

Muslims, Multiculturalism and Trust: New Directions

SOAS, University of London 1st and 2nd June 2013

Abstracts

Keynote Address: Trust, Integration and Multiculturalism

Tariq Modood, University of Bristol

Abstract

Trust across groups requires a respect for 'difference' as well as a sense of commonalities; these are required at the level of the local and the city but also at the level of the national. A framework of anti-discrimination and processes of uncoercive cultural encounters are also necessary but are not sufficient. We also need to have the possibility of sharing a macro-symbolic sense of belonging. With this in mind I consider a number of modes of integration but argue that they are incomplete without multiculturalism. I go on to argue, however, that multiculturalism must develop the same sensitivity to the majority as it has in relation to the minorities, and that it is indeed capable of doing so given its emphasis on subjectivity and dialogue.

Biog

Tariq Modood is Professor of Sociology, Politics and Public Policy at the University of Bristol and is also the founding Director of the Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship. He is a regular contributor to the media and policy debates in Britain. He was awarded an MBE for services to social sciences and ethnic relations in 2001 and was elected a member of the Academy of Social Sciences in 2004. He has led many research projects on ethnic minorities and Muslims, having held over 40 grants and consultancies and has over 30 (co-)authored and (co-)edited books and reports and over 150 articles or chapters in politics, sociology and public policy. His latest books include *Multiculturalism: A Civic Idea* (2nd ed; 2013), *Still Not Easy Being British* (2010); and as co-editor *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship* (2009), *Global Migration, Ethnicity and Britishness* (2011), *European Multiculturalisms* (2012), *Tolerance, Intolerance and Respect* (2013) and *Religion in a Liberal State* (2013). His website is <tariqmodood.com>

Keynote Address

Lord Bhikhu Parekh, University of Westminster

Abstract

In recent years multiculturalism has come under considerable criticism. I trace its post-war history in Britain, outline its various forms, and argue that while its implementation was sometimes imbalanced and skewed, its basic principle was and remains valid.

Biog

Bhikhu Parekh is Professor of Political Philosophy at the University of Westminster, UK. A political theorist of international renown, he is Fellow of the British Academy, and recipient of a Distinguished Global Thinker Award and the Sir Isaiah Berlin Prize for lifetime contribution to political philosophy. He is a labour member of the House of Lords and President of the Academy for Social Sciences. His numerous publications include: *A New Politics of Identity: political principles for an Interdependent World* and *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*.

'A spike through the pages of love, a spike through the sacred': Literary controversies, class and multiculturalism in Britain

Rehana Ahmed (Teesside University)

Abstract

This paper will focus on protests by religious minorities in Britain against creative works. Drawing on Marxist spatial theories, it will complicate representations of such disputes in terms of creative freedom and religious censure and censorship by highlighting the unequal access to spatial, economic and cultural capital that often shapes them. In doing so, the paper will challenge the secularist sacralisation of creativity that became prominent in the wake of the Rushdie affair and more recently with the New Atheist movement – captured in the title image of books pinned to the ceiling from Nadeem Aslam's novel *The Wasted Vigil*. A consideration of an early protest – by the Jamiat-ul-Muslimin against H. G. Wells' *A Short History of the World* in 1938 – will historicise more recent protests, and by doing so interrogate contemporary discourses surrounding the 'failure' of multiculturalism. With particular reference to the *Satanic Verses* and *Brick Lane* controversies, the paper will then argue for the importance of reading literary controversies alongside and against the texts that trigger them, demonstrating how such a reading practice can productively illuminate tensions and complexities both in the textual representations of multicultural Britain and in multicultural Britain itself. Its contention is that both of these novels contain within them and attempt to manage the contradictions of multicultural Britain, which were then unearthed on the novels' publication.

Biog

Rehana Ahmed is Senior Lecturer in English Studies at Teesside University. She is co-editor of *Culture, Diaspora, and Modernity in Muslim Writing* (Routledge, 2012) and *South Asian Resistances in Britain, 1858-1947* (Continuum, 2011). She is currently completing a monograph on literary representations of British Muslims (MUP, forthcoming).

