

Postcolonial Critique of Islam in the Eyes of West in Samira Ahmad's Internment

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Abstract:

Islam and Muslims are depicted as 'Other' in literary world, particularly Muslim community living in west misrepresented and marginalized by the 'Us'. Westerns identify Muslims as fundamentalists and a threat to west. Therefore western world has started to observe zero-tolerance policy to avoid growing militancy across the globe and allegedly called Islam and Muslims behind this escalation of the terror. This zero-tolerance policy of the west in response to Islamophobia, revive the former practices of fascism that has been adopted by ardent follower of fascism in first half of twentieth-century. The practices and stances of fascism are opted by the America to maintain its dominance over the Muslim and to marginalize them against the stereotyping and othering image created by it. The novel Internment (2019) by Samira Ahmad exhibits the entire milieu controlled by the American government for exploitation of the Islam and Muslim. Qualitative methodology and close textual analysis is used this exploratory research to state the stances of fascism and marginalization of Muslims due to these fascist practices and to know the stance of Ahmad towards Islamophobic practices of the west.

Keywords: Post colonialism, Islam, West, Samira Ahmad, Internment

Introduction

The present study tends to focus on Western's fascist, militaristic, and hegemonic attitude towards Islam and Muslims in the novel *Internment* (2019) composed by Samira Ahmad from the perspective of Post colonialism. Islam in the eyes of the West is largely stereotyping and

Othering depicted in western and postcolonial discourses on account of the prejudice of the west and Islamophobia towards the Muslim community in West. Being colonial power, West marginalizes third world countries particularly the Muslim community by exerting hegemonic influence using certain fascist stances.

Fascism is a concept used in political and sociological studies described as a type of far-right, tyrant ultra-nationalism characterized by dictatorial force, opponent's forcible suppression, with strong regimentation of society and economy, it comprises of "Nolte' three anti's - anti-Marxism, anti-liberalism, and anticonservatism - plus a list of other items: nationalism, authoritarian statism, corporatism and syndicalism, imperialism, idealism, voluntarism, romanticism, mysticism, militarism, and violence" (Payne, 1961).

In response to (mis) representation of colonized or third world, the Postcolonial critique highlights colonial legacies in postcolonial writings through postcolonial criticism. The impact of hegemonic influence with fascist approach illustrates the barbarity of West who deliberately projects a negative image of Islam constructed presently on the political and religious spirit of hostility, which is largely found in postcolonial writings, is needed to be addressed because the issue of Islam in the eyes of West is evident in all type of media and has no exemption in English literature.

The researcher has based the study on the idea that Muslims across the world not only mere marginalized but are deprived off of their due right as a legal citizen. Since the colonizers have dethroned the Muslim power in the second half of the nineteenth century and pseudo withdrawal in the twentieth century, neo-colonialism is still prevailing in the world and would continue in the future in a more brutal form. After 1857 mutiny colonizers have placated their wrath against Muslims by confiscating lands, properties, jobs, and right to education and offering them to non-Muslims which was right to be owned by Muslims, Moreover, Islamophobic colonizers allowed Muslims not to take part in politics. As Islamophobia swells after the incident of September 2001 west's barbarity increases and Muslims are being tormented across the world, colonizers invaded many Islamic states in the name of terrorism such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, etc and put sanctions to few others including Iran. Military operations are carried out and drone attacks are made on the name of killing terrorists without obtaining permission from the state. Not merely west agonizes Islamic states working beyond territory but in western states, Muslims are tormented more, and this hegemonic endurance with militaristic power would continue in the future in America particularly. Being the superpower of the world and Ahmad's focus of intention in the *Internment*, the

researcher shall discuss American's intolerance and Islamophobia towards Islam in the eyes west.

Colonized nations especially third world countries write about the issue of colonialism which they had experienced during the period of subjugation. Ashcraft draws attention to the colonized nation which is "Emerging in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with the imperial power and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the imperial center. It is about to make them distinctively post-colonial" (Ashcroft et al., 1989, p. 2). Americans place themselves in the *Centre* and referring them as 'Us' while the third world as Others revolving around that *Centre*. Edward Said in his *Orientalism* (1978) writes about binaries created by the west marginalizes 'Other' as inferior which describes them superior. Westerns describe themselves by defining Orientals such as lazy, uncivilized, and irrational which means they are active, civilized, and rational.

