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'You're Othered here and you're Othered there': Centring the clothing practices of Black Muslim Women in Britain

By:

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

To those of us experiencing the margins:

“If we’re gonna heal, let it be glorious” (Beyoncé, *Lemonade*)

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Abstract

By using clothing practices, the thesis illustrates how we become Black Muslim women in relation to a multitude of objects, bodies, gazes and spaces. This contributes to research within critical race studies on the performance and production of racialised bodies across different spaces. Specifically, the thesis asks what analytical tools can be developed to understand how Black Muslim women negotiate presentations beyond a fixed categorisation of our beings and how clothing practices highlight different experiences of being Black Muslim women across a multitude of spaces. This extends work on the territorialisation of the body, emotional and affective geographies, performativity and material culture, as well as visual studies through phenomenological readings of race. Building these fields through the lens of Black Muslim stylisation illustrates how centring Black Muslim women in Britain provides the opportunity to develop new and critical knowledges on the co-production of different bodies, gazes and spaces within Social Geography.

I explore how we perform our beings through the use of clothes journals and semi-structured interviews (based on Black feminist dialogue) with 21 Black Muslim women in Manchester and Sheffield. These methods (along with the research design and analysis) speak from and build upon a wider ethical commitment to reflexively build knowledge with Black Muslim women, and to challenge spaces of knowledge production and legitimisation that have excluded and/or objectified this diversity of beings across different spaces.

To highlight these experiences of being, there are three analytical tools that come in and out of focus throughout the project; comfort, layering and visibility are developed within the interludes running between the empirical chapters. Meanwhile, the empirical chapters expand on our beings as shifting in relation to our presentations across three spaces (home, prayer and work). Home clothing illustrates how boundaries around the body shifts as we interact with different bodies (and boundaries) in and around the home. The clothes used for prayer speaks to the relationship between layering and prayer's brief (and racialised) temporality: even after the material layer used for prayer is removed, the performance of prayer remains part of our overarching beings. Finally, I use work outfits to think through the clothing practices used to 'fit' into (i.e. negotiate visibility within) different spaces.

By framing this thesis through the geographies of Black Muslim women, I extend research on how bodies are produced and shift across different spaces. This highlights different experiences of being across a multitude of spaces, and challenges a homogeneous and static reading of Black (and) Muslim women as Other to a white Self.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Project rationale: centring our beings

In April 2017, I made a trip to U.S.A. that brought the key themes of this dissertation into focus. As a disabled Black Muslim woman, I have long associated the navigation of airports with anxiety and dread. The metal in my prosthetic means that my movement through metal detectors inevitably leads to extra searches of my body and headscarf for any threats (to the nation) that I might be concealing.

Although it is my disability that sounds the alarm constructed as catching out the “threat,” the disability is hidden by the clothes that I wear: it is my clothed body that airport security and border control personnel are interacting with. Through these encounters, I am hyperaware of my Black body and shifting visibility as a Muslim (depending on whether or not my headscarf is read as an explicitly Muslim presentation). I think of how my Black body is on display as a potentially threatening and dangerous Other to the nation that constructs itself as implicitly white (Ahmed, 2000; Hage, 2012; Yancy, 2008). My clothed body is also situated alongside an awareness that Muslims have when entering U.S.A. following the two attempted “Muslim bans.” Movements through airports are thus layered with an awareness of how Black (and) Muslim bodies have been constructed more broadly, and I contend with the many different ways that my body could be made visible.

Whilst airports exemplify how the borders of a nation can be made explicit, it also reminds me of how processes of categorisations are negotiated within everyday spaces. Yet these categorisations are often understood in isolation from one another: Blackness is separated from disability which is separated from one’s Muslim identity. It is the coming together of the specific meanings attached to being a disabled Black Muslim women within the airport that produces my discomfort. These meanings shift as I move in and out of this space and encounter different bodies, gazes and spaces. This highlights the need to expand what it means to be disabled, Black, Muslim and/or a woman without forcing a distortion of one’s being to fit into any one of these categories (through the exclusion of another part of our experience of being).¹

Yet the (abridged) quote used in this thesis’ title speaks to the Othering that Black Muslim women feel more broadly:

You’re Othered here and you’re Othered there, so what identity do you choose?

(Khadijah, 24, Sheffield)

Through this project, I push against the need to ‘choose’ any categorisation that Others part of who we are as Black Muslim women. In doing so, this thesis cobbles together our own language to address the experiences of Black Muslim women in Britain.

¹ Throughout this thesis I use ‘we’ and ‘our’ to situate myself within this grouping of Black Muslim women – this is explained further in Chapter 2.

This thesis is premised on the need to research differences across experiences in order to move beyond this staticity. Through focusing on the clothing worn by Black Muslim women across different spaces, I aim to highlight how processes of categorisation meet and shift, and how we manoeuvre in light of these categorisations. This moves away from focusing on how we as Black Muslim women might fit into pre-defined categories (of race, gender or religion): I am interested in exploring how we present ourselves as we move through different spaces. This centres those that have been located on the margins of these categorisation, and examines how we experience and negotiate our lives beyond marginalisation and categorisation.

It is particularly important to situate this through the clothing practices of *Black* Muslim women in Britain as there is an erasure that occurs through the way racialisation and religious identity are constructed as meeting (or not). When the label of “British Muslims” is employed, it is implicitly attached to Muslims with some form of South Asian heritage ties, reducing this religious identity to an ethnically defined category (e.g. Archer, 2001; Brown, 2006; Meer et al., 2010; Phillips, 2015; Werbner, 2000). Meanwhile, when religious identity and Blackness are discussed, there is an overwhelming focus on the role of Christianity and churches (e.g. Alexander, 1996; Edwards, 1992; Harris, 2006; Hunt and Lightly, 2001; Kalilombe, 1997; Karner and Parker, 2011; Knowles, 2012). Both these linkages work to essentialise race and religion. This limits an exploration into how Blackness, anti-Black racism, Muslim identity and Islamophobia alter as they are constructed with and through different social and economic factors. This prevents us from addressing the function of Blackness and Muslim identity across different contexts, and understanding them as processes that are ever-developing.

By focusing on the clothing practices of Black Muslim women, this project builds tools to address how we negotiate different processes of categorisation. This uses the geographies of Black Muslim women to expand understandings of both Blackness and Muslim identity. More broadly, this focus on our presentations and interactions across different spaces develops research on how to push against the categorising and caricaturing of our bodies as fixed Others: it opens up an opportunity to discuss experiences of Black Muslim women as always developing and shifting in relation to the different objects, bodies and spaces that we encounter.

This chapter is used to situate this research project and is structured as follows: first, I push forward with Black feminist thinking on intersectionality so as to set up my own understanding of Black Muslim women’s beings (as more than marginal or Other to different processes of categorisation). Second, I review literature that addresses the clothing practices of Black Muslim women. This is used to ground understandings of how our bodies, presentations and clothing garments work together in our shifting performances of being Black Muslim women across multiple spaces. From here, the third section can be used to outline the aims and research questions that have framed this project. Finally, I focus on the structure of this thesis, and address the main points made in each section.

1.2 Moving beyond the margins: Black feminism and intersectionality

Intersectionality was a lived reality before it became a term (Crenshaw, 2015).

This section sets up my focus on the 'lived reality' of Black Muslim women through the use of intersectionality. Intersectionality has become a widely used term to describe research that focuses on more than one axes of identity categories. It is Crenshaw's analogy of the intersection that has been taken up in definitions of intersectionality: this has helped to understand the complexity attached to Black women's experiences of discrimination.

The point is that Black women can experience discrimination in any number of ways and that the contradiction arises from our assumptions that their claims of exclusion must be unidirectional. Consider an analogy to traffic in an intersection, coming and going in all four directions. Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them (1989: 149).

Alexander-Floyd (2012) points to how the idea of the intersection has garnered more interest than the Black feminist scholarship that Crenshaw repeatedly attributes to developing her thinking (e.g. Adewunmi, 2014; Carbado et al., 2013; Crenshaw, 1989; Crenshaw, 1991). Through this manoeuvre, the deep political challenges that intersectionality presents (by exposing which bodies are centred within the conceptualisation of laws and societies) are ignored in favour of the use of intersectionality as a theoretical term devoid of context.

This is a grim irony: a tool elaborated by women of colour to confront the racism and heterosexism of white-dominated feminism, as well as the sexism and heterosexism of antiracist movements, becomes, in another time and place, a field of expertise overwhelmingly dominated by white disciplinary feminists who keep race and racialized women at bay (Bilge, 2013: 418).

Concerns with this strand of research on intersectionality have been widely discussed (see Alexander-Floyd, 2012; Bilge, 2013; Choo and Ferree, 2010; Falcón and Nash, 2015; May, 2014), and it is this critique that I launch my own understanding of intersectionality from. It is by remembering the political impetus behind intersectionality (i.e. exposing the absence of Black women from academic discourses) that allows me to use intersectionality as a tool within this project. After all, Falcón points to how 'intersectionality gave us a language and framework out of the quandary: "All the women are white and all the blacks are men"' (Falcón and Nash, 2015: 2). I remain invested in intersectionality as a tool to address the erasure of Black Muslim women from research that claims to address our experiences.

In order to move forward with this framework, I first focus on key concerns that I am wary of when undertaking research that claims intersectionality as its grounding. Second, I respond to some of these concerns by bringing Crenshaw's (1989; 1991) intersectionality into dialogue with Spillers' (1987) American grammar book of race.

Both work to unpack the complexity of experiences of Black women, and it is through this dialogue that I find space to theorise the experiences of Black Muslim women.

1.2.1 Critiquing intersectionality

This project begins with intersectionality because of the tools it offers for centring the experiences of Black Muslim women. As Choo and Ferree (2010: 131) point out, intersectionality is a non-additive process that allows us to move ‘beyond the enumeration and addition of race, class, gender, and other types of social subordination as separate factors.’ Using intersectionality to focus on the experiences of Black Muslim women enables an understanding of these social factors as constructed in relation to one another, and exposes the wider relations that situate (and separate) race, religion and gender.

However, this has opened up criticisms about the difficulty in engaging with this form of analysis. Collins (2015: 3) highlights how work on intersectionality ‘participates in the very power relations that it examines.’ In analysing the absence of Black (Muslim) women from academic discourses on race or gender, there is a risk that these social factors become essentialized in their assumed distinction from one another. How do we ensure that these categories are exposed rather than reinforced?

Carbado and Gulati (2013) recognise this as a problem with the symbol of the intersection rather than the theory of intersectionality. They argue the symbol ‘brings readily to mind a Venn diagram within which each thing exists both inside and outside of the intersection’ (2013: 532). Intersectionality, however, was developed as a corrective against the erasure of women of colour from frameworks that focused on race and gender as distinct processes. This is supported by Crenshaw’s (1989; 1991) initial writings on intersectionality: despite all identities being intersectional, the theory was used to elaborate on those experiences that were marginalised in social discourses.

The problem is not simply that discourses fail women of colour by not acknowledging the “additional” issue of race or of patriarchy but that the discourses are often inadequate even to the discrete tasks of articulating the full dimensions of racism and sexism. Because women of colour experience racism in ways not always the same as those experienced by men of colour and sexism in ways not always parallel to experiences of white women, antiracism and feminism are limited, even on their own terms (Crenshaw, 1991: 1252).

Here, Crenshaw is using intersectionality to forge ‘anti-subordination analytics, frameworks, and politics that inform theory, politics and feminist worldviews’ (Falcón and Nash, 2015: 8). It is this critique that is at the crux of intersectional work within this PhD project. Research claiming intersectionality as its grounding principles is not only claiming a theoretical tool for use, but is (or rather, should be) expressing a

commitment to expose the function of processes of categorisation through centring those that are overwhelmingly absented from these discourses.²

This is particularly important within a discipline that has the tools to pay attention to the social locations of these identity processes. For Kobayashi and Peake (1994: 239, emphasis in original), “the idea that all social relations are spatial, and *take place* within particular physical contexts (landscapes) whose attributes do matter is an article of faith for most, if not all, geographers.” These social relations do more than just take place; they are part of ideological projects that also *make* place. This is one of the reasons why the empirical chapters are built around particular spatial imaginings (i.e. home, prayer time/space and workplaces). It uses the framework of intersectionality to expose the interplay of social relations within particular locations.

This focus on social locations does not presume that all forms of categorisation ‘meet’ in the same form at an intersection. Rather, this reflects work by Anthias (2013: 130) and Valentine (2007) on how ‘our location is embedded in relations of hierarchy within a multiplicity of specific situational and conjunctural spheres.’ By addressing specific ‘spatial and temporal moments,’ this project provides an insight into ‘what identities are being “done,” and when and by whom, evaluating how particular identities are weighted or given importance by individuals at particular moments’ (Valentine, 2007: 15).

However, it is not solely about how different identities are weighted, but about the processes and categories that inform identity construction more generally. This is where Puar’s critique of intersectionality must be addressed:

Indeed, many of the cherished categories of the intersectional mantra [...] are the product of modernist colonial agendas and regimes of epistemic violence, operative through a western/euro-american epistemological formation through which the whole notion of discrete identity has emerged, for example, in terms of sexuality and empire (2013: 376).

Puar’s concern lies with how the use of intersectionality can deflect from wider discussions about the historical formation of processes of categorisation. Alexander-Floyd (2012) points to the widely cited McCall (2005) article for developing a post-black feminist approach to intersectionality that can be used by ‘social science scholars without their having to substantively change their research methodologies’ (Alexander-Floyd, 2012: 10). Falcón and Nash (2015: 5) attribute this to the institutionalisation of intersectionality research and its conflation with diversity policies that ‘simply [add] women of colour to an existing violent structure.’

Alexander-Floyd (2012), Puar (2013), Falcón and Nash (2015) all recognised this as a critique of the deployment of intersectionality rather than inherent to the concept of intersectionality. After all, Crenshaw developed intersectionality as ‘a methodology

² Here I note Nash’s (Falcón and Nash, 2015) important questioning of the centrality afforded to intersectionality over and above the many different ways ‘anti-subordination analytics’ have been articulated by Black feminists (e.g. Lorde, 1983; 1996; Nash, 2013; Spillers, 1987).

that will ultimately disrupt the tendencies to see race and gender as exclusive or separable' (cited in Bliss, 2016: 742). Importantly, this also sets up intersectionality as an incomplete and ever-developing concept. For Carbado et al. (2013: 3), it is in assessing 'what else the framework might be mobilised to do' that we can highlight a range of critical knowledges that have been otherwise silenced within current academic discourses. This is the direction I hope to take intersectionality in: towards critical knowledge about the experiences of being a Black Muslim woman in Britain.

In order to do this, the above critique of the deployment of intersectionality must be attended to. Although Crenshaw (1991) desires intersectionality to push against social categorisation, there needs to be an explicit illustration of how this could be done. What does it mean to take Puar's (2013) critique seriously and use intersectionality to challenge the historical formation of processes of categorisation? To do this, I pair Crenshaw (1989; 1991) with Spillers' (1987) work on the U.S. grammar of race and build a more robust analysis of the processes to be explored within this PhD.

1.2.2 *Drawing from Spillers and Crenshaw*

I bring Spillers and Crenshaw in conversation with one another because they both belong to a Black feminist tradition addressing dimensions of race and gender that were absent from mainstream discourses (Bliss, 2016). For Spillers, this meant finding a way to 'go to war with a whole repertoire of violent behaviour that was always performed in a very genteel way' (Spillers et al., 2007: 301). She begins by thinking through processes that mark the African-American Black woman and provides a historical account of the grammar of race developed from this history of enslavement.

The symbolic order that I wish to trace in this writing, calling it an "American grammar," begins at the "beginning," which is really a rupture and a radically different kind of cultural continuation. The massive demographic shifts, the violent formation of a modern African consciousness, that take place on the subsaharan Continent during the initiative strikes which open the Atlantic Slave Trade in the fifteenth century of our Christ, interrupted hundreds of years of black African culture. *We write and think, then, about an outcome of aspects of African-American life in the United States under the pressure of those events* (Spillers, 1987: 68, emphasis added).

It is this historical accounting of the grammar of race that addresses Puar's (2013) concerns with the trajectory of intersectionality research. Within Spillers' analysis, the categories used to understand processes of identification are products of a wider history of racialized violence. It is this violent rupture that informs the language of race and the way (gendered, classed, dis/abled, religious, etc.) bodies are understood and constructed.

Intersectionality is thus understood as a consequence and a push against the violent rupture that formed this 'radically different kind of cultural continuation.' Much like the use of grammars of race, intersectionality is addressing the absence of knowledges about the way these categories are produced in relation to one another. Yet intersectionality is doing that work as a corrective *within* grammars of race that centre

certain bodies as either racially unmarked (i.e. white) in gender discourses or unmarked vis-à-vis gender (i.e. male) in race discourses. Intersectionality provides a framework for speaking of the construction of these categories together whilst also exploring how these categories were formed under the pressure of historical events.

These connections establish the groundwork for how experiences of Black Muslim women will be situated within this dissertation. It is not just about what Black Muslim women happen to do or wear. I aim to explore what *being* a Black Muslim woman means when located within and pressured by historical events that have constructed the British grammar of race. This understanding of 'being' is developed through the interludes that cut across the empirical chapters. Our experiences of comfort (and discomfort), the layering of clothing (and performances), and perceptions of our visibilities all speak back to the grammar of race that informs our experiences of being a Black Muslim woman across different spaces.

In focusing on the British grammar of race, it is important to note the specific traditions that inform the way racialized bodies have been researched and constructed within the British context. Such work focuses on (borrowing from Gilroy, 1993) the "Black Atlantic" as constructing understandings of Blackness in Britain today (e.g. Blakely, 2009; Gilroy, 1987; Gilroy, 1993; Hesse, 2000).³ These literatures have pushed against an imagining of Blackness as perpetually marginal and the immigrating alien threat to Britain.

[... The] metaphors of Britishness (e.g. "the British nation," "this Island Race," "the Bulldog Breed" [and currently, "British values"]) served to coalesce white English class differences into "nation," a *United Kingdom*, in fact, that stands almost always united against blacks and metaphors of blackness (Baker Jr. et al., 1996: 4).

In pushing against these traditions, Hall (2000[1991]) pays particular attention to the complexity of identities that cannot be fixed as a racialized Other to Britishness. Within this, Blackness as a unifying term for particular experiences of racialisation is understood as 'an identity which had to be learned and could only be learned in a certain moment' (Hall, 1996a: 116).

Although this understanding pushes against the marginalisation and fixture of Blackness, an understanding of how gendering is co-constituted with one's Blackness is absent from these discourses. In paying little attention to how theories of Blackness centre those who are gender-neutral (i.e. male), these literatures are unable to pay close attention to the consequences of different historical (and social) moments that have constructed Blackness in Britain. I work with Crenshaw (1989; 1991) and Spillers (1987) to develop a language that pays attention to this gap. This is situated alongside

³ There has also been work on political Blackness (e.g. Andrews, 2016), but this is beyond the scope of this thesis as it presents particular problems with masking the function of racial hierarchies (see Chapter 2).

research like Tate's (2005) to address the absences that occurs within British social discourses on race.

I also highlight the centrality placed on this history across the Black Atlantic by exposing the way it excludes Black bodies that have East or Central African heritage ties. Intersectionality connects to the British grammar of race by pushing against the centring and prioritisation of any single process of racialisation as 'authentic' Blackness at the expense of an Othered. Rather, it enables us to situate the grammar of race as an ever-developing process with multiple experiences of Blackness across different spaces.

In understanding these multiple experiences of Blackness situated within the British grammar of race, I focus on the clothing practices of Black Muslim women. For Skov (2011: 4), the wardrobe is a 'space for backstage activities' for the everyday performances we engage with. Within this, clothing practices can be understood as an under-researched yet foundational part of the performance of 'being' and interacting across different spaces.

By highlighting a number of different clothing practices that Black Muslim women engage with, there is a reflection on how these processes of identification might be enacted/emphasized in different ways by those within this grouping of Black Muslim women. This is done to push against the homogenising of Black Muslim women, and to ensure that the focus remains on how processes of identifications are made and remade as we move and interact with different objects, bodies and spaces.

This section has been used to situate the experiences of Black Muslim women within the British grammar of race. This frames my reviewal of work related to the clothing practices of Black Muslim women. In the following section, I weave together literatures on presentations, clothing practices and the construction of the Black body to develop a working language for understanding the experiences of being a Black Muslim woman.

1.3 Reviewing the clothing practices of Black Muslim women

The category of the 'black body' can come into being only when the body is perceived as being out of place either from its natural environment or its national boundaries (Mohanram, 1999: xii)

There have been a number of scholarly debates about the construction of Black bodies (Fanon, 2008[1952]; Nayak, 1997; Saldanha, 2006; Sexton, 2015; Tate, 2005). For Yancy (2008: 3), "my darkness is a signifier of negative values grounded within a racist social and historical matrix that predates my existential emergence." As was alluded to in the previous section, Spillers (1987: 65) begins her interrogation of the grammar of race by examining the Black female body as 'a meeting ground of investments and privations in the national treasury of rhetorical wealth.' This is an important starting point for this section: it situates the Black female body as a social production (Csordas, 1999; Fessenden, 1999; Taylor, 1999).

This does not mean that there is only disembodied space with nothing fleshy in existence. Rather, I am setting up how the materiality of the Black female body is navigating social representations as we also attempt to present our bodies through the clothing practices that we engage with. Ahmed (2000) addresses the function of these social representations by discussing the expulsion of Black bodies from the white social body through Blackness being positioned as “strange” or “alien”:

The gestures that allow the white body to withdraw from the stranger’s body hence reduces that body to dirt, to ‘matter out of place,’ such that the stranger becomes recognised *as the body out of place*. Through such strange encounters, bodies are both deformed and re-formed, they take form through and against other bodily forms (Ahmed, 2000: 39, emphasis added).

It is within this context that Puwar (2004: 8) entitles their book *Space Invaders* to address those who are ‘marked out as trespassers [...] in accordance with how both spaces and bodies are imagined (politically, historically and conceptually).’ Through their theorisations, both Ahmed (2000) and Puwar (2004) draw attention to the meanings ascribed to the racialized and gendered body and the way this is negotiated by people positioned through their strangeness.

Yet this is only one part of the construction of our bodies. Moving forward with Ahmed (2000) and Puwar (2004) includes working through the different spaces Black Muslim women exist within and moving beyond the fixing of our bodies as the strangeness to observe. Massey (2000; 2005) and Rose (1993) are amongst geographers who have provided a language for the coexistence of multiple spaces within which we can situate our experiences of Blackness. I use this to understand how our Blackness (or more generally, strangeness) shifts in its articulation as we interact with different spaces. This expands the discussion around the British grammar of race by exposing multiple experiences that are negotiated across different spaces. Rather than focusing on a single experience as central to Blackness, this project highlights ever-developing understandings of Blackness.

I also use this reflection to situate the power relationships that inform and produce the way Black Muslim women present our bodies as we interact across these different spaces. Bartky (2003) draws from Foucault to explore how femininities are made and re-made through the painting of a face or walking straight. For Craik (1994: 4), this illustrates how ‘bodies are worn through technologies of movement, restraint, gesture and projection.’ For this project, I connect the presentations that we engage with to the social discourses that inform the way our racialized bodies are represented. Such a connection is briefly made by Odoms-Young (2008) when reflecting on African-American Muslim women who negotiated around the characterisation of the Black female body as sexually licentious by connecting to a ‘spiritual’ presentation of their bodies as Muslim. I explore this kind of work further through questioning the way Black Muslim women present our racialized and gendered bodies as we move through spaces.

Fábos (2012) draws on this in their study with Black-Arab Sudanese women who attempted (through e.g. using skin-lightening creams) to position themselves as 'Muslim' Arab rather than Black Sudanese. This led to participants reflecting on the confusion/frustration felt when migration to Britain meant that the British grammar of race coded them as Black rather than Muslim-Arab.⁴ Here, the Sudanese history of colonisation by Egypt is significant to the distinction between Muslim-Arab and Blackness. Yet it also speaks to the way research (and by extension, social discourses) around Black (and) Muslim bodies have developed: one can either be positioned as Black *or* Muslim, but not as both.

Thus this project uses the presentation of Black Muslim women to illustrate how processes of identification are co-constituted throughout different spaces. This builds upon (and moves beyond) previous work that has been done on Black stylization (see Tulloch, 2004). I look to expand on contemporary understandings of 'being' Black (and/or) Muslim so that they encompass a range of performances. Importantly, this illustrates the differences embedded in how others perceive our bodies (as "acting Black" or performing religiosity), and the ways in which we feel our bodies being encountered as we move through different spaces.

This discussion is pushed further when addressing the visibility of Black Muslim women in the empirical chapters and Interlude III. This is developed from Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical reading of the presentation of our bodies, wherein a presentation is an actor providing a 'believable' performance to relevant audiences. Goffman (1959) highlights the relationship built between the 'actor' and 'audience,' which is useful to understanding how being a Black Muslim woman is negotiated across different spaces. This is expanded within his definition of a performance as 'all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants' (Goffman, 1959: 26).

Implicit in this understanding of performance are the 'choices' that a participant is assumed to make to 'influence' other participants. I am particularly wary of this language of choice because it is often given heightened importance in research on Muslim women (e.g. Dwyer, 1999; Ryan, 2011). When research on Muslim women is steeped in a language of controversy and oppression, discussions are limited to a choice/oppression binary (Massad, 2015; Mushaben, 2008). Lewis (2009: 73) points to research on technologies of femininities to divert attention from this focus: after all, 'nobody is born knowing how to walk in high heels' and yet this is a gendered performance that is normalised within British society. Rather than focusing on whether or not Muslim women 'choose' to perform 'alternative' femininities, I focus on what it means for Black Muslim women to construct and be constructed by performances of racialized femininities.

⁴ This is similar to the experiences of the Somali children in Valentine and Sporton's (2009) study who felt that race was used to mislabel their experiences as belonging to part of the Caribbean community.

This is part of a larger critique of Goffman (1959) wherein the idea of presentation implies ‘an active, prior, conscious, and performing self’ (Gregson and Rose, 2000: 433). Building from an understanding of the British grammar of race means that I am exploring more than how identities are performed: I am also considering how identities are in and of themselves *performative* (Butler, 1990; Butler, 1993; Gregson and Rose, 2000). In other words, I use Goffman’s (1959) dramaturgical definition of performance to build my own understanding of how our identities are constantly being (re)produced through performance (see, for example, Interlude II on layering). Through such a framing, I focus on the clothing practices that Black Muslim women engage in, the performances that are being built and repeated, and the different ways in which performances are (or are not) constructed as ‘believable.’

In focusing on whether or not performances are ‘believable,’ there is an important exploration of how the presentation of one’s body might be misread by different audiences. This is why Emma Tarlo (2010) chose to title her book around participants that wore different garments (e.g. headscarves and abayas) that signified their bodies (whether intentionally or not) as *Visibly Muslim*.

Yet a focus on the visibility of ‘Muslim’ bodies can also function to highlight racialized bodies as spectacle and neutralise those positioned as non-Muslim audiences. Because of this, I am particularly interested in the way Black Muslim women perceive of different audiences that we negotiate across spaces. This draws from literatures on negotiating social encounters to explore the ‘everyday phenomenon of inter-cultural co-existence’ (Clayton, 2009: 483). However, I move away from discussions on whether these experiences create some form of ‘mundane friendliness’ between those racialized as strange and those neutralised within race discourses (Valentine, 2008). Such a focus maintains a logic of certain ‘neutral’ bodies holding the capacity of extending or withholding friendliness to those racialized as alien. I push this literature forward (here and within Interlude III) by centring how different gazes are experienced when one’s body can be positioned as strange to the social norm.

