

The Multicultural State We're In: Muslims, 'Multiculture' and the 'Civic Re-balancing' of British Multiculturalism

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British multiculturalism is alleged to have buckled under various Muslim-related pressures. Indeed, some intellectuals, commentators and politicians of different political persuasions have pointed to evidence of a 'retreat' to be found in an increased governmental emphasis upon 'integration' and 'social cohesion'. One response to these developments, from defenders of diversity-related politics, has comprised a discursive reorientation of British multiculturalism to focus upon an anti-essentialist 'multiculture' that can transcend the alleged hitherto reification of British multiculturalism. This article offers an alternative appraisal of British multiculturalism. We contest the idea that British multiculturalism is subject to a wholesale 'retreat' and suggest instead that it has been, and continues to be, subject to a productive critique that is resulting in something best characterised as a 'civic re-balancing'. Simultaneously, and rather than seeking comfort in a depoliticised 'multiculture' view, we defend the ideal of a dynamic political multiculturalism, comprised of a body of discourses and policies originating from a racial equality paradigm inaugurated by the first Race Relations Act (1965). It is argued that this tradition has successfully and legislatively embedded a recognition of 'difference' – with the goal of promoting equality of access and opportunity – into Britain's self-image which has led to some significant accommodations for certain groups. Muslim minorities are currently appealing to this tradition as one means of achieving greater civic inclusion.

Whether or not multiculturalism as a sensibility or aspiration is backed up by explicit endorsement of the state, a multicultural mode of incorporation is not going to be easily extirpated (Kivisto and Faist, 2007, p. 47).

On a first reading, Peter Kivisto and Thomas Faist's recent display of optimism might appear odd at a time when public and media discourse is rife with obituaries announcing the demise of multiculturalism.¹ While it is important to remember that, when compared to the scholarly accounts of leading experts, journalistic commentaries arguably provide less reliable analyses of broad social and political change, it is notable that Will Kymlicka (2005, p. 82), a proponent of one of multiculturalism's best-known and most comprehensively argued formulations, has conceded:

Several years ago I rashly predicted that we were witnessing a growing convergence within the Western democracies on the ideal of 'liberal multiculturalism'. According to this ideal, public institutions have a duty to accommodate ethnocultural diversity ... with a firm protection of individual rights and non-discrimination. I acknowledged that some countries were moving more quickly in this direction than others ... but I confidently predicted that the overall trend across the West was

clearly towards multiculturalism. Today, however, it is clear that this prediction was false.²

To the extent that it amounts to a 'confession', Kymlicka's is of the forced kind, following as it does some recent changes, not least in Europe, adopted by states which had previously been moderate-to-strong proponents of state-sponsored 'difference'-affirming policies pursued under the title of 'multiculturalism'. This includes the Netherlands and Britain which, while differing from one another in their relatively inclusive approaches to the integration of ethnic minorities, came to reject the coercive-assimilationist or *ius sanguinis*-exclusive approaches of France and Germany, respectively.

The 'drastic break with multiculturalism' (Entzinger, 2007, p. 201) recently made by the Dutch has been widely recorded; it has seen the Netherlands discontinue some emblematic multiculturalist policies while introducing others specifically tailored to ignore ethnic minority differences. This includes: the large-scale abandonment of dual-citizenship programmes; a withdrawal of national-level funding for minority group organisations and activities supporting cultural difference; reallocating the small percentage of public broadcasting time dedicated to multicultural issues; banning the wearing of the burka in public places through an act of parliament; and a cessation of ethnic monitoring of labour market participation (Bader, 2008; Breugelmans and Van De Vijver, 2004; Entzinger, 2007; 2003; Van De Vijver *et al.*, 2006).

In Britain, meanwhile, multiculturalism is widely believed to have been responsible for domestic terrorism, but even prior to that to have been creaking under the Muslim weight of allegedly 'culturally unreasonable or theologically alien demands' (Modood, 2006, p. 34). The governmental and other non-right-wing criticism of multiculturalism noticeably took off after several urban riots in 2001, such that in 2004 a swathe of civil society fora and institutions of the centre left or the liberal left held seminars or produced special publications with titles like 'Is Multiculturalism Dead?', 'Is Multiculturalism Over?', 'Beyond Multiculturalism', etc. (e.g., *Prospect*, the *Observer*, the *Guardian*, the Commission for Racial Equality [CRE], openDemocracy, Channel 4, the British Council).³ With a chorus of commentators declaring that multiculturalism had been killed by the London bombings of 7/7,⁴ it is not surprising that it is commonplace to characterise British multiculturalism as being in 'retreat' (Appleyard, 2006; Joppke, 2004; Kepel, 2005; Liddle, 2004; Sanderson, 2007).

This article queries the validity of this assessment, and distinguishes at the outset between those seeking to point to a normative or descriptive tendency and others who have made little attempt to disguise their political motives in rejecting Britain's multiculturalism. In the latter camp we could include the influential centre-left commentator David Goodhart (2004), who evidently sympathises with the position of those he calls 'Burkeans' that 'we feel more comfortable with, and are readier to share with and sacrifice for, those with

whom we have shared histories and similar values. To put it bluntly – most of us prefer our own kind'. We could also include Trevor Phillips, previously Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and current head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), who has famously stated that Britain should 'kill off multiculturalism' because it 'suggests separateness' (quoted in Baldwin, 2004). More recently and, some might suggest, more predictably, Goodhart and Phillips' views have been redeployed by the centre-right Conservative party leader, David Cameron, who has characterised British multiculturalism as a 'barrier' that divides British society (Cameron, 2007). While a much stronger and vitriolic critique is not unusual from a centre right in Britain that has historically lamented and contested governmental interventions recognising the diversity of minority populations,⁵ opposition to the recognition and support of minority cultural practices in Britain has undoubtedly had a qualitatively greater impact since it was joined by 'the pluralistic centre-left [and] articulated by people who previously rejected polarising models of race and class and were sympathetic to the "rainbow", coalitional politics of identity' (Modood, 2005a).⁶

One outcome for the British approach is that the inclusion of ethnic minorities is now increasingly premised upon greater degrees of qualification. This is epitomised by the introduction of citizenship tests, the swearing of oaths during citizenship ceremonies and language proficiency requirements for new migrants, as well as repeated calls for an unambiguous disavowal of 'radicalism' or 'extremism' from Muslims in particular. Writing in the *British Journal of Sociology*, Christian Joppke (2004, p. 253) has interpreted these changes as evidence of a 'retreat' from multiculturalism and a 'turn to civic integration' that is 'most visible in Britain and The Netherlands, the two societies in Europe ... that had so far been most committed to official multiculturalism'.⁷ It is our argument that Joppke's interpretation proceeds through the assumption of a dichotomy between 'civic integration' and 'multiculturalism', or at least places the two in a zero-sum equation that ignores the extent to which they could just as plausibly be synthesised in a potential outgrowth of one another. This article therefore offers an alternative interpretation which suggests that *despite* the recent changes listed above, Kivisto and Faist's quoted optimism might not be as misplaced as first imagined, and Kymlicka's 'confession' much less dramatic. For if it is the case that Britain, the Netherlands and other countries are currently engaged in a 'retreat' from multiculturalism, heralding a victory for liberal or republican universalism in Western democracies, would it not follow, ask Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka (2007, p. 7), that these states would:

also have rejected the claims of substate national groups and indigenous peoples *as well as* immigrants. After all, the claims of national groups and indigenous peoples typically involve a much more dramatic insertion of ethnocultural diversity into the public sphere, and more dramatic degrees of differentiated citizenship (emphasis in original).