As aforementioned that colonizer fondles Muslims not only across the border but within their territory, behind this attitude they have a prejudice against Islam which is deep-rooted and the result of this attitude is the misrepresentation of Islam. Both the selected literary theories are taken into the same thread of consideration in which postcolonial Muslim text is treated based on Orientalism. Orientalism discusses the marginalized image of the east from the perspective of the west who are Orientalist giving meaning to Islam are largely stereotyped. "Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or philologist either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism" (Said, 1979, p.2). In literary texts, marginalization and hegemonic framework under the Orientalism is not something new to encapsulate the whole situation but to identify these concepts under the crown of fascism to apply in the literary text would be a great effort by the critique of Islam.

In the first two decades of the twentieth-first century, atrocities against Muslims are increased and critics emerged by labeling terrorism to Islam. Abbas (2017), in his article on Muslim fear and terrorism, note that Islam is considered as the Trojan horse of Islamic fundamentalism and Islamic fundamentalism as a Trojan horse of terrorism. West generally distinguishes between good Muslim and bad Muslims, using the terms "moderate" Muslims and "Extremist" Muslims, "those who are stricter in the practice of Islam are the ones more prone to extremism. Islamophobic West fears this "self-defined extremist" exaggeratedly and shows hostility and hatred toward Islam and Muslims, which is noted in Centre (2011) as negative stereotypes result in bias, discrimination, and the marginalization

and exclusion of Muslims from social, political, and civic life. America escalates this marginalization to violence and paramilitary actions in the justification of nationalism to overcome all oppositional forces like a fascist do and Mann in his book *Fascist* (2004) notes the brutal role of fascists, agrees that “Fascists were determined to overcome all opposition ruthlessly, by will, force, whatever was necessary, without compromise or scruples”. America generally considers it as a democratic state but fascist activities are carried out under the cover of democracy while Ahmad (2019) herself labeled it “fascist America” and “Islamophobic America” in *Internment*. She is of the view that “when fascism comes to America, it will come draped in the flag” (377).

The selected novel *Internment* (2019) by Ahmad is a postcolonial novel with numerous issues of colonialism/fascism and its effects on the lives of Muslims. Ahmad is a Muslim Indian Diaspora writer who has written this novel according to the need of the time in which Muslims are victims of American atrocities across the world generally and not spared even in America. Americans not only discourage Islam and Muslims regardless of race, culture, and boundaries but also thought of and represented as Non-American. This echoes that nonwhite minority in America is not only Other but marginalizes as Non-American, with the thought of being nonnative and anti-American strict laws are imposed to confine to protect the sovereignty of the nation. In the disguise of protecting nation, non-human treatment is done by setting aside the standard of Geneva Convention applying fascist approaches to incarcerate Muslims at camp where once Japanese Americans were interned during WWII till the war is ended. Keeping in mind subjugation and incarceration Ahmad is of the view that these atrocities would continue in the future, further she notes that events in *Internment* take place “fifteen minutes into America’s future” (378).

The researcher has selected her novel *Internment* (2019) for the present study to explore the combined approach of Fascism and Post colonialism. Ahmad has personal experience of Islamophobia, therefore, she delineates stereotyping and othering images of Islam and Muslims under the fascist stances exerted by previously been colonizer and presently superpower. In the selected novel she has portrayed the nationalism, barbarity, cruelty using militaristic and autocratic or authoritarian power against Muslims who are detained for being Muslim as their principal crime.

Research Statement:

Third world countries, particularly the Muslim community is depicted ‘Other’ in literary words either the westerners or postcolonial writers engage with the representation of Muslim and Islam, is largely (mis)representation. The Muslim community, identified as Islamic

fundamentalists are have been facing several problems while living in the West for long, is the debate of postcolonial writers who depicted them as “Other”, contemplated by the western nationalism. The current research deals with Samira Ahmad’s “*Internment*” that engages with the stereotypical and ‘Othering’ images of the Muslim, living the West. The work is undertaken as a postcolonial critique to highlight the problems of the Muslim community, living in the west.

Objectives of the study:

- To explore the hegemonic, militaristic, and dictatorial practices of westerners in Samira Ahmad’s *Internment* to marginalize the Muslim community.

Research Questions:

- How Samira Ahmad does depict hegemonic, militaristic, and dictatorial practices of the west to marginalize the Muslim community in her *Internment*?

