficial for both partners, fostering resilience in the face of challenges and enduring into old age. Additionally, the amicable relationship between spouses significantly influences the dynamics between children and their parents.

As a legal mandate, the Quranic verse in Surat Nur outlines the rules for Muslim women, instructing them to preserve their modesty, refrain from displaying jewelry that might attract undue attention, and cover their necks. Fulfilling these guidelines necessitates effort and sacrifice.

Islam, as a social religion, seeks to safeguard civilization from potential destruction through individual and social regulations. The obligation of the hijab extends to both individuals and the broader community, emphasizing a dynamic and healthy societal development where the potential of each member is fully realized and protected from societal maladies rooted in base instincts. Islam underscores purity as a fundamental aspect of every human action, grounded in rational comprehension of religious arguments.

The role of Prophet Muhammad as a divine messenger is seen as correcting the community's misunderstandings in implementing religious teachings, in contrast to the actions of Saudi Arabian rulers who undermine women's personalities and curtail their independence and freedom. It contributes to a negative perception of women as a societal element, a significant factor in the stagnation of the Saudi Arabian community. The pride of men in having women obedient to their orders and wishes, as expressed

by Sultana, further exacerbates the backwardness of Saudi society.

"...In Saudi Arabia, the pride of a man's honor evolve from his women, so he must enforce his authority and supervision over the sexuality of his women or face public disgrace...The authority of a Saudi male is unlimited; his wife and children survive if he desires. In our home, he is the state.... From an early age, the male child is taught that women are of little value: they exist only for comfort and convenience"(Princess, 1993, p. 21).

Human civilization must progress toward a more advanced and improved state, aiming for elevated ideals and creating a society where individuals are not monotonous but advocates for freeing women from constraints. This emancipating community is formed when its foundational elements consist of exemplary individuals. Ideally, numerous women choose to wear the hijab based on a genuine understanding of its inherent advantages for their well-being. This choice should not stem from the fear of punishment or sin, nor a sense of shame, and should not be driven by a desire to appear pious. In the words of Sultana, reflecting on her son Maha's experience with wearing the hijab:

"It was a marvelous experience for Maha, for although she is forced to wear her abayas and headscarf, she is not required to wear the hated veil once inside the hospital doors" (Daughters of Arabia, 2004, p. 45).

This serves as proof that women are compelled to wear the hijab, even when they are unwell or in a hospital setting. It is indeed unfortunate if the issue of the hijab transforms into a challenge for women, turning them into commodities, sources of income, and marginalized entities. Moreover, women in Saudi Arabia face neglect from their fathers, animosity from their brothers, and harassment from their husbands, often not knowing their whereabouts. Sasson and Carmen depict and highlight these issues in their works, turning them into a platform for criticizing Islam, notably the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

3.2. Political Power of the Feminist Postcolonial (FPC) on Islam (the East)

The fundamental nature of America's relationship with Arab countries, specifically Saudi Arabia, underwent a significant shift after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, which saw the destruction of the World Trade Center's twin towers in New York and the Pentagon building in Washington. The fact that 15 of the 19 suspected perpetrators were Saudi citizens marked a novel chapter in the history of U.S.-Saudi relations. In response, the United States sought to reshape the social order in Arab nations, seen as a breeding ground for radicalism and

terrorism. Consequently, a key objective of American political policy in the Arab region was promoting and implementing democratic principles.

Since November 6, 2003, President George W. Bush openly called on Saudi Arabia and Cairo to adopt the democratic system, even though full implementation had not been achieved. While many in Saudi Arabia supported Bush's call for a democratic system, this demand emanated not only from the moderate opposition but also from the hardline opposition, critical of the government and holding anti-American sentiments, often resorting to acts of terrorism against American assets on Saudi soil.

The primary obstacle to Saudi Arabia's transition to a more democratic region, including the advancement of women's rights, is the tension between American policies and anti-American opposition. The lukewarm response to supporting Bush's idea was influenced by the perception that the U.S. remained pro-Israel and its decisions to engage in conflicts in Iraq and Palestine. The wave of opposition intensified as protests against American policies gained momentum.