Since this does not appear to be the case in Britain at least, with quite the opposite in fact seeming to be true,⁸ one explanation of the ‘widely divergent assessments of the short history and potential future of multiculturalism’ (Kivisto and Faist, 2007, p. 35) pertains to the meaning and usage of the term itself. Indeed, this ‘highly contested and chameleon-like neologism whose colours change to suit the complexion of local conditions’ (Pearson, quoted in Kivisto and Faist, 2007, p. 35) seems to have a ‘vehicular’ (McLennan, 2004) quality that is adopted differently in support of different projects. Even in relation to post-immigration multiculturalism – our concern here – while some intellectuals, commentators and politicians of differing persuasions have in recent years coalesced in their rejection of multiculturalism, their critique has simultaneously revealed the diverging ways in which multiculturalism in Britain has been conceived. This article argues that there are *at least* three such discernible contemporary positions which comprise:

- (1) an integration and social cohesion perspective that seeks to include minorities through a process of greater assimilation to majority norms and customs;
- (2) an alternative, explicitly secular ‘multiculture’ or ‘conviviality’ approach that welcomes the ‘fact’ of difference, and stresses lifestyle and consumption-based behavioural identities that are anti-essentialist in orientation and which invalidate ‘group’ identities in particular;
- (3) a political multiculturalism that can to some extent incorporate the priorities of either or both of these positions, while also being inclusive of ‘groupings’, not least subjectively conceived ethno-religious minority groupings (Modood, 2007c; 2008).

Of these three positions it appears that the latter had been taking a cumulative and progressive institutional form since the early 1990s, mainly by developing certain racial equality discourses and policies beyond their starting points in a response to minority ethnic and religious assertiveness (Modood, 2005b). This has taken legal form in, for example, the outlawing of religious discrimination and the incitement to religious hatred (Meer, 2008), and an educational form in the inclusion of some non-Christian, non-Jewish faith schools within the maintained sector in England (Meer, 2007b; forthcoming). It is *this* multiculturalism that has been the principal target of recent critiques from across the political spectrum. Yet we shall argue that rather than having been defeated, the fate of this peculiarly British multiculturalism currently remains undecided and might equally be characterised as subject to a ‘re-balancing’ rather than a wholesale ‘retreat’. One way to begin to explore the plausibility of this argument, as much as one can within the permitted space, is to turn to the most robust and coherent public policy advocacy of multiculturalism that Britain has known.

Has the Multicultural Moment Passed?

In the course of ushering in an era ‘after multiculturalism’, the journalist and intellectual Yasmin Alibhai-Brown (2001, p. 47) has argued that ‘all societies and

communities need to take stock periodically to assess whether existing cultural and political edifices are keeping up with the people and the evolving habitat'. Such an exercise was exemplified by the much maligned report produced by the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (CMEB) (2000), sponsored by the Runnymede Trust and chaired by the political philosopher, Bhikhu Parekh.⁹ This report made over 140 policy recommendations to assist 'a confident and vibrant multicultural society' to take advantage of 'its rich diversity' in order that Britain should realise its full potential (CMEB, 2000, p. viii). Entitled *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, it strongly endorsed both the possibility and desirability of forging a meta-membership of 'Britishness' under which diversity could be sustained. To this end its recommendations not only sought to prevent discrimination or overcome its effects, but they simultaneously championed an approach that could move *beyond* conceptions of formal equality by recognising the substantive elements of 'real differences of experience, background and perception' (CMEB, 2000, p. 296). For example, the CMEB advocated a systematic type of ethnic monitoring that would 'go beyond racism and culture blind strategies' (CMEB, 2000, p. 297), and could be implemented across public institutions to promote an awareness of cultural diversity in general, and unwitting discrimination in particular. It claimed that while high-profile statements of ideals by senior politicians and civil servants are important, 'they remain mere paper commitments or rhetoric, however, if they are not fully incorporated into all mainstream agendas and programmes' (CMEB, 2000, p. 296).

This was the post-Stephen Lawrence inquiry¹⁰ 'multicultural moment' when the New Labour government declared its commitment to creating a country where 'every colour is a good colour'; where 'everyone is treated according to their needs and rights' and where 'racial diversity is celebrated' (Home Office, 2000, p. 1), while individual politicians boasted that 'Britain's pluralism is not a burden we must reluctantly accept. It is an immense asset that contributes to the cultural and economic vitality of our nation' (Cook, 2001). As the then prime minister insisted:

This nation has been formed by a particularly rich complex of experiences ... How can we separate out the Celtic, the Roman, the Saxon, the Norman, the Huguenot, the Jewish, the Asian and the Caribbean and all the other nations [*sic*] that have come and settled here? Why should we want to? It is precisely this rich mix that has made all of us what we are today (Blair, 2000).

In a similar vein, and rather uncharacteristically, while attending the annual and predominantly Caribbean-influenced Notting Hill Carnival, the former Tory leader William Hague was moved to assert that 'Britain is a nation of immigrants' (*Daily Telegraph*, 13 October 2000, quoted in Fortier, 2005, p. 560). This was not only a time of reflection upon the presence of institutional racism alongside Britain's ethnic diversity, however, but a period in which the policy recognition of Britain's historical multi-national diversity was being concretised by devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

It was not unreasonable, then, that post-migrant ethnic minorities too were seeking recognition of particularities arising from previously demeaned identities; not as self-governance but through an endorsement of the pluralising of the mainstream with their own distinctive differences derived from ethnic, religious or cultural difference. Explored in the next section, this high-water mark was in truth the consequence of a cumulative political movement that had followed the migrations of the parents and grandparents of many of Britain's post-immigrant ethnic minorities, who had exercised their Commonwealth citizenship and moved to its metropole from South Asia, the Caribbean and elsewhere. This is why the CMEB recommended that central government take steps in formally declaring Britain 'a multicultural society', for it was hoped that such an approach would invalidate the social and political inequalities derived from minority cultural differences (CMEB, 2000, p. 296).