"Headscarves and Burqas in Europe: How the religion of some became the public concern of others"

Valérie Amiraux (University of Montreal)

Abstract

Over the course of the last thirty years, the publicly visible “otherness” embodied by the Muslim population in the member states of the European Union has sparked movements of transnational panic mainly driven by the fear of the collapse of “national cohesion”. Generally however, these fears, shared internationally, always become more pronounced when women are at the center of their focus, a phenomenon equally evident in the language used in reference to other communities of belief, such as Mormons, the Amish and Jews. Islamic women’s attire, whatever the terminology used to describe it – veil, scarf, and more recently, burqa, to designate a garment fully covering the body – is presented as an increasingly delicate problem, an issue at the center of legal battles and the subject of virulent political controversy in France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. This paper is more specifically concerned with the “public texture” of the discussions surrounding the recent ban on the wearing of the full veil in European public spaces. It aims to engage in the conversation about the epistemological and political implications of the evaluation of daily, individual experiences through a legal framework and classifying them as problematic in secular contexts, or even criminalizing them.

These occurrences of local friction, tension, disagreement, and sometimes violence, have emerged in different contexts, regardless of the national conventions with regards to immigration politics, the relationship between church and state and the wider construction of national identity. They are part of a racializing configuration about which I wish to develop three lines of argument. The first hinges on the unintelligibility of certain manifestations of belief in secularized European public spaces. The second develops an analysis of the racialization of the indicators of religious belonging, whether real or supposed, and which most specifically affect the Muslim population of the EU. The third finally proposes some speculative readings of the public experience of the different crises arising from the visibility of Islamic religious signs and the capital attached to their visibility.

Biog:

Valérie Amiraux is a full professor in the department of Sociology at the Université de Montréal and Canada Research Chair in Religious Pluralism and Ethnicity (CRSH, 2007-2017). Before moving to Montreal, she held several different positions in Europe, including at the Centre Marc Bloch (Berlin), the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (Florence, Italy) and at CNRS-CURAPP (Université Jules Verne Picardie). Her research, initially focused on Muslim minorities in Europe is today more concerned with the role of the legal arena in regulating conflicts produced by the experience of religious pluralism and on the ethnography of the relationship between pluralism and radicalization within an urban context.

Rushdie's *Joseph Anton*: Islamophobia in 'A World Without Shadows'

Claire Chambers (University of York)

Abstract

In *Joseph Anton*, Rushdie describes the *fatwa* as 'an intense light shining down on everyone's choices and deeds, creating a world without shadows, a stark unequivocal place of right and wrong action' (150-1). In the light of the story he is telling, of relationships and his own safety being damaged or destroyed by the deplorable *fatwa's* fallout, his monochrome analysis is understandable. Yet the despair Rushdie felt in his nine-year hiding period appears to have led to a permanent hardening of attitude.

As well as analyzing the memoir's Manichaeian tendencies (JanMohamed 1983), this paper also contrasts its denial of Islamophobia with studies by Allen (2010) and Sayyid and Vakil (2011). Rushdie writes, 'A new word had been created to help the blind remain blind: *Islamophobia*' (343) and later describes the term as part of 'the vocabulary of Humpty Dumpty Newspeak' (346). The author seeks to make a distinction between attacking ideas and attacking people. And yet, his implied claim that hatred of Muslims does not exist is disproven not only by scholarship, but also by his own account of one publisher assuming he would dislike anyone with a Muslim background after reading Naipaul's *Among the Believers* (63). Rushdie fails to recognize that virulent criticism of a religion can often lead to abuse of its (assumed) followers. At one point, Rushdie uses the adjectives 'unqualified, unyielding' as praise (22), but this paper argues that amidst the current 'clash of fundamentalisms' (Ali 2002), more qualifications, greater attempts at intercultural dialogue, and a less inflexible stance are desirable.

Biog

Claire Chambers is a lecturer in Global Literature at the University of York, where she researches and teaches modern writing from South Asia, the Arab world, and their

diasporas. She is the author of *British Muslim Fictions: Interviews with Contemporary Writers* and the forthcoming monograph *Representations of Muslims in Britain*, and her research has been supported by grants from HEFCE, the AHRC and British Academy. Claire has published widely in such journals as *Postcolonial Text*, *Crossings*, and *Contemporary Women's Writing*, and is Co-editor of the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*.