Despite the democracy concept advocated by the U.S., Saudi Arabia held its first elections in 2005 for seats in local councils, presenting it as a historic event. The Saudi government strategically organized an international anti-terrorism conference in Riyadh before the election to attract foreign journalists. However, the enthusiasm surrounding this event could not conceal the fact that the Saudi regime had promised political reform for the first time in 1962, and it took three decades for King Fahd to sign the country's Constitution through a government decree rather than a legislative process.

This history of unfulfilled promises has eroded trust among the people of Saudi Arabia, especially women, in their government's commitment to defending women's rights. Consequently, only a quarter of eligible voters registered, and only two-thirds of those registrants participated in the elections. As articulated by Sultana, women were still denied the right to vote, prohibited from driving and required to wear an abaya, a traditional dress covering them from head to toe.

When our veiled plight piqued the curiosity of numerous foreign journalists, many educated women of my land began to plan for the day that they could burn their veils, discard heavy black abayas, and sit at the steering wheels of their cars." (Daughters of Arabia, 2004, p. 38)

Government officials, particularly those adhering to the conservative Wahabi ideology, play a crucial role in Saudi Arabia. Islam is the official religion, and all legislation is exclusively derived from Shariah. The Supreme Council of Religion (Majlis As-Shura), appointed by the king and

outlined in the Council of Ash-Shura law, determines the kingdom's daily religious legitimacy.

This formal and ritual application of Shariah by the Saudi Arabian government is a crucial factor that contributes to the negative portrayal of Islam, particularly in the perspectives of Sasson and Carmen as representatives of the West. Their works not only address religious aspects but also emphasize issues related to the lives of women, often portraying them with a lower status within the Saudi Arabian community. This portrayal is evident throughout their works; for instance, women in the kingdom face challenges such as not having their identity cards (IC) and needing to rely on the identity of a man (husband or father). This limitation arises from the impossibility of displaying their pictures on ID cards. Additionally, women require assistance to drive or travel alone. When leaving their homes, they must be accompanied by a mahram and wear a burqa, a garment that covers from head to heels with only a veil for the eyes to enable visibility. Sultana articulated this by stating:

"The veil interferes with everything I do! I cannot believe that we were unlucky enough to be born in a country that forces its women to wear shrouds of black!" I grumbled (Dessert Royal, 2004, p. 62).

The application of traditional Shariah jurisprudence, established over 12 centuries ago without significant reforms, particularly in family law, gives the impression that Islam is biased against women. Despite the dynamic changes in society, where women now have ample opportunities for education and employment, Shariah remains static. Women have demonstrated their capabilities and ability to outperform men when given the chance, yet Shariah remains unaltered. The authorities in charge of Shariah assert the sole accuracy of their perspective, dismissing all other views. Consequently, this has further deteriorated the image of Shariah (Islam) in Saudi Arabia, affecting both international relations, especially with superpowers like the United States and domestic politics, eroding trust in the leadership of the king.

This perspective reflects the negative interpretation of feminist postcolonial (FPC) viewpoints on Saudi Arabia, with the West perceiving Saudi society as traditional, irrational, and aggressive due to constraints imposed by religious teachings serving as the foundation for Islamic law. Women, in this context, are seen as victims of discrimination and marginalization, constrained by religious doctrine and male dominance, denying them opportunities for communication with authorities and subjecting them to violence and oppression.

Moreover, as the Western world continues to hold global influence, it perpetuates negative stereotypes about Saudi women, portraying them as passive, marginalized, closed, and exotic. The narrative extends to depicting mistreatment by husbands, fathers, and brothers, perpetuating a patriarchal culture through generations. FPC views this depiction as a means of controlling their colonial space, aiming to implement political reforms gradually or swiftly. Continued control of this nature is deemed hazardous, as it aligns with the West's vision and mission to undermine Saudi Arabia through the lens of human rights, particularly women's rights, and democratic principles. A brief examination of the Western perspective towards Saudi Arabia underscores the discrimination against women, notably regarding the enforcement of the hijab.

“Within a short time, she would be compelled to don the veil, for, in my country, many Muslim girls are being forced to veil even before they reach puberty” (Dessert Royal, 2004, p.181).