That the report was subject to an unrelenting critique from the right, not least in the national media, has been well documented elsewhere (McLaughlin and Neal, 2004). What is worth noting here, however, is the extent to which it also incurred the wrath of some prominent liberals who considered its approach a grave contravention of universalistic principles, not least those recommendations which promoted diversity as a means to facilitate equality (compare Barry, 2001). Indeed, none other than Lord Anthony Lester, one of the founders of the Runnymede Trust and a key architect of Britain's race equality legislation, said of the report that:

much of the more theoretical sections is written entirely from the perspective of victims, with little to challenge attitudes and practices prevalent among some minorities and their leaders that are difficult to reconcile with the ideals of a liberal democratic society based upon the rule of law (Lester, 2003).

A very recent formulation of the argument upon which this complaint is based can be found in Kenan Malik's (2007) assertion that:

Political equality only becomes possible with the creation of a ring-fenced public sphere, which everyone can enter as political equals, whatever their cultural, economic or ethnic backgrounds. ... Only by establishing a distinction between the public and the private can we forge a relationship between diversity and equality, allowing citizens to have full freedom to pursue their different values or practices in private, while ensuring that in the public sphere all citizens are treated as political equals whatever the differences in their private lives.

What such a view ignores, however, is both the role of negative or demeaned differences that serve as an obstacle to political equality in the public sphere,¹¹ a key problematic for the CMEB, as well as the substantive elements of a British approach that has historically, if inconsistently, intertwined equality and diversity agendas.

Equality and Diversity in British Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism in Britain consists of an approach through which post-war migrants who arrived as Citizens of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth (CUKC),¹² and subsequent British-born generations, have been recognised as ethnic and racial minorities requiring state support and differential treatment to overcome distinctive barriers in their exercise of citizenship. It includes how, under the remit of several Race Relations Acts (RRAs), the state has sought to integrate minorities into the labour market and other key arenas of British society through an approach that promotes equal access as an example of equality of opportunity. Indeed, it is now over 30 years since the introduction of a third Race Relations Act (1976) cemented a state sponsorship of race equality by consolidating earlier, weaker legislative instruments (RRA 1965, 1968). Alongside its broad remit spanning public and private institutions, recognition of *indirect* discrimination and the imposition of a statutory public duty to promote good 'race relations', it also created the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) to assist individual complainants and monitor the implementation of the Act (see Dhami *et al.*, 2006, pp. 19–25).

This is an example, according to Joppke (1999, p. 642), of a citizenship that has amounted to a 'precarious balance between citizenship universalism and racial group particularism [that] stops short of giving special group rights to immigrants'.¹³ What it also suggests is that the institutionalisation of redress, against racially structured barriers to participation, represents a defining characteristic in the British approach to integrating minorities. But does this amount to multiculturalism? It is argued that it amounts to a *British* multiculturalism which, although lacking an official 'Multicultural Act' or 'Charter' in the way of Australia or Canada (CMEB, 2000), rejected the idea of integration being based upon a drive for unity through an uncompromising cultural 'assimilation' over 40 years ago. It did so when the Labour home secretary Roy Jenkins (1966) defined integration as 'not a flattening process of assimilation but equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance'.

Alongside this state-centred and national focus, there is also a tradition of what we might characterise as 'municipal drift' where multicultural discourses and policies have been pursued through local councils and municipal authorities, making up a patchwork of British multicultural public policies in the way summarised by Gurharpal Singh (2005, p. 170):

Historically, multiculturalism as a public policy in Britain has been heavily localised, often made voluntary, and linked essentially to issues of managing diversity in areas of immigrant settlement. The legislative framework on which this policy is based – for example, the Race Relations Acts (1965[1968] and 1976[2000]) – recognised this contingency, giving additional resources to local authorities as well as new powers to better promote racial and ethnic equality. With these enabling powers, most local authorities with large ethnic minority populations have trans-

formed themselves from initially being the bastions of official racism to being promoters of anti-racism and multiculturalism, and in this change the strength of local ethnic communities and coalitions has played a pivotal role.

Perhaps the best example of Singh's assessment of local multiculturalism is captured by the programmes of anti-racist education (Mullard, 1985; Troyna, 1987) and multicultural education (Swann, 1985) that have historically been enacted at the Local Education Authority (LEA) level. LEAs are responsible for education within the jurisdiction of county councils and metropolitan boroughs, and this includes responsibility for all state schools with the exception of those which apply for and are afforded 'voluntary aided status' (and can therefore opt out) under the terms of the 1944 Education Act. In many multi-ethnic urban areas LEAs have actively encouraged anti-racist and multicultural initiatives in the face of – and at the cost of – some vociferous opposition (Hewer, 2001), and this has in turn informed the national picture. Indeed, it was through debates at the local level that one of the leading public policy documents on multiculturalism came from an inquiry into multicultural education. Entitled *Education for All*, the Swann Report (Swann, 1985, p. 36) characterised multiculturalism in Britain as enabling:

all ethnic groups, both minority and majority, to participate fully in shaping society ... whilst also allowing, and where necessary assisting the ethnic minority communities in maintaining their distinct ethnic identities within a framework of commonly accepted values.

This captures and describes something like the multicultural sensibility invoked earlier by Kivisto and Faist (2007), and a continuity in the espousal of this would vindicate their optimism and support Banting and Kymlicka's (2007, p. 6) conclusion that 'multiculturalism has become deeply embedded in the legislation, jurisprudence, and institutions of many Western countries and indeed their very self image'.

On a first inspection it is not difficult to find evidence of a continuing presence of this Swann sensibility, even from a recent home secretary who was certainly not renowned for his sympathy toward the promotion of ethnic minority cultural differences. For example, in the summer of 2001 after civil unrest and 'rioting' that had taken place in some northern towns, home to both a small and large number of Muslims, David Blunkett (2001, p. 3) stated that 'one of this government's central aims is to achieve a society that celebrates its ethnic diversity and cultural richness; where there is respect for all, regardless of race, colour or creed'. In the same statement he gave notice of Home Office-funded teams which would 'undertake an urgent review over the summer of all relevant community issues' (Blunkett, 2001, p. 3). A contemporaneous local Bradford report set the pattern for official questioning of multiculturalism by arguing that particular communities, widely understood as Muslim communities, were self-segregating (Ouseley Report, 2001), an alleged tendency that was described in another report as the phenomenon of leading 'parallel lives' (Cantle, 2001).

Muslim Exceptionality?

In charging Muslim communities with self-segregating and adopting isolationist practices under a pretence of multiculturalism (for an analysis see Hussain and Bagguley, 2005), these reports pioneered an approach found in other post-riot accounts,¹⁴ and which provided many influential commentators with the licence, not necessarily supported by the specific substance of each report, to critique Muslim distinctiveness in particular and multiculturalism in general.¹⁵ This has given rise to discourses of 'community cohesion' and a greater emphasis upon the assimilatory aspects of integration, which have increasingly competed and sought to 're-balance' the recognition of diversity in previous discourse and policy.