Significance of the Study:

The problem to be investigated here is the prejudice and Islamophobia of west depicting Muslims as ‘Other’ and stereotyped them as a threat in the west, by having fascistically hegemonic authority give vent to their fascist attitude in effecting public and private life of Muslim community. While presenting the relationship between Islam and West, all issues like marginalization, hegemony, stereotyping and Othering will be studied in the perspective of fascism. It will be explored whether the selected novel has compatibility between Islam in the eyes west and techniques of fascism, its authoritative and dictatorial suppression of Muslims in America. The present study sheds light on the issues of marginalization, hegemony, stereotyping, and othering in the fascist milieu. The exploitation of Muslim's rights as a noble citizen and also inhuman conduct of Islamophobe west leads to not mere marginalization and hegemony but physical violence and fascist hegemony in the name of nationalism or saving national interests. Through the study of selected novel *Internment* (2019) the researcher tries to investigate the exploitation of Muslims living particularly in a so-called democratic state such as America. Mann (2004) has well defined the techniques adopted by fascists’ ruler which include everything in the marginalization of Muslims and hegemony of fascists. The present study emphasizes the stereotyped or negative image of Muslims in the west from the perspective of Postcolonialism due to which Islamophobe west wields fascist hegemony upon them. Moreover, that identity of Orientals is challenged. Said’s concept of Orientalism and Gramsci’s fascist hegemony go parallel with the concept of Mann on Fascism.

Reviewing Islam in the Eyes of West in Existing literature

Smith (2015) thinks that in today's Europe relationship between Muslims and Christian is affected due to the historical fear of "Islamic violence. No doubt this fear is escalated by the activist events that are occurred in various parts of the world since the beginning of the twenty-first century. Smith argues that fear of Islamic violence resulted in the origin of term Islamophobia and many other terms associated with Islam and Muslims such as radical versus moderate Islam, Muslim terrorists, good Muslims and bad Muslims and Islamic fundamentalists, etc. Moreover, Smith draws attention to the nervousness of the European people because of mass Muslim immigration in European states, which suggests that the west fears the presence of Islam and Muslims for loss of a job, security, social services, and cultural integrity.

Huntingdon (1993) has a different perspective on conflict and differences among former great religious rivals. Huntington argues that the clash between modern states has shifted from that of religious and political dominance to cultural superiority over the others. Huntington's expectations regarding future conflict are neither economical nor ideological but cultural. "The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural." (p.22)

Doyle (1986) elaborates the United States' style of dominance as "relationship either formal or informal, in which state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. It can be achieved by force political collaboration, economic, social, or cultural dependence. Imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire." Doyle sees the United States as imperial power just like Said (1993) describes in his essay and it is elaborated by another critique by illustrating cultural, political, and economic relations with third world particularly Islamic countries.

Thomas (1987) notes the United States as a superpower of the modern world and being hegemonic supremacy the third world states are bound to operate within laws created by "western European states". Eventually, Muslims dominating territory is largely in east and east in the eyes of the west is the third world therefore Islam and Muslims to present Christian superpower is third world therefore it has to operate within the rules created by the United States. The United States is a practitioner and exponent of the capitalist system and the existence of these third world countries including Islamic states are defined within the context of this capitalist system. Moreover, the United States has political and military relationships with these countries which include many Muslim states such as; Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and other Asian countries as well. These countries are under the influence of the power of the west who shape their

identities and culture because of “pre-eminence in international economic rule-making and management.”

Guerlain (1997) asserts that “America is powerful” and dominate the culture across the globe. Third world countries under the influence of power and cultural hegemony yield to this imperial power who exploits the rights of the marginalized nation. Largely west is the cultural industry and particularly colonial United States rules it. Khalema & Jones (2003) argue that pre-eminence of the west around the globe create stereotypes against Muslims. Moreover, stereotypes are vocalized by media which is part of the “Dominant Cultural Industry” that creates binary oppositions. In these binary opposition west considers its culture and society as superior in comparison to the culture and society of the east particularly Muslims. Therefore west reinforces cultural, political, and economic dominance over the Islamic states to establish its supremacy.

Mishra (2008) thinks that the west has various advantages over the east that resulted in the creation of binary opposition of powerful and weak, Christian and Muslim, West, and Islam. Mishra assumes the supremacy of west over culture, politics, and economy as a primary reason for the creation of binary of West and Other.

Morrisroe (2011) states exploitation of East constantly from West that frequently representing the Orient as ‘other’. Morrisroe taking Freeman as reference drawing attention the well-established writing of ‘otherness’ to represent the Islam intentionally the Orient and “inferior to the West”. Morrisroe terms progress of the west with Christianity and express ferocious hostility to the Islamic world that is non-Christian. And describing on Freeman’s view towards Islam and Muslims are traditional and confrontational.