The debate over the hijab is a contentious issue within both feminist postcolonial and feminist studies, attracting attention in academic circles and popular media alike. It has emerged as a focal point, symbolizing oppression and resistance. From a cultural perspective, discussions surrounding the hijab delve into identity issues linked to colonialism and patriarchy. In the Western context, particularly in feminist postcolonial (FPC) discourse, the hijab is often portrayed as a tool of oppression, sparking ongoing debates within social and religious contexts. FPC perspectives from the West tend to interpret the hijab's development solely through their worldview, with Western media frequently depicting Islam as a religion exploiting women through patriarchal norms, emphasizing the burden of wearing the hijab. According to FPC views, the hijab is seen as a symbol of Saudi women's oppression and exploitation by men, with efforts to resist being likened to neo-colonialism.

The hijab is perceived as both a colonialist fantasy and a discourse on gender identity, with a specific focus on Saudi women, particularly princesses residing in palaces. The FPC approach, influenced by Western perspectives, attempts to understand the experiences of these princesses by scrutinizing definitions and explanations of the hijab worn by other Muslim women in Saudi Arabia. While FPC analysts use Western lenses to examine Saudi women, they struggle to comprehend the hijab's meaning and role within Saudi Arabian culture. Despite efforts to connect the historical process of wearing the hijab from the era of Jahiliyyah to the present, there is a disconnect leading to various protests, as elucidated by Carmen below:

Salome and I put on our veils a few minutes before we landed. We were entirely covered in thick black clothes, head and body. Just our feet stuck out. The hijab hid even our eyes behind the impenetrable black gauze" (Inside the Kingdom, 1994, p. 32).

The matter of the hijab is growing increasingly significant in the context of globalization, Islamophobia prevails in the Western world, and the rise of fundamentalist and nationalist groups continues to be emblematic in cultural discourse. Despite this, feminist postcolonial studies challenge the universal paradigm, critiquing its imperialist norms that perpetuate the marginalization of the Eastern world, exemplified by countries like Saudi Arabia, through spatial power dynamics. Consequently, the focal point of discussion centers on the reciprocal understanding of the hijab from both Eastern and Western perspectives, fostering a dialogue that aims to bridge cultural gaps, dispel misconceptions, and promote a more inclusive global discourse on religious attire and individual expression. However, the theoretical framework views the hijab as a constraining factor, representing differences such as East/West and male/female, opening the door for debates and negotiations to reconcile varying opinions.

Drawing on Edward Said's perspective on Orientalism, he deems it a discourse of colonialism, wherein a culture constructs a representation of foreign cultures as inferior and subject to control. Said emphasizes the pervasive nature of these hierarchical structures, asserting, "No area of experience was spared the unrelenting application of these hierarchies" (Said, 1994: 120).

Parallel to Said's stance, Sasson and Carmen argue that the hijab symbolizes oppression and backwardness for women, contributing to the negative portrayal of Saudi culture as cruel, primitive, and sensually driven. This portrayal suggests that the Eastern world is reduced to the hijab alone. Narayan echoes a similar sentiment, emphasizing the political struggle between Western and colonized cultures, particularly regarding the hijab, as a crucial issue that demands resolution through negotiation.

In these conflicts, such indigenous practices were symptoms of backwardness and barbarity of the third-world cultures and contrasted with Western cultures' progressiveness. The figure of the (veiled) colonized women became the representative of the oppressiveness of the entire "cultural tradition" of the colony." (Narayan, 1997:17)

Said reinterprets the European stance on Saudi Arabia, emphasizing an individualized perspective rooted in historical context. Throughout history, Saudi Arabia has been cast as an 'other,' posing a challenge to European moral standards. This portrayal is characterized by a

romanticized and sensual representation, casting doubt on the veracity of its true nature, as per Said's analysis. Direct observation or circumstantial descriptions of the Orient are fictions presented by writing about the Orient (Said, 1997:34)

Therefore, it is highly pertinent to delve into the works of Sasson and Carmen, allowing them to vividly illustrate the dichotomy between the East and West and between men and women. The crisis faced by women who wear the hijab takes the form of the burqa, which obstructs the view and conceals the face, sparking a global debate, mainly led by the Feminist postcolonial (FPC). The Western perspective not only scrutinizes the hijab but also questions ethical values, religion, politics, terrorism, and nationalism.