Before this key point is explored in the next section, it is worth noting the extent to which the relationship between Muslims and multiculturalism in Britain has become increasingly interdependent, and for which there are at least two reasons. The first is that Muslim claims making has been characterised as specifically ambitious and difficult to accommodate (Joppke, 2004; 2007; Moore, 2004; 2006; Pew, 2006; Policy Exchange, 2007). This is particularly the case when Muslims are currently perceived to be – often uniquely – in contravention of liberal discourses of individual rights and secularism (Hansen, 2006; Hutton, 2007; Toynbee, 2005) and is exemplified by the way in which visible Muslim practices such as veiling¹⁶ have in public discourses been reduced to and conflated with alleged Muslim practices such as forced marriages, female genital mutilation, a rejection of positive law in favour of criminal sharia law and so on. This suggests a radical 'otherness' about Muslims and an illiberality about multiculturalism, and, since the latter is alleged to license these practices, opposition to the practice, it is argued, necessarily invalidates the policy.¹⁷

The second reason derives from global events, not necessarily from the acts of terrorism undertaken by protagonists proclaiming a Muslim agenda (which are routinely condemned by leading British Muslim bodies), but from the subsequent conflation of a criminal minority with an assumed tendency inherent in the many. Indeed, in a post-9/11 and 7/7 climate, the explanatory purchase of Muslim cultural dysfunctionality has generated a profitable discursive economy in accounting for what has been described as 'Islamic terrorism' (for example Cohen, 2007; Gove, 2006; Phillips, 2006).

The net outcome of these two issues is a coupling of diversity and anti-terrorism agendas that has implicated contemporary British multiculturalism as the culprit of Britain's security woes. A good illustration of this can be found in a comment by the Labour MP, Tony Wright, who disapproved of the funding of Muslim schools shortly after 9/11 by stating: '[b]efore September 11 it looked like a bad idea, it now looks like a mad idea' (BBC News, 22 November 2001). As Singh (2005, p. 157) has quipped, comments such as these make it appear as though 'British multiculturalism is dead and militant Islam killed it off'. At the same time, and while Britain has undoubtedly witnessed some securitisation of ethnic

relations, it is not quite the case, as one commentator has suggested, that public policy solutions aimed at managing ethnic and religious diversity amount to being 'tough on mosques, tough on the causes of mosques' (Fekete, 2004, p. 25). There have, however, been calls for passenger profiling and the demand made by former Communities Secretary, Ruth Kelly, that Muslims take 'a proactive leadership role in tackling extremism and defending our shared values' (Kelly, 2006). To this end the government made £5 million available to help local authorities monitor 'Islamic extremists' with local councils acting as 'the eyes and ears for the police in countering threats' (Blackman, 2006).¹⁸

These developments are compounded by a curious situation in which Muslims are increasingly subjected to surveillance and targeting by intelligence agencies while their status as victims of racism is being challenged by some prominent anti-racists. A good example of what we mean by this can be found in Kenan Malik's argument that:

the Islamic Human Rights Commission monitored just 344 Islamophobic attacks in the 12 months following 9/11 – most of which were minor incidents like shoving or spitting. That's 344 too many – but it's hardly a climate of uncontrolled hostility towards Muslims. ... It's not Islamophobia, but the perception that it blights Muslim lives, that creates anger and resentment. That's why it's dangerous to exaggerate the hatred of Muslims. Even more worrying is the way that the threat of Islamophobia is now being used to stifle criticism of Islam (Malik, 2005).

Malik is not alone in holding this view and there are several problematic issues that arise in his analysis that may also be evident in others (Hansen, 2006; Joppke, 2007). For example, it is easy to complain that Muslims exaggerate Islamophobia without noting that they are no more likely to do so than others who might exaggerate colour racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, ageism, homophobia or many other forms of discrimination. Hence this remains a political rather than a comparatively informed empirical claim. Secondly, and more importantly, Malik limits Islamophobia to violent attacks and ignores its discursive character in prejudicing, stereotyping, direct and indirect discrimination, exclusion from networks and so on, and the many non-physical ways in which discrimination operates. This would, of course, lead us to ignore the acute objectifications and racialised distortions that currently characterise a great deal of the media representation of Muslims in Britain (see Meer and Noorani, 2008; and Moore, Mason and Lewis, 2008). Indeed, these are the very forms of discrimination that Britain's race relations architecture has historically been developed to prevent and redress. Thirdly, Malik draws upon data gathered prior to the events of 7/7, following which, according to the same source (the Islamic Human Rights Commission) and using the same indices, there were reported to be 200 Islamophobic incidents in the first two weeks following the bombings. These included 65 incidents of violent physical attacks and criminal damage, and one fatal stabbing where the victim was accosted by attackers shouting 'Taliban' (Islamic Human Rights Commission [IHRC], 2005, *Press Release*, 25 July).¹⁹

One of the surprising features of the denial of anti-Muslim racism is that it comes at a time when there is great concern over the prevalence of anti-Semitism: a concern that has led to a parliamentary inquiry (*Report of the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism*, 2006) and public and media contestations that have incorporated the views of leading academics and intellectuals (see Cesarani and Cohen in 'The War on Britain's Jews', Channel 4, 9 July 2007). This discrepancy parallels the anomaly that while British case law successfully applied the aforementioned race relations legislation to redress discrimination against Jewish minorities, this has not been extended to Muslims.²⁰ This is because Muslims are not recognised – within the application of the legislation – as being defined by racial grounds (Meer, 2007a). For example, in the case of *Nyazi v. Rymans Ltd* (1988), the Muslim plaintiff was excluded from the protection afforded by the Race Relations Act (1976) on the grounds that 'Muslims include people of many nations and colours, who speak many languages and whose only common denominator is religion and religious culture' (quoted in Dobe and Chhokar, 2000, p. 382).

The decisive rationale common to this and further rulings (*CRE v. Precision Engineering*, 1991 and *Malik v. Bertram Personnel Group*, 1990) was that Muslim heterogeneity disqualifies their inclusion as an ethnic or racial grouping. This is despite the fact that Jewish minorities in Britain can incorporate Ashkenazi Jews from Poland, Berber Jews from Algeria and African Jews from Ethiopia – all of whom may have different languages, customs and cultures – while rightly receiving, as Jewish minorities, the full social and political protections granted under the race relations legislation.²¹ It is in fact the domestic adoption of a European Union directive of non-discrimination in employment on the grounds of religion or belief, conceived in article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam, that has provided protection for Muslims on the grounds of religious discrimination since December 2003. Even then, unlike the British race relations legislation, it was limited to the sphere of employment until April 2007 (see Meer [2008] for a full discussion of these issues and their contemporary political implications).

Recent Shifts: A 'Civic Re-balancing' or 'Retreat'?