"Praying for Wind: Imperial Multiculturalism, Blackness and the Specter of the Muslim in post-9/11 America"

Sohail Daulatzai (University of California, Irvine)

With the re-election of Barack Hussein Obama in 2012, the mainstream narrative surrounding his victory had to do with the "demographic shifts" taking place in the U.S., and the emergent political power of a "majority minority" electorate. But as the rhetoric swung between liberal celebration of multiculturalism and conservative panic over what was perceived as a "changing America," a deeper more enduring struggle around Blackness and the Muslim continued to structure and shape the imperial multiculturalism of the post-9/11 era. This talk will probe the current debate around race by situating it within a longer trajectory of post-Civil Rights triumphalism that cohered in the early 1970s when Blackness and the specter of the Muslim came to define U.S. statecraft in the face of imperial expansion and the aftermath of Black Power.

Biog

Sohail Daulatzai is the author of *Black Star, Crescent Moon: The Muslim International and Black Freedom beyond America* (2012) and is the co-editor (with Michael Eric Dyson) of *Born to Use Mics: Reading Nas's Illmatic* (2009). His writing has appeared in *The Nation*, *Counterpunch*, *Al Jazeera*, *Souls*, *Amer-Asia*, *Basketball Jones*, and as the centerpiece in the museum catalog *Movement: Hip-Hop in L.A., 1980's - Now*. He has written liner notes for the 2012 release of the 20th Anniversary Deluxe Box Set of Rage Against the Machine's self titled debut album, the liner notes for the DVD release of *Freestyle: The Art of Rhyme*, and the centerpiece in the museum catalog *Movement: Hip-Hop in L.A., 1980's - Now*. He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Film and Media Studies and the Program in African American Studies at the University of California, Irvine.

Dangerous Liaisons: The Clash between Islamism and Zionism

Rumy Hasan (University of Sussex)

Abstract

Samuel Huntington's book *The Clash of Civilizations* aroused a storm of interest when it was published in 1996. Its basic thesis was that in the aftermath of the Cold War, the fundamental antagonism among nations would be on the basis of 'civilisation' rather than ideology or economics. The thesis was heavily criticised on the grounds that it was much too generalised and simplistic and so limited in its relevance and applicability. Since September 11 2001, however, and the 'war on terror' the notion of the existence of a clash between two of Huntington's civilisations – the Western and the Islamic worlds – gained traction. A common refrain was that the war on terror was really a war on Islam waged by the US/West; but this was an assertion without any basis in reality. Nevertheless, a clash arose between certain ideological forces within each geopolitical tectonic plate, specifically, between Islamism and Zionism. That these two ideologies are in firm opposition is not in doubt; in that Zionism is a European/Western ideology and the country whose constitution is based on it, Israel, is located in a Muslim-majority region, their clash manifests itself naturally in the Islamic world and has done so acutely since 1948. However, given that millions of Muslims have settled in Western countries, increasing numbers of whom have espoused Islamism, this clash has, in recent years, also arisen and with seemingly greater intensity in the Western world.

The root cause of this particular clash is a tract of land – Palestine – and its colonisation by Zionist settlers from the late nineteenth century, which ultimately led to the creation of the Jewish state and expulsion from it of the majority of the indigenous, mainly Muslim, population. This conflict is a running sore that has shown no signs of resolution and has naturally received much attention. But, in the modern era, particularly in the 21st century, this clash is also about *identities* and, more specifically, *dual identities*.

Throughout Western Europe in particular and to a lesser extent also in North America, there have, in the post 9/11 era, arisen the desire on the parts of many of the governments of these countries to increase the integration of Muslims into mainstream society and to improve social cohesion. These laudable objectives and policy aims have gained focus because of widespread concerns regarding the situation of Muslim migrants, notwithstanding the fact that a key motivating factor has been to wean young Muslim males away from jihadi-inspired acts of terrorism. I wish to argue that the antagonism between Islamism and Zionism in the West is a significant threat to such integration and social cohesion; my aim is to draw attention to this *explicitly in terms of a clash*. This has been an important lacuna that needs to be highlighted, one which has rarely been acknowledged as such.

