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Abstract Only – Work in Progress

**“Toward Critical Multivocality in
International Aid: Resisting the Rescue”**

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This paper examines the push toward global liberal-modernity in the context of international aid interventions in Muslim societies by specifically focusing on the unequal power relations between *recipients* and *donors* that underpin international assistance. Drawing from post-colonial analysis, this paper argues that aid relations are constructed on saving and rescuing entire societies through a *liberal-corrective* framework that is premised on the re-ordering of belligerent and failed societies. It is this construction between the West as the *active-knowing* authority directing all stages of development, and the third world as the *passive-known* receivers of aid that fundamentally blocks meaningful dialogue, debate and critical engagement. Muslim societies are further pathologized as anti-liberal, parochial and resilient traditional societies warranting greater discipline and containment through aid interventions. Drawing on textual and policy representations, this paper argues that these representations promote *discursive closure*, undermining the agency of aid-dependent actors to contribute to the international aid agenda and construct alternative frameworks on their own terms.