Having been celebrated as 'unique in Europe' (Statham, 2003, p. 123) and once recognised as an approach that 'has not stood in the way of successful integration' (Joppke, 1999, p. 644), to what extent is it then true to say that the policy and rhetoric of British multiculturalism is in 'retreat'? Accepting that there has been movement does not require us to accept that this has been a retreat, however, as another way a 'shift' might be characterised is in a move from the perceived *neglect* to *affirmation* of 'Britishness', presented as a meta-membership with which all should engage. For example, the government-endorsed report entitled *A Journey to Citizenship* (Home Office, 2005a, p. 15) chaired by Sir Bernard Crick has characterised Britishness as denoting:

respect [for] the laws, the elected parliamentary and democratic political structures, traditional values of mutual tolerance, respect for equal rights and mutual concern ... To be British is to respect those over-arching specific institutions, values, beliefs and traditions that bind us all, the different nations and cultures together in peace and in a legal order. ... So to be British does not mean assimilation into a common culture so that original identities are lost.

Similarly, while the aforementioned Cante Report (2001, p. 10) argues for a 'greater sense of citizenship' informed by 'common elements of "nationhood" [including] the use of the English language' (Cante, 2001, p. 19), it equally stresses that 'we are never going to turn the clock back to what was perceived to be a dominant or monoculturalist view of nationality' (Cante, 2001, p. 18), and its lead author has elsewhere pleaded: 'let's not just throw out the concept of multiculturalism; let's update it and move it to a more sophisticated and developed approach' (Cante, 2006, p. 91). To this we could add the conclusions of the Home Office-sponsored Denham Report (2002, p. 20) which stressed that 'our society is multicultural, and it is shaped by the interaction between people of diverse cultures. There is no single dominant and unchanging culture into which all must assimilate'. Indeed, Tony Blair's last speech on the topic presented this affirmation in a strong 'civic' sense before endorsing an 'ideal' of multicultural Britain that is worth quoting at length:

when it comes to our essential values – belief in democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, equal treatment for all, respect for this country and its shared heritage – then that is where we come together, it is what we hold in common; it is what gives us the right to call ourselves British. ... The whole point is that multicultural Britain was never supposed to be a celebration of division; but of diversity. The purpose was to allow people to live harmoniously together, despite their difference; not to make their difference an encouragement to discord. The values that nurtured it were those of solidarity, of coming together, of peaceful co-existence. The right to be in a multicultural society was always, always implicitly balanced by a duty to integrate, to be part of Britain, to be British and Asian, British and black, British and white. ... So it is not that we need to dispense with multicultural Britain. On the contrary we should continue celebrating it (Blair, 2006).

An insight into Blair's thinking can be found in the earlier White Paper, *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* (Home Office, 2002) which proposed some measures following the Cante recommendations that included swearing a US-style oath of allegiance at naturalisation ceremonies,²² an English language proficiency requirement when seeking citizenship, as well as the earlier Crick Report's recommendations for citizenship education in Schools (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority [QCA], 1998). Meanwhile, the government's current strategy for race equality and community cohesion, *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society* (Home Office, 2005b), and its follow-up, *One year On – A progress Summary* (Home Office, 2006b), reiterate the two key aims of 'achieving equality between different races; and developing a better sense of community cohesion by helping people from different backgrounds to have a stronger sense of "togetherness"'

(Home Office, 2006b, p. 1). This includes, for example, 'raising the achievement of groups at risk of underperforming i.e. African-Caribbean, Gypsy Traveller, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Turkish and Somali pupils' (Home Office, 2006b, p. 2) which is meant to contribute to a cohesive community in which 'there is a common vision and a sense of belonging; the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities' (Home Office, 2006b, p. 7). Indeed, the most recent comment from the government-sponsored Commission on Integration and Cohesion (COIC) (2007), *explicitly* distinguishes the definition of integration from a potentially competing assimilatory mode:

Very many of the definitions of cohesion and integration offered in the response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (COIC) consultation spontaneously include a level of concern to distinguish integration from *assimilation*, stressing the importance for true cohesion of accepting – and celebrating – difference. Individual and group *identities* should not be endangered by the process of integration, but rather they should be enriched within both the incoming groups and the host nation. Cohesion implies a society in which differences of culture, race and faith are recognised and accommodated within an overall sense of identity, rather than a single identity, based on a uniform similarity (COIC, 2007, p. 5, emphases in the original).

It is in fact the case that, perhaps unlike the Dutch, the British approach still promotes the mainstreaming of ethnic monitoring and positive duties of care, and it is still the case, to take an extreme example, that the British Airport Authority allows its Sikh employees to wear the kirpan (a traditional knife) despite strong opposition from the British Pilots Association (Singh, 2005, p. 165). Given these sorts of accommodations and evidence of an emphasis upon recognising differences in governmental policy and rhetoric, as well as the polls conducted shortly after the London bombings which reported that 'the majority of British people think that multiculturalism makes the country a better place' (BBC Poll, 10 August 2005), why might some commentators have argued that multiculturalism in Britain is in retreat?

'Multiculture' or 'Communitarian' Multiculturalism?

One explanation might be to point to the very different meanings of multiculturalism. For example, in the above opinion poll it was noted that while 62 per cent of the survey sample stated that multiculturalism makes the country a better place, 58 per cent declared that people who come to Britain should 'adopt' its values and traditions. Of course this does not necessarily describe a dichotomy, for nuances of both can easily be true of the same type of multiculturalism depending upon what is meant by 'adopt'. It is worth considering, however, the extent to which the poll confirms Anthony Giddens' suspicion 'that much of the debate about multiculturalism in this country is misconceived' (Giddens, 2006) and 'seems simply to be out of touch with what the

concept actually means' (Giddens, 2007, p. 155). In particular, there seems to be a key misconception arising from the confusion of what we are describing as competing 'communitarian' and individualistic 'multiculture' views of British multiculturalism. These differences might be characterised in the following ways:

- A communitarian multiculturalism emphasises the ways in which strong ethnic, religious or cultural identities can lead to a meaningful and self-assured integration. The work of Parekh (2000), Modood (2005a; 2005b; 2007c) and the aforementioned public policy invocations of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (2000) have been paradigmatic of this approach in Britain.
- A multiculture perspective stresses the possibilities of consumption-based, lifestyle identities that are adopted in an atmosphere of 'conviviality'. Advocates of this approach include Paul Gilroy (1987; 2004), sometimes Stuart Hall (1991) and more recently Kenan Malik (2007), and it can be found in the reports of the COIC.

While the two approaches overlap, and the CMEB 2000 particularly tried to synthesise the two, the key difference is that the latter approach theoretically and politically seeks a multiculturalism without groups. It is our argument that, in making this distinction, one can observe the exclusion of thicker ethno-religious identities that were once assumed to be a minor feature of British multiculturalism; an exclusion that may partially result from 'a built-in interpretative bias that has led scholars to see religious identification as a backward or reactionary form of "false consciousness" simply masking objectives and interests that are actually "secular"' (Statham, 2005, pp. 164–5). Despite the contemporary nature of these distinctions, they have not gone unnoticed in the past. For nearly a decade and a half ago Gilroy (1993, p. 94) invited us to contemplate what it meant if 'the political and cultural gains of the emergent black Brits go hand in hand with the further marginalisation of "Asians" in general and Muslims in particular'. While certain events, not least the Rushdie affair, had prompted his probing empathy, based upon the evidence of his recent theoretical advocacy of a 'multiculture' that does not speak to the marginalisation of contemporary Muslims, his question has not moved him to seek a more inclusive answer.

