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Arising in the specific context of the United States and responding to the dual challenges of patriarchy and hegemony, this paper introduces a novel form of Islamic theology, Muslima theology, and highlights its comparative, constructive and theological potentials.

Muslima theology recognizes the historical complexities of the relationship between Islam and feminism, including scholars' hesitancy to holistically adopt the general norms and approaches of feminism and feminist theology. This hesitancy in large part arises from the view that dominant formulations of feminism and feminist theology are not expressive of—and potentially oppressive of—the particular experiences, concerns and liberative strategies of Muslim women.

This perspective on dominant formulations is not unique to Muslima theology. Rather, it has been strongly voiced by many theologians, resulting in the articulation of multiple genres of theology, including Womanist Theology, Mujerista Theology, Asian Women's Theology, and African Woman's Theology. As with these multiple genres, Muslima theology foregrounds the existence of meaningful diversity, a desire for agency, and a common recognition of the power of naming and self-definition.

Muslima theology thus strives to be responsive to the particular experiences, concerns and interpretative approaches of Muslim women. It does so through a unique combination of comparative, constructive and theological lenses.

In reference to the first, I argue that Muslima theology should not be carried out in isolation from other discourses on religion, women and gender. Muslima theology, even in recognizing the complex history and power relations surrounding Islam and feminism, is an explicitly comparative endeavor. It conscientiously and critically engages other 'feminist' theologies, seeking to learn about, be challenged by, and potentially even enriched by other perspectives and approaches.

Muslima theology is also constructive. By this, I intend that Muslima theology is not only about "retrieval" and "purification" of what already exists in the tradition and sources. Muslima theology aims to go beyond exegetical work and historical ressourcement. It is a constructive enterprise that is rooted in reinterpretation of the central sources and historical figures, but is not limited to this activity.

Finally, I argue that Muslima theology is actually theology. The use of the term "theology," while somewhat of an importation to the Islamic tradition, indicates that Muslima theology is concerned with articulating integrated interpretations of God and God's relation to the world, including humanity. Therefore, in Muslima theology, discussions of women and gender are necessarily contextualized within a broader theological exploration of the nature of the Divine, the types of interactions between the Divine and humanity, and the nature and purpose of humanity itself.