Biog

Rumy Hasan is Senior Lecturer at Sussex University and author of *Multiculturalism: Some Inconvenient Truths* (2010) and *Dangerous Liaisons: the clash between Islamism and Zionism* (2013).

Muslim American Targets: Distrust, Surveillance and Detention after 9/11

Salah Hassan (Michigan State University)

Abstract

On October 28, 2009, FBI agents shot and killed Imam Luqman Ameen Abdullah in a Dearborn, Michigan warehouse. It was the first killing of a Muslim religious leader by the U.S. government. This incident can be linked to an aggressive US policy to target Muslims in the United States as internal threats to national security. The events of September 11 provided the pretext to infiltrate, surveil, detain and incarcerate Muslims, reinforcing public sentiment that Muslim Americans are especially dangerous. Events in Europe after 9/11 and more recent incidents at Fort Hood and during the Boston Marathon consistently feed a sense of distrust in Muslims. This presentation will provide an overview of some of the US cases in which Muslims have been detained as terrorist threats and then will present a short documentary, titled "The Death of an Imam," which was produced by Salah D. Hassan. The documentary examines the news reporting associated with the shooting and explores the issues at the core of the incident: The allegations of a terrorism conspiracy, the use of FBI informants, and Muslims in the mainstream media.

Biog

In addition to his position in English, Salah Hassan is core faculty in the Muslim Studies Program and in Global Studies in the Arts and Humanities at MSU. His areas of research and teaching include postcolonial literature and theory, mid-20th century anticolonial intellectual movements, literatures of empire, and Arab and Muslim North American studies. His research projects have recently been oriented around the representation of Arabs and Muslims in the media and also projects of Arab and Muslim self-representation. He is the founder of the Muslim Subjects website and blog (muslimsubjects.org), and coordinator of the following projects on that site: "Migrations of Islam," "American Halal," and "Journal/Islam." Muslim Subjects was established with a grant that he received from the Social Science Research Council in 2011. He co-curated RASHID & ROSETTA, an international online art exhibit on the theme of [the Rosetta Stone](#), and is co-editor of a special issue of MELUS (Winter 2006) on [Arab American literature](#). He co-produced the short documentary film, "[Death of an Imam](#)" and is currently producing a series of documentary films on Muslims in the US.

The gift of trust: how to get there from here

Anthony Simon Laden (University of Illinois)

Abstract

Under a common conceptualization of trust, trusting someone involves making oneself vulnerable to them. Trust is thus only warranted under certain conditions, conditions that can not themselves be brought about by acts of trust. Consequently, the moment when trust becomes warranted continually recedes from view. A similar dynamic occurs with certain common conceptions of reason and of democracy: it looks as if we can not bring people to reason by reasoning with them, nor foster democracy in undemocratic societies by democratic means. In the paper, I rely on this analogy and recent work on reason and democracy to suggest the advantages of a different conception of trust: trust as a gift. If we think of trust as a gift, a conceptual path opens up whereby acts of trust can bring forth the conditions of trustworthiness. I conclude by suggesting how such a conception of trust might guide action in situations of asymmetrical power relations and multicultural misunderstanding.

Biog

Anthony Laden is Professor of Philosophy, and, since Aug. 2012, Chair of the department. He received his Ph.D in philosophy from Harvard University in 1996. He works in moral and political philosophy, where his research focuses on reasoning, democratic theory, feminism and the politics of identity, and the philosophy of education. He also has interests in the history of moral and political philosophy, especially Rousseau, Kant, and Hegel. He is the author of *Reasoning: A Social Picture* (Oxford University Press, 2012), and *Reasonably Radical: Deliberative Liberalism and the Politics of Identity* (Cornell, 2001), as well as the co-editor, with David Owen, of *Multiculturalism and Political Theory* (Cambridge, 2007). He has published numerous essays on the work of John Rawls, including "The House the Jack Built" (*Ethics*, 2003), and most recently, "Constructivism as Rhetoric" (forthcoming).

Good and Bad Diversity: The Crises of Multiculturalism as a Crisis of Politics

Alana Lentin (University of Western Sydney)

Across the West, something called multiculturalism is in crisis. That it is a failed experiment foisted upon overly tolerant liberal elites is the dominant way in which racism is articulated in 'postracial' times. Parallel communities threatening social

cohesion, enemies within cultivated by irresponsible cultural relativism, and mediaeval practices subverting national 'ways of life' are evoked.