This is particularly so because Gilroy assumes that multiculture, or at least its politics, must be secular in orientation. Hence he prioritises 'the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary feature of social life in Britain's urban areas and in postcolonial cities elsewhere [hoping] an interest in the workings of conviviality will take off from the point where "multiculturalism" broke down' (Gilroy, 2004, p. xi). It seems that this 'breakdown' occurred as Asian and Muslim political claims rose in salience, the solution to which seems to entail a refocusing on secular socio-cultural interactions. It is this sociological and normative conception of community, the 'communitarian' thrust of the CMEB, for example, that Gilroy and some other 'multiculturalists' (e.g.

Alexander, 2002) are distancing themselves from in their conceptualisations of 'multiculture' as multiculturalism *without groups*.

For some, communitarian multiculturalism apparently deserves the political criticism it attracts because it is too political. This is most apparent in Malik's (2006/7, p. 3) statement that 'when most people say that multiculturalism is a good thing, they mean the experience of living in a society that is less insular, less homogeneous, more vibrant and cosmopolitan than before'. Hence his dramatic plea 'to separate the idea of diversity as lived experience from that of multiculturalism as a political process', because that latter amounts to a political project that will 'seal people into ethnic boxes and [...] police the boundaries' (Malik, 2007, p. 9).²³

The idea of 'ethnic boxes' – and charges of 'essentialism' and 'reification' – as a critique of communitarian or ethno-religious multiculturalism ignores, however, the ways in which ethnic categories can reflect subjective (and not only objective or externally ascribed) positionings within and between the sites of 'boundaries'. True, these are not unproblematic, can be multiple and may be informed by common experiences of racism, sexuality, socio-economic positions, geographical locality and so forth (Modood, 2007c, ch. 5). In this sense, all group categories are socially constructed, but it is clear that people do have a sense of groups (to which they feel they belong or from which they are excluded). One of the reasons we cannot ignore the communitarian conceptions of difference is that religious minorities, for example, often see and describe themselves as sharing a 'group' identity through such categories as 'Jewish', 'Muslim' or 'Sikh', among others. If we accept that these are no less valid than categories of 'working class', 'woman', 'black' or 'youth', it appears inconsistent to reject some groupist categories simply because they are subject to the same dialectical tension between specificity and generality to which all group categories are subject. This is not to 'essentialise' or 'reify', however, since the category of 'Jew', 'Muslim' or 'Sikh' can remain 'as internally diverse as "Christian" or "Belgian" or "middle-class", or any other category helpful in ordering our understanding ... diversity does not lead to the abandonment of social concepts in general' (Modood, 2003, p. 100). This returns us to an earlier debate examined in Modood's (1998, p. 378, pp. 379–80) discussion of anti-essentialism and multiculturalism, in which he noted how:

critics have attacked multiculturalism in very similar terms to how multiculturalism attacked nationalism or monoculturalism. The positing of minority or immigrant cultures, which need to be respected, defended, publicly supported and so on, is said to appeal to the view that cultures are discrete, frozen in time, impervious to external influences, homogeneous and without dissent ... British anti-essentialists have proposed the ideas of hybridity and of new ethnicities as an alternative to essentialist ethnic identities [which] are not simply 'given', nor are they static or atemporal, and they change (and should change) under new circumstances or by

sharing space ... Reconciled to multiplicity as an end to itself, its vision of multiculturalism is confined to personal lifestyles and cosmopolitan consumerism and does not extend to the state.

These sorts of hybridity and multiplicity are epitomised for some – not necessarily accurately – by Hall’s (1991; 1996) ‘new ethnicities’ thesis, and refer to a *laissez-faire*, secular multiculturalism that is less receptive to the recognition of ‘groupings’ in general, and ethno-religious community identities in particular.²⁴ This sort of multiculturalism seeks to engage with the cultural complexities of ethnic identities, specifically their processes of formation and change, which it views as being produced somewhere between an interaction of the local and the global in which ‘the displacement of “centred” discourses of the West entails putting in question its universalist character and its transcendental claims to speak for everyone, while being itself everywhere and nowhere’ (Hall, 1996, p. 169).

Contrast this, for example, with the way in which the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) describes its vision of multiculturalism:

The MCB’s vision is of a multi-faith, pluralistic society with a conscious policy of recognising that people’s cultural and faith identities are not simply a private matter, but ones that have public implications. This vision does not imply cultural separatism – the MCB is committed to working for the common good (MCB, 2007, p. 2).

It is arguably the case that if the former multiculturalism view is championed at the expense of more communitarian accommodations of ethno-religious community identities in general, the impact on Muslims may be particularly negative. No less, indeed, than a shift toward nationalist civic-assimilationist rhetoric. This is because a secularist ‘multiculturalism’ effectively demarcates ‘the limits of their [Muslims]’ expectations for the future extension of special rights and exemptions, as well as perhaps having a demoralising effect because of the stigmatising and stereotypical way it represents them in the public domain’ (Statham, 2003, p. 145). As a replacement, then, for a political multiculturalism, the ‘multiculturalism’ approach appears blind to one of the greatest challenges currently facing British multiculturalism, i.e. the inclusion of Muslim ‘groupings’.

What’s in a Name?

While it is important not to assume a clear causal connection between rhetoric and anything more substantial, it is arguably the case that intellectuals and commentators have proven instrumental in presenting a ‘crisis’ of multiculturalism as real and impending in ways that appear alarmist (for an analysis of media discourse on multiculturalism see Meer [2006]; Meer and Noorani [2008]). It is nevertheless important to consider the extent to which this critique has been productive and, to this end, the recent comments of the chair of the Home

Office-sponsored Independent Review team into community cohesion, Ted Cantle, prove instructive. In response to the denunciation of multiculturalism by Trevor Phillips described earlier, Cantle (2006, pp. 91–2) has stated:

Trevor Phillips has come up with the idea of scrapping multiculturalism. I don't agree with that. I don't think we see or should see British multiculturalism as a failure. There is a huge amount of work we need to build on. ... I don't want to scrap multiculturalism, I want to move it on to where we can continue to preserve and respect difference, continue to promote cultural diversity but have a much clearer sense of promoting commonality between different communities.