I emphasize that one’s body *can be* positioned as strange, as this is not the only way that Black Muslim women encounter different bodies, objects and spaces. Focusing on our experiences of moving across different spaces enables a drawing together of multiple performances of being (a concept that I build upon through Interlude II on layering).

[... As] bodies move from one space to another, performing different elements of their identities as they go (from daughter at home, to worker in the shop, to consumer in the lunch-hour perusal of other retail outlets, to passenger on public transport), only some elements of which are legible to the external observer and all of which require different cultural competencies to be decoded (Lewis, 2009: 72).

I use the movement that Lewis (2009) picks up on as a starting point for my exploration of the changing ways in which Black Muslim women present our bodies across different spaces. This is not to downplay the disconnect that can be felt between

the actor's and audience's perception of a performance (Craik, 1994; Goffman, 1959; Gregson and Rose, 2000). However, I focus on how these relationships to audiences are felt by Black Muslim women. This recognises that identifying (and being identified) as a Black Muslim woman changes as we move through different spaces and negotiate different audiences and gazes.

This is evident in research on the increased salience of some Somali women's visibility as Muslim following migration: when confronted with a new social setting wherein one's body is positioned as out of place, fellow 'insiders' were recognised through a shared dress sense as visibly Muslim (Hopkins, 2010; Valentine and Sporton, 2009). Thus our movement through different spaces involves (yet is not limited to) our negotiation of different gazes, and I build upon this understanding of encountering audiences throughout this project.

When thinking about this visibility in relation to one's clothing practices, it is important to reflect on research regarding 'Muslim' clothing.⁵ In March 2017, the European Courts of Justice decreed that companies requiring employees to "dress neutrally" could legally ban the wearing of garments like headscarves or niqabs from the workplace (Janmohamed, 2017). This ruling is part of a wider discourse surrounding visibly Muslim bodies as deviant from those centred within what it means to "dress neutrally." After all, David Cameron and Theresa May (as the 2015 U.K. Prime Minister and Home Secretary) ordered a review into "integration and opportunity" that posited a connection between the "adherence to Muslim dress" and a "pull[ing] further away from mainstream society" (Casey, 2016: 129). This fixes certain clothing practices as signalling a threatening and haunting presence of The Muslim that is unable to integrate (Lewis, 2009; Ryan, 2011). Specifically, Muslim women are hemmed into particular clothing practices that fix one's body as a potentially transgressive presence within public space.

The rhetoric surrounding Muslim women is not limited to public discourse: academic research has focused on clothing practices that position "The Muslim woman" as a controversial figure within implicitly public spaces (e.g. Afshar, 2008; Begum, 2008; Bilge, 2010; Bullock, 2007; Dwyer, 2008; Haw, 2009; Mir, 2011; Mushaben, 2008; Ryan, 2011; Salvatore, 2004; Siraj, 2011). Although some of this work pushes against this language of controversy, it still fixes particular bodies (or more specifically, particular clothing practices) as defining this categorisation of Muslim women. This work speaks to a wider inability to explore and address the diversity of clothing practices that exists within and beyond public spaces.

Within this research, there is also an overwhelming focus on the headscarf as a representation of the oppression/controversy that Muslim women face (Lewis, 2009). Indeed, discussions about the headscarf appear to subsume the women donning this cloth (e.g. Bilge, 2010; Dwyer, 2008; Salvatore, 2004). Therefore, research on Muslim

⁵ I question the notion of explicitly 'Muslim' clothing practices in and of itself: what makes an abaya specifically 'Muslim' and jeans not?

clothing practices is stitched together with research on how presentations of the body occur. These clothing practices do not occur in disembodied space but are a part of attempts to communicate *being* a Black Muslim woman across different spaces. This PhD project is an opportunity to pay attention to the way these presentations are communicated.

Even within research that focuses on headscarves as Muslim clothing, Hamzeh (2011) highlights the incorrect use of 'hijab,' 'veil,' and 'headscarf' interchangeably. It is by looking to Mernissi's (1991) construction of the multidimensional hijab that Hamzeh (2011) illustrates how the hijab has connotations that cannot be communicated through the term headscarf. In fact, the hijab is not necessarily a headscarf: Mernissi (1991) points to the curtain leaders used to sit behind that divided them from their followers as a different form of hijab.

For Mernissi (1991: 93), the hijab has three dimensions. The first dimension is visual and can be understood through its ability to 'hide something from sight.' The second dimension is spatial, demarcating a boundary around the body. The third dimension is ethical, wherein it creates a 'forbidden' area for some audiences. I am particularly interested in exploring this multi-dimensional construction of hijab because of how it speaks to literature on how belief can be 'embodied and enacted' (Gökarıksel, 2009: 661).

This embodied understanding of hijab also moves forward with an interrelated understanding of spaces (e.g. Massey, 2005), illustrated through a necessary complication of the private/public binary. When moving through public spaces, hijabs can demarcate a private space built around the body, communicating who can and cannot see particular presentations of the body. More generally, El Guindi (2000: 81) argues that the public/private binary is too static to apply to Muslim bodies because prayer and/or clothing practices create shifting boundaries around the body 'throughout the day every day.' It is these shifting boundaries around the body that I am curious to explore further: the multi-dimensional hijab provides an opportunity to explore how Black Muslim women construct and interact with different spaces.

Yet it is not just the hijab that illustrates the way different spaces are negotiated. Although Mernissi (1991) dismisses the headscarf as 'just a cloth' when it is used interchangeably with hijab, I push for a more complex understanding of headscarves as a part of one's negotiation of different spaces. This is illustrated through Tarlo's (2007b) work with women who used different types of headscarves to interact with different spaces. From the politician who wore bold prints in a 'turban' style that stood out within Parliament, to the comedian who used the trope of the all-black wearing Muslim within the comedy club, it was evident that their clothes (including but not limited to their headscarves) revealed information about their biographies. It also illustrated how certain bodies were neutralised within these spaces (and alternatively, which bodies and presentations were highlighted as out of place).

For both, the [headscarf] begins as a working tool, as a means of communicating and enabling specific forms of interaction in specific spaces (Tarlo, 2007b: 28).

Although Mernissi (1991) is correct in pointing out that wearing the headscarf is not necessarily attached to a performance of religiosity, headscarves do communicate particular (gendered) ways of presenting one's body across different spaces. I use both hijab and headscarf as distinct terms because of what both can communicate about dressed bodies and the spaces one is negotiating.

Although this is an important clarification, it is also necessary to move beyond the headscarf and pay attention to clothing practices taking place below the neck. As was stated previously, the headscarf can be used to fix Muslim women's bodies to this particular public presentation of the Muslim woman's body (e.g. Bilge, 2010; Mirza, 2013; Secor, 2002; Tarlo, 2007b). This also ignores the way the headscarf might be used/removed depending on the spaces that one is engaging with. By drawing on research on the presentation of bodies, Craik accounts for this:

Where an outfit cannot be interpreted, people either take one item of clothing as being the most salient and classify that, or else produce an account which can reconcile the codes attached to different terms of the outfit (1994: 9).

Focusing on the 'most salient' signifier attached to one's clothing is a reflection of social categories and the way bodies are read as belonging to specific performances. However, this reading of clothing practices centres the gazes looking at the visible Muslim body rather than exploring the way Muslim women construct and communicate our own presentation of identities. Although it is important to situate how Black Muslim women are represented through these social discourses, focusing solely on how Muslim women might be positioned as strange within public spaces narrows our understanding of how this is negotiated through the different clothing practices Muslim women engage with.

This is reflected in some of the literature produced on Muslim women's clothing practices. 'Muslim' clothing becomes reduced to an ethnically bound shalwar kameez (e.g. Dunkel et al., 2010; Dwyer, 2008), or lip service is paid to Muslim women's diverse clothing practices without a further exploration into what that diversity means (e.g. Ryan, 2011). Both of these narratives ignore the complexity of Muslim women's clothing practices more generally, and the diversity represented within Black Muslim women's clothing practices specifically.

It is by understanding these clothing practices that I illustrate the potential that intersectionality has. By expanding 'Muslim' clothing practices to include many different decisions on how to present the Black body (from jeans to an abaya, from afros to headscarves), this project explores the way presentations highlight co-constituted processes of identification. In turn, this focus on the production of different experiences of being a Black Muslim woman also exposes the diversity within Muslim clothing practices.

Both Lewis (2009; 2013b) and Tarlo (2007a; 2007b; 2010; 2013) have spearheaded an expansion of understandings of Muslim clothing practices. They critique images of Muslim women as a homogeneous Other shrouded in black:

[... While] trendies demonstrate their cultural capital through the consumption of diverse cultural foods, forms and fashion styles, the British Muslim woman wearing the [headscarf] is not presumed to be engaging in cool postmodern fashion bricolage. Instead she is likely to be essentialized as a victim of Muslim patriarchal control or as evidence of the security risk posed by Muslims' presumed lack of social/national integration (Lewis, 2009: 69).

Lewis (2009) is calling for an exploration of the different meanings attached to clothing practices that Muslim women wear when negotiating different spaces. I take this exploration further by also critiquing the focus placed on this 'cool postmodern fashion bricolage.' The construction of the young postmodern Muslim woman also works to expel other clothing practices (e.g. the black niqab or abaya) as too strange for this imagination of the multicultural postmodern nation. Yet these clothing practices are still a part of the negotiations made by Muslim women when interacting with different spaces, and should be explored as such.

This is where I expand on Tarlo's (2010) understanding of visibly Muslim bodies. By situating this alongside the construction of racialized (and strange) bodies within the British grammar of race, it is possible to explore how visibility is interacted with through everyday presentations of Black Muslim women. This is particularly important when paired with work like Saldanha's (2006) on how phenotype marks specific bodies as Black (with shifting understandings of what Blackness entails across different grammars of race). The visibility of Black Muslim women is not understood as a static process but one that is continuously redefined in relation to local, national and international bodies and structures (Ahmed, 2000). It is through focusing on clothing practices that I can examine this changing process through the different performances (and social discourses) that it communicates. This lays the groundwork for the following section where I outline my research aim and questions.

1.4 Research aim and questions

Through the previous sections, I have identified the gaps within research on the clothing practices of Black Muslim women in Britain. This has highlighted the overarching aim of this thesis: I aim to conduct research about Black Muslim women in Britain whilst paying attention to the differences within this categorisation. I do this by exploring the clothing practices Black Muslim women use to present themselves whilst negotiating different gazes, bodies and spaces. This aims to highlight the fluidity in performances across different spaces, pushing against a fixing of one's body as marginal or Other.

This is explored in relation to the following questions:

RQ1 What analytical tools can be developed to understand how Black Muslim women negotiate presentations beyond a fixed categorisation of our beings?

RQ2 How do clothing practices highlight different experiences of being Black Muslim women across a multitude of spaces?

1.5 Thesis structure

This thesis argues that performances of being a Black Muslim woman shift as we negotiate different gazes and spaces. In paying attention to these shifts, there is room to expand understandings of race and religion whilst developing tools that pay attention to the similarities and differences across Black Muslim women's experiences.

Chapter 2 begins this process by exploring *how* to address these questions through my methodology. Beyond the use of interviews and clothes journals to research the experiences of Black Muslim women, this highlights how ethics were embedded into each stage of the research. This is reflected through the focus on developing research with people categorised as Other without perpetuating a positioning as marginal to social norms. This contributes to research on double-consciousness by using it as a methodological tool to navigate around fixing Black Muslim women as Other to a white Self. Once outlining how this research with Black Muslim women can be conducted, the other three sections (research design, methods and analysis) detail how these ethical considerations were developed through the mechanics of this project.

I then move on to addressing the research questions through the empirical chapters. Between these chapters are three interludes that develop particular analytics for reframing how we negotiate our beings as Black Muslim women. **Interlude I** begins this task by expanding on what it means to negotiate comfort when positioned as a source of society's discomfort. This explores **RQ1** and sets up an understanding of comfort that is developed through the following chapter.

Chapter 3 responds to **RQ2** by detailing the clothing practices Black Muslim women negotiate within and around the home. This builds an understanding of how different presentations are used to signal one's body as 'at home' and expands on the different functions of comfort (continuing the work in Interlude I of addressing **RQ1**). This chapter explores how boundaries are enacted and shift as we move in and out of constructions of home. This highlights the different boundaries used when negotiating different gazes. I illustrate this through the possibilities (and limitations) of mismatching clothing practices within the boundary of home: mismatching builds from hybridity by moving away from the transformative rationale implicit in notions of hybridity. This is developed alongside Ahmed's (2014c) work on wiggling to explore how Black Muslim women negotiate presentations in relation to the social norms that are being navigated.

This leads to **Interlude II** which develops layering as another analytic that addresses **RQ1**. Layering is used as a way of speaking to both that which is visible to external gazes and that which is hidden. By extension, layering reframes understandings of that

which is visible as only one part of a cumulative experience of being a Black Muslim women across multiple spaces.

This is picked up through the different layers used for prayer (and the performances surrounding prayer) in **Chapter 4**. It is particularly beneficial to examine prayer in relation to layering because of the temporary yet lasting connection built and repeated through prayer (thus addressing elements of **RQ1**). This chapter speaks to **RQ2** by examining how our surroundings and identities can be transformed through the act and temporality of prayer. In understanding the fluidity of prayer across different spaces, this chapter begins to unpack how specific layers might be used to negotiate particular experiences of visibility within and around the construction of spaces to pray in.

It is this concept of visibility that is taken forward and developed through **Interlude III**. This responds to **RQ1** by exploring how Black Muslim women feel themselves being looked at within white-dominated societies. This moves away from whether or not the gazes that are felt to be negotiated are 'imagined' or 'real': it is about the way social discourses produce this experience of visibility.

Chapter 5 provides the opportunity to explore how this understanding of visibility is negotiated through the outfits worn to work. By recognising how Black Muslim women are positioned as strange from the somatic norm, this chapter speaks to **RQ1** and **RQ2** as I explore how Black Muslim women negotiate visibility through different clothing practices. This builds an understanding of the different gazes that are felt through our movements, and how we learn to present ourselves in relation to these gazes. I end by reinforcing the importance in focusing on how Black Muslim women's presentations shift as we move across different spaces.

Chapter 6 brings together the key themes discussed throughout the project to highlight how this thesis expands understandings of Blackness and Muslim identity. This chapter focuses on the contributions made in understanding identities as fluid and shifting through the clothing practices and geographies of Black Muslim women in Britain. This ends by looking to where this research can grow and discussing potential avenues for future research.

1.6 Conclusions

This chapter has been used to provide the framework for addressing the clothing practices of Black Muslim women. This sets up a centring of Black Muslim women and an exploration of how social discourses are co-constructed and shift as we engage with different spaces. Thus I reiterate the questions that frame this research:

RQ1 What analytical tools can be developed to understand how Black Muslim women negotiate presentations beyond a fixed categorisation of our beings?

RQ2 How do clothing practices highlight different experiences of being Black Muslim women across a multitude of spaces?

It is through these clothing practices that the presentation of one's body is connected to the social representations of Black (and) Muslim female bodies. Both of these questions enable a focus on the multiple presentations that Black Muslim women engage with as we interact with different objects, bodies and spaces. This is an important move away from focusing on clothing practices that are presumed to be attached to fixed performances of religiosity or race.

This also makes an important contribution to the uses and understandings of intersectionality. By understanding different ways that being a Black Muslim woman is performed, there is also a focus on how different forms of racialisation and gendering construct and transform multiple spaces. This pushes against the erasure that intersectionality was designed to expose: instead it centres what it means to present one's body as being a Black Muslim woman across different spaces. Here, intersectionality is used to highlight how these processes of categorisation interact whilst producing and being produced by different social locations. Thus intersectionality is located within the British grammar of race: this grammar speaks to how identity categories are formed and perpetuated within the British context.

Reviewing these literatures has enabled the bringing together of fields that were constructed as separable (e.g. Muslim clothing practices and the Black body). This in turn frames the questions that I ask about the clothing practices of Black Muslim women. However, in a project that uses intersectionality as an anti-subordination analytic, it is also necessary to consider how to ask (and answer) these questions through this research project's design, methods and analysis. I therefore use the following chapter to address my research methodology, and to outline the ethical standpoint essential to this project.

Chapter 2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The research questions set up in the introduction were addressed (through the use of interviews and clothes journals) with Black Muslim women in Manchester and Sheffield. Interviews (based on Black feminist dialogue) assisted in building understandings across different ways of 'being' a Black Muslim woman between myself and participants, highlighting the different bodies, objects and spaces we interact with. The clothes journals provided an illustration of this diversity as Black Muslim women wrote down all the clothes worn across different spaces over (at least) a four-day period.

As was illustrated in the previous chapter (through the use of intersectionality), this is an ethically driven project. My chosen methods are situated within a larger commitment to build critical knowledges with Black Muslim women, challenging our absence from dominant social discourses (on race, gender and religion). It is not just about what Black Muslim women do or wear as we move through different spaces: as a Black Muslim woman in Britain, I am all too familiar with how such research can end up objectifying our lived experiences. Rather, I am interested in addressing the way knowledge is produced about our racialized bodies (through what Black Muslim women wear). This draws from work by Black feminists on how knowledge (and this whole research project) is reflexively situated; this is why it is necessary for me to specify 'the contexts and concerns which guided my research into Black [Muslim] women's subjectivity' (Mama, 1995: 66; also see hooks, 1990).

In relation to this, the methods used are also framed through my awareness of the pressures and structures of the academy as an institution that neutralises whiteness (to be discussed later in this chapter). This is why I emphasise that interviews were *based* on Black feminist dialogue, and why I hesitate to name this project a Black feminist ethnography. I recognise that some Black feminists label themselves as Black feminist ethnographers to situate themselves as explicitly engaging with a diversity of voices that have previously been excluded from these institutions, and to think through our roles as 'both agents of change and complicit within our current world system' (Craft et al., 2007: 60; also see Brown, 2012; Griffin, 2012; hooks, 1990; Nayel, 2017). However, I am particularly keen to expose the limitations of knowledge produced and legitimised within this institution. That includes this thesis which still had to (at least, in part) be legible to (and written for) majority white audiences within academia. It is important to make this explicit as part of the limitations of this project, and to highlight how the tenets of Black feminism push us beyond the structures of this institution (or of ethnography/interviews as a methodological tool developed by and for these institutions).

This speaks to the ethical considerations that frame the way this research project has been designed, the methods that were chosen and the development of analysis. In

setting up this framework, I have structured the chapter as follows: first, I outline the nuts and bolts of this project through a technical summary of my chosen methods, which will then be expanded through the rest of this chapter. Second, I examine the ethical concerns that built this project by questioning how to conduct research on bodies racialized as Other without re-inscribing this marginal positioning. Third, I outline the logics of this research design i.e. why I focused on participants that self-identified as Black Muslim women in Britain. Fourth, I address how the chosen research methods build on the ethics of the project and answer the research questions. Finally, I focus on the way analysis for this research was conducted.

In detailing the ethics, design, methods and analysis of this research project, I illustrate the mechanics informing the following empirical chapters. This chapter focuses on the importance of building a framework of ethics to conduct research, particularly when focused on those that are racialized as Other.

2.2 Technical summary

I begin with this technical summary to clearly outline the structure of my fieldwork and analysis to the reader. This sets up an overview of the mechanics of this research project: from here, the rest of the chapter is used to expand on the logic and ethics behind these technical decisions.

21 Black Muslim women (aged 18-51) in Manchester and Sheffield participated in this research project from July 2014 to September 2016 (see Table 1). During participant recruitment, I (mostly) left it to potential participants to self-identify as Black, Muslim and a woman living in Manchester or Sheffield. In line with this, I contacted a number of specific sites that Black Muslim women might engage with that were based in Manchester and Sheffield: I put up flyers at Afro-Caribbean hair salons, shops (marketing themselves as) selling Muslim clothing, local mosques and university prayer rooms (for an example of the poster, see Appendix A). I went to play groups for children of African heritage, Afro-Caribbean, BME and Islamic university societies, and Muslim women's study groups. I also posted online calls for participants on Facebook groups targeted at Muslim, Black and/or BME communities in Manchester and Sheffield.

Once contact with some participants was achieved, I used snowball sampling to recruit other Black Muslim women. Snowballing was useful in this project because I was not focused on participants as a representative sample of a wider population: rather, I was looking to highlight different narratives within experiences of being a Black Muslim woman. This was also the guiding principle behind my decision to stop recruiting participants after working with 21 Black Muslim women: it was at this point in time where I began to notice how a number of themes were repeated across participants' narratives.

Table 1: Participant details

Pseudonym	Age	City	Interview locations	Heritage	Regular headscarf wearer	Regular abaya wearer
Aaliyah	25	Sheffield	Café	Somali	Yes	Yes
Aneesa	24	Sheffield	Participant home	Somali	Yes	No
Aqua	18	Sheffield	Participant home	Somali	Yes	No
Asiya	23	Sheffield	Café & University prayer room	Somali	Yes	Yes
Babs	26	Manchester	Café	Sudanese	Yes	No
Cookie	28	Sheffield	Participant home	Nigerian	Yes	No
Fatima Mohamed	42	Manchester	Participant home	Somali	Yes	No
Halima	18	Manchester	Participant home & College	Nigerian	Yes	No
Hind	26	Manchester	Café	Sudanese	No	No
Khadijah	24	Sheffield	Participant home	Somali	Yes	No
Laila	25	Manchester	Café	Sudanese	Yes	No
Liala	48	Sheffield	Participant home	Somali	Yes	Yes
Mimi	27	Sheffield	Participant home	Somali	Yes	No
Mistura	51	Manchester	Participant home	Nigerian	Yes	Yes
Sahra Hassan	19	Sheffield	Café	Somali	Yes	Yes
Sally	18	Sheffield	Participant home	Somali	Yes	No
Salma	40	Manchester	Café	Sudanese	Yes	No
Sam	18	Sheffield	Participant home	Somali	Yes	No
Umm Kareema	51	Sheffield	Participant workplace	Jamaican	Yes	Yes
Umm Yusuf	28	Manchester	Participant home	Nigerian	Yes	Yes
Zainab	21	Sheffield	University prayer room & café	Nigerian	No	No

I decided to use a mixed-methods qualitative approach: this was designed to tease out different knowledges with participants (Meth and McClymont, 2009).⁶ This involved two interviews (based on Black feminist understandings of dialogue) and a clothes journal (see table 2). Each semi-structured interview was at least one hour long: this was audio-recorded and later transcribed.⁷ Before Interview 1, participants were sent an information sheet (see Appendix B) and a consent form (see Appendix C) which we discussed before the recorder was turned on at our first interview. Interviewees were asked to choose their own pseudonym, and all contact information, clothes journals, interview recordings, and transcripts were labelled with that name.⁸

Table 2: Interview structure

Interview 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal background
Clothes Journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of clothes worn over a minimum of four-day period
Interview 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of clothes journal • Discussion of clothes worn through clothes journal • Experience of interview process overall

Interview 1 was used to ask general questions about their personal background including what they liked to wear across a number of different spaces, what they used to wear as children, and how this might have altered as they grew older. Following this, participants received daily prompts from me that reminded them to tell me all of the different clothes they wore (and where they wore them) over (a minimum of) a four-day period (for examples of this, see Appendices D and E). Each day, participants recorded their clothing practices and movements in a makeshift clothes journal (i.e. via WhatsApp, sms or email).⁹ Interview 2 was then used to ask questions about the different clothes shared through the clothes journal. It was also an opportunity to ask any follow-up questions that either of us had from Interview 1. At the end of interview 2, both of us reflected on the interview process and discussed different things that had been learnt through our conversations.

It was important to analyse the interview transcripts and clothes journals in a manner that highlighted how Black Muslim women built understandings of our beings through different clothing practices. To do this, I used a cross between narrative and critical discourse analysis: Souto-Manning (2014) refers to this as critical narrative analysis. By using critical narrative analysis, everyday narratives (built with participants)

⁶ Using complimentary qualitative methods is also illustrated through related literature, particularly with Hamzeh (2011) who used participant observations, focus groups and individual interviews to explore the construction of the hijab.

⁷ The only exception to this was Umm Kareema who did not want to be recorded but was happy for me to write up notes following our interactions.

⁸ The only information that stated their given names was on the consent form (see Appendix C): these forms were stored in a locked drawer.

⁹ My mobile phone was locked to ensure that no one else had access to participant's journals.

anchored the analysis of the larger discourses at play as Black Muslim women negotiated their beings across different spaces. Journals and interview transcripts were coded with the use of NVivo, starting with more descriptive codes that were then re-worked to highlight discursive themes (Berg, 2007; Bryman, 2012; Crang, 2005; Silverman, 2010).

As was stated at the beginning of this section, this is an overview of the decisions made when conducting research with Black Muslim women for this project. These were not easy or straightforward decisions to make: the deeply reflexive nature of this project and its anchoring within Black feminist ethics and epistemology meant that each of these decisions had to be carefully interrogated (as will become evident through the rest of this chapter). Before I expand on these technical decisions, I set up the ethical concerns that I confronted as part of the foundation of my methodology.

2.3 Ethics: hanging pictures of brown bodies

This section is used to ask (and answer) some fundamental questions regarding the ethics of research on racialized bodies conducted through and for spaces of knowledge production that centre (and neutralise) whiteness (Johnson and Joseph-Salisbury, forthcoming; Puwar, 2004; Tate, 2016). Bilge (2013: 413) addresses normative whiteness when reflecting on the ‘whitening of intersectionality:’

[I untie] *whiteness* from skin colour, physiology, or biology, and [understand] it as: a structurally advantaged position (race privilege); a (privileged) standpoint from which White people view themselves, others and society; and a set of cultural practices that are considered “unmarked” – yet unmarked only if viewed from the perspective of normative whiteness (Bilge, 2013: 412-413, emphasis in original).

It is normative whiteness that fixes Black Muslim women as Other, and it is normative whiteness that is evident within the walls of academia. This prompted my ethical concern: what does it mean to conduct research on Black Muslim women without fixing them as marginal to normative whiteness? How can I research bodies that are fixed as Other whilst based within the academic institutions that perform the same manoeuvre that I am critiquing?

This was a central anxiety early on in my PhD, and has been worked through by a number of different academics (see Colectivo Situaciones, 2006; Collins, 1990; Khan, 2005; Mikell, 1999; Pizarro, 1998; Villenas, 1996). I discussed this with Parvati Raghuram, who retold her experience negotiating this earlier in her career. When asking her brother if she could take pictures of people for her PhD project, he responded, “I am not going to let you take pictures of brown bodies to hang on white walls.” This highlights a concern with the role of academic research, specifically academic research that is produced about racialized bodies. Despite significant amounts of research being *about* bodies that are racialized, bodies within these (UK) academic institutions that produce (and legitimise) this knowledge are still disproportionately white (Adams, 2017; Equality Challenge Unit, 2015; Shilliam, 2016).

This division perpetuates a separation of the (white) academic Self from the racialized and objectified researched Other. This is what Burciaga describes as ‘a mutilation of the human being, an objective of the ruling class who have us convinced that there are people who are “head” and people who are “hands”’ (cited in Pizarro, 1998: 64).