Choice-based 'diversity' is proffered as a solution to multicultural crisis. Yet, this is attenuated by an implicit understanding that there is good diversity that 'adds value' and bad – excessive – diversity, that dilutes and threatens the supremacy of 'our' way of life. The culturalism upon which social cohesion is now predicated elides other possible foci on the material conditions necessarily undergirding equality, which are sidelined under neoliberalism. In this sense, the crises of multiculturalism lends insight both into the character of contemporary racial formation, but also of politics under (post)racial neoliberalism.

Biog

Alana Lentin joined the School of Humanities and Communication Arts as a Senior Lecturer in Cultural and Social Analysis in June 2012 after six years in the Department of Sociology at the University of Sussex, UK.

She works on the critical theorization of race, racism and multiculturalism. She is currently working on a new research project on Racism and Antiracism in a Digital Age with [Gavan Titley](#) (National University of Ireland Maynooth).

Her publications include [The Crises of Multiculturalism: Racism in a Neoliberal Age](#) (with Gavan Titley, 2011); [Racism and Ethnic Discrimination](#) (2011); [Racism](#) (2008); [The Politics of Diversity in Europe](#) (with Gavan Titley, 2008); [Race and State](#) (with Ronit Lentin, 2006, 2008); [Racism and Anti-racism in Europe](#) (2004). She also publishes extensively in journals such as the *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *European Journal of Social Theory*, the *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, and *Patterns of Prejudice*. She is a contributor to [The Guardian](#), [OpenDemocracy](#) and [Eurozine](#).

Multiculturalism from a multinational space: Scottish perspectives on the 'new Scots'

Nasar Meer (Northumbria University)

Abstract

While there is now a burgeoning literature on Scottish nationalism, it is unclear where ethnic and racial minorities, sometimes dubbed the 'new Scots', might come to rest in debates about nationalist politics, identity, and nationhood in contemporary Scotland. It has been argued that this may result from the comparatively smaller presence of such

groups in Scotland, or that such minorities have not become politicised in a manner comparable to England. In either case, and at a time when all political parties of Scottish politics are jockeying over a vision for the nation, inquiry on this topic provides one understudied means of interacting literatures on multinationalism and multiculturalism. Focusing especially on the little known question of how elite political actors are locating minorities within projects of nation building, this paper offers an entry point in developing such an account. Drawing upon original empirical data, three predominant clusters emerge. The first centres on an aspirational pluralism, in so far political elites do not - in contrast to counterparts in some other minority nations - seek to place ethnically determined barriers on membership of Scottish nationhood. The second concerns the competing ways in which the legacy of Scotland's place in the British Empire is appropriated by actors of different political hues, and assumes a multiform role. The third cluster points to potential limitations in minority claims-making and recognition, especially in terms of formal multi-lingualism and corporate multi-faithism, something that may partly be explained by the tension between multinationalism and multiculturalism. The paper begins with a discussion of what is described as multinationalism studies, before moving to consider the rationale and methodology for research elites. After this the empirical data is discussed in relation to wider literatures, before some tentative conclusions are proposed.

Biog

Dr Nasar Meer is a Reader in Social Science and co-Director of the Centre for Civil Society and Citizenship, Northumbria University. He has been a Minda de Gunzberg Fellow at Harvard University, a Visiting Fellow with the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH) at the University of Edinburgh, and is currently a member of the British Council's Outreach Program. www.nasarmeer.com

Framing Trust: Impression Management and the Multiculturalism Debate

Peter Morey (University of East London)

This paper argues that debates about multiculturalism and a perceived breakdown of trust between Muslim communities and others in society can be understood through the sociological lenses of framing and impression management. Beginning from the assumption that both the quality of trust itself and those selves who invest in it are socially oriented towards others and receive validation through successful interactions, it will argue that certain performances are sought from minority (and in particular Muslim) members of society as a way of guaranteeing successful integration and non-threatening – that is, passive – citizenship.