With this in mind, Modood's (2007c) recent restatement of multiculturalism as a civic idea that can be tied to an inclusive national identity, and some of the responses this has elicited (see Modood, 2007b), helps cast light upon the ways in which Cantle's aspirations may be realised. For not unusually among advocates of multiculturalism, Modood emphasises the role of citizenship in fostering commonality across differences, before recasting part of this civic inclusion as proceeding through claims making upon, and therefore reformulating, national identities. This is because:

[I]t does not make sense to encourage strong multicultural or minority identities and weak common or national identities; strong multicultural identities are a good thing – they are not intrinsically divisive, reactionary or subversive – but they need the complement of a framework of vibrant, dynamic, national narratives and the ceremonies and rituals which give expression to a national identity. It is clear that minority identities are capable of exerting an emotional pull for the individuals for whom they are important. Multicultural citizenship, if it is to be equally attractive to the same individuals, requires a comparable counterbalancing emotional pull (Modood, 2007a).

This restatement contains at least two key points that are central to the preceding discussion. The first concerns an advocacy and continuity of earlier forms of multiculturalism that have sought to accommodate collective demands and incorporate differences into the mainstream. These demands or differences are not only tolerated but celebrated, and include the turning of a 'negative' difference into a 'positive' difference in a way that is presented in the ethnic pride currents as elements of racial equality policies in Britain. The second is to place a greater emphasis upon the unifying potential of an affirmation of a renegotiated and inclusive national identity therein. While the latter point is welcomed by some commentators who had previously formed part of the pluralistic or anti-racist left identified earlier, the bringing of previously marginalised groups into the societal mainstream is, at best, greeted more ambivalently.

One example can be found in Nick Pearce, former director of the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) and currently Head of the Research and Policy Unit at 10 Downing Street under Prime Minister Brown. Pearce rejects the view that religious orientation is comparable to other forms of ethno-cultural belong-

ing because this 'may end up giving public recognition to groups which endorse fundamentally illiberal and even irrational goals' (Pearce, 2007). He therefore argues that one obstacle to an endorsement of multiculturalism is the public affirmation of religious identities.²⁵

It is difficult, however, not to view this as a knee-jerk reaction that condemns religious identities per se, rather than examines them on a case-by-case basis, while on the other hand assuming that ethnic identities are free of illiberalism. This is empirically problematic given that clitoridectomy is an example of a *cultural practice* among various ethnic groups, and yet has little support from any religion. So to favour ethnicity and problematise religion is a reflection of a secularist bias that has alienated many religionists, especially Muslims, from multiculturalism. It is much better to acknowledge that the 'multi' in multiculturalism will encompass different kinds of groups and does not itself privilege any one kind, but that 'recognition' should be given to the identities that marginalised groups themselves value and find strength in, whether these be racial, religious or ethnic (Modood, 2007c).

Conclusion

What has been taking place in Britain, then, cannot accurately be called a 'retreat' of multiculturalism. Rather, the emergent multiculturalism of the 1990s that was attempting to accommodate Muslim communities has been simultaneously subjected to at least two critiques. One emphasises commonality, cohesion and integration; the other is alive to fluidity, multiplicity and hybridity, especially in relation to expressive culture, entertainment and consumption. Each critique is a reaction against ethno-religious communitarianism but neither emphasises what is not usually present in some form in most accounts of multiculturalism. Hence, it is better to see these newly asserted emphases, and the interaction between these three positions, as a re-balancing of multiculturalism rather than its erasure. All of this suggests that the question currently facing British multiculturalism concerns the extent to which a recognition of diversity needs to be offset with civic incorporation, or, more profoundly, to what extent multiculturalism and citizenship can be mutually constitutive and defined in interdependent terms in a way that is inclusive of Muslims.

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Notes

We thank the three anonymous *Political Studies* reviewers for their comments.

- 1 For example, in its 2006 end of year review the *Sunday Times* saw fit to announce: 'Multiculturalism is dead. It had it coming. An ideology that defined a nation as a series of discrete cultural and political entities that were each free to opt out of any or all common orthodoxies was never a serious contender in the Miss Best Political System pageant' (Appleyard, 2006). This is one of a family of characterisations that underpins many 'rejections' of multiculturalism discussed later in the article.
- 2 This is, of course, a meditation on his now infamous comment that 'multiculturalists have won the day' (Kymlicka, 1999, p. 113).
- 3 The *Guardian* is probably the only national newspaper where the (Muslim) challenge to multiculturalism is regularly discussed in a context where there is some ongoing support for multiculturalism and for incorporating Muslims within it. Yet even then prevailing opinions are clearly divided among its columnists, with Madeline Bunting, Gary Younge, Seamus Milne and Jonathan Freedland in favour, and Polly Toynbee, Catherine Bennett and Timothy Garton Ash, among others, against. This is in contrast to its sister paper, the *Observer*, particularly in the writings of Will Hutton and Nick Cohen, being against the position this article seeks to defend (see Meer, 2006).
- 4 Examples include William Pfaff's (2005) certainty that 'these British bombers are a consequence of a misguided and catastrophic pursuit of multiculturalism'; Gilles Kepel's (2005) observation that the bombers 'were the children of Britain's own multicultural society' and that the bombings have 'smashed' the implicit social consensus that produced multiculturalism 'to smithereens', alongside Martin Wolf's (2005) conclusion that multiculturalism's departure from the core political values that must underpin Britain's community 'is dangerous because it destroys political community ... [and] demeaning because it devalues citizenship. In this sense, at least, multiculturalism must be discarded as nonsense'. These views have also been elaborated in Anthony (2007), Cohen (2007), Gove (2006) and Phillips (2006), suggesting a large degree of convergence between 'left' and 'right' commentators on the topic of multiculturalism.
- 5 Particularly the allocation of public provisions for minority cultural practices on the grounds that these deviate from a core 'majority' national identity to which minorities are required to assimilate. A good example of this view can be found in the *Salisbury Review*, a conservative magazine that was founded in 1982 with the influential conservative philosopher Roger Scruton as its editor. The incendiary role it played in the Honneyford Affair provides an excellent case study of the main political argumentation contained within this position. See Halstead (1988).
- 6 As one commentator has put it, 'the old alliance with the centre-left is fraying to breaking point; old allies in the battles against racism have jumped sides' (Bunting, 2006).
- 7 As a possible indication of a potential retraction, in a conference paper Joppke (2007, p. 19) has described his earlier conclusion as 'premature'.
- 8 Indeed, at the time of writing the Scottish National party (SNP) has formed a minority government in the devolved Scottish Parliament and on the opening of the third session of the Scottish Executive has reiterated its long-term aim of full Scottish independence from England (see Salmond, 2007). Meanwhile, the Welsh Nationalists, Plaid Cymru (party of Wales), have achieved an equal representation to that of the Labour party in their coalition government of Wales.
- 9 See McLaughlin and Neal (2004) for an excellent discussion of the negative press coverage that this report received. It is worth noting that Alibhai-Brown, alongside others including Trevor Phillips and Herman Ouseley, were commissioners and named as co-authors to this report which was not long published before each separately, and publicly, attacked multiculturalism (see Alibhai-Brown, 2001; Ouseley Report, 2001; Phillips, 2006). This contrariness perhaps illustrates that a loss of support for multiculturalism, apparently among some of its leading advocates, was already under way prior to the impact of 9/11 and 7/7 that is discussed below. (Interest disclosure: Modood too was involved in the CMEB report.)
- 10 The Stephen Lawrence inquiry into the police handling of the murder of a black British teenager living in London found that the Metropolitan Police Service was 'institutionally racist' (see MacPherson Report, 1999).
- 11 Of course, feminists have long critiqued the ensuing power imbalances contained within the public/private sphere distinction. While one of the earliest, extended, critiques may be found in the work of Carole Pateman (1970), the late Iris Marion Young is probably the best-known advocate of consolidating the critique of the public/private sphere distinction by incorporating a multitude of minorities which are potentially oppressed by an unreconstructed public sphere. This led her to argue that 'a democratic public sphere should provide mechanisms for the effective recognition and representation of the distinct voices and perspectives of those of its constituent groups that are oppressed or disadvantaged' (Young, 1990, p. 165).
- 12 The 1948 British Nationality Act granted freedom of movement to all formerly or presently dependent, and now Commonwealth, territories (irrespective of whether their passports were issued by independent or colonial states) by creating the status of 'Citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies' (CUKC). Until they acquired one or other of the national citizenships in these post-colonial countries, these formerly British subjects continued to retain