Within such a logic, racialized bodies are objects which knowledge can be produced about, whilst knowledge holders are implicitly (and often uncritically) associated with whiteness (Johnson and Joseph-Salisbury, forthcoming). It is the knowledge shared amongst Black Muslim women that spurred my initial interest to do a PhD: perpetuating the Othering and objectification of Black Muslim women (and through that, my own body) led to several anxious conversations about my role within academia (see Pizarro, 1998). Collins (2000: 256) describes this by pointing to the structures of academia that ‘ask African-American women to objectify ourselves, devalue our emotional life, [and] displace our motivations for furthering knowledge about Black women.’

This reflects a tension within writing this dissertation as an attempt to centre Black Muslim women: how do I ensure that this project does not focus solely on Black Muslim women’s representation as Other, and thus re-centre the (white, non-Muslim, male) Self? My use of intersectionality would then (ironically) do the reverse of what was intended. Instead of intersectionality being used to address the complexity of our social locations, it would be used to fix our bodies as a homogeneous Other. This depoliticizes intersectionality and reduces it to describing the meeting of race, gender and religion at a particular intersection, with little else of important. It reduces bodies as existing within the same processes of categorisation that intersectionality was designed to push against. It simply ‘reinscribes the researched into the dominant representations of powerlessness’ (Bhavnani, 1993: 30), and I push against this by outlining the ethics which grounded my theoretical and empirical work.

This section frames my research with Black Muslim women by illustrating how research must do more than situate us as Other within a (white) Self/(black) Other binary. First, I contribute to research on double-consciousness by employing it as a methodological tool for conducting research on bodies that are Othered. This sets up the second part of this section where I explore how my use of double-consciousness and ethical commitments were developed through research relationships with participants (across two interviews and a clothes journal).

2.3.1 Working with double-consciousness

When understanding this Self/Other binary, I begin from the significant research on the construction of Blackness (and on a broader note, the non-white Other) through its distance from Whiteness (Ahmed, 2000; Ang, 1996; Du Bois, 2007[1903]; Fanon, 2008[1952]; Sardar, 2008). Fanon (2008[1952]) & Du Bois (2007[1903]) point to their own experience of their Blackness through the eyes of whiteness: Du Bois (2007[1903]: 7) hears this in the pauses in conversations which ask “How does it feel

to be a problem?” This is what Parvati and I reflected on when thinking of the white walls of academia which make Black and Brown bodies so visible as deviations.

The objectification of one’s racialized body is not specific to the construction of Blackness. It is this same process of distancing that is reflected in Said’s (2003) work on the construction of the Orient through the Occident; Ang (1996) & Ahmed (2000) use this logic of the Other to discuss how the stranger or alien is constructed within multicultural discourse; and Massad (2015) accounts for how Islam and The Muslim have been constructed as Other to the liberal democratic non-Muslim Self.

Although the Self/Other binary is useful in illustrating the distance that is assumed through our positioning as *not* (white, liberal, male), it also ends up homogenising several experiences of Othering into one category. As Fuss (1994: 22) illustrates, this ‘paradoxically risks eliding the very range and play of cultural differences that the designation is intended to represent.’ As was stated earlier, this focus on Othering risks re-centring whiteness and runs counter to this dissertation’s task of centring the voices and experiences of Black Muslim women.

The logic of this Self/Other binary is not only reflected through the Other’s distance from the Self, but also through the internalising of notions of ‘genuine’ Blackness and/or Muslim identity (Hall, 2000[1991]; Tate, 2005; Young, 2000). The theorization of the veil,¹⁰ both in the context of the Algerian war that surrounded Fanon (2004[1960]) and in recent debates around its symbolism as oppression or religiosity, highlights how these processes are internalized and used to exemplify ‘genuine’ or ‘faith-full’ Muslim women (Dwyer, 2008; Lewis, 2009).

This speaks to a concern regarding the centrality of Blackness to my own sense of being and belonging which is inevitably reflected in what I read and how I related to bodies around me. However, this is/was not the case for all the participants: some highlighted their Blackness as their skin colour and focused more on their visibility as Muslim, whilst others worked to distance themselves from any of these labels (as will be discussed in Chapter 5).

However, my own sense of belonging to Blackness does not delegitimise the different ways that I engage with performances of religiosity. Likewise, participants who focused on their visibility as Muslim were still negotiating their Blackness as a part of that visibility (however that Blackness might have been defined). This speaks to the recursive and reflexive nature of this research project. Whilst the ethics (developed from my own experiences of being a Black Muslim woman) inform the analysis and ‘findings,’ this analysis also informs how I situate and understand my own experience of being. This reflexive understanding of my own situatedness opens up room for understanding a multitude of expressions within Blackness (and constructions of

¹⁰ I use the term “veil” intentionally, as it is not the multi-dimensional hijab that is discussed within this context, but more to do with a politicised reading of the headscarf as a veil, with all of the connotations that are associated with the term (e.g. being ‘hidden’ from sight, inviting questions about whose sight the veil is preventing).

Muslim identity) rather than constructing one fixed and “true” experience. This is assisted through the use of dialogue as a research method (as detailed later on in this chapter).

Thus researchers must avoid falling into the trap of fixing processes of Othering onto the body. This requires us to explore the myriad of ways in which these performances were engaged with through different social situations and spaces. Young (1996) points to the implicit assumption of masculinity behind Fanon’s (2008[1952]) chapter on the ‘Fact of Blackness.’ Re-reading Fanon’s (2008[1952]: 84) interaction with the white boy exclaiming ‘Look Mama, a Negro! I’m frightened!’ she asks:

What if the scene were of a white father and daughter with the child gazing at a black woman? [...] Would the black woman quiver with fear and self-loathing? Might she not, in any case, be invisible? [...] Since the power implicated in the act of looking and being looked at is asymmetrically allocated to white and black, to male and female, in racially stratified patriarchal societies, changing the sex of the participants in this ritualized version of the encounter between black and white to one which focuses on a black woman as the object of the look, serves to foreground a different set of relations and experiences: a set of relations upon which Fanon does not turn his own critical gaze (Young, 1996: 93).

It would be (at the very least) reductive to ignore how these differences are highlighted through individual positionings and experiences. Although intersectionality was developed to address the marginalisation of Black female bodies within these social discourses, I needed to develop a language to describe the fluidity embedded within processes of racialisation.

Double-consciousness sets up this missing language by highlighting the relationship Black Muslim women have to the Self/Other binary. Within such an understanding, the Self (as constructed through white hegemonic discourse) is a category that we were never meant to inhabit (and at best, can only mimic). Simultaneously, the Other is a category that fixes notions of Blackness, whether through internalised ‘community’ notions of authenticity or through its construction as *not* Self. Neither of these fixed sites are able to show the fluidity of our relationship to *both* of these sites, nor how we take this on board through our being (Black Muslim women) across different spaces.

Double consciousness is not about freedom from one state of being and subsequent entry into another – an essentially chronological plot of identity. Instead, double consciousness presents – and this is its peculiar ontological strength – a state of being defined by the refusal to choose between opposed identities, be it those of the “Negro” and the “American” that [W.E.B Du Bois] describes or those of the contending discourse that subtend its description (Cooppan, 2005: 304).

The term double-consciousness is developed to understand the presentations of Black Muslim women in Britain who negotiate these processes of Othering and yet are not (and cannot be) wholly defined through this. What I’m interested in exploring is how Black Muslim women respond to these categorisations and negotiate identities beyond

a binary that could never explain the fluidity of our different presentations. There is a focus on the *relationship* had to these fixed categories, and I use the following section to examine how to research this relationship through critical reflexivity.

2.3.2 *On reflexivity: researching relationships*

The use of double-consciousness has important consequences for the framing of this project and my own role within the academy. In exploring the relationship had to fixed categories (and to the knowledge that categorises us), Black feminists across disciplines have challenged academia's role as the legitimiser and holder of knowledge about Black women as researched Other to the white male academic Self (e.g. Collins, 1990; hooks, 1989; Lorde, 1996; Nayak, 2015). They have emphasized spaces of knowledge production outside of academia that have been essential to developing knowledge (and ways of knowing) about our Blackness.

Reclaiming the Black feminist intellectual tradition also involves searching for its expression in alternative institutional locations and among women who are not commonly perceived as intellectuals (Collins, 1990: 14).

This process of reclamation includes mining music, literature, daily conversations and everyday behaviour as critical spaces of knowledge production (Collins, 1990; hooks, 1989; Noxolo, 1999). This pushes for a fundamental shift in the way knowledge claims are legitimised by challenging the distance perpetuated when knowledge is produced 'in here' about bodies 'out there.' Interactions with participants cannot be fixed as sites 'in the field' wherein 'data' can be retrieved and transformed into knowledge by The Academic.

In order to challenge the Self/Other binary, there must be a challenge to the dynamics that construct the academic Self as distant from the researched Other. Using double-consciousness to explore the relationship to the Self/Other binary also means building research relationships that focus on Black Muslim women as knowledge producers across different sites, including some that are not legitimised by academia. The relationships built between myself and the other Black Muslim women participating in this project speaks to the exchange and production of different knowledges.

Despite the interview process reflecting knowledge constructed with participants (Denzin, 2009; Khan, 2005), the writing process requires me to construct my own imagining of the world wherein participants' experiences and knowledges are interpreted.

The "Other" who is presented in the text is always a version of the researcher's self. Krieger argues: "When we discuss others, we are always talking about ourselves. Our images of 'them' are images of 'us' (Denzin, 2009: 92).

Embedded in Denzin's (2009) understanding of the interpretive researcher is the assumption of distance (and difference) between the researcher and the researched. In doing so, Denzin (2009) perpetuates this Self/Other binary. Yet what happens to those of us who are a part of the communities that are being written about? How do we

highlight the potential within understanding research relationships as more than this distance (and/or deviance) from one another?

It is within this context and in response to Haraway's (1988) critique of objectivity that I use "us" and "we" to situate myself within this grouping of Black Muslim women. This is done reflexively, much like Collins (1990) when positioning herself within the African-American women that she researches: terms such as "they" and "their" imply an ability to distance one's racialized and gendered embodiment from the academic writing produced from that positioning (Noxolo, 2009). I hold onto my own experiences as someone who is racialized and gendered as a Black Muslim woman (and who holds a British passport). These processes inform what and how I read experiences of Black Muslim women, as well as how I interact with participants (and vice versa). They inform and construct the research that is then produced.

This does not assume that my own situated experiences within this 'grouping' would negate the unknown ways that power permeates the research process (Rose, 1997). At different points in time, I maintain the distinctions between "them" as participants that shaped and shared knowledge through interviews and clothes journals, and "I" as the researcher who continues to interact with their words to construct this written world. Signalling my own role as part of yet apart from this grouping works to highlight the complexity within the grouping of Black Muslim women. One of the strengths of this project is the use of intersectionality to question how these social discourses produce different experiences of being (a Black Muslim woman). As I look to highlight how identification is 'produced, experienced, reproduced, and resisted in everyday life' (McCall, 2005: 1783), it only strengthens this research to reflexively situate myself as an illustration of this process, as both researcher and researched.

Through reflexivity, I use the research relationships as spaces where knowledge is shared between myself and participants about the clothing practices of Black Muslim women. Some of these performances were recognisable to one another, others highlighted the differences that exist within this grouping. It is within these exchanges that we find, share and stitch together the different ways Black Muslim women construct their beings. This works to highlight Presser's (2005: 2086, emphasis in original) point that 'we must go beyond simply writing ourselves into research interviews to writing our *exchanges* into them.'

I am again wary of any reading of these exchanges as 'totally' communicated/understood in the omniscient manner assumed by the 'goddess trick' (Rose, 1997). Rather, this highlights that knowledge of (and by) any arbitrary grouping cannot be 'complete' in any sense. We are continuously being made through our interactions, and thus knowledge about our experiences/existence is constantly being produced and reproduced. I use these interactions to push for an understanding of identities as fluid rather than static processes.

It is these epistemological considerations that grounds the rest of the project. From here, I expand on the practical details surrounding designing a research project with Black Muslim women in Britain.

2.4 Research Design

As was stated previously, 21 Black Muslim women in Manchester and Sheffield were recruited for this project. Although some parameters were set around this 'group' of Black Muslim women, my research questions were focused on how participants' narratives communicated different processes of identification and spoke to wider discourses around our experiences of being as racialised and gendered bodies. In recognition of this starting point, this project is informed by an acceptance that the narratives shared will not necessarily fit smoothly into one another, nor should I force them to do so.

This is illustrated through Table 1 in the Technical summary: participant details are intended as a snapshot of a few characteristics of the participants rather than *the* sole characteristics relevant in the same ways as Black Muslim women present themselves across different spaces. These changes are reflected through the following chapters wherein different participant details are highlighted in each chapter. This is an intentional illustration of how shifts in presentations occur as we engage with different spaces.

The two details that are continuously referenced alongside quotes by participants are their pseudonyms and ages. For the latter, it was important to maintain a wide age range because of the way research on Muslim fashion portrays this diversity of clothing practices as a youthful trend (e.g. Lewis, 2013a; Siraj, 2011; Tarlo and Moors, 2013). This fixes older generations as steeped in 'tradition' whilst the 'younger' generation are positioned as more dynamic and capable of performing this postmodern meshing of styles and cultures. This 'generation gap' logic is critiqued by Audre Lorde:

The 'generation gap' is an important social tool for any repressive society. If the younger members of a community view the older members as contemptible or suspect or excess, they will never be able to join hands and examine the living memories of the community, nor ask the all important question, 'Why?' This gives rise to a historical amnesia that keeps us working to invent the wheel every time we have to go to the store for bread (Lorde, 1996: 164).

It is this need to explore experiences across different generations that led me to recruit people who identified as Black Muslim women from ages 18 and above. Much like other social discourses that were not explicitly 'controlled for' (including class, sexuality, dis/ability, etc.), this was done to highlight how these processes influenced the shifting identities of Black Muslim women. I was interested in understanding how our presentations spoke back to a number of different social discourses, reflecting the diversity within this grouping of Black Muslim women.

This focus on how Black Muslim women present themselves was also reflected in their chosen pseudonyms. The process of naming one's self was discussed during the first interview. Most participants chose a name that had some form of emotional significance to them,¹¹ with Aneesa reflecting on her use of her mother's name as a pseudonym:

Azeezat: But why not choose-¹²

Aneesa: A random name?

Yeah... like Jenny or John or whatever. Like what is the difference between, like why choose that name?

I don't think that I would use a non-Muslim name.

Ok, why?

Because I think that's what I associate myself with. I wouldn't use a name that-

-doesn't-

-yeah, that has no association with me and then... probably mum's cos... it's my mum.

(Aneesa, 24, Sheffield)

Through this exchange, the naming process is a part of the presentation of a Muslim body. In attaching 'randomness' or 'whatever' to Jenny and John, both I and Aneesa perpetuate assumptions of the neutrality associated with names that do not *sound* Muslim. Within this, there is also an assumption of the authenticity of a 'Muslim-sounding' name. Here, double-consciousness can be used to address how presentations are constructed through this conception of authenticity. In understanding the significance behind a name that sounds like a participant, how are certain characteristics focused upon over others? What does this mean when thinking about the different ways the label of 'Black Muslim woman' might be engaged with by participants?

These questions set up the parameters of this project, and are explored below. First I detail what it meant to recruit participants that identified as Black Muslim women. Second, I explain why this project focused on Black Muslim women located in Manchester and Sheffield.

2.4.1 Identifying Black Muslim women

During participant recruitment, potential participants were asked to identify themselves as a woman, as a Muslim and as (b)Black. However, I had to reconsider what it meant to identify as Black after I was contacted by a Muslim woman who identified as politically Black and wanted to participate in the project. Political Blackness was used by racialized minorities to unite against racism in the 1970s and

¹¹ A notable exception was Aqua who chose her name from the colour of the top that I was wearing.

¹² My words in interview transcripts will always be italicised to highlight the difference between myself and the participant I am in conversation with.

80s (Hall, 2000[1991]), but it is still used today (even though there is some scepticism and controversy surrounding its use).¹³

Although researching the differences within experiences of (political or not) Blackness does have merit, this project began with a desire to focus on those that are marginalised within normative imaginings of both Black and Muslim experiences. Political Blackness was useful as a unifying term, but it can also mask the function of racial hierarchies within racialized communities. This returns to an earlier criticism of how several different experiences of Othering are then homogenised under the banner of one category. To avoid this, I decided to focus on those who self-identified as '(b)Black' Muslim women with some form of heritage ties to African or Caribbean countries.

Although the Black Muslim women in this project had some form of heritage to African and/or Caribbean countries, these were not the *only* heritage ties that were important to their personal narratives.¹⁴ By focusing on these specific heritage links, their Blackness is implicitly attached to that of an African or Caribbean migrating body to Britain (e.g. Hopkins, 2010; Knowles, 2012; Oyètádé, 1993; Valentine and Sporton, 2009). I push against this since 'immigration' and 'Blackness' could have different connotations across the different experiences of Black Muslim women.

This is evident through work like Fábos' (2012) wherein Black-Arab Sudanese Muslims were perceived to reject the label of Blackness because of the discourses attached to Blackness within the British grammar of race. However, this still speaks to the relationship built to processes of Othering, as one is attempting to present one's body in relation to (or more specifically, to counter) these racial discourses. This is a part of the way we communicate our performance of identities, and assists in answering the research questions set. I therefore use interviews to explore how we interact with our Blackness rather than assuming the centrality of a narrative of African or Caribbean heritage.

Similarly, interviews were used to tease out how Muslim identity is framed. As was mentioned previously, Tarlo's (2010) *Visibly Muslim* encourages the reader to think critically about how a visibly Muslim woman becomes entwined with the wearing of a headscarf. However, I was keen to push against this narrative as it fixes Black Muslim women's presentations to that of a visible Other. Despite my attempts to recruit participants from a multitude of spaces, most of the participants did wear a headscarf (of some sort) in public regularly (see Table 1).

Zainab helped me to reflect on this when suggesting a friend that might be able to participate in the research project as she had grown up in a Muslim household. As her friend did not identify strongly as a Muslim anymore, I tried to assure Zainab that I was not solely interested in identifying Black Muslim women who frequently participated in

¹³ See the 2016 discussions over Zayn Malik and Sadiq Khan being used as the face of University of Kent's Student Union Black History Month campaign (Batty, 2016).

¹⁴ For example, some identified Dutch, British or Saudi heritage as another part of their beings.

religious or spiritual activities, but a range of experiences to understand what 'being Muslim' meant to people. When her friend still felt uncomfortable participating in the project, I realised that in order for this project to actually highlight different experiences of what it meant to be a Black Muslim woman, participants did have to self-identify (to whatever extent) as *being* Muslim.

However, being Muslim did not mean that performances were attached to the wearing of headscarves; in fact, questions were deliberately asked to reflect how one changes clothes (including removing or putting on the headscarf) in relation to the spaces we are negotiating.¹⁵ Therefore, focusing on participants who self-identified as Muslim still provided the range of experiences that I was interested in exploring.

2.4.2 Situating Britishness and choosing locations

When situating how participants related to Britishness, I had initially planned to recruit Muslim women who identified as Black British. Yet the label of Black Britishness is not one that all Black Muslim women felt an affinity towards. How 'British' did one need to be to identify (and be identified) as Black British? What about those who do not see themselves within the racialisation of Black Britons? How does this perpetuate notions of 'authentic' Blackness within Britain? It was Aaliyah who neatly summarised the marginality that could be felt through this label:

But when you see like Black British music, or Black British literature, or Black British food, it's always Afro-Caribbean. It is **not** African.

(Aaliyah, 25, Sheffield)

Aaliyah perceives a centring of some Black bodies within understandings and cultural signifiers of Black Britishness which leads to her distancing from such a label. By focusing on those who identified within Black Britishness, I would have been unable to hear tales from those who see themselves on the margins of this narrative. Therefore, I decided to recruit any Black Muslim women who reside in Britain. This would assist in highlighting some of the differences (and similarities) between Black Muslim women and their experiences of being 'in' Britain.

Rather than focusing on Black Muslim women in Britain more broadly, participants were recruited from Manchester and Sheffield. This was an intentional move away from London as a site wherein research on Black Muslim populations often takes place (e.g. Griffiths, 1997; Hopkins, 2010). Both Manchester and Sheffield had both established and newer Black Muslim communities, with Manchester having a larger Black Muslim population (Office for National Statistics, 2013). Manchester and Sheffield were also specifically chosen because of my own connections to both cities as places that I had worked and lived in. This helped me to know where to begin recruiting participants, and speaks back to the deeply reflexive nature of this project wherein it is my own positioning that produces these narratives with participants.

¹⁵ This also speaks to the uses of a clothes journal more broadly

However, the demographics of either Manchester or Sheffield is not the focus here: it is the micro-scale performances that Black Muslim women engage with through these locations that I focus upon. This is also reflected in the decision to build research relationships with 21 Black Muslim women. As I was focusing on micro-scale performances, I stopped recruiting more participants once it became apparent that certain themes were repeated across research relationships. The methods that structured these research relationships and how this examined everyday performances are discussed below.

2.5 Research Methods

Once the parameters of the project had been established, I worked on a mixed-methods qualitative approach that began from intersectionality as an anti-subordination analytic. This meant using the clothing practices of Black Muslim women as an opportunity to address Black Muslim women as producers of knowledge rather than objects or knowns (Abu-Lughod, 1990). Although the interviews (based on Black feminist dialogue) and clothes journals highlight how Black Muslim women present or communicate our identities across different spaces, they also speak back to the ethics that built research relationships.

In relation to this, the interviews and clothes journals did not have the same epistemological standing within this project. Whilst the clothes journals were used to as a secondary resource to illustrate the changing clothing practices that Black Muslim women wore across different spaces, it was the interviews that provided the primary context wherein these clothing practices could be understood. Ultimately, the role of clothes journals is primarily one of describing what Black Muslim women happen to wear, even as this description is used to highlight the diversity of our experiences. I am interested in centring the voices and knowledges produced by Black Muslim women through this project: interviews were designed to unpack how these clothing practices illustrated a communication of our beings as shifting and as more than any fixed categorisation. This pushes against simply describing what Black Muslim women happen to do or wear.

However, embedded within both of these methods was a focus on working with participants to highlight the fluidity of our identities, altering as we move across different spaces. This section will be used to explain how this was developed by first examining the interviews that were built from Black feminist work on dialogues, followed by clothes journals.

2.5.1 Interviews as Dialogue

To begin a discussion about dialogues, I use a reflection that took place between Asiya and I about the interview process:

I've got a lot of things off my chest
Ok, is that good?

Yesss. Because, yes, I work with other Muslims, but... there's some very... you know it's non-existent that I get to talk to some other **Black** Muslims especially other **African** Muslims who understand **Black** issues. [...] So it's nice to just... meet someone else who understands, and we can just rant about it for an hour and a half and be like 'yeah, it's so wrong how they treat us, yeah, yeah.'

[...] It's the same whenever I meet other Black Muslims and you can talk about all of these things in toge-together. Because sometimes when you're with Black people, they'll only wanna talk about Ferguson,¹⁶ but they won't mention the Islamophobia Muslims are facing, or when you're at the mosque and they'll be like "ohh, pray for Syria," but like they'll forget about Nigeria or Sudan or Somalia.

Yeah, that's quite annoying to be honest. It's like 'hello! We're here too!'

(Asiya, 23, Sheffield)

Through this interaction, Asiya and I reflect on the similarities and differences across our experiences. These conversations are informed by an ethics of caring, where we can be 'centred in one's own experience while being empathetic to the differential positioning of the partners in dialogue' (Collins, 2000: 245). By reflecting on experiences of marginalisation, there is also a re-affirmation of intersectionality as a framework that can address our absences from social discourses. Both Asiya and I reflect on these interviews as an attempt to push back against the marginalisation that is felt.

Within this, there is an important recognition of one another through the exclamation 'We're here too!' The term 'we' becomes a way to recognise one another as experiencing that marginalisation, and connecting through these experiences. That is not to say that our experiences of being a Black Muslim woman are the same, but that we recognise each other's experiences as a part of (and not just marginal to) Blackness and Muslim identifications. It is within this context that bell hooks (1989: 6) refers to dialogue as 'the sharing of speech and recognition.'

For this project, dialogue was the most appropriate way to centre Black Muslim women as knowledge holders and to draw from this ethics of caring. Dialogical thinking has been addressed across a variety of literatures (e.g. Collins, 2000; Denzin, 2009; England, 2008[1994]; Hudson et al., 2012), but it is Black feminist writings that illustrated how dialogues could be an instrumental part of this research project.

[... Dialogue] is not about rubberstamping or negating other perspectives, it is about searching and learning, through repeated confrontation between incommensurable points of view (Noxolo, 1999: 87).

It is through this process of 'searching and learning' that I can also negotiate my own personal positioning as a Black Muslim woman. By constructing interviews as

¹⁶ At the time of this interview, Michael Brown had been killed by a police officer in Ferguson, launching protests in Ferguson and around the globe through the exclamation Black Lives Matter.

dialogues, there is no single experience of Blackness that needs to be addressed: our different experiences of being racialized can be spoken to and learnt from.

This meant sharing stories from my own life throughout the interviews and reflecting on these narratives as part of the research relationship. I used these stories to break up the structure of interviews where questions (and answers) are unidirectional. Instead, both of us are attempting to gain clarity about the other's experiences.

In line with this, I recounted a racist experience after the Charlie Hebdo shootings at a bus stop to Cookie. Cookie immediately read it as an encounter that took place due to anti-Black racism which made me pause. When noticing my hesitation, she clarified, "no, when those things happen to you in public, it's because of the skin." Both Cookie and I were looking to read our embodied knowledges onto the encounter. Because of Cookie's self-positioning as experiencing anti-Black racism rather than Islamophobia, she read my encounter as existing within such a context. Yet for me, this encounter was layered with the knowledge of the increase in Islamophobic attacks following the Charlie Hebdo shootings (Travis, 2015), as well as conversations with my sister who feared walking home without using a hooded sweater to hide their headscarf. It became an extension of a wider discussion about the terror of Islamophobia.

Neither of these interpretations were more "accurate" than the other. By aiming to highlight intersectional identities, I recognise how the "cause" of an event may be read in multiple ways, and as a function of several overlapping forms of identity categorisations (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991). However, it was the process of dialogue that teases these different understandings of our presentations out.

An individual emerges through the process of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product, but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate (Davies and Harré cited in Haddix, 2012: 174).

Through dialogue, meanings about our experiences can be built together, and there is an intentional focus on how we present ourselves through our interactions (with one another, and with the other clothes, objects, bodies and spaces that we are describing). This is used to highlight how individuals manifest themselves through these interactions. This is where Hind refers to the interview as a process wherein 'we've kinda both combined what we've thought or come across.' Using dialogue involves recognising the learning that takes place within the interview. It involves a commitment to unpack our differences and similarities through the interviews.

This is not to assume that dialogue (or any other method) would act as an equaliser within the interviews (and research process more generally). As Noxolo points out:

I therefore interact with my interlocutors during the time in which the dialogue occurs, and again repeatedly through transcribing the dialogues, then reading and re-reading the transcripts. The people with whom I dialogue, however, only interacted with me once,

during the dialogue. This sets up an inequality within the dialogues [...] (1999: 24).