It will proceed through a brief reading of the history of trust as a central foundation of the 'Good Society' in European political theory, yet one that is – as Bhikhu Parekh has shown – intimately bound up with the universalist monism of Enlightenment Liberalism. David Cameron's notorious Munich speech of 2012, with its invocation of 'muscular liberalism' as a replacement for a flaccid and weakening multiculturalism can be seen as an attempt to reinforce this Enlightenment universalism through a quasi-moral in-group communitarianism as exclusive in its own way as Islamic fundamentalism's intolerant millenarianism.

When understood through the lens of Erving Goffman's ideas of framing and impression management, intercultural relations between Muslims and others appear predicated on the successful performance by Muslims of roles which point up patriotism and loyalty to the nation in a manner not expected of any other group. Moreover, in those instances where such performances are undertaken, the overarching frame of the debate – shaped by politicians and the media – means that even those Muslims performing their loyalty most vigorously fall into what Goffman calls the 'frame trap': indirectly confirming, through their actions, the 'truth' that Muslims as a whole are likely to be disloyal and untrustworthy.

The paper concludes with a brief example of impression management that arguably falls into this frame trap, and with the proposal that it is, in fact, the terms within which the multiculturalism debate is conducted that stand in the way of a more direct and profitable discussion of how to manage democratic evolution in our present-day plural, multicultural society.

Biog

Peter Morey is Professor of English and Postcolonial Studies in the School of Arts and Digital Industries at the University of East London. He specialises in colonial and postcolonial literature, culture and theory, and has a special interest in issues of race, nation and diaspora with particular reference to South Asian writing. He is co-author (with Amina Yaqin) of *Framing Muslims: Stereotype and Representation after 9/11* (Harvard University Press, 2011); co-editor of a special issue of the journal, *Interventions* on 'Muslims in the Frame' (12:2, 2010); and joint editor of a collection of essays entitled *Culture, Identity and Diaspora in Muslim Writing* (Routledge, forthcoming in 2012). His previous books include *Fictions of India: Narrative and Power* (Edinburgh UP, 2000), *Rohinton Mistry* (Manchester UP, 2004) and *Alternative Indias: Writing, Nation and Communalism* (Rodopi, 2006), and he is also the author of a number of articles and book chapters in various publications. He is currently RCUK Global Uncertainties Leadership Fellow heading the *Muslims, Trust and Cultural Dialogue* project. Between 2007 and 2010 he was Principal Investigator on the AHRC-funded *Framing Muslims* international research network. He is currently working on a monograph on *Islamophobia and the Novel* and a co-authored book on *Muslims, the West and the Question of Trust*.

Did Fatwa Really Lead to Jihad? Kenan Malik and the narrative of failure

Anshuman A Mondal (Brunel University)

Abstract

This paper will examine the arguments put forward by Kenan Malik in his influential book *From Fatwa to Jihad: The Rushdie Affair and its Legacy* (2009) that multicultural politics bred the Islamist movements in Britain that led, eventually, to the atrocities in London in July 2005. There are, however, a number of significant problems with the way in which the book supports its thesis that the current predicament concerning Muslims in Britain (and Europe more generally) has its origins in 1980s multiculturalism. Principally, this revolves around the ways in which multiculturalism created ethnic divisions and fomented distrust between communities that fragmented the anti-racist struggles that preceded it, whilst, at the same time, ascribing its failure to the *idea* of multiculturalism itself, thereby disavowing the ways in which *its own account* demonstrates that such divisions have emerged out of local political calculations and *class* divisions as opposed to the ‘identity politics’ it supposedly encouraged. That is, Malik suggests both that such division and distrust arose because local politicians used ‘multiculturalism’ to manipulate local resources in such a way as to create ‘vote banks’ along ‘ethnic’ lines, *and* that this would have been the effect even if they had not because ‘multiculturalism’ itself is inherently flawed in principle.

Although he situates Muslim ‘identity politics’ as a problematic sign within the discourse concerning multiculturalism’s supposed failure, in fact Malik does not eschew identity politics *as such*, for he continues to affirm the politics of anti-racism. Rather, it is Muslim ‘identity politics’ in particular, and non-secular identities in general, that trouble him. The suturing of global jihad to the failure of multiculturalism in Europe does not just represent the paradoxically parochial universalism of Eurocentrism, or testify to the idealist undercurrent of his method; its tenuousness is symptomatic of the way in which multiculturalism’s failure is a proxy for secular-liberalism’s universalist aspirations.