Research Methodology and Theoretical framework

The researcher deals with research methodology and theoretical framework of the present study. The nature of present research is qualitative and for the data analysis, a close textual analysis technique has opted. The method researcher has chosen for this particular research is the qualitative method and the technique used for the analysis of the particular opted text for current research is done through deep and close reading. Moreover, the present research has been performed by close textual analysis and intensive reading of the postcolonial text by Samira Ahmad *Internment* (2019). Textual analysis from the postcolonial perspective is conducted to explore the misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims in the West.

The researcher has selected a combined approach of Post colonialism and Fascism for reading the novel *Internment* (2019) to study the “Islam in the eyes of the west” from the perspective of Postcolonial aspects. The present research is qualitative and analysis of the text will be

done through *Orientalism* (1978), and *Covering Islam* (1997) of Edward Said. Edward Said has published a masterpiece on misrepresentation and misinterpretation of East by the West particularly of Arab-Muslims in *Orientalism* (1978). Orientalism as a theory constitutes an appropriate framework to understand the relationship that connects both, Westerners and Muslims. Orientalism means erroneous depiction and perception of the East by the West. Eurocentric discrimination against Muslims of Arabia and their culture is revealed by Orientalism. It is constructed upon the ladder of the European self that refers to the binaries of masculine for west such as strong, rational, and Subject while East refers to feminine such as weak, irrational, and object. Europe is helped by such divergence to describe itself by defining the East and try to establish and maintain opposites and others. Orientals are looked as inferior, uncivilized, meager, wicked, and dirty by western countries. Said points out in *Covering Islam* (1981) that historical encounters are still structured between West and East regarding the view of Islam. And this encounter is outlined by craze, prejudice, and political interests.

Islam in the Eyes of West in Samira Ahmad's *Interment*

Ahmad writes the story in the first-person narrative in which Layla, the protagonist of the story, states the prevailing condition in America, after several militancy attacks around the world that Islamophobic Americans start looking down upon Muslims and marginalizes them. In a fascist state, the usually dominant group is strengthened and unified while minority group is persecuted in many ways particularly the way that minority group is negatively stereotyped.

Said (1981) notes that negative stereotypes, broadcasted by media create fear and prejudice in the general public towards a particular group and these negative images are building ground to seek total control over the masses. Said attempts to describe that construction of such images incites the general public which ultimately helps in supporting the state's ideology. In the first chapter, Mrs. Brown who is going to burn 'dangerous books, banned books' in books burning festival suggests that Islamophobic lady abides by to the nation's propaganda against Muslims that is when Layla says; "I spy a flyer for the burning taped around the lamppost at the corner; JOIN YOUR NEIGHBOR" (Ahmad, 2019, p.3-4).

Fascist states largely stress on the centralized or national government and have control over major parts of the society where the private needs of the individual must be given to serve the purpose of the state or society represented by the state. In the 'Books burning' festival along with Mrs. Brown all the people of community support book burning particularly the books written by Muslims or Pakistani writers. This shows that how the fascist state goes far to torment Islam and Muslims in the

western community when the state is Islamophobic by negative representation. Ahmad writes it as:-

The woman keeps her head turned away from me, refusing to meet my gaze, shoveling the books and papers back into her bag. I reach for two books and glance at the titles before she grabs them from my fingers. *Palace Walk* by Naguib Mahfouz. *Nameless Saints* by Ali Amin—my father. (Ahmad, 2019, p.4)

Said (1981) states that the western marginalization of Islam and Muslims is the product of the distorted image of Muslims created by media. In a fascist state oligarchy or dictator, tries to bring people and institution under central command to enforce obedience. So the media giving coverage to threatening speech of president denouncing Muslim community suggests that fascist ruler deliberately giving vent to anti-Muslim sentiments in America using media. Burning of books written by Muslim writers denotes that Islam and Muslims in the western community are considered as others. Said postulates that modern western media is controlled by most powerful because they can determine what people like or dislike. In general, fascist acquired such powers because it can enforce policies and whatever it likes.

