ISLAMIC POSTFEMINISM AND MUSLIM CHICK-LIT: COEXISTENCE OF CONFLICTING DISCOURSES

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Abstract
Feminism is a travelling concept that metamorphoses itself into target geographical, religious and cultural terrains. Owing to its complex web of affiliations and influences, Pakistani feminism is a nexus of Islamic feminism, post-colonial feminism and post-structuralist feminism. This multi-layered complexity begins with Muslim feminism’s bifurcation into secular and religious feminisms. The secular stream adheres to Western notions of gender equality and female liberty, whereas the religious group proposes an indigenous, religiously-invoked version of female freedom. The concept of Islamic postfeminism, we suggest, challenges the notions that frame Muslim women as unhappy voiceless victims of patriarchy in Islamic Pakistan. This study aims at examining the ways that re-orient womanhood as it appears in contemporary anglophone writings of young women, hence contextualizing postfeminism in a Pakistani context. In addition to theoretically situating this merger, this paper draws upon postfeminist portrayals of female characters in Beautiful from this Angle by Maha Khan Phillips and Karachi You’re Killing Me by Saba Imtiaz. It adumbrates how contemporary Pakistani fictionists are challenging the stereotypes of Asian-Islamic-femaleness through unconventional, yet realistic, free and forward-looking portrayals of their female protagonists. The significance of this study is to create and promote alternative discourses of Pakistani feminism that define their expressions of freedom by dislocating them.

Keywords
Postfeminism, Chick-lit, Pakistani Anglophone Fiction