Part of these limitations are attributed to 'the individualist ethos of writing and obtaining a PhD' (Noxolo, 1999: 24), and these limitations are returned to when thinking about research analysis. However, for the purposes of dialogue as a method, I am not claiming to have discovered an idealised research method. Rather, I look to reflect participants' interactions with my role as an embodied researcher (Knapik, 2006). It is through the interactions between our bodies (and within the research relationship) that critical knowledge about Black Muslim women is created.

It is important to think through dialogue not as a method that is post-ethics, but one that works to minimise the distance between the academic Self and researched Other. It does this by drawing from the way everyday conversations outside of the research relationship can also be structured. Much like everyday conversations, one participant may use these interactions to reflect on the knowledge shared long after the conversation took place. Conversations outside of the research relationship can also follow a series of questions, and can (and have) been used by Black women to clarify thinking about shared and different experiences (Collins, 2000). My use of dialogue exposes these dynamics as a part of the way we present our identities across different spaces.

The function of power dynamics within the interview was particularly evident through research with Laila. For the first 25 minutes of Interview 1 she had responded with short answers until I eventually decided to end the interview:

So that's pretty much it for questions for this interview, do you have any questions for me?

Yeah

Ok, go for it

So... [picks up the list of questions and turns the recorder to point at me] How long have you lived in Sheffield? [She laughs]

Erm, are you serious??

Yeah

Ok [I laugh]

I'll not ask you any of those questions cos I think, I don't know if you're bored with it or not. [She laughs]

No no, I'm ok with any questions that people want to ask, cos, like, you know, like fair enough.

I just wanna know more about you, you can turn off the recorder now if you're-

No no no, I'm cool, like what do you wanna know specifically?

Like, tell me your life story [she laughs]

My life story, goodness me.

(Laila, 25, Manchester)

When she initially turned the recorder to face me, and asked the first question, I recall feeling thrown off by the role reversal that she enacted. Yet in that movement the dynamics of the interview were made apparent, as well as the space that I had been afforded throughout the conversations I had with other Black Muslim women. Despite my attempts to share my own life experiences throughout the interviews, I still had the choice to decide when to speak and when to take a step back and just listen. This is not to say that participants could not choose when or how they wanted to share their own experiences (as evinced by Laila's short responses to the questions posed prior to the role reversal). However, the power that the interviewer has when asking questions and choosing when to share answers should be exposed.

Through this role reversal, Laila set boundaries to the type of interactions she was willing to have with me, and responded as much or as little as she wanted through her positioning as interviewer. For me, it was in answering questions as the interviewee that the substantial part of the interview with Laila took place. As the information that I wanted (and needed) for this project was still achieved, my commitment to an ethics of caring needs to be situated within the benefits that I could (or would) receive from these academic institutions as the primary name attributed to producing knowledge about Black Muslim women. These ethics exist within wider relations of how academic knowledge is produced, and yet dialogue allows for those relations to be exposed within understandings of the research process.

This interaction with Laila illustrates some of the complexities that I hoped to pay attention to through the framework of dialogue. Our interactions within the interviews are reflected upon as a part of the way we interact with different bodies across a diversity of spaces. Through my use of dialogue, I could discuss the dynamics of the research relationship in relation to my ethical grounding. This was also developed through the use of clothes journals, which are discussed below.

2.5.2 Clothes journal

As I wanted to highlight the shifting presentations that Black Muslim women engaged with, it was necessary to find a method that exposed the changes in our clothing practices. Initially I had considered using wardrobe research where participants spoke through the different garments that they had accumulated in their wardrobes. This is a method that is well-established in research on clothing practices (e.g. Cwerner, 2001; Klepp and Bjerck, 2014; Skov, 2011; Woodward, 2005), and appeared to suit the needs of this project. Yet it was not the storage of different clothes that I wanted to explore: rather it was how 'dressing involves not only individual preferences but fundamental cultural competencies' (Woodward, 2005: 23).

Clothes journals highlighted the changes in clothing practices, and assisted in exploring these 'cultural competencies' through Interview 2. They were an innovative method designed specifically for research on the presentations of bodies across a multitude of spaces. It pushed against the fixing of Black Muslim women as Other or as fixed to the wearing of a headscarf. The use of clothes journals to highlight a number of different

presentations opened the possibility of researching how Black Muslim women's clothing practices altered in relation to different spaces.

As was previously stated, digital applications (i.e. WhatsApp, sms or email) were used, and the format of the clothes journals was dependent on the application participants used most frequently. For most participants, this meant the clothes journals became a (temporary) part of their everyday routine.¹⁷ It meant that the research relationship could be developed over a longer period of time rather than solely through the face to face interactions.

This distance from face to face interactions made the clothes journal comparable (at times) to the use of participant diaries, as participants often shared other details about their lives in between recording the different clothes being worn (see Khadijah's clothes journal in Appendix E). According to Meth and McClymont (2009: 915), this distance 'facilitates a more open approach as the writer has the time, space and privacy to consider what it is they wish to share.' This also furthered my interest in working with participants to see how they interacted with different performances (and boundaries) across different spaces.

The potential within clothes journals was illustrated through the WhatsApp conversation between Hind and I. She used this line of communication to reflect on how her clothing practices had been formed through her relationship with her body:

Btw there are things I realised about how I dress that I'd completely forgotten. Including main reason I covered up so much was also a deep insecurity about my shape: super skinny ankles and wrists to a totally disproportionate & wide middle [...]. Now, learning to accept more, love my black figure & learn that different clothes suit different people - so take my time & am more forgiving with shopping.

Maybe you didn't need to know any of that... but thought you might. Good night, be messaging tomorrow.

Thanks for sharing this - (if you feel like it) I would be really interested in talking some more to you about body image and the different concerns we all face regarding the 'ideal' body and trying to unlearn that.

(Hind, 26, Manchester)

Through the clothes journal, there was room for Hind to reflect on my motivations and our interactions and come back to clarify her own words in light of those considerations. The use of these digital applications continued the dialogues that we had through the interviews.

However, even whilst the clothes journals provided an innovative example of engaging with clothing practices, the use of a digital medium also meant negotiating other

¹⁷ At times, participants forgot to record the different clothes worn, and so the beginning of Interview 2 was used to piece together what they had worn and where they had gone over the past 4 days.

boundaries around how to describe/show their bodies. Other than sending a daily reminder to share their clothing practices, I left it to the participants to decide *how* to describe their clothing practices. This meant that both images and written descriptions were used depending on what participants were comfortable with.

It is important to note the different ways that participants chose to present their clothing practices within the clothes journal. Due to her personal understanding of being and performing a Muslim identity, Asiya preferred to describe what she wore rather than taking images that could be seen by a wider and unknown audience (see Appendix D). Zainab and Sahra were happy to take some pictures but made decisions about which images could be used for the project, and which were only for my point of reference. Meanwhile, Khadijah (see Appendix E) and Mistura sent images with their faces already cropped out. Through these decisions about who can see one's body, participants negotiated how to re-present their bodies. Working with participants to decide which audiences could see which clothing practices provided another fount of knowledge about how these performances are negotiated in relation to different spaces.

By working with participants when exploring their presentations, we began to address the knowledges that frame the lives of Black Muslim women. This task was continued through my re-engagement with the interview transcripts and the clothes journals when writing the dissertation. This process of research analysis is discussed below.

2.6 Research Analysis

Through my continued engagement with the interviews and clothes journals, I return to Noxolo's (1999) concern about the imbalance in engagements with dialogue for researchers and interviewees. As one of my aims is to centre the voices of Black Muslim women as knowledge producers rather than 'data' to be mined, the centrality of the researcher's role in the process of analysis must be exposed. After all, it is still my voice as the researcher that 'decided what was significant, how it was significant, and how it should be discussed' within the context of this PhD (Pizarro, 1998: 59).

This makes the ethical foundation of this project all the more important. I was not just concerned with researching Black Muslim women because of their absence from academic discourses that claimed to include their experiences. Rather, it was a desire to correct the inequity produced through this absence. Jennifer Nash sums this up:

[... My] own intellectual and political allegiance is always going to be to women of colour, not just as theoretical objects or rhetorical strategies, but as material and fleshy bodies whose actual beings need to be accounted for seriously by academia. My own investment is in these bodies as locations of wisdom, experience, and knowledge – that's where my own anti-subordination commitments are located (Falcón and Nash, 2015: 9).

It is this commitment to anti-subordination that contextualises my analysis, and the themes that I was curious in unpicking. I was interested in the differences in our

narratives and the way Black Muslim women illustrate a diversity of experiences beyond the homogenising of Black (and/or) Muslim women.

This was also reflected in the images that I use to illustrate different clothing practices within different chapters. Initially I was concerned with how these pictures might re-focus this project on what Black Muslim women happen to wear, ironically fulfilling the chapter's opening anxiety about using images to hang brown bodies on white walls. Yet whenever images are used, they are part of a larger project of challenging the hypervisibility of Black (and) Muslim bodies rather than re-fixing Black Muslim women as a homogeneous grouping. This speaks back to the secondary role of clothes journals in relation to the narratives shared and built through the interview process.

Challenging processes that homogenise and fix Black Muslim women was central throughout the different stages of research analysis.

This builds on what has previously been stated regarding the uses of critical narrative analysis as a crossover between narrative and critical discourse approaches to analysis (Souto-Manning, 2014). Whilst the narrative approach is useful in examining 'how individuals accounted for themselves and their experiences' (Burck, 2005: 258), it is less effective in examining how these narratives speak to wider discourses.

Alternatively, critical discourse analysis is useful due to its focus on how different discourses produce (and are produced by) our social contexts (Aguinaldo, 2012; Burck, 2005; Davies and Harré, 1990). However, this form of analysis can remain at an abstract level, which runs counter to this project's aim of centring the everyday lived realities of Black Muslim women in Britain. The critical narrative approach uses the strengths of both these analytical approaches: it holds onto the everyday narratives of Black Muslim women whilst recognising how these narratives are built by (and build) wider social discourses.

This is reflected in my mode of analysis: interviews and transcripts were first coded for more descriptive themes which were then re-analysed for their relationship to wider discourses. However, it was these descriptive codes that frame the following chapters on the clothing practices of Black Muslim women (through the focus on home, prayer and work). This teased out the differences in performances that Black Muslim women engaged in, whilst also illustrating how different discourses come in and out of focus within these narratives. Through this, the analysis feeds into the wider task of exploring how Black Muslim women present their bodies when encountering many different bodies, objects and spaces.

2.7 Conclusions

This chapter was developed from my use of intersectionality as an anti-subordination analytic that centres those often erased or marginalised from the categorisations that are meant to define our lived experiences. Such a framing of intersectionality has informed my contributions to how research (on the clothing practices of Black Muslim women) should be conducted. I have used this chapter to set up the ethics that are

important to this project, and how these ethics have been embedded into each stage of the research process (i.e. research design, methods and analysis).

The use of double-consciousness as a methodological tool is an example of how ethics is embedded throughout this project. It is also an important contribute to research methodologies: this develops a language for how to research the experiences of those positioned as racialized Others. It is in recognising the relationships had to this Self/Other binary that I centre the experiences of Black Muslim women. Through this, Black Muslim women are not fixed as Others (to a white Self that could never be achieved): rather, they are centred as people who are *negotiating* these processes of Othering.

Although this theoretical refocusing is valuable in and of itself, it also has practical consequences. This relationship to processes of Othering is explored in greater detail through the focus placed on the research relationships built with participants. Once we move beyond fixing Black (and) Muslim women as objectified and researched Others to the white academic Self, it is necessary to use tools that highlight Black Muslim women as knowledge producers. This includes disrupting the distance assumed between the researcher and the researched by reflexively using terms like us and we. On a broader note, this includes recognising and exploring how knowledge is produced through the interactions had in research relationships. Through these research relationships, participants and I were communicating how to present ourselves across different spaces (including the spaces that clothes journals and interviews were taking place within).

Both the interviews and the clothes journals were used because of how they assisted in communicating different aspects of the clothing practices of Black Muslim women. By using interviews (based on Black feminist dialogue), the interviewee and I were able to share similarities and differences across our clothing practices and experiences of being Black Muslim women. Through these interactions, we stitched together how Black Muslim women's identities were performed (and shifted) through clothing practices.

Clothes journals were also an innovative and important contribution to researching how presentations are developed across multiple spaces. These journals focused on the fluidity of our presentations, facilitating a move away from fixing Black Muslim women as attached to specific public performances. Highlighting the changing clothing practices of Black Muslim women enabled a reflection on the different spaces that Black Muslim women negotiate in everyday movements.

It is these methods that helped to build an exploration into a diversity of performances. However, the following empirical chapters are not focused solely on what Black Muslim women happen to wear: it is the ethical considerations developed through this chapter that informs how to address this research focus whilst ensuring that Black Muslim women are centred as people rather than racialized and objectified Others throughout this thesis.

These principles are used to explore comfort in the following interlude. Interlude I reframes research on comfort by centring Black Muslim women as bodies that are positioned as a source of society's discomfort. This begins a discussion about home spaces and the different experiences of comfort that Black Muslim women negotiate.

Interlude I: Comfort

This interlude sets up an understanding of comfort (as an affective encounter) that is used throughout the dissertation. I work through comfort in relation to Black Muslim women in Britain who are positioned as a source of society's discomfort. This focuses on how comfort is relational to our visibility as deviant from an unmarked norm.

Historically, comfort has been theoretically intertwined with the concept of home. Within this context, the home was imagined as providing 'a sense of place and belonging in an increasingly alienating world' (Brickell, 2012: 225). This imaginary of the home was complicated by feminists who challenged whether the home as a workplace for many women could provide the same comfort that was assumed within binary masculinist understandings of the home vs. work or private vs. public.¹⁸ Even as this challenged understandings of the different social processes embedded in experiences of home, there was a limited examination of the different ways in which comfort (as the affective experience of belonging in an 'alienating world') might function differently for people who are living within the same household.¹⁹

When unpacking the potential within comfort, I begin with Ahmed's work on the cultural politics of this emotion.

Comfort is about an encounter between more than one body, which is the promise of a 'sinking' feeling. It is, after all, pain or discomfort that return one's attention to the surfaces of the body as *body*. To be comfortable is to be so at ease with one's environment that it is hard to distinguish where one's body ends and the world begins. One fits, and by fitting, the surfaces of bodies disappear from view (Ahmed, 2014a: 147, emphasis in original).

Within this, there is a limited understanding of the different modalities of comfort. I argue that the production of a 'sinking' feeling speaks to a particular form of comfort that is closely associated with the unmarked white male body. This normative body 'comes to matter through the reduction of other bodies to matter out of place (=strange bodies)' (Ahmed, 2000: 52). The sinking feeling or understanding that one 'fits' speaks to a public comfort that is inaccessible to those who are positioned as deviant (and marked) from the unmarked norm. Indeed, part of feeling that one fits includes seeing those that are expelled as Other to the imagined Self.

The pain/discomfort from this process of Othering that 'returns one's attention to the surfaces of the body' (Ahmed, 2014a: 147) could also be understood in relation to the register of the nation as an imagined (white) body: one's visibility as outside this national body is connected to a positioning as the source of society's discomfort. In

¹⁸ There has also been a wider challenge to this conceptualisation of home launched by academics in geographies of sexuality (e.g. Gorman-Murray, 2006; Johnston and Valentine, 1995).

¹⁹ Wise (2000) has attempted to de-couple the process of home-making from the home as house structure, but this remains within the logic of the home as a potential site for comfort when this needs to be expanded beyond the home.

2006, Jack Straw (a former British House of Commons Leader & ex-Foreign Minister) illustrated this by explaining his decision to ask Muslim women wearing burqas to 'lift the veil' when meeting him as part of his constituency (Straw, 2006). Straw argued, "if we bumped into each other in the street, you would be able to say hello to me. I would not be able to do the same. The obvious reason is that I cannot see your face. Chance conversations make society stronger" (Straw cited in Ahmed, 2014b). The 'chance conversations' necessary for social cohesion are imagined as impossible because of the difference which the burqa-wearing Muslim woman represents. As Ahmed (2014b) points out, 'discomfort becomes the basis of a political demand: for the white body to be comfortable, others must unveil.'²⁰

By expanding this understanding beyond that of public comfort, I move emotional geographies forward through paying attention to the power dynamics that produce these geographies. As Tolia-Kelly (2006a: 215) points out, 'a body that is signified as a source of fear through its markedness cannot be free to affect and be affected similarly to one that is not.' Tolia-Kelly charges both affective and emotional geographies with flattening out the differences across bodies when investigating emotions/affect.²¹ In doing so, little attention is paid to how emotions/affect would take on different meanings dependent on the bodies, objects and spaces that are encountering one another. By interrogating the different modalities of comfort, I push for research to pay attention to the complexities of power that are entangled with emotional geographies.

This also works to re-imagine the spaces commonly divided across the public/private binary. Although this binary has already been challenged for its deficiencies by feminist researchers (Brickell, 2012; Gorman-Murray, 2006), the centring of these affective relationships illustrates the way these spaces are 'constructed out of movement, communication and social relations which always [stretch] beyond it' (Massey cited in Brickell, 2012: 226). This avoids binary divisions wherein public spaces are represented as devoid of the emotions whilst private spaces are feminised (Anderson and Smith, 2001).

This is particularly important for Black Muslim women as the rationalising of the public sphere goes along with a universalising project that remains within a logic of neutralised whiteness. Such a logic is incapable of addressing the function of power dynamics when experienced by those who are racially marked as part of society's (broadly defined) Other (Tolia-Kelly, 2006a). The pursuit of the function of these emotions is part of a larger move within emotional geographies to recast

²⁰ Comparisons could be drawn to the decision in France to ban Muslim women from wearing burkinis at beaches, infamously enforced in August 2016 when a Muslim woman was told to remove her clothing by armed police officers whilst onlookers applauded (Quinn, 2016).

²¹ Although I recognise the differences between affective and emotional geographies (see Pile, 2010), both speak to this inability to understand the processes of racialisation that are a central part of the production of the body and the fluidity of emotions/affect.

understandings of the commonplace public/private binary (Harding and Pribram, 2002; Thien, 2005).²²

From here, there are broader questions on how bodies that are marked as (visibly) deviant might experience comfort. Noble (2005) introduces this when asking how bodies that represent the source of society's discomfort negotiate a sense of comfort. Under what conditions do we experience comfort in our surroundings, and how might this differ from Ahmed's theorisation of public comfort?

In answering this, it is important to reflect on how comfort and visibility are intertwined. This is evident within the definition provided by Ahmed: one's ability to find this ease is tied to an ability to sink into one's surroundings as unmarked by social normative discourses. Ahmed (2014a) illustrates this by considering those outside the comfort (and power) embedded in heteronormativity: discomfort is produced through one's visibility as outside the assumption of heterosexuality e.g. through questions that misgender the person one is in a relationship with. For Black Muslim women, our bodies mark us as visible and our relationship to comfort is intimately connected with how we perceive our bodies' visibility (see Interlude III). For Mistura that meant that:

Nowadays I'm just more comfortable with my abayas. I really am. It's part of who I am now. It doesn't necessarily show you're a Muslim, I suppose. But for me, it does. That has become more and more important. There's no mistaking. There's no getting around it. This is who I am.

(Mistura, 51, Manchester)

The abaya thus signifies a boundary around her body that is intimately connected with her desired presentation as visibly Muslim. Mistura embraces this boundary around the body and uses it to pre-empt interactions with bodies and audiences around her: she presents herself as visibly and consciously Muslim ('There's no getting around it'). Comfort is thus associated with her visibility as Muslim and not with sinking into one's surroundings. This is done whilst recognising how such visibility can be attached to processes of stigmatisation. However, rather than moving away from such a performance, she embraces this visibility as Muslim and puts forth her own understanding of her visibility that includes being recognised through her abayas to 'show you're a Muslim.'

That is not to say that there is always this desire to embrace this specific form of visibility as a Muslim body. The wider point here is that we find ways to get comfortable when negotiating the visibility of our bodies across different spaces. Sally illustrates this when explaining why she felt comfortable wearing an abaya in the mosque but not in the city centre.

I think it's because it's a place at the mosque where there's lots of Muslims and they'll judge you more if you're wearing something

²² Thien (2005) also provides a convincing argument against a 'Thriftian' affective geography that constructs affect as more than just the 'nice and cuddly' emotions that are assumed to be the remit of emotional geographies (Thrift, 2004: 58).

other than an abaya or a skirt. But then in town, I think people don't really-- because there's more different people than just Muslims and it's okay because they're not really thinking why you're wearing jeans and not an abaya.

So what would make you feel uncomfortable in the city centre?

Leggings or--

Yeah, you mentioned. Do you think you'd wear an abaya in the city centre?

No.

No? Why?

I don't usually wear that to school, I wear jeans or skirt. But I don't wear abaya to school and I don't wear it into town or other places. I think it just depends on where you're going and who you're going to see.

(Sally, 18, Sheffield)

This perception of visibility differs depending on 'where you're going and who you're going to see.' Both Mistura and Sally speak of an understanding of how Black Muslim women are made visible, but their negotiations differ. For Mistura, comfort is possible by situating herself further within her religious performances as Muslim, embracing 'who I am.' Meanwhile, Sally negotiates a comfort that is relational to different perceived audiences. In both cases, the process of getting comfortable is intertwined with recognising the audiences that one is interacting with and developing clothing practices that establish the desired presentation of one's visibility.

Therefore, less focus should be placed on comfort as enabling 'the surfaces of bodies [to] disappear from view' (Ahmed, 2014a: 147). Rather, comfort is seen in the possibilities of navigating around the stigmatization constructed as a part of certain forms of visibility. This speaks to work by Mir (2009; 2011) and Ryan (2011) that focuses on the manoeuvres Muslim women make in order to negotiate stigmatization whilst also critiquing the capacity of certain bodies to access public comfort. In maintaining a boundary around one's body (particularly for daily abaya and headscarf wearers like Mistura), one negotiates tropes associated with being visibly Muslim. This includes negotiating the stigma associated with the presentation of one's body through these clothing practices (or through one's visibility as a Black body). Comfort is not an absolute or 'easy' state that is reached, but about the negotiation of these different perceptions of visibility to develop a presentation that is felt to reflect one's desired interactions across these spaces.

From here, I look to understand how the stigma associated with these forms of visibility might be negotiated when Black Muslim women create more room to engage with a desired presentation of one's body. This draws from Ahmed's (2014c) work on wiggling:

I have been thinking of social categories as rooms, as giving residence to bodies. Some social categories might be experienced as roomier than others. When I think of roominess, I think of wiggle

room. Often, it is a most affectionate thought. I think of shoes that in being roomy, allow my toes to wiggle about. I think of less roomy shoes, and I think of my toes with sadness and sympathy: they would be cramped, less able to wiggle. Less wiggle room: less freedom to be; less being to free.

The cramped shoes can be contrasted with the boundary constructed through the multi-dimensional hijab (discussed by Mernissi, 1991). Although both imply a particular form of bodily space that has been enclosed, the functions of the boundaries differ. The former is a boundary in existence because of social categorisations that cramps space, achieving this sensation of less freedom to be. The hijab sets a boundary around one's body that enables one to move within and across different spaces by mobilising a particular form of privatisation around the body. Problems occur when these two boundaries overlap and the clothing practices represented through this multi-dimensional hijab are stigmatised or enforced. These situations necessitate a wiggling to create more 'freedom to be,' wherein one looks to present the clothed body within a performance of visibility that feels less cramped by the social categorisation that can fix one's visible body as deviant.

In thinking through wiggle room, Ahmed (2014c) works through a '*corporeal wilfulness*' wherein 'you have to be less accommodating if you are to persist in being who you are being' as it is your being that is positioned as deviant. I expand this to reflect on how the use of boundaries around one's body to negotiate different spaces and gazes can be a form of wiggling.

I connect Ahmed's (2014c) work with Alloula's (1986: 13) work on how, to the colonial photographer, the Algerian women's veil signified 'an injunction of no trespassing upon this space, and it extends it to another space, the one in which the photographer is to be found: public space.' In establishing a boundary around what can and cannot be seen by the photographer, there is a move to create different types of room to be across the gazes that we negotiate. Our presentations are not confined within a particular visibility of one's body as deviant. Wiggling means negotiating comfort in relation to the different spaces we move through.

This is what Cookie does when she speaks of manoeuvring between different spaces through her clothing, and her decision to avoid wearing a headscarf when confronted with the immigration services. We discussed her negotiation of the headscarf when returning to the UK following her trip to Nigeria and the news coverage of 'Jihadi John' (Casciani, 2015).

It depends on the atmosphere. If I'm in Nigeria [...], if I was going up North, I'd obviously dress differently because they're a bit more conservative as well. But typically the things that actually dramatically change the way I would dress and what I would be comfortable with is if I was going to the airport and the discussion at the time. Because I just always try to distance myself from it, because I feel like if I get caught in the fire I'm going to be described in very degrading ways that is far from who I am. I just don't want to be part of it and [...] it's just the way of doing the minority time

in Nigeria. You don't fight when police come up to your car and then go in peace. So I've always had that mentality in my head, like do what they need you to do even if it makes you unhappy. Do it, go, when you've left the space, do whatever you want to do. Do what's you. But don't be in that situation where you're having to fight for something that they should understand but they choose not to.

(Cookie, 28, Sheffield)

For Cookie, comfort was not limited to the material layers worn around the body: it was about finding ways to manoeuvre through various spaces where she recognises her body becoming visible as deviant. Cookie deals with those spaces by layering those performances with that of other spaces where there is more room to be (i.e. to 'do what's you': layering is returned to in Interlude II). Wiggling negotiates different ways to be in relation to those spaces that are felt to include 'less roomy' social categorisation.

That is not to say that this process of distancing is always done from a place of ease: after all, Cookie recognises the performance she engages with as a difficult (or 'unhappy') negotiation that she must use. Yet the alternative would include negotiating one's body being perceived as visible 'in very degrading ways that is far from who I am.' Faced with these options, Cookie performs a presentation that enables a form of comfort through the distance it creates from a visibility that is seen as degrading.

Contrary to Holliday's (1999: 489) conceptualisation of comfort as 'an easy, unthinking state' that is eventually reached, this highlights how comfort is shifting and relational to multiple experiences of being, including experiences where one recognises one's body as having less freedom to be. This problematizes any iteration of comfort/discomfort that mimics the public/private binary. Constructing comfort as oppositional to discomfort (something that both Holliday and Ahmed do) is unrealistic and inaccessible, even to those identified (or unmarked) through their access to public comfort. Cookie's negotiation illustrates how comfort is relational to where one negotiates the least cramped space accessible to her visible body. That is not to say that one becomes unaware of the social categories that inform our experiences of visibility. Rather, I understand comfort through what it can indicate about our movement and construction of spaces and audiences that we encounter.

In exemplifying how this might function, I return to consider the home and its entanglement with the concept of comfort. By focusing on comfort as relational, we can also understand different people's construction of the home as expanding beyond the structure of the house. Cookie explains her ability to 'do whatever you want to do' from within the context of home by speaking to different performances of normativity engaged with outside of her imagination of home.

Since it's confidential, [at home] I would just be joggers – like the way I'm dressed right now – and a chunky sweater, and not wear a bra [she chuckles]

Yeah – why, you know? Who am I impressing?

