# Post-Colonial Novelists' Impressions of the Arab/Muslim Character

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*Abstract:* **Post- colonialism is a literary movement which is as an opposition to colonialism. Post-colonial literature is based on racial affairs (white and black) with its effects the society. It aims to investigate the reflection of the Arab/Muslim in post-colonial novels. This study hypothesizes that this type of the novels has the negative qualities of the Arab/Muslim character. This study falls into four sections. The first section is an introduction. The second section represents the reflection of the Arab character in Post-colonial literature. The third section shows post-colonial novelist's impressions of the Arab/Muslim character. Finally, the study has reached some conclusions that verify the hypothesis of the study.**

*Keywords:* **(Post-colonialism, Post-colonial literature, the western literature).**

## 1.   INTRODUCTION

Post-colonialism is full of authors and topics. It has a perfect diversity in distinctive subjects which include the difference in historical events, religious activities and social interests. This term describes the colonial society in a literary way and it also describes the universal manners which took place the colonialism.

The reflection of the Arab and Muslim character appears in the novels of post-colonial literature. However, the question is to what extent the theme of the Arab and Muslim character can be regarded by its authors whether the novelist is Arabic or British or American.

## 2.   THE REFLECTION OF THE ARAB CHARACTER IN WESTERN LITERATURE

In the ancient times, Muslims and Arabs can be represented by the western literature during the early communication between them. Age after age, especially during the old Wars when the Arabs invaded Europe to get some states until the very days of the Third Millennium, the West publicizes nearly the same stereotypes for Arabs and Muslims. Whether the communication took place in the previous centuries or it happens lately, the West maintain a continuous conceptualization of the Arabs and Muslims as different characters an alien "Other" or rather "Enemy", though both the means of communication and crediting terminologies have known some changes.(1)

According to the literary works and fictional texts in the western literature, the West keep some descriptive qualities to the Arabs during the times for example, in the past Arabs and Muslims were chiefly described in the West as "erotic", "primitive", "ignorant", "slave traders" among other many belittling terms. recently, the terms such as "terrorist", "fundamentalist" and "blood-thirsty" are the terms that are well-known recognized to the Arabs and Muslims.(2)

### *2.1. Islam and Jihad*

Islam means peace and it is a religion of brotherhood and equality  and it is regarded an essential requirement for keeping the prevailing correspondence and benevolence with non Muslims. in this respect, Jihad comes as second choice when peace is not appreciated. Anyway, Jihad, as a concept, can be submitted a series of deformations. For instance, it shows Muslims as sanguineous people and makes them a love-brutality people. after that, it can strip from its religious and spiritual implication, the West tries to belittle Jihad as a concept to an unimportant deed of terrorism.

In a literal sense, the concept "jihad" is not limited in furious actions and war as it is conceptualized and described in Western world, but it is open according  to Muslim that can do and play different actions and performances. Jihad, for

instance, can be practically associated with an individual "refraining from illegal behavior", to a "woman agonizing in child-birth", to a "man struggling and endeavouring to up-bring his family", in addition, obviously, taking a "holy war" as a defense but never as an attack. In this respect, the similarity between the main beliefs of Islam and furious actions is a deformation of facts that is caused originally by the Western reasoned unawareness of Islamic principle.(4)

### 2.2. Fundamentalism

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, the term fundamentalism is "holy viewpoints based on a truthful explanation of everything in the Bible and regarded as fundamental to Christian belief and morals". this definition shows that the term means to take the religious doctrine as it is and thus it is the usual and established way of worshiping God. If this is right for Christianity, why should it be otherwise for Islam? fundamentalism is exposed from its literal sense and established a depreciatory one, connoting mainly extremism and terrorism.(5)

In the identical manner, in juxtaposition with the deformation of facts and the design of stereotyped images of the Orient's culture, Arabs costumes do not escape the goal of derision of the Western media. therefore, the scarf and the veil can be reduced to the level of masks worn by terrorists in order not to be recognized. In this way, the Islamic veil and scarf are stripped of their sacred and artistic demonstration of chastity.

unseen behind their scarf and veil, Western media try to equate Muslim women to masqueraded terrorists and evil doers. Some assert that putting a veil has nothing to do with religious principles, but it is simply a manner to cover their "ugly faces".