It is imperative to elevate the position of Saudi women from being perceived as mere victims of men to becoming agents of change, and this transformation is highly reliant on discourse. These works, viewed from a Western or Eastern standpoint, strive to neutralize and clarify women's identity, echoing Mills' assertion that stereotypes are not fixed behaviors but hypothesized versions played within mediated experiences such as television, advertising, newspapers, and magazines.

The concept of hijab, as described above, serves as a barrier between space and identity to empower women as agents. From the male perspective, the hijab represents a form of freedom and personal independence, as it shields something sacred and uncontaminated by external impurities. Examining this issue through feminist postcolonial theory involves analyzing power distribution in society, prompting questions about women's ability to act under societal expectations and visions or whether they remain silent followers of men's desires. Today, women must assert themselves as agents of change, addressing social reforms to attain equal roles with men.

In the fictional space of Sasson and Carmen's works, a form of colonization is depicted as they seek resolutions for the problems faced by the palace princesses. Simultaneously, they explore and challenge the system and rules in the Saudi Kingdom through cultural, political, and economic spaces, mainly through the discourse surrounding the hijab, which they perceive as a significant form of women's oppression and exploitation. Representing the West, the FPC deliberately constructs compelling narratives to influence and challenge readers' mindsets through hijabi concepts and perspectives. Their works, laden with political values linked to women's lives, offer a realistic portrayal of life by reconstructing personal stories and experiences as a process of acquiring true identity.

While the FPC freely describes the challenges faced by the princesses, they also encounter resistance and opposition from the Saudi government, including religious (Islamic) authorities. Portraying negative stereotypes becomes their means of challenging Saudi culture, particularly in opposing patriarchy. The use of space in the novels effectively competes with and dismantles the old myths prevalent in the royal palace. Works like "Princess," "Daughters of Arabia," "Royal Dessert," and "Inside the Kingdom" detail various forms of men's behavior towards women associated with Wahhabism, constraining the space and movement of princesses. These works juxtapose past experiences with the present, illustrating princesses' limited and confined lives behind the hijab. The West attempts to influence cultural values and norms by portraying characters that reconstruct the princesses' identity in alignment with Western styles and behaviors. Without the use of hijab, these princesses can move freely without male accompaniment, leading Sultana to liken Saudi women to exotic birds.

"I have been told that we Saudi women resemble bright exotic birds with our choice of attire under our black veil and abayas" (Princess, 1993, p. 153).

The style and approach employed by the Feminist postcolonial (FPC) in effecting changes in the lives of Saudi women are intriguing. One notable strategy involves liberating and emancipating princesses during their visits to other countries where they eschew the hijab. This portrayal signifies a momentary transformation in women's identity and independence, yet its impact is enduring. This transformation is vividly depicted in the experiences of Sultana and her sister in Italy, America, and England, as well as Carmen's visits to Switzerland, America, and Europe.

In addition to showcasing freedom and independence, the FPC ventures into the controversial territory by asserting that Saudi princesses residing in the United States compromise their honor with white men due solely to expressions of love. This narrative deliberately tarnishes the reputation of these princesses, placing them in a dishonorable light. Essentially, this narrative suggests a divergence from Islamic teachings, portraying the princesses as succumbing to Western influence at the expense of their Eastern roots.

The FPC crafts this narrative space to capture the princesses' authentic essence and life experiences. It serves as evidence that the FPC, representing the West, excels in constructing negative portrayals of Saudi women, influencing readers to accept and align with the ideas embedded in their novels. The aim is to cultivate readers into discerning consumers of literature, fostering sympathy

for the West and cultivating feelings of envy and animosity towards Saudis, particularly men. Nura articulates this sentiment in the passage below.

"Nura, the family's matriarch, lifted her veil and stared sternly at Me.'Sultana! I command you to stop! Today, you will concentrate on our trip, not your veil' (Dessert Royal, 2004, p. 238).