Put simply, it was not *multiculturalism* that enabled Islamist politics to gain a toehold in Britain, but rather a combination of the ‘bottom up’ factors of social and cultural exclusion, on the one hand, and ‘top down’ global dynamics of international politics, on the other, which converged in the controversy over *The Satanic Verses* and its aftermath. To argue otherwise, to ascribe the rise of Islamism in Britain to multiculturalism *as such*, is to perform a rhetorical manoeuvre that masks an anxiety concerning the political provenance of certain forms of cultural difference that might prove recalcitrant to secular-liberal hegemony. This speaks to the limitations of the liberal imagination in conceiving possible forms of cultural difference that are not always already permissible from within liberalism itself. Malik’s book, and the discourse of failure that it articulates,

thus represents a cultural supremacism that ironically mimics that of the Islamists he opposes.

Biog

Anshuman Mondal is a Reader in English at Brunel University, specialising in post-colonial studies. He is the author of *Nationalism and Post-Colonial Identity: Culture and Ideology in India and Egypt* (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), *Amitav Ghosh* (Manchester University Press, 2007), and *Young British Muslim Voices*, an account of his journey across the UK talking to young Muslims

Economies of Trust in Narratives of Microcredit

Stephen Morton (University of Southampton)

Abstract

Microcredit, or the financial practice by which non-governmental organisations provide entrepreneurs with small, low-interest loans, involves a moral economy of trust that works to control and regulate the subject of debt. First developed by the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, microcredit or microfinance is predicated on the claim that 'poor women are bankable'. The assumption underpinning this claim, as the founder of the Grameen Bank, Muhammad Yunus explains, is that poor women are more financially insecure in the traditional patriarchal family structure of Bangladesh. Such rhetoric of women's economic empowerment not only obscures how women borrowers of microcredit are subjected to the norms and values of the market and finance capitalism; it also effaces the ways in which patriarchal kinship relations work to control women's economic empowerment (Karim 2011). Beginning with a critical analysis of Muhammad Yunus' *Banker to the Poor* (1998), this paper proceeds to consider how a moral economy of trust and honour works to govern and regulate the gendered subject of microcredit loans. With reference to Monica Ali's novel, *Brick Lane*, the paper suggests that the narrative of Nazneen's debt to the moneylender, Mrs Islam, and her husband's consumption of the money from that loan helps to shed light on the limitations of trust as a framework through which to understand the exploitation of women's productive labour that microfinance entails. In doing so, it seeks to address Gayatri Spivak's suggestion that microfinance involves a relationship of 'feudality without feudalism'.

Biog

Stephen Morton is Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Southampton. His publications include *States of Emergency: Colonialism, Literature, and Law* (Liverpool University Press, forthcoming 2013); *Terror and the Postcolonial*, co-edited with Elleke Boehmer (Blackwell 2009); *Foucault in an Age of Terror* (Palgrave 2008) co-edited with

Stephen Bygrave; *Salman Rushdie: Fictions of Postcolonial Modernity* (Palgrave 2007); *Gayatri Spivak: Ethics, Subalternity and the Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (Polity 2006); and *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* (Routledge 2003); as well as articles in *Textual Practice*, *Public Culture*, *New Formations*, *Parallax*, *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *The Year's Work in Critical and Cultural Theory* and *Interventions*.

Islam and Europe: Interacting diversities

Jørgen S. Nielsen, (University of Copenhagen)

Abstract

The stock challenge raised to the juxtaposition of two seemingly disparate terms – Islam a religion, Europe a geographical space – illustrates the potential for misunderstanding both within Europe and between Europe and the Muslim world. On the one hand there are two competing macro-narratives whose centres are located geographically apart and which tend to selectively absorb headline realities. On the other hand are local realities which at the same time challenge and confirm the narratives. Within each of the two large components, Europe and Islam, contests are taking place also between perceptions and ideologies of unity and those of diversity. This paper will explore the main dimensions of this complex relationship and consider the identities and interests of the main actors and the processes through which game-changing developments can take place.