Western media and western literature try to equate bearded Muslims to brutal and barbaric persons who are probably inclined to achieve any unreasonable act. Sex raises uncertainties why does man/woman look so "alien" in     his/her Islamic dresses.

### 2.3. Terrorism

Terrorism is a principal topic in Western literature that is arbitrarily and supposedly ascribed to Arabs and Muslims regardless to tangible evidences. Terrorism is offered within the construction of Western creed that preconceives Muslim Arabs as "absolutist", "patriarchal", "unreasoning", "punitive" (6). It is an incorrigible and inculcated Orientalist preconception of Arabs held by the West to the extent that Arabs and Muslims are instinctively stereotyped and recognized or rather equated with the word terrorism. L. John Martin established that word "terrorism" was generally used in Western literature whenever they portrayed the individuals or events they deprecated. shockingly, media use the word terrorism with great reservation when dealing with individuals who are not Arabs.(7)

## 3.    POST-COLONIAL NOVELISTS' IMPRESSIONS OF THE ARAB/MUSLIM CHARACTER

The reflection of the Arab character appears in the novels of post-colonial literature. However, the question is to what extent the theme of the Arab and Muslim character can be regarded by its authors whether the novelist is Arabic or British or American. Therefore, the aim of this study is to shed light upon whether the individuality of the author will affect on the vision to the Arab/Muslim character for its identity. Hence, the scope of the present concern is restricted to the post-colonial novelists, and to the three writers. Yasmina Khadra in The sirens of Baghdad ( 2006), Ian McEwan in Saturday ( 2005)   and John Updike in Terrorist ( 2006).

Khadra's The Sirens of Baghdad, which show the reflection of the Arab and Muslim in this novel. The Sirens of Baghdad shows and depicts life in Baghdad city through the citizens(men and women) and how Khadra depicts the frustrations and the disappointments faced by the American and Iraqi soldiers.(8)

"It's not a question of washing your bodies, but your souls, young men. If you're rotten inside, neither rivers nor oceans will suffice to make you clean."

This quotation is from" The Siren of Baghdad" in which the writer wants to show that the human should be pure and true with himself and does not cheat her with mischievous deeds and wrong actions.

the British writer Ian McEwan'   Saturday (2005) is a book by Ian McEwan , shows the significance of life and what the point of existence in it. The major personality, though externally triumphant, still conflicts to recognize sense in his life,

discovering private fulfillment in the post-modern, developed world. Though smart and well read, Perowne feels he has little influence over political actions.(9)

There's a taste in the air, sweet and vaguely antiseptic, that reminds him of his teenage years in these streets, and of a general state of longing, a hunger for life to begin that from this distance seems like happiness.

McEwan wants to presents some didactic and moralistic lessons that the man can take from the experience of life such happiness, hope and yearning to the peaceful life.

In Updike's Terrorist, individual sees a convinced literary development in concentrated form: the development of great formal, technical skill at one pole, and the strict weakening of the artist's understanding of history and social association at the other. It also shows a reflection of  the image of the Arab   character in the western conceptualization. In Terrorist, Updike shows his extensive talent for storytelling and social commentary to the most important topic of the budding twenty-first century: the terrorist threats on American  cities  and  citizens.(10)

He showed the world what can be done against the odds, against a superpower. He showed -- and this is where Vietnam and Iraq come in, that in a war between an imperialist occupier and the people who actually live there, the people will eventually prevail. They know the terrain. They have more at stake. They have nowhere else to go.

Updike shows the destruction and the devastation of the war that take place between the conflicting forces which made the men destructive and waste.

## 4.    CONCLUSION

To generalize the individuality of such large area in two terms Arabs and Muslims is a conscious and aware strategy which makes things easy for the West stereotype both the race and its religion. This population, regardless of its different languages, various cultures and incongruous religion, is radicalized as Arabs and religionzed as Muslims. Arabs and Muslims represent as a threat for the west. This study shows post-colonial literature clearly and properly to help the readers in understanding this literary movement during the post-colonial novels. So the hypothesis of this study is accepted.

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