Marginalization is largely described as the exclusion of people, often considered as inferior, by the dominant group in the society. Said (1979) in his *Orientalism* defines that the west marginalizes east and creates binaries of superiors versus inferior while Ahmad (2019) highlights the marginalization of Muslims, living in America as immigrant or minority, from the superiority of fascist American. These Americans marginalize Muslims as being the root cause of terrorism across the world this is why Muslims must be excluded from society. As mentioned earlier that title of the novel suggests exclusion and incarceration so the story speaks social exclusion of Muslims particularly when Layla is being told by one of the Exclusion Guards that:-

“Under order of Exclusion Authority and by the powers vested in the secretary of war under Presidential Order 1455, we are here to serve notice and carry out your relocation.” “Relocation. What does that mean? I turn from the Suits to my parents; my mom is sobbing into her hands, and my dad looks like the house is burning down around him” ... Suit # 1 turns toward the stairs, narrowing his eyes at me. “Near Manzanar. And you would do best to keep quiet” (Ahmad, 2019, p.31).

Here, the researcher tries to argue that marginalization presented by Ahmad (2019) not just simple social exclusion but has some force behind it. And such type of force is usually employed by a fascist ruler who belongs to the superior social group of the society. This social exclusion has minor difference to that of Spivak's in “*Can the Subaltern speak*” that

marginalization to her is discrimination and suppression of the voices of marginalized where they cannot speak and represent themselves but Ahmad tries to assert that law is a force which justifies the act of marginalization of the Muslims as an inferior community in the west. Presidential order supports social exclusion by announcing “order 1455” and Muslims exclusion from America is immediately begins and Muslims have no right to ask because the law of the state allows paramilitary to exert force in exclusion of Muslims from society and they “would better to keep quiet” and be compliant to fascist rules and regulations.

Mann (2006) states sources of power and hegemonic way of marginalization, both share the common characteristic of paramilitary and political control over the rival. So hegemony is the use of power, a common strategy employ by fascists and marginalization which is social exclusion, both crushes the oppressed group in the society. Further, marginalization refers to the relegation of an inferior group to the powerless and unimportant position within the society noted in Webster dictionary as “relegate someone to powerless position”. Forced exclusion of Layla and other Muslims in a camp with strict surveillance executed by using drones, cameras, and paramilitary leads to the position where interned Muslims have no power refers to the hegemonic way of marginalization of Islam and Muslims. And later this social exclusion further supported by law, and the curfew is installed to relegate Muslims to an insignificant and powerless position.

“But prison is prison, I guess. And being called an enemy of your country, the feeling that you are hated—they probably felt that, too. I wonder if the weight of that ever goes away. Even if we get out of here, will fear become a part of daily life, like breathing? There’s not even a real war, not like World War II. It’s all terrorist attacks and retaliations and enemies without borders. There could be no end. I’m afraid we’ll not away and die in here. Erased. Forgotten” (Ahmad, 2019, p.281-282).

Moreover, in the marginalization of the particular community, not just religion is taken as the essential difference between ‘us’ and ‘them’ but culture, caste, class, ethnicity, gender, and social stratification play a vital role in discrimination of the ‘other’. It is necessary to know such underlying factors, responsible for social exclusion and social injustice. And Mann (2004) argues that fascists crush their political enemies where opponents could be perilous in the free ruling. And Gramsci notes it as fascist hegemony against the non-native social group to enforce obedience toward the state. Fascist’s prejudice against the repressed group is depicted in their discrimination of social practices of ‘other’ group.

“There’s, like, a hierarchy for bigots, isn’t there? Like their hatred of Muslims isn’t equal. They dispense it in degrees. They hate some of us more. Like, the darker your skin or the more foreign-sounding your name. And if you’re black and wear hijab, you’re getting the brunt of it.” “Honestly, I think some racists think Islam is a race or ethnicity and not a religion. Like we’re all brown and from Muslimistan.” (Ahmad, 2019, p.115)

Hegemony usually thinks as dominance by consent and Gramsci speaks of fascist hegemony which is acceptance of dominance too, but the marginalized group has fear of being tormented in case of non-compliance with the fascist ruler. So hegemony, with a certain stance of fascism such as dictatorship or paramilitary influence refers to as fascist hegemony. Various characters including Layla become victims of fascist hegemony and excluded not merely from ‘Us’ but later on, from ‘them’ too, in response to resistance against fascist Director. Fascist Director, President of state and secretary of war, marginalize Muslims of America and articulate stereotypes that are described by Ahmad as:-

“Pay attention to the racist demagoguery and scapegoating that aligns with that policy: immigrant and migrants are “animal” who “pour into and infest our country.” They are “rapists” and “criminals” who put a strain on our economy” (Ahmad, 2019, p.378).