Yeah, it's not just about who I'm impressing, it's just that it's a release from having to hold them up every day [both laugh]. It's tiring sometimes. So I'm just comfortable the way I am dressed really. Or like a kaftan or like a boubou, or when it's hot, tie a wrappa, or be in my knickers and a bra and just sit down in front of the TV and just **be me**.

(Cookie, 28, Sheffield)

Both Cookie and I illustrate how these gendered performances are maintained as we negotiate a comfort through distancing our bodies from a visibility as deviant from normative behaviour. In recognising the spaces where one 'has to' (according to Cookie) 'impress' (according to me), we discuss performances that are outside of these rules of engagement. This is done through constructing a home space where this 'release' is possible.

For Cookie, the home becomes associated with a place where one can 'just **be me**.' This ability to just be involves engaging with a number of clothing practices that become possible within the boundary constructed around home. There are vastly different styles and clothing practices represented through the boubou, wrappa, kaftan and underwear, the first two being illegible to those outside cultural contexts that Cookie sees herself as a part of. These are worn through a comfort produced within the particular context of home. However, comfort within these clothes is also related to how the same presentation could produce a discomfort when outside of the home. This is not to say that this experience of comfort within the home is any more legitimate as a comfortable performance than the use of bras in public spaces. Rather, both unpack the social processes that inform our presentations across these spaces. Comfort unpacks the way we negotiate our visibility and the boundaries around our bodies.

This section has explored the modalities of comfort by examining how those marked as a source of society's discomfort (i.e. the strange 'Other' to society's 'Self') might experience comfort. I focus on how comfort can be established through boundaries around one's body and how a sense of discomfort is produced through the visibility of one's body as deviant. In focusing on the work that these boundaries do, I adapt Ahmed's concept of wiggling to understand how comfort is produced in relation to the different presentations that we engage with. Chapter 3 draws from this understanding of comfort to explore how the home speaks to different boundaries around the body and the audiences that are negotiated through different clothing practices.

Chapter 3 Home clothing

3.1 Introduction

First thing I do is take off the hijab and **change**. And change, wash my face and change, usually it's pjs cos my days are really long.

(Khadijah, 24, lives with parents and sisters)²³

When returning home, Khadijah emphasizes this need to 'take off the hijab and **change**.' There is a particular comfort experienced within the house structure that necessitates the removal of the 'hijab' (i.e. headscarf) and make-up so that her body can move within pjs. In changing her clothes, Khadijah encourages an examination of how the home is constructed through this change in bodily presentations. This builds on a point previously made in Chapter 1 regarding the limitations of research on (Black) Muslim women. Whilst there is significant research on how Black (and) Muslim bodies are (re)presented, this research is predominantly focused on how our bodies' visibility is negotiated within public spaces (e.g. Dwyer, 2008; Fanon, 2008[1952]; Mirza, 2013; Simmonds, 1997; Tarlo, 2007b). It is within this context that Simmonds (1997: 231) explores how 'in this white world, the Black body, my body, is always on display.' Although such research has been vital to furthering understandings around the visibility of Black bodies, it also misses the different ways Black (and) Muslim bodies might be presented as visible or 'on display' within the home. By changing into her pjs, there is a move to present her body within a construction of home. How do experiences of home alter the presentation of Black Muslim women's bodies, and what are the implications of this? How do the boundaries constructed around home inform a more nuanced understanding of what it means to be 'on display?'

In answering these questions, I extend the work in Interlude I in developing comfort as an analytic. It is the boundaries constructed around home that will be used to illustrate the different functions of comfort. This explores the sensations negotiated when getting home and changing into pjs and washing off the day's make-up. It is Asiya who illustrates this affective relationship between comfort and the home when discussing how she feels if she remains in her work clothes after coming home.

When I'm still in my work clothes I don't feel like I'm fully relaxed cos I'm still in my outdoor mode. Like, when I wear an abaya that to me, I'm going out. So, wearing one at home I feel like I'm going somewhere, and I don't want to so... relax.

(Asiya, 23, lives with mother and sisters)

The temporality of this performance (i.e. coming home meaning no longer being in 'outdoor mode') does not mean that one stops negotiating different gazes; the home is still 'a turbulent sea of constant negotiation rather than simply some haven for the self' (Miller cited in Brickell, 2012: 226). This chapter offers an opportunity to explore the different ways Black Muslim women construct and perform notions of home. This

²³ This chapter describes the other members of a participant's household to highlight how clothing practices and boundaries around the home are negotiated in relation to these bodies.

includes the production of comfort through the use of 'mismatched,' 'sexy' and 'national' garments. Within each of these labels, there is a wiggling to push at social norms by creating boundaries around the body whilst our bodies are also firmly located within these social performances. This highlights a fraught relationship between the regulation of performances and the way these social processes are pushed against, creating room for slippage (Butler, 1990; Gregson and Rose, 2000). This particular relationship is examined through the boundaries constructed around the home, as well as the edges or boundaries of constructions of home.

In asking (and answering) what is being performed within Black Muslim women's understandings of home, I develop Goffman's (1959) description of the possibilities within a believable performance. The focus is not only on who these performances are being made believable for, but on the context and social processes within which these performances are taking place.

To explore this, the chapter has been structured as follows. First, I focus on the process of getting home and set up an understanding of the boundaries around one's body constructed through the hijab. Second, I discuss what is being worn within the home, opening a discussion around which audiences are being negotiated within the home and the role of mismatching clothes in bringing together performances across nationalisms. This conversation is continued in the third section which focuses on who sees what at home (and how these audiences can be negotiated through wiggling). Finally, I focus on the boundaries around the home that are felt through movements in and out of the home space, and what that means for the presentation of our bodies, as well as our construction of home.

3.2 Getting home and the dimensions of the hijab

It's like, a transition. I get home, I take this off [the abaya] straight away, I take my hijab off, I take this like shirt off and then I wear what's underneath, and then, I take my shoes off and then my socks. [...] And then I get upstairs, and then I take my hair out of the bauble and then I'm like, I throw my bags down, and then I eat something, I'm still wearing this, and then I go upstairs and then I put my house clothes on.

(Sahra, 19, lives with mother and sisters)

Sahra's reflection on changing when coming home speaks directly to commonplace understandings of how clothing practices change as people (whether Muslim or not) move through different spaces. Despite these changes, research on Muslim women is overwhelmingly focused on the headscarf and its role within public spaces (as was stated in Chapter 1). This fixes Muslim women's visibility within public spaces without exploring what it means for Muslim women to reach (what Asiya notes to be) 'the end of the day.' As Sahra re-orientates her body towards being 'at home,' her clothing shifts to meet this ideal. The headscarf and abaya that are a vital part of Sahra's presentation outside of this construction of home are removed, and a different boundary around the body is put in place.

It is through this idea of boundary that Mernissi (1991) theorizes the concept of hijab as a form of territorialisation with three dimensions (visual, spatial and ethical). As was stated in Chapter 1, Mernissi (1991) and Hamzeh (2011) challenge the way research on Muslim women uses the hijab interchangeably with other terms like headscarf or 'veil.'²⁴ In Mernissi's understanding of hijab, the boundary which it signifies is not specifically constructed through one's gender.

However, some of the Black Muslim women interviewed (including Sahra in the quote that opened this section) also used hijab and headscarf interchangeably. The cloth of the headscarf is thus entwined with the hijab's construction as a gendered territorialisation around the body. This boundary around an implicitly female body speaks to the way these boundaries are performed through a pre-existing gendered language, even within a context where we hope to establish our own boundaries around our bodies.

By complicating the relationship between clothing practices and the multi-dimensional hijab, I also challenge static interpretations of clothing practices (e.g. the headscarf or abaya) that are a part of public performances for some Black Muslim women. As Sahra moves into her home, the hijab shifts and is represented through the different rooms within her house rather than her abaya or headscarf. In removing these clothes, the abaya and headscarf are understood as doing more than simply signifying her body as 'visibly Muslim.' Through these garments, Sahra works to establish a boundary around her body that enables her to move through public space. This is comparable to the way the boundary around her house enables a particular form of movement through her construction of home.

Contextualising the different ways Black Muslim women present their bodies enables an exploration into how comfort is negotiated through different boundaries, and specifically (within this chapter) through our construction of home. As Sahra, Asiya and Khadijah become more at home, the clothing practices used to negotiate a boundary around their bodies change and are represented through the house and 'home' clothing. This extends an understanding of how Black Muslim women experience the limitations and potential of comfort when negotiating different social codes. I build from Interlude I by exploring how wiggling creates room beyond (and yet also in relation to) the social categories that perpetuate the technologies used to present our bodies. This questions what kind of comfort is being negotiated through the boundaries that we construct around our bodies.

For Sahra, the boundary around home enables a comfort in the shedding of clothes used 'outdoors' and the wearing of 'house clothes. This distinction between presentations opens up questions about what 'house clothes' can do that 'outdoor clothes' cannot do. It is within this boundary of home that house clothes enable Sahra

²⁴ Although such a discussion is beyond the scope of this dissertation, the term 'veil' has its own political connotations that must be troubled 'for its association with Orientalist imagery' (El Guindi, 2000: xi).

to feel her body 'sinking into' her construction of home. To explore the work that these house clothes do, I use the following section to ask this deceptively simple question: what do we wear at home?

3.3 What do we wear at home?

This section details some of the different performances that are negotiated through boundaries constructed around the home. First, I speak to the role of the shiid amongst the participants of Somali heritage, and the way experiences and constructions of home alter as we get older and negotiate adult femininities. Second, I begin to discuss mismatching, a process that illustrates the fluidity (and constraints) of our clothing practices through negotiations of home(s).

3.3.1 *The shiid: signalling adult femininity*

It was the shiid (see figure 1) that was consistently discussed as something to wear within the home for participants of Somali heritage. This opens up conversations about the performance of femininity and wearing of 'national' garments within the house structure.

The shiid was often brought over in batches by family who had gone to Somalia or the Middle East. Participants spoke of the change in clothing from wearing other pyjamas to the wearing of national garments, as a part of growing up and being positioned as an adult. It is telling that Aqua, as the youngest daughter in her family, spoke of her mother disliking her wearing the shiid as 'she says I look 50 years older than I am.' Within this, the shiid was reflected upon as separate from other home clothing like pyjama pants and a t-shirt: it becomes a signifier of a process of national identification that one participates in as a Somali woman, assisting in the construction of a Somali identity within the home.²⁵



Figure 1: A shiid (Khadijah's clothes journal, 08/11/2014)

²⁵ This speaks to research on the way the female body can be positioned as a figure of the nation (see Sharp, 1996).

Conversely, not wearing the shiid worked to distance one's body from a performance of adult femininity. This was particularly evident with Sam who was negotiating the clothing practices to be worn outside of her house with her mum. Whilst her mum thought she should start wearing abayas regularly when going outside of her home, she preferred to wear jeans. In light of these conversations, there is a similar theme apparent in the distinction Sam makes with the shiid being associated with 'older' rather than 'younger ones':

Would you ever wear like, shiids?

Oh yeah. I don't tend to wear that. That's like dresses for the old, not like, you know the age and stuff for like younger ones, and this and that. [...] I mean, once you get older, you can turn to those kind of-

-Ah ok, where you can wear those-

Yeah.

(Sam, 18, lives with mother and sisters)

By maintaining this age distinction, Sam could distance her own clothing practices from performances that she did not want to engage with. Within the boundaries around the home, there are still multiple presentations that are being negotiated alongside different audiences. Her distancing from the shiid can be read alongside her distancing from the abaya. By wearing pyjamas, she distances herself from a visibility as an 'older' Somali woman both within and outside of the home.

Through rejecting this positioning as 'old,' Sam recognises the significance of being 'older' and how this might present her body as deviant from the audiences that she feels a part of. She is thus distancing herself from national performances that are intertwined with this positioning as an 'older' woman. In choosing clothes that establish a comfort through her youth, she stakes a claim in the identity she wishes to belong within, even as this is challenged through conversations with her mother.

The role of mothers in negotiating performances of femininity highlights a broader point on how we learn to be Black Muslim women within the home, and yet also beyond this space (as will be discussed in Chapter 5). This moves forward with research on wardrobes as 'a materialisation of the identities and biography of a particular woman' (Gregson and Beale, 2004: 690; Skov, 2011). Such work does not extend an understanding of the places that these wardrobes exist within i.e. the home. The materialisation of these identities exists within a context where one is already negotiating gazes that recognise different performances as 'appropriate' or not.

This speaks to the way performances produce identities (Butler, 1990; Spillers, 1987), challenging the language of individualised agency that Goffman (1959) draws upon (Gregson and Rose, 2000). Whilst Goffman focuses on the actor's choices when engaging in 'believable' performances, Asiya illustrates how the context wherein performances are believed is in and of itself 'an articulation of power' (Gregson and Rose, 2000: 434). Within her home, Asiya reflects on her mother's positioning of her

and her sisters as 'women,' and speaks of the 'appropriate' clothing practices that they are meant to use to illustrate this womanhood:

There's, there's things that was ok when we were kids but now that we're "women" it's not ok anymore, and one of those things is dressing, in a way... not wearing a shiid. She's like, 'you're women, you need to wear them dadada,' you know, have that thing whereas when we were kids it didn't really matter

Why do you think she says that?

Because we're at a marriage age so she's, I think she thinks that if we, if we don't get used to these things now, you get married, you know, you have other fam- new family that you're gonna be around sometimes and therefore, you know, you don't wanna show yourself up by being that 'why's she wearing that in the house??' you know, that kinda thing. Cos even though most, most of the time my mum doesn't care what other people think, it does play on her mind.

(Asiya, 23, lives with mother and sisters)

Asiya illustrates an awareness of the different gazes that are felt within the context of home. In focusing on how she (and her mother) might be 'shown up' for a poor negotiation of her Somali identity, she constructs an imagination of home that involves Somali gazes who 'need to' see this performance of Somali femininity within the home. Her family's migration to Sheffield includes an awareness of the different gazes that are negotiated within Britain (wherein one's Black Muslim body is visible as deviant within public spaces). It is within this context that the shiid provides a shifting basis for national recognition amongst Somalis within the home. However, it is the possibility that this national recognition may be lost that reinforces the shiid's visibility when discussing how to navigate new family members (or rather, 'new homes').

Sam and Asiya highlight how presentations are constructed through the negotiation of multiple gazes. These gazes are both nearby and distant, embodied and disembodied. Both Sam and Asiya illustrate how these gazes are felt as we present our bodies. For Sam, this included negotiating her mother's gaze and her own desire to fit in with the 'younger' people located outside of a visibility as Muslim and Somali.²⁶ Meanwhile, Asiya was negotiating the gazes of her mother and the imagined 'new family you're gonna be around' to construct believable performances as 'Somali' within new constructions of home.

By picking up on both cases, it is evident that the role of these gazes is not straightforward in the way they inform social performances. These gazes work within an understanding of 'noisy surveillance' wherein gazes are never completely controlled and there is room 'for 'interference' and displacement of the gaze' (Robinson, 2000: 81). In understanding the function of this economy of gazes,²⁷ the construction of home

²⁶ It is interesting to note how that visibility as Muslim (through wearing an abaya in public space) and visibility as Somali (through wearing a shiid within the home) are intertwined.

²⁷ An economy of gazes refers to the valuing and devaluing of different gazes that inform our experiences of being (see Interlude III).

(and specifically, performance of home through clothing) cannot be predetermined. Its conception is reiterated through the shifting bodies, objects and spaces being negotiated.

In imagining this new home, the shiid is not stable in its role as a signifier of Somali cultural competency. By moving across different concepts of home, it is possible to see how these garments re-shape distant homes within new contexts. Although both Sam and Asiya positioned the shiid as an expression of cultural competencies, their ability/desire to engage with it was dependent on the other gazes/experiences that they encountered through (and beyond) the home. This is an example of the (challenges and possibilities in) hybridity within the boundaries of home.

I specifically pick up on hybridity because of the way home clothes – particularly home clothes that are positioned as culturally significant (like the shiid) – become worn and negotiated across multiple local and national contexts.

[... Migrant] communities use their connections to *multiple provenances* to strengthen their foundations of residency here in Britain. Their domestic sphere becomes an archive of these multiple sites, sounds and sensory textures of enfranchisement and belonging. The visual cultures which shape these new textures of home are shot through with memory of 'other' spaces of being. These ensure that material landscapes in Britain are continually remade through the aesthetics and textures of postcolonial landscapes [...] (Tolia-Kelly, 2004: 676, emphasis in original).

Although the shiid does shape new textures of home through their movement, I note the tensions embedded in what it means for these clothing practices to produce a belonging (and reframing of 'material landscapes') in Britain. After all, the shiid is significant because of its role *within* the boundaries of home, even as that home is located within Britain.

Even with these tensions, it is important to situate Britishness as 'concurrently a set of discourses, textures, narratives, histories and embodied moral politics which are intangible, yet also tangible' (Tolia-Kelly, 2006b: 342). It is the very presence of these clothing practices within Britain that expands understandings of how to be within a British home. This pushes the concept of British homes (and *Britishness*) further to include this diversity of presentations even as they are kept within particular boundaries.

The shiid's role within the boundaries constructed around home speaks to how specific gazes are imagined as seeing (and being seen by) us within the home. This adds further nuance to expanded understandings of Britishness (and Somali identity) through the use of 'national' clothing within new and different homes. How are these concepts of home built through relationships across nationalisms? I explore this further in the next section through the mismatching of clothing.

3.3.2 *Mismatching home clothing*

At home it's just like, you just wear stuff that, you just wear stuff that's comfy you know? Even if it's like a mismatch, even if it doesn't look right, even if it's weird.

(Babs, 26, lives alone)

In this recollection, Babs speaks of wearing the 'weird' within the boundaries of home. This builds on the previous section's understanding of the different functions of Britishness by focusing on the construction of the visible body. Despite finding a place wherein different forms of visibility were possible, her presentations are still understood as potentially miss-matching with one's surroundings, as that which 'doesn't look right' in relation to the somatic norm (i.e. 'the matched'). It is the ambivalence around this positioning that is explored within this section.

When understanding the relations that produce mismatching, the contexts wherein bodies (or clothes) are thought to match is brought to the forefront. Through these banal negotiations of one's body and its in/ability to 'fit' within (and beyond) the context of home, I expand on the previous discussion on belonging and Britishness. Despite the boundary constructed around home, the wearing of these clothes is still done within the context of Britain. This is comparable to Gorman-Murray's (2006) coining of the term 'unhomely homes' to describe how heteronormativity within the home was queered by the experiences of Australian gay men. Through changing the practices that are normalised within the boundaries of home, the very notion of home (and the national context wherein that home is constructed i.e. Britain and Britishness) become altered as well.

This highlights national identity as 'a relative concept always constituted through definitions of Self and Other, and always subject to internal differentiations' (Matless cited in Tolia-Kelly, 2006b: 341). However, what happens when notions of belonging are broadened out to incorporate our own mismatched experiences as the Other within the nation? It is within this context that Tolia-Kelly explores the potential for British Asians to engage with banal nationalisms within Britain.

The desire of the British Asian diaspora to attain a cultural nationalism in situ (at home) and in the everyday, are formed and communicated through materials which reflect alternative discourses of national and cultural identity of a variant *Englishness*. The diasporic community, through these material and visual cultures (at home) asserts *spaces* of connection with landscapes and sites of belonging within and without the British landscape that secure various hybrid cultures of boundedness and stabilise claims to citizenship (2006b: 345, emphasis in original).

Returning to Asiya's negotiation of the shiid (in relation to new homes), the shiid signifies an unstable performance of cultural nationalism. Asiya's (and by extension her mother's) legitimacy as 'Somali' can be called into question through the movement of these performances into the context of British homes. Importantly, this also signals the blurring of boundaries around different performances of national identifications.

This blurring of the boundaries around national performances is also reinforced through conversations had with shiid-wearers about what was worn under these garments. For Aneesa, Asiya, Khadijah and Sahra, the shiid was paired with leggings or pyjama bottoms, especially during winter when the shiid material was felt to be too thin to provide complete comfort. This was another point of conversation between Asiya and her mother, as her mother stressed the importance of wearing a shiid with a *gorgarad* (underskirt) as a part of her performance of Somali identification. In rejecting this, Asiya alters assumed 'appropriate' performances of her body through mismatching, creating room for a presentation that speaks to her own sense of comfort within her construction of home. The potential within mismatching lies in its ability to speak across contexts. In this case, there is a connection to past performances of identity that disrupt the assumed stability and distinctiveness of both Somali and British national performances. There is also a connection made to future experiences of being by manoeuvring one's body to connect and belong across both of these categorisations, necessitating an expansion of these categorisations to include these performances.

Identity, says [Stuart] Hall, belongs to the future as much as to the past. 'Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation [...].' Our role in the making of history depends on how we conceive of ourselves as active, changing subjects, in ways that generate meaningful links between 'how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves' (Ang, 2000: 1).

In pairing shiids with pyjama bottoms, Asiya moves towards developing clothing practices 'that bear on how we might represent ourselves.'

Although this reflects the potential within mismatching, it must also be understood alongside concerns that have been identified with hybridity (see Anthias, 2001; Easthope, 1998; Werbner, 2001). There are particular connotations apparent within the process of *miss*-matching that prevent the painting of an overly 'hopeful' image of the potential within this term. In order for a mismatch to be produced, there is a retention of the notion of a 'matched' body that does look right in relation to its surroundings (Anthias, 2001; Easthope, 1998). As a result of this, mismatching stays on the periphery, as the deviant from the matched, no matter how much room to move is experienced through the mismatching.

Although this presented a particular difficulty for scholars espousing hybridity as producing new subjectivities (e.g. Hall, 1996b), this is less of a concern when thinking about mismatching. Embedded in the term itself is the assumption of a brief temporality: mismatching is a moment produced through the context of power that structures these moments. Its positioning on the periphery of normative behaviour is therefore understood as the context wherein comfort can be achieved through mismatching.

Yet it is important to highlight mismatching as a tool in the production of both comfort *and* discomfort. It exposes how presentations that transgress social norms can provide (more or less) space to move within our surroundings. This builds on the work from Interlude I by illustrating how comfort is not an 'easy, unthinking state' (Holliday, 1999), but a continuous negotiation of our bodies' relations to different spaces.

Within this logic, there is also a wider question about which bodies are presumed to produce mismatches, and which ones can sink into normative national discourses. Lewis (2009), McNay (1991) and Noble (2005) all point to how 'Western' constructions of identity include the ability to incorporate 'ethnic' (read strange) differences into the positioning of the unmarked white Self as universal postmodern citizens. However, such a manoeuvre is not open to those bodies fixed as Other within this context. Returning to a quote used in Chapter 1 (albeit with a different focus):

While middle England prides itself that the nation's favourite meal is the Indo-Anglian hybrid of chicken tikka masala, and trendies demonstrate their cultural capital through the consumption of diverse cultural foods, forms and fashion styles, the British Muslim woman wearing the hijab is not presumed to be engaging in cool postmodern fashion bricolage. Instead she is likely to be essentialized as a victim of Muslim patriarchal control or as evidence of the security risk posed by Muslims' presumed lack of social/national integration (Lewis, 2009: 69).

This perpetuates an imagining of the nation wherein racialized bodies become fixed and expelled as Other to the nation's Self. This particular function of British nationalism moves from Massey's (2000; 2005) work on the multiple trajectories that construct space and time, and the ways in which certain trajectories 'can be immobilised while we proceed with our own' through 'their relegation to a past (backward, old-fashioned, archaic)' (Massey, 2005: 8). Even as the (white, British) Self becomes known through its ability to consume elements of the Other's culture, this is done within a context where the Other must remain fixed as strange/alien to the (national) Self. Mismatching recognises the way these distinctions are constituted and can potentially provide a language to negotiate it.

This is an important step taken through mismatching: it does not limit itself solely to an understanding of the body and how it might (or might not) be matched with one's surroundings. It also begins to provide tools for Black Muslim women to speak back to normative understandings wherein bodies are (or are not) matching. As part of an exchange between Aneesa and myself, a connection is formed over where the shiida should (and should not) be worn by white friends who are given these garments as gifts.

Do you, do you have these as well?

Yeah

So comfortable! Do you wear them at home?

Yeah, at like home. It is weird because, I've gotten a couple for some of my white friends and they were like "oh, we can wear them outside" and I was like "No."

[She laughs] no, no, you wear them, you wear them inside the home

Also like, I can't be giving you these things and then you wear them outside, like, you cannot be one of those white hippies, no no no no. Like, not with clothes that I know, no.

(Aneesa, 24, lives with parents and sisters)

Although my own connection to these clothing practices came from a different cultural context from that of Aneesa's, there was still a connection formed over the wearing of these garments and the comfort found through the boundary of home. A clothing practice that is understood as outside of normative performances is accepted within this conversation as a source of connection and comfort rather than deviance. Through the connection made to this garment as 'clothes that I *know*' (emphasis added), there is a looking back at the white body as mismatching these garments with surroundings. As we share an understanding of the boundaries wherein these garments can (or should) be worn, the white friends are positioned as potentially transgressing these boundaries. The 'white hippies' who take on and present these garments as part of their own 'cool postmodern fashion bricolage' (Lewis, 2009: 69) are visible and marked as deviant within this conversation. Through this, the social categories within which Black Muslim women's clothed bodies and white bodies are produced as visible are reversed, and there is an opening up of what these social categorisations could potentially mean as we move towards representing ourselves.

The experiencing of comfort through mismatching is still located within these social categories (wherein bodies can be matched). Thus mismatching works alongside wiggling: it is potentially because of the boundaries maintained around the body (through e.g. constructions of home) that room is created for these presentations to exist. Wiggling and mismatching highlight the different forms of comfort that can be achieved in relation to gazes negotiated within (and beyond) constructions of home.

In other words, the comfort that is possible through wiggling (and mismatching) is also dependent on the gazes that our bodies are feeling and negotiating. For example, both Babs and Hind noted the wearing of 'national' Sudanese garment outside of the home (in Britain) as 'impractical' or causing discomfort. What is it about these clothing practices and accompanying gazes that produces sensations of discomfort? I explore this further by considering which gazes we feel we are negotiating within this construction of home.

3.4 Who sees what at home?

This section expands on Black Muslim women's negotiation of different gazes through this construction of home. This highlights how our performances are informed by the presence of these ('imagined' and/or 'real') gazes, and how our presentation both perpetuate the dominance of particular social discourses and also resist this.

No moment of domination, in whatever form, is completely free of relations of resistance and likewise no moment of resistance, in whatever form, is entirely segregated from relations of domination: the one is always present in the constitution of the other (Sharp et al., 2000: 20).

As was stated in Chapter 1, this language of resistance vs. domination has been overplayed when referencing Muslim women (Mushaben, 2008), and I have no desire to perpetuate such work. Rather, it is wiggling that will be used to speak to this entanglement of different forms of power. This begins by exploring the 'sexy' clothing worn within the home, followed by detailing how Black Muslim women negotiate male relatives when at home.

3.4.1 *Sexy clothing*

I begin with Zainab's reflection on what she prefers to wear around the home when with her boyfriend.

Cos I don't feel comfortable like wearing long long trousers around the house? So if-

Ok why?