- their British status. This is one of the reasons why Kymlicka's distinction between national minority rights and ethno-cultural minority rights is not easily transposed on to Britain (see Modood, 2005b; 2007c).
- 13 It is important to bear in mind that the Race Relations Act does not allow positive discrimination or affirmative action. This means that an employer, for example, cannot try to change the balance of the workforce by selecting someone mainly because he or she is from a particular racial group. This would be discrimination on racial grounds, and therefore unlawful (see Karim, 2004/5). What in the US is called 'affirmative action' goes well beyond what is lawful in Britain.
 - 14 Including the Ouseley Report's (2001) likening of Muslim settlement patterns to those of 'colonists' (see Wainwright, 2001). It is worth remembering that the Ouseley Report was a response to the tensions in Bradford in the late 1990s and was completed before the 'riots' of 2001 but only released in their aftermath and fed into their analyses.
 - 15 For example, even a sympathetic commentator such as Jocelyne Cesari (2004, pp. 23–4) uncritically concluded that '[w]hether in the areas of housing, employment, schooling or social services the [Cantle] report describes an England [sic] segregated according to the twin categories of race and religion'.
 - 16 Including the headscarf or *hijab*, full face veil or *niqab* or full body garments such as the *jilbab*.
 - 17 Evidenced not only in public and the media but also by academics and intellectuals including Christian Joppke (2004, p. 251). Writing in the *British Journal of Sociology* he states: 'Certain minority practices, on which, so far, no-one had dared to comment, have now become subjected to public scrutiny as never before. The notorious example is that of arranged marriage which, to an alarming degree, seems to be forced marriage' (emphasis added). While this is an important issue that must never be ignored, on what evidence Joppke bases his assumptions remains undisclosed in the rest of the article. While the conflation between 'forced' and 'arranged' marriages is unfortunate and misleading, the suggestion that no-one has dared to comment on either betrays a surprising unfamiliarity with a British case in which pressure groups and organisations such as Southall Black Sisters and Women Against Fundamentalism (WAF) have led high-profile campaigns, and governmental strategies such as the Working Group on Forced Marriage have been in operation.
 - 18 To this we might also add recent calls from the outgoing head of MI5, Dame Eliza Mannigham-Buller, for the police to develop a network of Muslim spies who could provide intelligence on their co-religionists (Evans and Ford, 2007). This suggestion precedes the disclosure that a number of British intelligence agencies have monitored over 100,000 British Muslims making the pilgrimage to Mecca (Leppard, 2007), alongside an unpopular attempt by the DfES to encourage universities to report 'Asian-looking' students suspected of involvement in 'Islamic political radicalism' (see Dodd, 2006).
 - 19 These criticisms are compounded by the astonishing finding that between 2001 and 2002, instances of the 'stop and search' of 'Asians' (categorisations via religion are not kept for instances of 'stop and search') increased in London by 41 per cent (Metropolitan Police Authority, 2004, p. 21), while figures for the national picture point to a 25 per cent increase for the 'stop and search' of people self-defining as 'other' (Home Office, 2006a, p. 24). The latter can include Muslims of Turkish, Arabic and North African ethnic origin, among others, for while 68 per cent of the British Muslim population have a South Asian background, the remaining minority are comprised of several 'other' categorisations.
 - 20 The omission of religious discrimination from the legislation was not an oversight for the contrary view was pressed by reformers. Erik Bleich writes: 'the civil rights lion Anthony (now Lord) Lester made plain to Home Secretary Frank Soskice his assumption that religion should be covered in anti-discrimination provisions. In a February 1965 memo to the Home Office, junior Northern Ireland Minister and future Speaker of the House George Thomas also made the case that covering race and colour but not religion would be hard to defend' (personal correspondence).
 - 21 According to Erik Bleich (personal correspondence), in May 1965, during the House of Commons debate accompanying a second reading of the Race Relations bill, Bernard Braine MP noted that the bill failed to outlaw discrimination on the grounds of religion. He thus queried whether Jewish groups would be covered by the 'colour, race, or ethnic or national origins' phrasing. The response he received is instructive in what it tells us about types of assumption concerning the involuntary nature of Jewish identities, and perhaps further highlights the discrepancy in assumed legitimacy when compared to discussion of Muslim identity. This is because the then home secretary stated that: 'I would have thought a person of Jewish faith, if not regarded as caught by the word "racial" would undoubtedly be caught by the word "ethnic", but if not caught by the word "ethnic" would certainly be caught by the scope of the word "national" '.
 - 22 First proposed by the multiculturalist CMEB, 2000, p. 55.
 - 23 In obvious respects, this comment shares Waldron's (1995, p. 94) sentiment of what a cosmopolitan may resemble: 'The cosmopolitan may live all his life in one city, and maintain the same citizenship throughout. But he refuses to think of himself as *defined* by his location of ancestry or his citizenship or his language. ... He is a creature of modernity, conscious of living in a mixed-up world and having a mixed-up self' (emphasis in original).
 - 24 It is worth noting how Stuart Hall's seminal ideas are open to more than one interpretation. For example, most advocates of 'multiculture' look to Hall as a stimulus but Hall was a co-author of the 'communitarian' CMEB report (2000), and has never distanced himself from that report. For a discussion of Hall's ambivalence on some of these points, see Rojek (2003, pp. 178–88).

25 Kymlicka (2007, p. 54) identifies this fear as the 'liberal-illiberal' front in the new 'war' on immigrant multiculturalism.

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