Ahmad further, criticizes the policy of fascist rulers that are particularly designed to exclude Muslims from American society. Such policies not only take livelihood but take the lives of immigrants. The core purpose of the implementation of such policies is to assert fascist hegemony over the immigrant Muslims. Taking shelter, livelihood, the lives and dehumanization suggest hegemony of fascist state to marginalize Muslims.

“My dad teaches poetry and writing. Did teach, I should say. Until he was fired—mysteriously deemed unqualified for the tenured professorship he’d had for over a decade” (Ahmad, 2019, p.5).

Layla’s father is disqualified from his professorship and she is expelled from school because she is Muslim and having an affair with non-Muslim American residents.

“We were suspended for two days from school for kissing in the hall, in the open, where everyone could see. We weren’t breaking any laws. Not technically. But I guess the principal didn’t want to look like he was encouraging relationships between us and them” (Ahmad, 2019, p.6).

Layla knows that exclusion from society, suspension from school, and trails for indulging in an affair with the non-Muslim resident, are meant to marginalize Muslims only particularly when she is summoned with her parents before principle and enforced certain restriction to continue with

school. But her boyfriend never called for interrogation because of American citizen and having relations with fascist authorities. Moreover, Layla thinks that there has never been any law for suspension against making love affair inside school premises because she had seen many in the past.

“Apparently, PDA is against school rules but I’ve never heard of anyone pulling suspension for it. Even worse, although David got booted, too, only my parents and I were called in for a lecture about how I should know my place at school, keep my head down, and be grateful for the privilege of attending classes there” (Ahmad, 2019, p.6).

Fascist is largely a dictator and in dictatorial practices, the dictator has no real accountability therefore, President, secretary of war, and Director of Mobius prove to be a dictator. These three characters are found in various dictatorial practices employed to marginalize Muslims. President, although not an active character, in the novel and his speech at parliament and stereotypes against Muslims and ‘order 1455’ shows his dictatorial mindset. Said (1979) notes stereotypes of the west as the marginalization of the east while President is the authority and have no accountability, the reason to this, he denounces Muslims as ‘threat to America’ and orders the people not to have relationships with Muslims. And do not encourage Muslim scholars and intellectuals by reading their discourse; therefore, books are burnt by arranging ‘Book burning festival’.

“Bonfire? Let’s not use euphemism. They’re burning books in the school parking lot. They’re fucking burning books. My mom’s a damn professor, and she’s going along with this. And my dad, both of them, really” (Ahmad, 2019, p.11).

The dictator particularly organizes this ‘Book burning’ festival for the burning of Muslim books and Layla tells David that Muslims are being marginalized by Islamophobe fascist President that even the books, written by Muslims are threat to America. She weeps over the incident when sees her father’s books burning.

“I know,” I whisper. “It’s my dad’s books. His poems.” My voice cracks and tears fall down my cheeks. I brush them away with the back of my hand. “They’re burning his poems. He pretends it’s not happening. But those words are him. He’s trying to hide it, but I know it’s killing him. Both of my parents. All of us. Is this how end begins?” (Ahmad, 2019, p.11).

Moreover, the main character involves in the militaristic and dictatorial way of discrimination of Muslims is the Director. He negatively uses his powers and paramilitary too, he says that “I am the power” and his

blind use of power at an innocent Muslim prisoner depicts him as a true dictator, violating rules and regulation of “Genoa Conventions”.

“He curls his right hand into a fist and lands a vicious punch across Soheil’s face. I hear a crack; blood spurts from Soheil’s nose and mouth as he falls to the ground with a thud. There’s a single piercing shriek—I have no idea from where—then pandemonium. Ayesha screams. She and I rush to Soheil’s side, snatching napkins to wipe away the blood. The reporters leap forward into the crowd that surrounds Soheil, their phone cameras capturing the chaos” (Ahmad, 2019, p.244).

If the Muslims are real culprit then there are laws approved by the Geneva Convention which protect the rights of the prisoner as well. But relocation center Mobius is running without any law because Director considers himself as law and everything is in his dictatorial control this is why Layla herself says that “All I can hear is “violation of the Geneva Convention” and “prisoners of war” (Ahmad, 2019, p.244).

Not just males are tormented but women are also marginalized, beaten, and even disappeared after making certain interrogations. Layla resists to Director’s illegal acts, therefore, receives cruel treatment. It further suggests that fascists involving in dictatorial practices never tolerate any gender and its discrimination of suppressed group is based on cruelty and barbarity. Ahmad speaks through Layla and explains that how fascist marginalizes women in the west.