[...] Because it's my boyfriend I don't wanna be all covered covered because [...] he allows me to pray five time a day? I was having this conversation with my... my guy, well my Muslim brother [...] He was like, "are you sure because you don't wanna push the love, like, I'm not saying that you shouldn't go for religion, but you're so lucky to have a boyfriend that is not a Muslim but still encourages you to pray? But pushin it might be like you're pushin him away?" Kind of? [...] because he's not in that kind of religion, I feel like I have to compromise in some other way? So he doesn't feel like, "oh, she just, she just cover up every time!"

(Zainab, 21, lives with boyfriend and female housemates)

Zainab consciously performs (and wishes to be seen as part of) a dominant social narrative around femininity when dressing within the home. Through this, there is a positioning of Muslim women's bodies as static and de-sexualized (i.e. not wanting to be 'all covered covered'). This sets up her religious identification as a potential tension within her relationship, a tension that could prevent her partner from feeling close to her (i.e. 'it might be like you're pushin him away'). In order to distance herself from the labels attached to this fixed performance of Muslim femininity, she wears clothing that would enable him to see beyond the boundary set up around the body in other spaces. In doing so, these normative discourses on femininity are performed within specific boundaries: her home (or specifically, her bedroom) is constructed as a space of intimacy.

It is interesting to note the role played by the 'Muslim brother' who (through his conversation with Zainab) participates in the caricaturising and de-sexualising of Muslim women. This can be contrasted with Robinson's (2000) work on Octavia Hill's social housing in the late 19th/early 20th century. Robinson speaks of the power

dynamics between middle-class female housing managers and the working-class female tenants:

We could speculate that the subject's desire to see herself being seen or recognised as a good housewife or as a good tenant was constituted through the interaction with the housing manager [...] who personally represented the making visible of the family, home and habits of the tenant to a wider judgemental world. [...] N.Rose's account of the successes of expert knowledge and advice ring true: 'It achieves its effects not through the threat of violence or constrain, but by way of the persuasion inherent in its truths, the anxieties stimulated by its norms, and the attraction exercised by its images of life and self it offers to us' (Robinson, 2000: 84).

Through Zainab's reflection, the 'Muslim brother' is highlighted for his performance of a religiously significant identity. He acts as a signifier of both legitimate performances of religious identification and the performance of masculinity. It is in interacting with this embodied gaze that sexy clothing is embraced through 'the anxieties stimulated by its norms' (N.Rose cited in Robinson, 2000: 84). However, these practices are negotiated within the boundaries constructed around the home as a space between her and her partner. Within this, the dominant discourses that construct social norms can be understood to be both reproduced through clothing practices and resisted through a 'private' or 'intimate' construction of home.

This illustrates the agency of bodies inherent in Foucault's theorization around gazes, as 'if there are relations of power throughout every social field it is because there is freedom everywhere' (Foucault cited in Robinson, 2000: 85). It is precisely through the construction of this bounded, intimate and private space that makes room for an agentic understanding of Zainab's presentation. Allowing a partner to see and interact with a performance constructed within the boundary of home illustrates a recognition of how different bodies and gazes can and cannot be included within this space. This is done even as her performance within this boundary alters *because* of the presence of her boyfriend: after all the sexual desire that is focused upon in Zainab's re-telling of her clothing within this space is explicitly male (through her boyfriend or the Muslim brother).

This does not need to be fixed as either resistance or internalised patriarchy. Instead, it is the construction of space as intimate and 'my space' yet also for the pleasure of her boyfriend that both reproduces and resists gender norms. This mirrors research done on lingerie:

[L]ingerie is gratifying and a cause of despair: underwear beautifies the body and exposes its 'weak spots,' a new bra may intensify bodily sensations, but it can also be a straitjacket. Thus, consumption of lingerie constantly puts identity at stake by affirming, and at the same time challenging, the mental and physical integrity of the consumer. What characterizes 'a woman to the backbone' is that she enters this field of contradictions in order to control it and thereby preserves her self-image, but often she does this well aware of the fact that this image may end up controlling her (Jantzen et al., 2006: 176).

By focusing on the potential within wiggling, there is an understanding of the social norms/categories within which we attempt to find more room to be, and how pushing against these norms can be both 'gratifying and a cause of despair.' After all, in pushing against the boundaries of these social categories, one becomes aware of the ways in which one's body does not 'fit.' However, in using wiggling rather than a binary of resistance/domination, there is an explicit awareness that there are no answers to be found on either side of this binary. Rather, this ambivalent positioning enables an exploration of how we simultaneously push against and are contained within these social norms. It is this experience of wiggling that situates the performances of Umm Kareema and Umm Yusuf within this context of home:

In reality, I'm usually in pyjamas or I'm in workout clothes, or I'm in just what I call house clothes. It might be leggings and a vest or a t-shirt or something. But when I'm at home, I will wear – when my hubby's here as well, you know, I do make a conscious effort to wear stuff that is, this is a bit TMI [Too Much Information], but stuff that we can't wear outside. And I do like – I will go out and buy a nice dress or some shorts or a skirt, because you're **free** at home to dress the way that you want to dress without the fear or without the thingy of oh, people are looking at this or that and whatnot. You don't have to compromise anything. I'm in my space. And I can wear what I like. My underwear if I like [she laughs].

(Umm Yusuf, 28, lives with son and husband who works abroad)

Umm Yusuf reverses the narrative of oppression onto the non-Muslim or 'uncovered' female body within public spaces. Through an awareness of the audiences that are constructed as part of public spaces, a boundary around the home enables a different type of space to be, where one is 'free' to engage with these performances of femininity (with the 'stuff that we can't wear outside'). Although this re-centres specific normative practices of femininity, it also moves towards establishing different grounds from which one's gendered identity is repeated. The enjoyment of these clothes within the boundary of home is not solely for a patriarchal gaze, but an opportunity to look back at normalized performances of femininity.

This performance of normalised femininity is done through a boundary established around the home rather than the public spaces that require a navigation of patriarchal and colonial desires to 'unveil' the Muslim female body (Alloula, 1986). Umm Yusuf's body is known through the home in a way that troubles static and binary divisions between public performances of 'covered' and 'uncovered' female bodies as the boundaries around the Black Muslim female body and the 'stuff that we can't wear outside' interact through the home. This returns to the concept of wiggling: her 'house clothes' are constitutive of dominant normative discourses on how to dress the gendered body, even as they subvert this through the boundaries constructed through the home.

When situating this change in clothing practices, Umm Yusuf illustrates the fluidity of performances across multiple spaces. There is a recognition of the partiality of her performances within any given space and the need to stitch these together: she situates

her being across multiple spaces so that 'you don't have to compromise anything.' The mobilising of different boundaries around the body is built upon in the following section on negotiating male relatives whilst at home.

3.4.2 *Negotiating male relatives within the home*

The function of different boundaries was also reflected upon in relation to male relatives that Black Muslim women were negotiating when at home.

Because I live on my own, no one dictates what I wear. When I go **home**, I am conscious of like, I don't want to show too much leg, just it would feel awkward with my dad and brother at home. You know, they probably wouldn't care, but...

I mean why do you think you would feel awkward though?

Just because they're men at the end of the day. Even though like, obviously, they're my brother and dad so there's nothing there, but it's just that feeling of around men there's got to be a form of modesty. In my head that's kind of entwined, so I probably wouldn't wear shorts with like, you know, at my parent's home.

(Babs, 26, lives alone)

Babs' reading of bodies presented as male speaks to the way female bodies are called upon to be the guardians of modesty and repeat practices that draw from patriarchal notions of femininity (see Vance, 1989[1984]). However, Babs' use of modesty also reflect a more agentic reading of how boundaries around the body could be constructed. Modesty can be understood through the rejection of the masculine gaze to see within a space demarcated as private, illustrating the ethical dimension of the hijab (as outlined by Mernissi, 1991). This works to create a 'forbidden' area for some gazes. I pair this with Alloula's theorization of the male colonial photographer's desire to 'unveil' the Algerian woman:

Draped in the veil that cloaks her to her ankles, the Algerian woman discourages the *scopic desire* (the voyeurism) of the photographer. She is the concrete negation of this desire and thus brings to the photographer confirmation of a triple rejection: the rejection of his desire, of the practice of his "art," and of his place in a milieu that is *not his own* (Alloula, 1986: 7, emphasis added).

Alloula is referring to a gaze that is actively attempting to see beyond the veil so as to fix the Algerian woman for voyeuristic reasons, but this was not the case for the Black Muslim women interviewed. Babs (and other women like Sahra and Asiya) did not position their brothers, male cousins or fathers as engaging with this gaze of the voyeur, evident in Babs saying 'they probably wouldn't care.'

However, the focus should not be on whether this male gaze is imagined or not: I am interested in centring those who experience this gaze rather than the normative bodies assumed to be gazing (returned to in Interlude III and Chapter 5). What matters here is the negation of the ability to see within this space by denoting it as private and seeing a transgression of that boundary as uncomfortable or 'awkward.' Modesty is used to reject the power behind that gaze, to fix it as being 'in a milieu that is not his own.'

Through this move, it is possible to think of alternative spaces that become outside of this masculine ability to see within any and all spaces.

This re-emphasises the shifting comfort found within different boundaries to reflect the negotiation of different gazes. It returns to critiques of idyllic interpretations of the home as a site of comfort, and instead focuses on the movements that are made possible through relationships had with different rooms, bodies and gazes within the home (Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Brickell, 2012; Datta, 2009). The movements that are negotiated through the home reflect a complication and re-instatement of gender roles. Whilst maintaining a boundary that excludes the male gaze, there is an essentialising of gender differences (seen through Babs stating 'they are men after all').

This reflects a wider point about the making of these boundaries around the body as a performance of a particular set of gender norms. As was stated earlier, the use of the word hijab interchangeably with the headscarf shows how these gender norms function. For Liala, the boundaries that were used around her body in the presence of male relatives was also paired with some frustration:

There is only my children and me, and [in front of] my children can wear anything: short, long, cover my hair, not cover my hair. But if there is a man, five-six years ago, cousin was living with us so I had to wear something long and cover my hair all the time. Yeah.

How was that?

Really it's very difficult [I laugh]. I was not happy with all the time, sometimes [male cousin] outside and then you will forget to get them [the scarf and abaya] and when he knocks the door, you get them [the scarf and abaya] quickly. [...] so, all the time "where you are going?" Nowhere [both laugh] you know, it's not easy.

(Liala, 48, lives with daughters)

In the wearing of her scarf and abaya within the house, there was a continuous sense that one had to be going somewhere (as Asiya mentioned earlier on in this chapter). This illustrates the numerous dimensions embedded into the hijab. It functions to denote a 'forbidden' area for some audiences, but it can also be a way to position the body in preparation for negotiations made outside of the home. In using these clothes within her home, Liala expresses a frustration regarding the maintenance of these outdoor facing boundaries due to the presence of this male body. Thus the use of boundaries is not just about wiggling to create more space to be; it can also be about reinforcing gendered performances.

This interaction between Liala and her male cousin also illustrates the way Liala's construction of home and the comfort experienced through the home space becomes disturbed by a male relative that is outside this imagining of home. The boundary around different notions of home is not stable and is constantly being re-negotiated. This is reflected in the next section through different moments that occur as interruptions in this construction of a home space.

3.5 Blurring the home boundary

This section uses the blurring of the boundary around home to illustrate the instability of our performances of being Black Muslim women (within the home).

As [Butler] repeatedly insists, identities do not pre-exist their performance; and the successful copy can never be relied upon to reproduce faithfully that which it cites. [... Since] performances of subject positions are iterative, slippage is always possible, and this applies [...] to the spaces produced through them (Gregson and Rose, 2000: 438-441).

I began to explore this through the previous sections: wiggling illustrates the slippage that is possible within performances of subject positions. Yet wiggling also indicates that the boundaries of these social categories are being felt (i.e. it is through feeling *cramped* that we wiggle to create more room be). This section builds on discussions around wiggling by focusing on how the boundary between home and other spaces (or gazes seen as part of outdoor spaces) can reinforce or blur constructions of home.

In working through this, I focus on two particular moments: first, the arrival of visitors to the home, and second, the process of going outside of the house structure in home clothing.

3.5.1 Visitors to the home

Conversations regarding visitors to the home highlighted the function of these boundaries around constructions of home. This is built through this section (and the previous one) by focusing on how different audiences inform the presentation of our bodies. Here I argue that the presentation of our bodies (and the social norms embedded in these presentations) are not only shaped by interactions with different gazes: they also shape the construction of these home spaces. In other words, visitors to the home illustrate the way boundaries around the body (and around the conception of home) may be blurred, shifted or re-entrenched.

Zainab exemplifies this when wearing her 'jalamiya' clothes (that she would normally use for prayer – see figure 2) when her boyfriend's friends came over.



Figure 2: jalamiya clothes (Zainab's clothes journal, 05/02/2015)

I just wore my jalamiya clothes, cos I knew I would be praying into it anyway. So I just wore the jalamiya clothes on top of that all day [...] cos they're [boyfriend and his friends] in the living room? So it wasn't alright for me to just wear shorts in the living room, so, and I know-

Why?

Cos I feel like I'm like proper proper naked in front of everyone [...]. Cos I feel like that wouldn't be acceptable for them to start seeing my laps and everything. I just don't want, no that's not... it sounds weird because I know during summer, during summer I can wear like shorts, but I, I just feel like wearing pyjama bottom shorts could get like really sexual? I dunno.

(Zainab, 21, lives with boyfriend and female housemates)

Visitors to the home alter the performance of intimacy that she constructs within the home. Zainab works through the similarities and distinctions between wearing shorts in the summer (in public spaces) and wearing shorts as pyjamas at home. Through this process, she reflects on how these clothing practices that appear similar in their materiality become attached to performances that construct vastly different spaces. Through this understanding, Zainab reinforces points previously made around 'sexy' clothing and the intimacy constructed around her performance of home. 'Just wear[ing] shorts' in front of people constructed as outside this context of intimacy would mean transgressing the boundaries that she built around the home.

Thus her boyfriend's friends become part of audiences that are negotiated outside of the home. Wearing pyjama shorts when interacting with such audiences would produce a feeling of being 'proper proper naked in front of everyone.' The 'everyone' signals the role of these visitors in bringing the public into the intimacy constructed around home. In navigating this, the living room then becomes part of the edges of her construction of home wherein her shorts need to be layered with jalamiya clothes.

This is not to say that the living room and the 'everyone' that can be seen within this space can be read as a straightforward extension of 'public' performances. After all, the

clothes that she lays over her shorts are still associated with a performance of home, and the following chapter highlights how these layers are co-constructed through spaces like the home. However, these jalamiya clothes are constructed as providing a better boundary around the body; they are used to signal her body as a religious rather than sexual being. This can be contrasted with the intimacy attached to her pyjama shorts.

Earlier in this chapter, I spoke of how Zainab negotiated what to wear around her boyfriend through distancing herself from the desexualised 'covered covered' Muslim woman. Yet it is the garments used when praying that assists her in moving through different rooms within her constructions of home. This signals the shifting experiences of home in relation to different rooms and audiences. The presence of her boyfriend's friends shows how constructions of home (and rooms within the home) alter across different temporalities. The boundaries around the home shift as do the forms of comfort possible in different presentations.

With Aneesa, there is a shift in the boundaries around home when negotiating her mother's friends:

Would your home clothing change if people come to visit you?

Usually they're my mum's friends and I try to avoid them, but obviously I've gotta bring them tea or whatever. So I'll just quickly do an in and out, but not really [I laugh]. Even when my friends come over, cos I think they're the same, they just wear whatever is comfortable so I don't really change.

(Aneesa, 24, lives with parents and sisters)

When her mother's friends visited, Aneesa spoke of an awareness of what an interaction with this group of older women would entail and how the presentation of her body should alter to reflect this change within the home space. The performances that she engages with are altered by their presence (through bringing them 'tea or whatever'). Yet even as she engages in this particular performance, she can also move around the rooms that her mother's friends exist within. In doing so, these rooms are kept at the boundaries of her construction of home; these rooms can be interacted with through a quick movement before retreating to other spaces that remain stabilized within the boundary around home. Within this context, her construction of home is re-drawn through the house structure: parts of the house are retreated from in order to maintain a particular performance of comfort within the home. Such an understanding of comfort does not include the negotiations made around her mother's friends (or rather, it includes minimising contact with her mother's friends).

This can be contrasted with what happens when she chooses to invite her friends into her home. These people represent 'the same' comfort that she constructs through her process of home making and so no change is necessary. Instead, her home envelops her friends and becomes a source of connection as home is extended to include those who are 'the same.' Both of these examples speak to contrasting conceptions of home, even for people within the same household. Her mother's friends (as part of her mother's

making of home) required specific negotiations by Aneesa. These differed from the connections that she could make with her own friends through her constructions of home. Thus clothing practices assist in understanding the distinctions made across these different constructions of home. This is unpicked in the next section, which focuses on going outside of this house structure in clothing that is explicitly associated with constructions of home.

3.5.2 *Going out in home clothing*

I contrast Aneesa's reflection of her friends visiting with Sahra's experience of going out to her friend's home. Whilst Aneesa pointed to her friends as 'the same' in their performances of home, Sahra noticed the differences between herself and her 'Pakistani' friends who 'are basically like white people.' With this in mind, she reflects on her chosen clothing practices when invited to a 'pyjama party.'

I didn't even wear my pyjamas [she laughs]

Was it your home clothes then?

No, I just wore a t-shirt. To be fair I kept this [the abaya] on for as long as I could, like as **long** as. And then I wore some sweatpants and like, like a flowy t-shirt. And they were like 'that's not pyjamas' and I was like, if I wear my home clothes, it's basically like a shiid [...] But erm, so yeah, I just wore like a top and some sweatpants. Cos like I don't really, like when I'm around other people I never get **fully** comfortable, cos I don't know. It takes a while for me to relax.

(Sahra, 19, lives with mother and sisters)

Through this pyjama party, there is a negotiation of onlookers that are positioned as different from gazes that would normally see her (and be seen by her) within the home. The shiid is positioned as deviant from performances that could (or rather should) be engaged with around her friends (that are 'basically like white people'), reinforcing its comforting role within Sahra's construction of home. She uses 'a top and some sweatpants' to maintain a boundary around her body in this not-quite-home space, even as she recognises how that boundary stops her from being 'fully comfortable.' This highlights the different comforts that are produced in relation to different gazes.

Unlike Asiya's imagining of the (post-married life) shiid, Sahra's movement across different homes does not reflect an imagining of the 'same' performances of home across different spaces. Rather, her experience around her friends requires a shifting of boundaries (from an abaya into sweatpants and a t-shirt) that does not correspond with the comfort she experiences as part of her concept of home. The wearing of the sweatpants and t-shirt enables a wiggling within this space where her abaya is removed and yet the boundaries around her own home are not in place. In other words, she constructs boundaries around the body to produce (more or less) comfort through this in-between space of a home that is not quite *her* home.

The negotiations made through these in-between spaces were also reflected upon through the temporality of performances attached to movements across these spaces.

This was particularly evident in the temporality associated with taking out the bin or going food shopping. This reflects the different ways in which the construct of home could be extended (albeit not stably) to the surroundings of the house structure, but also how this could be disrupted as we move further away from this construction of home. Through this extension of the boundaries of home, there is also a reflection on the visibility that is felt through our movement along the edges of home. Asiya speaks to this when considering what she would wear to take out the bin:

Depends if it's dark, if it's like the middle of the night? My shiid and a coat if I can find it... just run out and put the bin out. But in the summer when it's still light, I kinda, I have to wear that big cotton thing [covering her hair and just above ankle-length – see figure 3] ... to put the bin out. But yeah. Cos it's just, it's just two minutes! Why am I gonna put all this on... it's the bin! Who's looking?

(Asiya, 23, lives with mother and sisters)

Asiya focused on the bin as located along the boundaries of home and public space. She reflects on the difference between day and night in negotiating the meeting of these two boundaries, and the gazes that are presumed to be negotiated through this in-between place. At night, the bins become enveloped into the home boundary as the audiences assumed to be a part of public space are unseen and (importantly) unable to see her. Thus the boundary around home shifts as does the construction of 'public' space: these spaces are not fixed in time but shrink or blur more easily in relation to the temporality within which certain practices are constructed.

During 'the summer,' the brightness of the day means that the meeting of public and home space needs to be negotiated through the wearing of 'that big cotton thing' used predominantly for prayer. This garment is positioned as out of place within public or home spaces (outside of prayer). It remains unnamed as a 'big cotton thing' that is laid over one's performance of home. When this is not available, the quickness of one's movement (where one can 'just run out and put the bin out') enables a negotiation of performances on the edges of the boundary between home and public space.

Potential gazes at this boundary are also constructed as unstable, illustrated through Asiya's questioning of 'who's looking?' When Mistura went outside to the bin, she always wore a scarf because of an awareness of her male neighbour who was tall and able to 'just look over the garden.' It is not just a question of who is looking, but who is *allowed* to look (as will be discussed in Interlude III and Chapter 5). He might not be looking, but his potential presence or proximity to her body when she is taking out the bin transgresses the boundary that she constructs around home, signalling his potential ability to see within 'a milieu that is not his own' (Alloula, 1986: 7). In wearing a scarf, Mistura re-establishes the boundary around her body in relation to the bodies whose presence is felt as she moves through the edges of her construction of home.

This can be contrasted with the boundaries around clothing that Mimi used when she went food shopping in these home clothes:

My mum hates it – what I used to do was I used to go food shopping at night, me and my other sister (she is not here, my younger sister), we used to have our diracs [shiids], we'd hike it up and put jeans underneath and we have hoodie on top [I laugh] and then go to Tesco. And my mum used to look at me like "...this is how you left the house?! This is how you represent me [I laugh] you look like you have no family, like you're a bag lady with 10 layers." But no, it's nice to look nice if you're going somewhere, to make an effort, but if you're, if you're just doing random chores, pfft. Comfort is the most important.

(Mimi, 27, lives with parents and sisters)

Mimi's mismatching of a shiid with a hoodie and jeans illustrated the way grocery shopping was within a performance of home and yet still constructed through its in-betweenness. The temporality of this performance is significant as it differs from the quickness of movement discussed previously. Whereas Asiya negotiates around this in-between state by putting on a 'big cotton thing' that covers her from head to ankle, Mimi wears clothing that is associated with performances across both public and home spaces. Her performance is based around the transient nature of going out of the home to 'do chores' still associated with the home. This movement is not constructed as part of the 'going somewhere' that would require her 'to make an effort.' Rather she can focus on the comfort that comes from wearing garments that remind her that she is at the edges of her construction of home, and thus still within this (blurred) home boundary.

Nonetheless, the boundaries around these spaces are seen to be transgressed by Mimi's mother: wearing home clothing outside of the home implies a poor negotiation of one's identity. It is interesting to reflect on Mimi being perceived as a 'bag lady' because of this mismatch, particularly in light of Appleford's work on pyjamas as a signifier of working-class performances in public spaces:

For these women, being seen in your pyjamas would be unspeakable; a form of private dress suitable for personal and intimate spaces, pyjamas are deemed totally inappropriate for public and visible contexts. Moreover, deemed indicative of working classes, who fail to adhere to the standards of respectability, being seen in your pyjamas is to be avoided at all costs [...] (Appleford, 2015: 15).

This negotiation of the shiid outside of the boundaries around home is positioned as a lack of awareness of 'appropriate' performances within public spaces in the nation that the shiid has migrated to. Yet the layering that enables the simultaneous visibility of the shiid with hoodies and jeans speaks to the way such mismatches expand performances (of home and public space) as located *within* Britishness. However, the very construction of this presentation on the periphery of home and public spaces also

works to re-inscribe the stability associated with performances in public (and to a lesser extent, home) spaces.²⁸

There are also generational (and migratory) differences that Mimi and her mother are communicating across (illustrated through the remark ‘this is how you represent me?’). For her mother, mismatching clothing practices is seen as a failure ‘to adhere to the standard of respectability’ (resulting in the reference to Mimi and her sister as ‘a bag lady with 10 layers’). For Mimi, mismatching extends her experience of home (and the comfort associated with home) beyond the house structure when doing ‘random chores.’

This could also signify different understandings of public space: for her mother (or rather, Mimi’s perception of her mother) looking ‘nice’ was needed for any performance outside of this boundary of the house structure, as the home was constructed as a place of belonging where different garments and practices from a distant home could be repeated. This works alongside an awareness of one’s role as a racialized migrant (i.e. a strange body) within British public space, and the necessity to present one’s body in relation to a ‘standard of respectability’ associated with British public life.

Mimi’s interactions across public spaces, particularly those spaces that are imagined as ‘less public’ (or on the edges of one’s construction of home and public space) speaks to her own positioning as a racialized body, but one that is also in the process of constructing their own experiences and imaginations of Britishness. This involved a mismatching to create more room for a performance across nationalisms. Even as this mismatching occurs, there is an awareness of these performances being situated on the edges of public and home spaces rather than centred within a conceptualisation of public space: interactions within public space would still require her to ‘make an effort.’

Although Mimi spoke of the comfort in extending home boundaries through mismatching, other participants spoke of the discomfort felt when moving in mismatches. This creation of more room to ‘wiggle’ is unstable, illustrated through the discomfort felt by Khadijah when she wore pyjamas underneath her abaya to go to the mosque:

[...] last Saturday, I was running late? And I remember I was brushing my teeth, getting ready, and I was rushing around trying to find some like, jeans to wear. And I was like ‘why bother? When you come back you’re gonna change into these pyjamas anyways, keep em on!’ And I went, but it was so awful cos I was so conscious that I was wearing my pyjamas outside [...] cos I thought what if

²⁸ Whilst her jeans and hoodies (as clothing worn in public spaces) could be worn within the home without being positioned as out of place, the same cannot be said when wearing home clothes in public space. This is why mismatching re-entrenches normative performances within the home to a lesser extent.

people know. People must know, people might think, oh dear, this was not a smart idea.

[...] to me, that's like the next step down, that's like you're falling from civilization [I laugh] when you start wearing pyjamas outside, you know you're losing the plot.

(Khadijah, 24, lives with parents and sisters)

For both Khadijah and Mimi, there was a similar negotiation of the length of time associated with being 'outside,' insofar as going to the mosque or going to the shops was conceived of as a temporary movement outside of this experience of home. However, the reality of being in a space that was constructed outside of home meant that Khadijah felt a discomfort in her mismatched presentation. Much like Mimi's reflection about her mum, wearing home clothes outside of home deviated from presentations deemed appropriate in this transitional space, and language was (again) used that spoke to the deviance associated with this practice (i.e. 'you're losing the plot'). It was no longer perceived through being in between home and public space, but was regulated in the same manner as public spaces. This prompted her concern regarding the failure of meeting expectations of public performances of identity (illustrated through the reiteration of 'people must know').

This awareness of whether people knew can be contrasted with Asiya questioning 'who's looking' when taking the bin out. It is not solely an awareness of how this performance could be viewed as a failure by different audiences, but also a protection of the boundaries constructed around the home. The comfort experienced through home clothing was constructed around the boundary of the house: once this shifts and is represented through Khadijah's abaya and headscarf, the abaya becomes too flimsy a boundary to cover the wearing of pyjamas (or rather, home clothes) underneath this visibility within public spaces. In distinguishing between the function of these clothing practices, Khadijah illustrates how pyjamas worn for comfort within the home assist in the construction of the home as a bounded and private space, separated through the house structure from public 'acceptable' performances.