Portraying princesses in the palace as characters grappling with the hijab issue is a clever and captivating concept, suggesting a potential rejection or objection to the hijab. This depiction can swiftly influence the broader community of women to abandon the hijab. The envisioned reform hinges on the refusal of the hijab by the elite and upper classes, with other groups automatically following suit. The focus here is on mothers, wives, and daughters who have reached puberty, and for them, wearing the hijab becomes a reversal of their accustomed open life before adolescence. The hijab acts as a constraint, closing them off from the gaze of men and obscuring all external entities beyond their sphere. For these girls, it transforms into a mental and psychological burden, confining them like prisoners behind bars. Their palace becomes their prison, and the hijab serves as a mysterious confinement, a realm of darkness as deep and faded as its dark black color.

In this context, the image of the hijab takes on a highly political nature. Rather than empowering women as agents of change, it seeks to render them silent agents. Carmen, for instance, is obliged to adhere to her husband's directives regarding the Saudi dress code, especially since becoming part of the Bin Laden family. However, when she is not in the family setting, the hijab and abaya are immediately discarded, emphasizing that the hijab is not an integral part of her life. A similar dynamic is observed in the experiences of Sultana, as noted by El-Saadawi below:

The portrayal of Arab women in the past and contemporary Arab literature does not reflect an accurate image of her. It is Arab women as seen through the eyes of Arab men, and therefore, tends to be incomplete, distorted, and devoid of a clear understanding and consciousness. (El-Saadawi, 1980: 66)

Observably, Saudi princesses adhere to the wishes of men within the existing system and regulations. Their potential as agents of change is limited as long as male dominance persists in the government's leadership. However, a transformation is anticipated with the increased participation of women in various professional domains, including politics, which significantly impacts the trajectory of women's lives. In this context, feminist postcolonial intervention in this sphere is seen as a

strategic move to advance the success of Saudi women despite encountering numerous challenges and opposition, particularly from men.

Examining this scenario from a psychoanalytical perspective unveils a connection between the purpose of the hijab and men's desire to conceal women. Borrowing Freud's terminology, men's desire to gaze upon women and perceive them as inherently flawed beings is intertwined with the rationale behind women wearing the hijab – a measure to protect and shield them from the male gaze. Here, the hijab functions not only as a disguise but also as a reflective surface, concealing the woman's face like an empty canvas that mirrors the image of the man, symbolizing a phallus-centric ruler. The hijab, serving as a battleground, evokes memories of colonial faces in the daily lives of individuals, especially those associated with the Foreign Public Culture.

IV. CONCLUSION

In summary, our argument revolves around the assertion that the involvement of American women in the lives of Saudi Princesses within the colonial context cannot be solely analyzed through the lens of colonization. The architectural limitations and ideological restrictions on women's mobility within the colonial setting play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of a woman's place and contribute to the framing of spatial dynamics. Despite these constraints, the clash between these limitations and women as active agents, knowledge producers, and observers of Arab women results in varied roles for women.

The works of Sasson and Carmen affirm that women wearing the hijab may struggle to adapt physically or conform to the prescribed social norms, leading them to resist and challenge the hijab as a mandatory garment. This opposition stems from their perception of the hijab as a symbol of antiquity, tradition, and oppressive cultural norms. This resistance creates a space for Feminist post-colonialism (FPC) to criticize and influence Saudi women, men, and Islam.

Novels serve as a platform to conceptualize and advocate for women's rights and liberation from colonial constraints and male dominance. Sultana and Carmen employ this literary space to address issues related to the hijab and political power, shedding light on various forms of discrimination against women. However, the Western perspective of the FPC, whether conscious or unconscious, also contributes to the colonization of Saudi women by redirecting readers' attention to their narratives and scenarios. Despite their intention to amplify women's voices and hearts, their works impact the values and norms

of Saudi women, indirectly tarnishing Islam by misinterpreting the patriarchal aspects of the religion. In essence, the descriptions and comments presented by the FPC in their works can be characterized as a form of colonial space that oversimplifies and generalizes without recognizing the nuances of culture and religion.

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