The Director skirts around his desk and stands over me. He puts his hands on the chair and bends over me until his face is inches from mine. I recoil from the whiskey on his breath and the sweat dripping from his hairline. I start to gag... he grabs my jaw between his rough, calloused fingers and squeezes. I twist my neck away, trying to free myself from his grasp, but he only grips harder. The pads of his fingers brand my skin with their force. I try to speak, yell out. (Ahmad, 2019, p.310) “Shut up,” he spits in my face. Then adds, “Does this hurt?”... “How about now?” The Director tightens his grip more, and a grin escapes his purple-red lips. (Ahmad, 2019, p.311)

The Director choked the voices of an internees and does not allow them to speak to the media when it arrives at the gate. It seems like Muslims at camp Mobius are ‘subaltern’ of Spivak which she says; “that subaltern cannot speak” because their voices are suppressed and they are indigenous people. So Ahmad’s Muslim community at Mobius can be taken as subaltern when Shoeil tries to speak to media in loud voice outside the gate to protest illegality in the Mobius camp but he is stopped by the Director and Exclusion guards.

“Soheil speaks loudly and clearly, directing his comments to the reporters. “We’re protesting the illegality of Mobius. We’re protesting the violation of the civil rights of the Muslim community. We want the world to know that there are internees who have been tortured and disappeared. Here. On American soil. We are being held without cause or trial” (Ahmad, 2019, p.243).

There is no limit of age at the camp, any person who is Muslim incarcerated here. A middle-aged Muslim woman wearing a hijab, runs after her boy to grab him. Layla notes that she is Arabic Muslims because she speaks Arabic to her child. According to the rules of the Director, none of the internees is allowed to go to the main gate where there are entered because of security reasons. The child of this old woman runs to the gate and she tries to stop that little kid reaches out there and Exclusion guard serving as paramilitary of Director does not spare the old lady and even the youngest child from cruelty.

“Three Exclusion Guards draw guns and aim them at him. A kid. They’re pointing their weapons at a kid. A fourth guard grabs him and pins him to the ground... “Please! Don’t hurt him! He doesn’t understand,”... she claws at the guard... he shoves her off, and she falls backward. One of the other guards directs his gun away from the boy and toward the mom” (Ahmad, 2019, p.65).

Ahmad is a feminist writer this is why in present novel female characters are more prominent than that of males. And women’s participation toward resistance is grater and they play the role of leader and male character acts upon the suggestion and order of Layla. Therefore, when it comes to sorting out marginalization, women characters again are greater sufferers to that of men. Ayshea, an internee friend of Layla, is brutally beaten by paramilitary, and Noor also punished by a private security detail of Director. Director is dictator as already mentioned above, showing no mercy like Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany.

“Then we hear screams. I stop short. I can’t breathe. Goosebumps spring up all over my body. I look at Ayesha. All the blood has left her face. We peek out from behind the Mercury Home. A woman is being dragged down the Midway by the Director’s small special force, his personal security guards, as the Director follows calmly, walking with his hands clasped behind his back like he’s on a stroll, as if his hands don’t have blood on them. Its Noor” (Ahmad, 2019, p.172).

Paramilitary of Director not just discriminated the internees but marginalized beyond religious ethics. Not just in Islam, immoral physical relations are prohibited but in Christianity too. When Director says that “I

am the law and have no accountability”, the orders issued to paramilitary are taken as having free hands to employ force. So the Director’s private security detail physically assaulted the Muslim girls at the camp. Such physical assault is a violation of the Geneva Convention and marginalization of the ‘other’, as Said argues that the west legitimizes the stereotyping of Muslims for being weak, dull, and inferior. Noor tells Layla about what happened she is taken away by a private security detail of Director.

“During our first few days here, Noor caught me smiling at her American flag hijab while we were both doing laundry, and she introduced herself. Block 6, she said, rolling her eyes. Arab American. She told me Authority Suits grabbed her from her dorm room for seditious acts. When I asked her if she had done what they claimed, she looked at me with a mysterious smile and said, “Rebellion is as American as apple pie. And so is fascism” (Ahmad, 2019, p.172)

Any person who comes in the way of Director to stop him against his cruel intentions, he launches his Private Security Detail. Asmaa tries to save Noor from being taken by paramilitary but Exclusion Guards beats her too.