3.6 Conclusions

This chapter has used clothing practices to explore Black Muslim women's constructions of home. By focusing on clothing practices within the boundary of home, there is a push to understand what Black Muslim women wear beyond that which is visible within public spaces. This in and of itself contributes to an understanding of how performances shift as we move across different spaces.

However, this also contributes to understanding the function of different boundaries. Boundaries can be represented through a multitude of clothing practices (like the abaya and headscarf) or through objects (including the house structure). By focusing on the concept of home, it is evident that these boundaries are not fixed: there is room for the construction of home to be pushed to include spaces outside of the house structure (as Mimi did when food shopping), or to be reconfigured to exclude

particular places in the house structure (as Aneesa did with her mum's friends coming to visit).

Through exploring the uses of boundaries, different modalities of comfort are unpacked. This situates comfort as relational to the boundaries constructed around the body as we negotiate different spaces and social codes. The home is thus positioned as one space wherein particular boundaries (through house clothing and/or the house structure) are perpetuated. Yet the gazes that are negotiated within this home space are also connected to our performances beyond the home: after all, clothes worn outside of the home are also donned (and/or removed) within the home.

This has particular consequences for research that focuses on wardrobes as a 'space dedicate to backstage activities' (Skov, 2011: 4). This chapter has highlighted the need to pay attention to the different gazes that are negotiated within this 'backstage' space. This pushes critiques of Goffman's individualised agency of the body (e.g. Gregson and Rose, 2000), and begins to examine the relations that build our beings. Understanding how Black Muslim women present themselves within and beyond the home means exploring how presentations are negotiated in relation to different gazes.

By exploring these gazes, I also expand on how boundaries are used to negotiate different gazes. By extension, this chapter illustrated how boundaries around home enable certain experiences and performances of being 'at home.' Through wearing garments of cultural significance (like the shiida) within the home, particular technologies of femininity are taught and practiced across generations. However, as clothing practices (and performances of femininity more broadly) migrate from international homes, they take on new meanings when worn in homes here. Through this migration, the very existence of these clothing practices within Britain pushes at understandings of what practices (and which bodies) can exist within the context of British homes. Yet even as these clothes expand notions of Britishness within the home, they are also contained within the specific boundaries of home. It is the ambivalence that comes from pushing against and being contained within these categorisations that is illustrated through the wearing of the shiida and the mismatching of clothing within the home.

Much like the shiida, the mismatching of clothing illustrates an expansion of Britishness through its use (and specifically, its use by those racialized as distinguishable Others) within and beyond the home. Through mismatching, there is a bringing together of different cultural competencies that represent a 'suturing of social relationships, identities and materialities into a place called home' (Baxter and Brickell, 2014: 134). Building from work on hybridity, mismatching bridges cultural (and national) signifiers that are constructed as separable whilst still recognising how the very process of bridging remains within a logic of these 'mismatching' cultures and nations being distinctive. However, the comfort found in mismatching is through its temporality and perpetual positioning on the periphery of these social categories (as a match that is missed). This is a key shift from hybridity, and one of the advantages of

holding onto the concept of mismatching: there is a focus on both the possibilities and the restrictions that are produced through this match that has been missed. This moves away from any use of hybridity as a tool for social transformation, as mismatching exposes its own transient (and fragile) nature.

Mismatching builds work on wiggling through understanding how home clothing (and clothing practices more broadly) exists within and pushes against social norms. This rejects a language that assumes practices can be allocated on either side of a domination/resistance binary. By questioning who sees what within the home (including negotiating male relatives and the wearing of 'sexy' clothing), I have expanded on the role of wiggling to simultaneously push against and perpetuate social norms. Wiggling to get comfortable does not mean breaking down or negating these social norms: it is about finding space (which at times means *creating* space) within these social categories for our bodies to move and exist beyond processes that cramp or fix our presentations as a static Other. Such an understanding of wiggling assists in developing research on the fluidity of bodily performances, and also furthers work on home and Muslim geographies.

Both wiggling and mismatching speak to the way presentations are built in relation to the social norms that are being navigated. However, further attention must be paid to how presentations are used and negotiated in relation to one another: after all, recognising discomfort in one presentation (or space) is relative to a recognition of comfort in a different presentation (or space). This is expanded upon in Interlude II through the function of layering. Layering develops a language to explore how performances are co-constructed around the body as we move across different spaces.

Interlude II: Layering

Layering is a flighty term that appears and disappears throughout this dissertation, illustrating a cumulative process of presenting (or being in) one's body as a Black Muslim woman. In the previous chapter mismatching included layers that were placed on top of one another, producing conflicting signifiers within (and across) different spaces. On a broader note, we all use different layers around the body as we move across different spaces (e.g. from clothes over *underwear*, to jackets over clothes). I use this interlude to develop layering as a way to speak of that which is simultaneously hidden and visible. In doing so, I build upon theories on how bodies move and connect to their surroundings through the 'accumulation' of material objects. Material and performative layers illustrate the complexity surrounding the body beyond that which is immediately 'visible' as part of any given performance within any given space.

Layering is a relational term that builds from Miller (1987) and Noble's (2004) work on how objects become personalised as possessions. These possessions have a cumulative effect on our being and represent 'mnemonics of a complex world': they illustrate the ways in which 'the world [but specifically *our* world] is made material' (Noble, 2004: 235).

In producing our social worlds, these objects are positioned in relation to other objects, places and beings that are also significant to the production of our being. It is here that layering can build from Noble's (2004) analysis of a display cabinet. He points to how the use and placement of objects within the cabinet signifies an accumulation of one's being.

The cabinet that contains many of their most cherished items captures the network of meaningful relationships with family and friends that frame their lives, past and present. The recounting of each item's origins spins a web of meaning and connection through these objects; in other words, the significance of this cabinet lies in its plenitude, not simply in the existence of discrete objects (Noble, 2004: 240).

Studying the accumulation of one's being is particularly useful as it explains the connections that objects have across multiple histories (as seen through the display cabinet). It begins to explain the movement inherent in the process of 'accumulating' one's being. Objects cannot be understood as discrete since they contribute to the overall being that is in production. This is reflected within the term layering: these garments do not act as separated 'discrete' presentations of the body, but speak to connections made across spaces as we (physically and emotionally) carry our personal histories with us through the clothes we put on and take off.

I use layering to push work on the accumulation of being because of the way it holds onto the body as the register wherein one's being is accumulated around. This moves away from the positioning of one's being as disembodied space, and enables an understanding of how one's skin and clothing practices interact with one another to

build these performances of being. In using this register of the body, I am also able to discuss both the material layers that we use to present our body (i.e. different clothing practices) and the performative layers that surround the body, providing us with a map of 'an identity instituted through a *stylised repetition of acts*' (Butler, 1988: 519, emphasis in original).

I begin this exploration of layering by focusing on the different forms of visibility negotiated through the simultaneous use of material layers. Whilst layering could include clothing eclipsing the visibility of some other garments (e.g. the wearing of clothes over underwear),²⁹ it also includes layers that are simultaneously visible to different audiences. In focusing on different aspects of in/visibility, layering develops an understanding of how different material objects are positioned in relation to one another. This points to how layers are used to negotiate different bodies and spaces. I move forward with layering by picking up on the way clothing becomes more or less visible through our different performances. Layering addresses the complexity of our beings through situating clothing practices in relation to one another.

To discuss the relations built between different layers, I pick up on Gorman-Murray's (2008: 288) work on identity fragments. For him, identity fragments (i.e. the way 'identities are fractured along lines of class, gender, ethnicity, cultural heritage, sexuality, politics, etc.') can be accumulated by gay men and lesbians through (domestic) material culture.

For instance, familial relationships or ethnic-cultural communities may be unable to accommodate non-normative sexualities or political positions. Yet, these diverse elements often need to be reconciled for reasons of individual self-esteem and personal well-being. Drawing on Noble, I suggest one important way fragmented axes of self-identity are reconciled is through material homemaking, which can simultaneously 'presence' antithetical self-identifications through the accumulation of meaningful possessions at home (Gorman-Murray, 2008: 288).

By focusing on how objects might be brought together (albeit within the specific boundary of home), Gorman-Murray (2008) understands performances (and the objects used for these performances) as relational to different experiences of visibility. This makes an important connection between the accumulation of material cultures and the performances associated with different material objects.

I move away from Gorman-Murray's (2008) use of identity fragments through my use of layering. Identity fragments implies a separation of processes of identification rather than an appreciation of their simultaneity (whether immediately visible or not). Layering speaks to this simultaneity, of both material and performative layers. These layers highlight the repeated practices of stylizing the body and the construction of personal histories that inform our being across different spaces.

²⁹ This is not necessarily a stable or complete eclipse, opening up questions on slippage: what happens when a layer that was assumed to be covered becomes uncovered?

The process of layering includes the material layers that are currently being used, but also the layers of performances that have previously been used to move through different spaces. In any space, these performative layers enable us to connect to that which might be hidden from visibility. Rather than understanding identity as fragmented, different performances of visibility are understood through the layers (both performative and material) that surround one's body. This speaks to how these different performances co-exist, moving away from singular/fixed understandings of the visibility of our bodies.

It is the fluidity embedded in layering that I am interested in. Through layering, we are presenting our bodies in ways that reflect desirable or 'appropriate' visible bodies because of relations to other objects, bodies and gazes that are imagined as part of a particular space. However, this presentation is not separate from the other presentations that we engage with. Rather, all of these presentations contribute to the accumulation of being: they are a part of the layers that we carry with us as we move through different spaces with an awareness of which performances can (or cannot) be engaged with through a particular layering of clothes.

From here, there is an exploration of the relationships built across different spaces through performative layers. I illustrate this through Aneesa considering some of the different places that she puts on and takes off her headscarf.

If you went out with your friends or if you went to a family gathering or to a wedding?

Err, no headscarf

okay, with your friends?

... Yes. It, it depends on what kind of thing it is, if it's anything like "oh, I'll meet you after work" then obviously not. But if it's a thing like, you know sometimes, sometimes it's a bit more, or sometimes we'll, or I'll feel a bit... blegh and like I'll wanna get dressed up, then I won't wear a scarf [...]. Erm, it doesn't happen often now, but sometimes you just want to feel a bit prettier, and I think without a scarf you feel prettier. And you get your hair done, you feel prettier.

(Aneesa, 24, Sheffield)

Through taking off her headscarf, Aneesa's hair is associated with an idealised performance of femininity. Even as the headscarf covers the possibility of this particular form of gendered visibility, both of these performances still co-exist around her body as potential ways for her to present her body with different meanings attached to them.

As was alluded to previously, the inability to discuss the hair/head as a part of the bodily layer speaks to the focus Noble (2004) and Gorman-Murray (2008) place on objects that are understood to be materially discrete from the physical body. Yet any discussion about relational understandings of one's being to other objects, bodies and spaces would have to consider the way in which the body *as a material* is embedded in

this process. Anything less would perpetuate a limited understanding of the visible body interacting with and constructing the material world.

This has particular consequences for bodies that are seen and racialized as Black. Despite the focus I place on the material layers that *surround* the body, an understanding of the body *as* layer enables us to hold onto the way Black Muslim women are negotiating their Blackness and their clothing practices simultaneously (even as one might be assumed to eclipse the other in specific ways).

This simultaneity is illustrated through Aneesa's use of the headscarf when she goes to work. There are two performances of femininity that are interacting with one another, enabling Aneesa to move across both. She is negotiating what visibility within her workplace and with her friends would feel like when using different material layers to present her body. And yet her ability to engage in both performances speaks to the performative layers that surround her body, informing the performances made possible in relation to these (assumed to be) different audiences.

An inside and an outside – a past (memory) and a present (subjectivity) – are two sides of a single surface. A person's relation with his or her body becomes both an "archive" and a "diagram," a collection of subjectivations and a mental map charted on the basis of the past and drawn from events and elements in the ambient world (Conley, 2011: 194).

This is the context within which layers garner meaning. They illustrate relations across past, present and (imagined) future performances. And it is the fluidity that comes from multiple (performative and material) layers interacting with the body that I build upon through the following chapter. Prayer (and all of the performances that surround it) illustrates the way different layers can be used as we move through sacred spaces, and negotiate different gazes. In using the language of layering, we are able to hold onto the material objects/culture that are pivotal to the construction of these performances of religiosity.

Chapter 4 Prayer

4.1 Introduction

I wake up for Fajr [morning prayer] half asleep. I put on the first thing that's near me – no, I make *wudu*, I put on the first thing that's near me, I'll pray in it, and then I go back to sleep. Which is really bad cos Fajr is like, not that early in the morning anymore. And it is always the case of putting an abaya on over my um, pjs, which are always (in winter at least) flannel bottoms and a t-shirt.

(Khadijah, 24, not a regular public abaya wearer)³⁰

During Khadijah's morning prayer, the bedroom space is temporarily transformed into a space connecting to a divine presence, i.e. a sacred space. This sacred space is produced through the layer of the abaya (as 'the first thing that's near me') and the ritual cleansing that comes from performing *wudu*'. This layer of the abaya is removed following prayer, enabling her re-engagement with the bedroom as a place 'to go back to sleep.' This manoeuvre is completed even as she questions her movement back to sleep instead of beginning her day (since Fajr is 'not that early in the morning anymore'). Even after she goes back to sleep and leaves the sacred space, the performance of prayer stays with Khadijah as a part of her being.

What I find particularly interesting here is the brief but lasting connection formed and repeated through prayer. It is not fixed to any material space (or objects) but requires a transformation of bodily comportment and presentations in order to construct this sacred space. When Khadijah finished praying, she returned to the performance temporarily hidden from sight by the layer used to develop this performance of sacrality.

This highlights prayer as constructed through its surroundings, and exhibits the importance of exploring prayer and layering in relation to one another. Prayer offers an opportunity to examine layering because of the construction (and repetition) of practices that stay with us even after the material layers used to pray are removed. This indicates the role of layering in constructing our *being* as Black Muslim women.

Through prayer, there is a momentary transformation of our surroundings that this chapter examines further. It enables a discussion of sacred spaces as both entwined with and separated from other spaces that we interact with. This pushes against a public/private binary: such a binary is unable to tackle the diversity of performances (and spaces) interacting with it. As 'sacred space and rhythmic time are both public and private' (El Guindi, 2000: 81), prayer is negotiated through the norms attached to an imagining of either side of this binary. This forces a re-examination of the gazes, bodies and objects used to construct both public and private spaces.

³⁰ I use this descriptor (maintaining regularity as a vague concept) to contrast quotes by participants with their interactions with the abaya (as a visibly Muslim presentation) in public spaces.

Despite prayer being constructed as a break in regular flows of time and space (e.g. Holloway, 2003), it is still made through (and laid over) performances within particular spaces. During prayer time Muslims are not 'stripped of worldly identity' (El Guindi, 2000: 78); rather, we use the material objects around us to create and recreate sacred spaces. This raises questions about how relations between our bodies, material possessions and a divine presence are negotiated. How do we dress for prayer in relation to the spaces we are encountering? How does this contribute to our construction of being a Black Muslim woman?

This chapter is structured as follows: first, I explore the role of Islamic prayer in our daily lives by defining sacred spaces and religious performance. In thinking about how prayer is entwined with different experiences of being a Black Muslim woman, I highlight prayer as off-beat to the national temporalities that implicitly structure social relations. Second, I focus on prayer within the home to explore the layering of clothes within the boundary of home. This builds from previous work on comfort to highlight its relationality to the different presentations we engage with. Third, I consider the mosque as an institutionally sacred space and examine how clothing practices can be fixed as an extension of that sacrality (as well as the different layers used to negotiate this). Finally, I focus on prayer in public space and the different forms of visibility negotiated through this.

4.2 Prayer and daily life

If I'm very honest, when I was younger, I – I'd pray when mum and dad told me to pray. And... lately, I started praying for myself and praying five times a day. I think the more that you pray, the more that you are aware of the kind of right and wrong, I think, in one way? Erm, I think also in terms of when I pray, I realised [...] I wanna go back and learn the Qur'an. I wanna learn how to read it again as I've not done that since I was... in college, erm, and just try to reconnect with the deen [religion] and try to learn more. [...] I wanna get there, I wanna get to the point where it's like your iman [religious faith] is like [hand raised high], I wanna be fully covered and wearing an abaya and stuff.

(Mimi, 27, not a regular public abaya wearer)

Mimi sets out her own understanding of how prayer is (or can be) constructed as part of one's daily life: it can be a routinized action completed 'when mum and dad told me to pray,' and/or it can be connected to a sense of piety (i.e. becoming 'aware of the kind of right and wrong'). As a routine, prayer is still a performance of religiosity even when it may not lead to an engagement with sacred spaces. It is the multiple meanings attached to prayer that becomes clearer through the definitions of religious performance and sacred spaces set up in this section.

This begins by focusing on Mimi's use of prayer as a signifier for increased spirituality.³¹ For Mimi, it was through 'praying for myself' that she began to aspire towards visibly (through clothing practices) and intellectually (through learning the Qur'an) positioning herself as a 'better Muslim.' Thus, prayer holds the potential of constructing a sacred space and shaping other daily performances. In other words, it is not just about the particular time or space wherein one prays: prayer speaks to how one's day becomes ordered, and the other spaces that one moves through.

This exposes the function of national temporalities, as prayer is about taking the time (and space) to connect to one's spirituality. To explore these national temporalities, I use Lefebvre (2004) and Edensor (2006) to discuss the rhythms that construct spaces.

The observance and policing of temporal codes when people may carry out actions, purchase services, attend institutions, make noise and drive cars, provide a framework for quotidian experience. Indeed, the ability of citizens to carry out the formal requirements necessary to get things done is part of the everyday bureaucratization imposed by government (Edensor, 2006: 530).

Within such an understanding of the 'temporal codes' that structure social relations, Noxolo (1999: 171, emphasis in original) has pointed to the power embedded in 'deciding *what time it is*, and making everyone else dance *on* that beat.' By extension, certain practices (and bodies attached to those practices) become positioned as off-beat. This is illustrated through the normalisation of the Gregorian calendar (marking the month of December where *Christmas* occurs) as fixed in the temporal codes that structure British society. Although Ramadan (and both Eids) occur as fixed points within the Islamic (lunar) calendar, the need to translate these dates so that they are legible to the Gregorian calendar highlights the need to dance to a beat set up through these dominant (and neutralised) temporal codes. Ramadan (and by extension, the Islamic lunar calendar) are positioned as outside this temporal framework, and thus perpetually off the beat set up through national temporalities.

The same could be said for the structure of prayer *time*: it is organised around the rhythms of the sun (i.e. sunrise, apex of the sun, sunset, etc.) and points to different temporal codes that everyday movements could be organised around. Yet its translation into dominant structures of telling time speaks to the positioning of these Islamic temporalities as unable to decide 'what time it is' (Noxolo, 1999: 171), and by extension, what *time* is. In Khadijah's routine for morning prayer, her return to sleep (as opposed to using this moment to start her day) speaks to the way prayer time can be positioned as off-beat.

However, by waking up to pray (and repeating this as a part of her own routine), Khadijah incorporates prayer into her own personal rhythm and movements across different spaces. Because of the temporal codes attached to prayer, this also means a

³¹ In fact, there is continuous debate amongst religious scholars on whether someone can still be called a Muslim if they do not pray regularly (Mahmood, 2001). This highlights the importance that prayer can hold in the lives of Muslims.

transformation of the way we interact with different spaces, and with it, our performances of being Black Muslim women.

This chapter explores how these spaces and our experiences of being are transformed through the repetition of prayer. Mahmood illustrates an everyday understanding of spirituality by recounting conversations between three women about the role of prayer:

Notably when Mona links the ability to pray to the vigilance with which one conducts the practical chores of daily living, *all* mundane activities – like getting angry with one’s sister, the things one hears and looks at, the way one speaks – becomes a place for securing and honing particular moral capacities. [...] The repeated practice of orienting all acts toward securing God’s pleasure is a cumulative process the net result of which, on one level, is the ability to pray regularly and, on another level, the creation of a pious self (Mahmood, 2001: 832, emphasis in original).

Prayer holds the potential of a piety shaped and reshaped through sacred spaces. The sensations derived from this explicitly divine connection ‘are for millions of people life-giving, life-fulfilling, and life-affirming – something we must respect and seek to understand’ (Holloway, 2006: 186). During prayer, sacred spaces are both the context wherein one’s body can be transformed (into a pious being) as well as the process of transformation. After engaging with sacred spaces, this piety acts as a performative layer surrounding the body. Instead of dissipating, it interacts with our movements across the different spaces (and audiences) that we negotiate. Through this, layering assists in understanding this construction of sacred spaces as a part of one’s everyday performances.

When Holloway (2003: 1961) notes how the everyday is ‘associated with the humdrum and commonplace,’ their comment disguises which practices are neutralised as ‘commonplace,’ and which are constructed as *otherworldly* (or off the normative beat). This is of particular importance for Muslims, considering the ways in which Islam has been constructed as Other(worldly) to Western liberal democracies (Massad, 2015). I push for an understanding of prayer that does not strip Muslims of their worldly identities (e.g. El Guindi, 2000), but that situates the sacred as a part of the performances we engage with as we move through different spaces.

By focusing on the sacred as a space, religious performance is used to denote wider performances of religiosity beyond (and yet also including) this specific construction of piety. In other words, religious performance is more than sacred spaces: it connects to and transforms other processes of identification that inform how Black Muslim women present our bodies. As researchers have looked to geographies of religion to understand the way religion “speaks back” through its own specificities’ (Yorgason and della Dora cited in Tse, 2014: 202), I highlight its relational positioning to different processes of identification. ‘Religion’ cannot be treated as a stand-alone category: the

construction of a 'Muslim' being is directly connected to the way we are positioned (and position ourselves) across different spaces.

This detailing of sacred spaces and religious performance helps to nuance prayer, moving it away from its relegation as a homogeneously 'religious' practice (e.g. Dwyer et al., 2013). This is necessary when thinking about the clothing practices of Black Muslim women, particularly for those positioned as visibly Muslim. When researchers attribute the headscarf to a fixed act of piety (e.g. Kong, 2010), they discount the different reasons Muslim women may have in wearing a headscarf, only some of which would include an explicit connection to spirituality.

This is illustrated through Mimi's positioning of the abaya (and its ability to 'fully cover' her) as a material layer enabling an engagement with sacred spaces.³² This can be contrasted with Sahra who (as a regular public abaya wearer) mostly reflected on the abaya's materiality (i.e. how it felt when worn on windy or rainy days) rather than using it to illustrate an explicitly pious representation of the body. Whilst both Sahra and Mimi are engaging in performances of religious identity, it is only Mimi that positions the abaya as a connection to sacred spaces.

The distinction of sacred spaces from religious performances more broadly has enabled two key contributions to understandings of Islamic prayer. First, prayer enables an examination of the fluidity of sacred spaces. By going beyond mosques as sites deemed 'officially [or rather, institutionally] sacred' (Kong, 2001), we can explore different constructions of sacred spaces whether in these 'official' sites or not. This complicates the different performances we engage with through prayer, highlighting our negotiation of different bodies and gazes across these spaces.

Second, this distinction enables an exploration into how the body is comported and dressed as we construct religious performances and sacred spaces. Holding onto the register of the body means that religious performances are understood in relation to the body's materiality (and thus intertwined with other processes of identification). This embodies sacred spaces and responds to critics that argue sacred space ignores how the body becomes 'marked as sanctified' (Secor, 2002: 7). This erases the body so that it appears as if 'there is nothing but disembodied space' (ibid). In exploring prayer, this chapter uses layering to investigate interactions between the body and different (material and performative) layers. This works to highlight how different garments (or performances) are positioned as more (or less) visible as we move through different spaces.

I begin this examination of layering by returning to the home. This brings layering in conversation with comfort by exploring how clothing practices used for prayer are simultaneously used to construct home spaces.

³² I pick up on the abaya and its connection to performances of piety later in this chapter.

4.3 Praying at home

This section illustrates the role of layers in constructing shifting experiences of comfort within the boundaries of home. Many Black Muslim women spoke of layering the same garment(s) over other clothing whenever they prayed at home. This included a long and 'big' scarf that goes over one's body (e.g. Cookie and Mistura – see figure 3); a scarf and abaya/jalamiya clothes (e.g. Zainab and Khadijah – see figure 4); and a large rectangular scarf that can be used to wrap around one's head and upper body for prayer (e.g. Asiya and Liala – see figure 5).



Figure 3: The big scarf
(Cookie's clothes journal,
23/10/2015)



Figure 4: Headscarf and abaya
(Khadijah's clothes journal,
03/11/2014)



Figure 5: Large rectangular
scarf (self-portrait,
02/11/2016)

Often these materials were made or brought over from distant 'home' nations and reflected a performance engaged with through the specific boundaries of home. This was the case for Babs whose prayer clothes changed depending on the different clothing worn within the home.

So if I'm wearing something that I, I feel is loose and comfortable enough to pray in, I would just put the scarf around my neck, err, my head. But if I'm wearing something like the one I was wearing before work (like short shorts and short sleeved top), then this [long and big scarf – see Figure 3] is something that my mum got me from Sudan this time. And she basically, my grandma had made it and it's a piece of cloth and then it, you just put it over and then it has a scarf bonnet attached as well, you just zip it up.

So your grandmother made it?

Yes

Okay-

It's the most ugly material ever [I laugh] but it's, you know, obviously like home stuff, it smells nice.

(Babs, 26, not a regular public abaya wearer)

For Babs, clothing worn at home must be 'loose and comfortable' enough to pray in: if it is not 'loose' enough, she layers it with a garment that reminds her of Sudan and her familial ties. This illustrates how the same garments can be associated with many different meanings (even within the same place). Clothing that is attached to a comfort within the home becomes out of place (as not 'loose' enough) when constructing a presentation to pray in.

It is the layering of 'short' clothes with 'the most ugly material ever' that speaks to prayer's connection to different nations (and homelands) embedded in her home. El Guindi's (2000: 78) claim that Muslims are 'stripped temporarily of worldly identity' during prayer is called into question: Babs is not stripped of this identity but uses these objects and connections to create a sacred space. Such an 'otherworldly' understanding of prayer situates practices used to construct sacred spaces as strange in relation to the norms of *this* world, without questioning how those secular norms come to have meaning. For Babs, prayer is still tied to a garment that reminds her of 'home stuff.'

Our construction of sacred spaces is thus building (and being built by) our imagining of the other spaces within which we have decided to pray. In wearing this 'ugly' material for prayer at home, performances of home and nation are laid side by side with Babs' performances of religiosity. This signals her body as a part of the home whilst engaging in the construction of sacred spaces. This challenges the holding of one's religious identity as distinct from other processes of identification.

Layering illustrates this simultaneous existence of different performances around the body. More specifically, it illustrates how (dis)comfort is negotiated through relations between bodies, objects, spaces and temporalities. Returning to the quote that opened this chapter, we can rethink Khadijah's reaching for the abaya to pray Fajr. Within the context of home (and specifically her bedroom), the abaya is not positioned as part of a strangeness worth observing (to be discussed in the following section). Through the boundaries constructed around home, clothes for prayer are used to signify a presentation connected specifically to a comfort within the home

Nonetheless, what does it mean for Babs to position this garment used within the home as 'the most ugly material ever'? In doing so, Babs draws from an understanding of mismatching where she recognises that something is (or should be seen as) *missed*, ugly, or out of place, even whilst it also constructs a sense of comfort. As was highlighted in Chapter 3, mismatching involves creating a space of comfort between notions of stable performances even whilst it reifies the stability and separation of these performances. However, the precarity associated with mismatching within public spaces is altered through our performances across home and prayer (when both are located within the house structure). In achieving comfort through these clothes at

home, it is evident that we construct (parts of) the home so that *we* are the bodies that accommodate rather than those being accommodated.³³

Thus the changes in clothing practices to facilitate prayer within the home speaks to comfort as a shifting process. Zainab illustrates this:

I wasn't sure if I would be able to pray cos my onesie's quite tight and my bum would like be popping out and I just didn't know if it was acceptable? Cos I know I would never go around without wearing my jalamiya to pray anyway.