Biog

Jørgen S. Nielsen is a Danish National Research Foundation (DNRF) Professor and director of the Centre for European Islamic Thought (CEIT) of the Faculty of Theology, since Oct. 2007). He holds degrees in Arabic, Middle Eastern Studies and Arab history. Previously he was Professor of Islamic Studies, University of Birmingham, where he has researched and published on Muslims in Europe since 1978. He has worked on study groups for the Council of Europe, as consultant to the then Forward Studies Unit of the EC Presidency and to the foreign ministries of Sweden, Denmark and the UK. He was Cultural Counsellor to the Danish Embassy, Damascus (2005-2007).

Multicultural Memoirs: Cosmopolitan and translocal Muslim Narratives of “social trust”

Amina Yaqin (SOAS, University of London)

Abstract

This paper engages with the concept of 'social trust' in an interdisciplinary framework. I am borrowing the idea of social trust from Earle and Cvetkovich, who suggest that it is based on ideas of cultural similarity that are developed around community relations. They put forward two conceptions of trust, 'pluralistic' and 'cosmopolitan'. I am interested in exploring the 'fluid, inclusive' idea of cosmopolitan trust that relies on leadership and is developed through narrative. I wish to explore this phenomenon in literary memoirs, in particular Fawzia Afzal Khan's *Lahore with Love: growing up with girls Pakistani style* and Ali Eteraz's *Children of Dust: a memoir of Pakistan*. How do these memoirs engage with notions of community and inter-cultural trust?

Afzal Khan's memoir projects an elite narrative encapsulating a cosmopolitan retelling of Pakistan's key social problems and a potted history with an implied impartiality that comes from the author's location in the US. Interpolating herself with political and cultural leaders Afzal Khan offers a symbolic unveiling of Pakistani women's lives for an American readership. In contrast to Afzal Khan, Ali Eteraz's memoir is a self-conscious Pakistani American's narrative of transformation from fundamentalism to liberalism. It also has a central theme of gender and sexuality that runs through it.

The literary form of the memoir itself associated broadly with the genre of autobiography has many contested definitions, one that is particularly relevant to the context of social trust is that put forward by Leigh Gilmore' who has debated the notion of universal truth in autobiography. She argues that the "'innocence' of autobiography as a naïve attempt to tell a universal truth is radically particularised by a specific culture's notion of what truth is, who may tell it, and who is authorized to judge it." Does the memoir form lend itself to ideas of social trust amongst communities and put forward a cosmopolitan diversity? How does the cosmopolitan feature in a multicultural narrative and why do themes of gender and sexuality play such an important part in formations of trust.

Biog

Amina Yaqin is Senior Lecturer in Postcolonial Studies and Urdu and Chair of the Centre for the Study of Pakistan at SOAS. She has recently co-edited a book on *Culture, Diaspora and Modernity in Muslim Writing* (Routledge, 2012), and is the co-author (with Peter Morey) of *Framing Muslims: stereotyping and representation after 9/11* (Harvard University Press, 2011). She has written numerous articles on themes of gender, sexuality, Urdu poetry, communal politics and South Asian literature in English. She is currently working on her next book *Imagining Pakistan: narratives of nation, culture and gender*.

Muslims, Multiculturalism and Trust. This event is archived. Amina Yaqin (SOAS, University of London). Date: 26 February 2014 Time: 1:00 PM. Finishes: 26 February 2014 Time: 2:00 PM. SOAS University of London 10 Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG Tel: +44 (0)20 7637 2388. 1 June 2013. SOAS, University of London. Recent high-profile interventions by politicians in the West declaring the "failure" of multiculturalism have had, as their very thinly disguised context, mistrust in those Muslim communities that have been growing in Western Europe and the United States since the end of the colonial era. The sense that multiculturalism has been a flawed experiment, that "unintegrated" Muslims are evidence of this, has become a truism of much journalism and media coverage. Muslims, Trust and Cultural Dialogue is an international collaborative research project funded under the RCUK Global Uncertainties scheme that analyses the conditions of trust and mistrust in three overlapping areas of modern life: politics and society; business and finance; and art and culture. It aims to bring together an international multidisciplinary network of scholars, practitioners and stakeholders exploring questions of trust in the relationship between Muslim diaspora populations in the West and the societies around them. Information for Visitors to SOAS, University of London. Location. Campus Maps.