“Asmaa... lunges for one of the men taking Noor away. An Exclusion Guard immediately steps up, grabs her by the shirt, and elbows her in the face, like she’s inconsequential to him. She falls to the ground, cradling her head in both hands, groaning. Two guards yank her up. Then the action feels like it slows down. There’s screaming and dirt getting kicked up and clouds of fine dust filling the air” (Ahmad, 2019, p.173).

Layla tells that not just Noor is taken away but Asmaa and Bilqis who try to save her are also taken by paramilitary of Director. And Layla further sketches the bloody scene after such turmoil.

“Blood is everywhere, smeared across their faces and clothes... there is so much screaming and deep, almost animal like sounds from the women. People in the crowd yell and curse and cry. Guards hold them back as Noor and Asmaa and Bilqis are taken away” (Ahmad, 2019, p.173).

Moreover, insurgency and its counter-response with more barbarity feared the Muslim prisoner at the Mobius. They got scared, reluctant to utter a single word, and try to hide from fascist and its paramilitary. Layla upon seeing above mentioned cruelty of Director and Exclusion Guards tries to soothe her by clinging to her mother. Layla weeps and unable to speak which suggests that the dictatorial practice of director and his use of paramilitary violence created fear into the internee Muslims and they forgot

to think and speak. Just like indigenous people who cannot speak and represent themselves in Spivak's '*Can the subaltern speak*'?

"A silence descends. People are either too scared or too stunned to speak. No one seems sure where to look—at the floor, at one another. Some people cover their faces and mouths with their hands. I shake my head at my parents, tears stinging my eyes; I have no words. What use are my words in the face of this? My mom pulls me closer and grasps my hand tighter" (Ahmad, 2019, p.94).

Layla speaks of the Muslims in the camp who are discriminated and tell other internee friends that how Muslims in the west are marginalized. Women are not allowed to wear hijab and for legally punishing Muslims the Elites have decided to celebrate punish a Muslim day.

"I understand what you're saying. We can't erase ourselves. But look at what happened to Nabra, those Muslim students at Chapel Hill, and that seventy-year-old New Yorker who was almost beaten to death after two guys asked if he was Muslim. And those mosques that were burned down in Texas and Seattle? Remember those 'punish a Muslim Day' flyers that mysteriously started around Chicago and Detroit? Don't you think we should've protected ourselves then? Now look at us. I feel like we can't even breathe" (Ahmad, 2019, p.23).

So it can be asserted that various Muslim characters living in America are marginalized by fascist America. Practices of fascism such as fascist hegemony, dictatorial practices, and paramilitary stances are employed by the fascist Director to marginalize the Muslim community in America.

Conclusion

Islam and Muslims in the eyes of the west, now have two representations the moderate and extremist, and second is internal and external. West thinks that moderate Muslims are internal Muslims or 'Good Muslims' and extremists refer to external or 'Bad Muslims'. Ahmad artistically presented moderate Muslims, who despite cooperation with the state are stereotyped and marginalized. Ahmad envelops the whole situation around curfew, confinement, surveillance, internment center, and again curfew within the internment center and her unique way of narration to portray the discriminated image of Islam and Muslims suggests that colonial subjugation and fascist's tyrannies do the same with the Muslims. The Muslims, native or immigrant, black or white but not white convert, African or Asian, all are taken to the internment center. Ahmad intertwines the whole story in the net of intolerance, discrimination, violence, and enforced obedience.

Western violence towards Islam and Muslims is due to Islamophobia that is created by western media itself. So the relationship between West and Islam is the relation of hostility because the image constructed by media is stereotyped and marginalized. Muslims are orientals and 'other' therefore western superiority exerts its hegemonic influence upon the Muslim. Now behind this hegemony, there is a government of the few who work beyond the law to marginalize the others.

The present novel *Internment* (2019) after analyzing from the perspective of fascism and its stances, depicts various issues of fascism. These stances not only marginalize Muslims physically but also economically, politically, and socially.

Ahmad's expertise in an association of affinity between American West and Islam and befalling circumstances of the character make her distinguish among other postcolonial Diasporic novelists because she writes about the issues of American Muslims in the western community. Representation of the Muslim community is more marginalized due to directly under the control of western power and the representation of Muslims across the world is hegemonic. In the west Muslim incorporate with western people and enrolled in public and private sector job and study in western school or colleges. So any Islamophobic decision within no time deprives all Muslims of their job and education or other social rights that are seen in the selected novel.

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