(Zainab, 21, not a regular abaya wearer)

Zainab was one of the women who spoke about wearing sexy clothing within the home (and specifically, within the bedroom) that was shared with her boyfriend (see Chapter 3). Both the creation of an intimate space with (and for) her partner and the engagement with sacred space (as an intimate connection with divinity) are accommodated within the home, illustrating the multi-layered performances negotiated through the home. Layering enables Zainab to participate within both spaces: by taking these layers on or off, she is able to move between performing her religiosity (through praying) and femininity.

Zainab also reflected on a momentary anxiety that came when deciding where/when a layer could be removed as she finished praying and entered public spaces (this is returned to later on in this chapter). However, the boundaries erected around home meant that the discomfort negotiated through that movement dissipates. Layering assists us to situate these two experiences of praying (within public spaces and the home) in relation to one another. It highlights the relationships built between different layers, bodies, audiences and spaces.

This includes understanding how layers are used to construct differing meanings of the same presentation, illustrated through Mistura wearing her headscarf around the home. Mistura spoke of feeling comfortable when wearing the headscarf at home since it served as a reminder of a divine presence that she would re-connect with throughout the day. As she reflected on taking the scarf off at the 'end' of the day when going to a bedroom shared with her husband, it is possible to note the multiple roles of the scarf: from providing a boundary when used in public spaces, to a connection to the possibilities of sacred space within the home, to its removal signalling the end of the day and the entering of an intimate space between herself and her husband. It is all of these meanings that surround the headscarf, acting as performative layers accessed in relation to the different audiences and spaces that she negotiates. This neatly illustrates the function of layering: it understands the co-existence of different meanings of one's presentation, only some of which are legible to external gazes.

³³ This is not to overstate the possibilities within constructions of home: there are still gazes that construct our experiences at home, some of which elicit a greater sense of comfort than others (see chapter 3).

I continue this examination of layering and the different presentations used for prayer by focusing on spaces that are institutionally sacred. This builds on work within geographies of religion that focuses on spaces that have been legitimised through the state as 'officially sacred' (Finlayson, 2012; Gökarkırsel, 2009). Despite the labelling of mosques as *the* site of spiritual significance, it is vital to explore the performances used to engage with these institutionally sacred spaces. How do we interact with these spaces that are politically recognised as sacred? What does this mean for the ways in which we present our bodies? What does this say about the relationships built through the mosque? I use the next section to explore Black Muslim women's clothing practices when going to the mosque.

4.4 Going to the mosque

I explore mosques within this chapter because of their role as explicitly spiritual sites within different built environments. In constructing or repurposing a building as a mosque, there are numerous local (and by extension, national) regulations that must be followed. For Sunier, these places of worship open up questions on whether 'Muslims as *Muslims* can become an integral part of the *imagined community*, be it on a national, transnational or local level' (2005: 325, emphasis in original).³⁴ The mosque's role within this imagined community is explored through the bodies and objects that interact within this place. After all, a mosque is not only made through the construction (or re-purposing) of the building: our interactions within the mosque are what (re)make the specificities of the place.

Gökarkırsel (2009: 657) points out that officially sacred spaces 'define 'religion' in a particular way and contain it within certain designated space.' Yet it is not just 'official' sacrality that constructs mosques: there are numerous places that are re-purposed as mosques without necessarily being sanctioned by the state. This is why I move to explore spaces that are institutionally sacred as it refers to buildings and places that are constructed as explicitly spiritual. This understanding of institutionalised spirituality is used to explore how these spaces are positioned within the local (and national) built environment by Black Muslim women. By maintaining a distinction between sacred space and institutionally sacred space, I recognise that not all practices taking place within the mosque are necessarily associated with sacred space, and not all sacred spaces are necessarily constructed through the mosque. However, this section highlights how 'sacredness is not inherent [and how] attention must be paid to how place is sacralised' (Kong, 2001: 213). How do we present ourselves in relation to this process, particularly within spaces that are imagined as explicitly embodying sacrality?

This section focuses on two aspects of negotiating the mosque. First, I explore the relationship built between the abaya and piety, particularly for participants who were

³⁴ Within the government-issued Casey Review, this is illustrated through the references to the 'distinctive architectural style and features of mosques' and the apparent anxiety that such buildings can and have caused through their visibility (Casey, 2016: 124).

not regular public abaya wearers. This outlines how Black Muslim women can present themselves in relation to the mosque whilst still feeling out of place in relation to the mosque's built environment. This experience of Othering leads to the second section which explores the use of different layers to negotiate movements around the mosque.

4.4.1 *Out of respect: the mosque and the abaya*

When thinking about how to present the body at the mosque, participants spoke of the need to wear 'appropriate' clothing 'out of respect' to this space of institutionalised spirituality:

Me and my sister like to do classes as well and we, we just put the abaya on. Or maybe because it's a mosque and I just feel like, out of respect maybe, cos you know, when it's prayer time you're already done, you can just pray.

[...] I try to do a little of make up or like the more casual like every day when I'm going to work or when I'm going to uni [...]. When I go to the mosque I don't wear anything at all, I don't know why, I just don't.

(Aneesa, 24, not a regular public abaya wearer)

For Aneesa, the abaya facilitates an ease of movement in and out of prayer time. There is a clear connection built between sacred spaces and the mosque, as practices used for a connection to divinity are extended to these spaces positioned as institutionally sacred ('out of respect'). Particular technologies of femininity also become tied to this 'respect': this is enacted through the abaya and a lack of make-up.

This practice of femininity speaks to how our bodies become an extension of our construction of these spaces i.e. building a presentation that embodies the institutionally sacred. For most of the participants who did not regularly wear the abaya in public spaces, there were references to the abaya as a presentation specifically for these institutionally sacred spaces.³⁵ This also works to fix Muslim women who were regular public abaya wearers as an extension of the institutionally sacred. They become visible through presentations that are associated with sacrality, regardless of the different reasons they might have for engaging in this presentation.

Through fixing the abaya to a performance of piety, Muslim women who wear the abaya are forced to (at least partially) negotiate their own presentations through this visibility as Other. Babs speaks to the discomfort from this positioning when wearing an abaya to her local mosque:

So the mosque is right next to the, opposite the Buddhist centre, and it's between like two cafes and there's like a pub on one side, so you have to walk through that. And erm, yeah, I guess especially like around Ramadan when it was sort of Taraweeh³⁶ time, so I could leave about 11 o'clock? And sometimes I'd feel

³⁵ This presentation was also used for other spaces wherein that 'respect' had to be communicated e.g. when visiting the homes of elderly family relatives.

³⁶ Taraweeh prayers are extra prayers (beyond the 5 daily prayers) that are performed at night during Ramadan.

uncomfortable because, you know, people would be coming out of bars or coming late and I would just feel very conspicuous in a kind of, it's very different in a jilbaab [abaya] and a scarf like wrapped around my head in kind of the traditional way. So yeah, that's made me feel uncomfortable in town. I've stopped going to that mosque.

(Babs, 26, not a regular public abaya wearer)

As Babs moves through public space she feels her visibility as a transgressive body. The deviance attached to her clothing practices speaks to the way Islam becomes constructed as a fixed and separate Other from the variety of performances incorporated into Britishness.³⁷ Yet by moving to and from the mosque, Babs interweaves performances for sacred spaces into the secularity felt in this public space. In doing so, she highlights an awareness of how performances can position us as mismatching with our surroundings as we move between different spaces. This movement highlights how 'sacred space is contested space' through its connection to other places (Kong cited in Finlayson, 2012: 1764).

Despite presenting her body as an extension of the mosque (as an institutionally sacred space), Babs speaks of her dressed body as out of place. The mosque's presence (and location) within that built environment does not protect Babs from feeling visible as strange. The discomfort that she locates on her 'conspicuous' and 'traditional' presentation connects to Puwar's (2004) work on space invaders: those marked as traditional are conspicuous because they are 'no longer staying in their frames' (Chow cited in Puwar, 2004: 45).

It is important to note Babs' reference to the temporality wherein her discomfort was produced. This complicates Babs' experience as strange when moving through 'town' in the abaya by situating her experience within a particular time frame. Whilst the mosque exists as a space of institutionalised spirituality within that built environment, it (and the bodies attached to it) is also coded as a part of specific temporal frames. Such an understanding contributes to work on how bodies and performances can be normalised (or Othered) within different temporalities.³⁸

Nonetheless, it is after experiencing this discomfort that Babs decides to stop going to that mosque. This interaction stays with her as a performative layer, developing her understanding of the abaya and its relationship to different spaces. These performative layers assist us in negotiating which performances are 'appropriate' for which audiences, whilst also holding onto an awareness of those presentations that mark our bodies as deviant within certain places.

Through this, layering also contributes to work on racial microaggressions on the 'seemingly slight but persistent daily reoccurrences that serve to remind' racialized minorities of their deviance from the social norm (Rollock, 2012: 518). Layering (and

³⁷ This also works to criticise the language of post-secularism that does not pay attention to the racialisation of different religions, and particularly the racialization of Islam (e.g. Pile et al., 2016).

³⁸ One could argue that the bargoers might feel out of place earlier on in the day as the normalisation of different bodies shifts in relation to time (and space).

specifically, performative layers) exposes the hidden imprint of past presentations. They illustrate the cumulative effect of these encounters and the way they become part of our knowledge of how to be across different spaces (and in relation to different gazes).

Babs' discomfort and decision to avoid going to that mosque in the future is also indicative of her positioning as someone that does not regularly wear the abaya in public spaces. Through her discomfort, a normalised gaze is attributed to the bargoers who are positioned as fitting in with their surroundings. It is the abaya, and (by extension) the mosque that causes this sense of discomfort as out of place. By noting her own visibility, Babs' remarks also function to fix Muslim women (particularly those who do wear abayas regularly in public) as Other amongst Muslim women audiences.

This highlights how we construct our own and others visibility through the gazes that surround our presentations. How we recognise and interact with these gazes is reflective of the social norms attached to different audiences and onlookers who are felt to inhabit these gazes (Interlude III is used to unpack these visual terms). This was evident when speaking to both Umm Kareema and Fatima about the niqab:

I don't feel comfortable sitting with somebody – to be honest – with niqab.

With niqab? Oh really?

Honest, I just like to see the face. But in Dubai it became fashion, and my sister started putting it on – she was 17. It was in fashion, and she started, my sister. She was putting on niqab as well. Because the young generation once they start out – it's like a phase, and then I was just thinking, "Are you really putting it seriously?" Because it was just like, you know, like now when the kids go and will dye their hair to become a pink [she laughs]

(Fatima, 42, not a regular public abaya wearer)

Fatima's discomfort with the niqab is processed in relation to two different audiences, illustrating our contextual constructions of visibility. When focusing on the UK and her desire to 'see the face,' she parallels a colonial discourse on how gendered bodies should be seen (Alloula, 1986). This speaks back to a point raised in Interlude I regarding Jack Straw's desire to 'see' Muslim women wearing the burqa.

However, Fatima's discomfort with the niqab's visibility alters as she reflects on her sister wearing it in Dubai. Despite some surprise at her sister's interest in wearing the niqab, it can be attributed to a 'kids' phase rather than a deviant performance of religiosity (and visibility). The comparison that she draws to the 'kids' who 'will dye their hair to become a pink' signals her normalisation of the niqab within the context of Dubai. Yet that normalisation occurs against the standards of non-headscarf wearers (whose hair could be *seen* as pink). The visibility and discomfort experienced from the niqab speaks directly to the bodies (and gazes) that are normalised within the UK.

It is these normalised gazes that illustrate how clothing practices can be constructed as a (potential) strangeness worth observing. Both the positioning of the abaya as an

extension of institutionally sacred spaces and the construction of the abaya as out of place within public space works to fix this presentation in a limiting fashion. Yet it is in the relations to gazes across different spaces that we can also see how experiences of visibility shift. These relations are expanded upon in the next section as I illustrate how layering enables a negotiation of this visibility as the (potential) strangeness to observe.

4.4.2 *Negotiating visibility: using layers*

This section explores the role of layering as Black Muslim women negotiated the mosque. For some participants (like Cookie), material layers were used when entering the mosque and removed when leaving.

Usually, I tie it [the headscarf] - how do I put it - in a very simple way. Like it's not, it doesn't cover my neck in any shape or form. It just covers my hair and then sometimes I push it back, because I like my hairline so I just push it back just a little bit and I play with the style sometimes. [...] But if I was going to mosque, I would use a more traditional type pashmina that would cover my neck, and I'd take my big hijab [see figure 3], that pink one that goes all the way to the floor. So when I'm going into the mosque itself, I'll just put it on [...]. But the moment out of the space, I'll take it out and put it in my bag.

(Cookie, 28, not a regular public abaya wearer)

For Cookie, the pink 'big hijab' enables a comfort when participating in the mosque space. However, 'the *moment* [she is] out of the space' (emphasis added), the scarf is removed to facilitate her participation and construction of public spaces. The use and removal of these material layers to negotiate her interactions across different gazes illustrates the way 'socially constructed religious places overlap, compliment or conflict with secular places' (Kong, 2001: 212).

Through this understanding of layering, there is no fixed or singular 'truth' for how to present one's body in any of the spaces that one moves through. After all, when Cookie puts on her 'big hijab,' her performance in the public space outside of the mosque does not disappear – instead it is enclosed by her construction of a performance to fit into sacred space. This hidden presentation is still interacting with this external layer through the decision made to present her body as layered. The material layer of the pink 'big hijab' does not disappear once the cloth is removed: instead it is carried with her through her inconspicuous bag. In finding her own way to move comfortably between these audiences and spaces, Cookie develops a performative layer that is repeated and perpetuated whenever she engages with the mosque (as a site constructed as requiring a 'traditional type' presentation).

Whilst performative layers are distinct from material layers, there is clearly a relationship between these different forms of layers that speaks to how we learn to use (and how we feel in) different material layers as we move across spaces. This is further illustrated through Hind's experience in an abaya and headscarf on her way to the mosque for Eid celebrations. Although she reflects on some discomfort in clothes that

she does not normally wear in public spaces, this dissipates as she gets closer to the mosque.

Once you get to Baker Street and everyone's going to the mosque there, it's... it's incredible. There's like, aaaall these different colours [...]. There's like Nigerians in their traditional wear going, like **incredible** colours going, there's like um, Saudi Arabians going in their full colours as well... a lot of black as well, but still.. Sudanese people, a lot of Sudanese people wearing the taub. It's just incredible, like as you're walking there's just this entire array of just like colour and culture and all this sort of stuff and it's just, it's really nice. And it's like for that day like everyone, everyone's fully fully together.

(Hind, 26, not a regular public abaya wearer)

Here, the boundaries of this institutionally sacred space shifted to include the street outside of the mosque. Within this, the layering of the abaya and headscarf over her body enables Hind to belong within the '**incredible** colours' on their way to the mosque. Through these garments, she is able to sink into her surroundings, contrasted with other spaces where the abaya and headscarf requires her to anxiously recall 'what people think of Saudi, [or] what people think of Muslims.' Her journey through Baker Street enables her to move away from the fixing of these garments as Other. Through the layers that she wears, she is part of a (temporary) transformation of (the bodies and gazes normalised as an extension of) Baker Street. This constructs a performative layer that enables Hind to see herself as a part of the 'everyone' that is 'fully fully together.'

To probe this transformation of Baker Street further, I use Puwar's (2004) reflection on hearing the Islamic call to prayer (*namaz* or *adhaan*) in Trafalgar Square during an anti-war protest. She argues that this 'foreign exclaim and the gathering of a broad and multiple mass of thousands in the most famous and politicised square in history, steeped in Empire, created an altogether different echo' (2004: 3). It is this echo (or imprint) that is created in the space of Baker Street as well, an echo that transforms the Othering of the abaya and array of colours and cultures into the normative. This is the connection and belonging that Hind lays claim to.

Even though this transformation is temporary, its affect stays with Hind after she leaves the space and can be retold through the interview process to me. This illustrates the lasting connection built through performative layers. After the interaction ends, it still provides the grounding for what performances are possible through the headscarf and abaya.

This also highlights the room for slippage within these performative layers. After all, Puwar's (2004) 'altogether different echo' is produced through a shift in the imagining of Trafalgar Square. When Hind experiences the 'incredible colours' that signal everyone being fully together, there is an opening up of possible performances (and imaginings) of Baker Street. The discomfort felt in the abaya elsewhere (noted through 'what people think of Muslims') produces an 'altogether different echo' here. Thus

performative layers hold the potential of opening up new meanings and relations across bodies and spaces.

Through these examples, prayer illustrates the co-existence of layers that are understood in relation to one another. Layering moves away from any fixed understanding of clothing practices by exploring both visible and 'hidden' elements of presentations as we negotiate different gazes and spaces. This is built upon in the following section by focusing on the clothes worn in public spaces when praying.

4.5 Praying in public

This section expands on the use of layering by focusing on the presentations visible or hidden as we move between public and sacred spaces. Such a movement is particularly important to explore because of the way prayer alters public spaces. El Guindi highlights how the secularity of public space can be transformed through Islamic sacred space:

A distinctive quality of the Islamic construction of space is how it turns a public area into a private space, without the entry of a stranger. It enables ordinary Muslims temporarily to convert any worldly place (street, shop, aircraft aisle) into a sacred space set apart, simply by marking it and occupying it in a ritually pure state facing Makka (El Guindi, 2000: 77-78).

This conversion of public space into sacred space is dependent on the performances (both clothing and bodily movements) that we engage with when praying. Because of this, I explore how bodies are (or can be) accommodated within public space. Within the U.S.A.'s legal vernacular, public accommodations specifically refers to buildings or activities (e.g. marches) that are open to and used by the public (e.g. Jakobsen, 2004), including spaces like shops, universities, mosques, etc. However, I use public accommodations to explore how bodies are accommodated within these public spaces. This is particularly important when exploring practices that are an extension of a religion constructed as Other to Western liberal democracies (Massad, 2015; Said, 2003).³⁹ Which practices are normalised when imagining the bodies that should be accommodated within public spaces? What power dynamics are at play when we (as strange bodies) are accommodated?

I am wary of homogeneously constructing the secular as only gaining meaning through its role in suppressing religion in public space (Howe, 2009). However, within a project that centres Black Muslim women, it is not secularity as a concept that is focused upon: rather, I focus on the way secularity is felt and interacted with by Black Muslim women. This draws from Tse's work on 'grounded theologies' and how the process of secularization 'already carr[ies] religious content' (Butler cited in Tse, 2014: 204), as secularism has often been constructed in relation to different theologies (Modood,

³⁹ It is important to note the differences within Christian traditions (and Muslim traditions), only some of which are dominant within the U.K. However, I am focused on the way Muslims become racialized as oppositional to the nation, reifying homogeneous imaginings of both Islam and Christianity.

2007; Tse, 2014). Rather than seeing the sacred or religious as 'spill[ing] out' into the secular everyday (MacKian, 2011: 63), this highlights the contexts wherein particular discourses (and specifically secularity) become dominant. It expands our understanding of the function of dominant theologies in the construction (and racialisation) of particular bodies and spaces.⁴⁰ These processes are implicated in the construction of spaces (and the bodies neutralised within these spaces).

By considering the way university and work places are constructed in relation to prayer, I ask how the boundaries between public and sacred spaces are experienced by Black Muslim women. Are sacred spaces constructed as a part of these everyday public spaces? If so, how? Is there a mismatching occurring when moving between public and sacred space? How does (or can) layering assist us in negotiating this movement?

To examine this, I focus on 2 events discussed by participants in relation to public accommodations: First, using an empty classroom to pray, and second, going to a designated prayer room within the university or workplace.

4.5.1 *Praying in a classroom*

More often than not, Khadijah used an empty classroom in her building to pray. She kept an abaya and prayer mat by her desk (see Figure 4), and went to public toilets to change and make *wudu'* when it was time for prayer.

By using an abaya and locking the classroom door, Khadijah re-purposed the room to suit her needs, transforming it into sacred space. This is not just a temporary transformation: the very presence of the abaya and prayer mat by her desk meant that they were kept as a part of her everyday space, even if they were contained (when not worn) or locked (when sealing entry into the available classroom). By finding the privacy to engage in this performance, she participates in both spaces, wiggling to be within both, even as she also re-establishes boundaries between both through the containment of her different performances.⁴¹

In layering her clothes, Khadijah's body and construction of public spaces are reorganized to make room for the performance (and construction of) sacred space. The boundaries of public spaces are pushed to accommodate her religious performance, even as they are also re-enforced through the locking of the classroom door and the removal of the abaya when leaving the classroom and returning to work.

The very fact that these spaces *can* be pushed (and the role of layering in blurring these boundaries) illustrates that 'place is often multivalent, and requires an acknowledgement of simultaneous, fluctuating and conflicting investment of sacred and secular meanings in any site' (Kong, 2001: 212). Whilst performances within

⁴⁰ Ivakhiv (2006: 170) addresses this by pointing to how indigenous communities were alternatively constructed as without any religion (and thus needing European colonization) or having 'religion of the most base form' (and thus needing European colonization).

⁴¹ It is important to note the toilets as a transitional space between both of these performances, meaning that these performances are not fully 'contained' within distinguishable spaces. This use of toilet spaces is developed further in Chapter 5.

sacred and secular spaces are open to transgressions, they are also (and at times simultaneously) reinforced through performances (and gazes) that construct 'appropriate behaviour.' Zainab becomes aware of this through the comments positioning her layering as inappropriate for prayer; Mimi reflects on this through the 'hassle' of changing her clothes and finding space to pray whilst teaching at a school with a minority Muslim population.

[...] at this school I don't have my own classroom yet, so I'm always moving around? So it's just I'd pray in the morning, come home and catch up, erm, and it works out a lot easier because the days are longer as well [...]

Okay, so what would you wear? Like since you were out, what would you-

If I was praying? [...] My skirt tends to be just below my knees so I don't, I can't pray with my legs showing that much so I'd wear a skirt, I have a skirt in my desk

Okay so did you always have-

Yeah, also I used to bring in abayas, it was literally... It was just a hassle wearing it, "miss, you changed!" [I laugh] "I had to pray" "Miss, why are you wearing that??" And it's like okay, never mind.

(Mimi, 27, not a regular public abaya wearer)

Here, prayer (and layering to engage with prayer) is positioned as strange or an extra difficulty when interacting and moving through public spaces. Mimi navigates around the strangeness attached to prayer in public space by holding onto her (i.e. her particular presentation for prayer's) ability to fit within her home. This exposes the assumed neutrality of public spaces through the way certain practices (and by extension, certain bodies) are racialized as out of place. Participating in these public spaces is thus negotiated through bracketing out specific racialized performances (Gorman-Murray, 2008; Sunier, 2005).⁴²

It is not just about bracketing out these racialized performances, but specifically the bracketing out a racialized *temporality*. In needing to go home before she can 'catch up' with the prayers missed whilst within the workplace, prayer is perpetually off the beat of the daily work rhythm. It is thus constituted as part of a performance that is out of time within public space, and thus out of space. It can only be 'caught up' through the temporal codes that structure (and are possible) within the home.

However, interactions across public spaces are not static or homogeneous: our negotiations of different public spaces are continuously developing. Mimi's discomfort in praying in her current workplace was also mediated through her understanding of past workplaces with larger Muslim populations where she did feel comfortable praying. Performative layers enable us to contextualise experiences of discomfort through other spaces where that discomfort was not present. Similarly, one's comfort

⁴² When thinking of public spaces more broadly, this has particularly deadly consequences for trans and non-binary persons who are included through the exclusion of queer performances.

within a particular space can be contextualised in relation to another space wherein that comfort was missing.

On a broader note, this also requires a consideration of the different spaces wherein racialized performances are (or can be) accommodated. While Mistura, Asiya and Khadijah were able to pray in classrooms, others (including participants who worked in hospitals, supermarkets and offices) were not provided with a similar space. Wiggling against the boundaries of public space to construct sacred spaces is dependent on the rigidity of the boundaries of public space. This returns to a consideration of how different bodies use public spaces and the need to expose the temporal codes that structure (and racialize) bodies within society.

As was stated in Interlude I, wiggling also includes recognising the different spaces wherein one might feel less comfortable. Layering assists with this understanding by situating (potentially conflicting) performances in relation to one another. When Mimi decides to pray at home instead of at work, she recognises the boundaries of possible performances within public spaces, and where Othered public performances might be possible. The simultaneity of these performative layers around our bodies enable us to hold onto the different spaces wherein prayer (or rather, comfort in praying) was possible.

This is developed further by understanding performative layers. The following section addresses this through the clothing practices Black Muslim women wear when negotiating university or workplace prayer rooms.

4.5.2 Negotiating the prayer room

In universities (or at times in Muslim-majority workplaces), rooms were designed with the explicit purpose of being a prayer room for Muslims.⁴³ For Asiya, the university prayer room was a place that allowed for a space to 'breathe' and to find a sense of solidarity amongst other Muslim women:

Because it is a prayer room, it's just people coming in to pray, so it just feels... calmer. Like a different world. And then you go back into the hustle and bustle. So Alhamdulillah [Praise be to God].

(Asiya, 23, regular public abaya wearer)

The calmness and otherworldly values ascribed to the prayer room speaks to the way the space *outside* of the prayer room is constructed. The 'hustle and bustle' felt within public spaces is implicitly connected to her movements around non-Muslim audiences. The prayer room provided a comfort that enabled her to negotiate the secularity felt within the university public space. Prayer (and the affect produced through the prayer room) acts as a performative layer surrounding (and centring) her as she moves back into the 'hustle and bustle.' This highlights her construction of the prayer room as relational to her imagining of public spaces.

⁴³ Often (but not always) there would be two separate gendered prayer rooms or a curtain dividing a single room.

This is situated alongside an understanding of the different ways Black Muslim women are visible as we move across these different spaces. For Asiya (who wore the same clothes when praying and moving around the university more generally), her experience across these spaces were mediated through her visibility as a Muslim in both the prayer room and other university spaces. This carried different connotations depending on whether she was moving through the secularized university space or the explicitly religious prayer room.

Meanwhile, Zainab, Khadijah and I use material layers to mediate our movement between these spaces. Through changing our clothing, there is a careful consideration of the boundaries around performances within each space. It is an awareness of these boundaries that also causes discomfort when these co-existing performances are thought to 'spill out' or become uncovered. Zainab illustrates this through her concerns with removing her headscarf once leaving the prayer room:

I, I do normally have a strange feeling cos I'm not always sure how to do it. So it's like, if I take it off, I feel like I'm just going back. It's a weird feeling cos you kinda feel like 'oh god, I can't walk out of here in the hijab, someone might see me, just take it off,' but I do get that strange feeling like 'oh am I doing the right thing, should I leave it on' so I do feel weird, like I get this... uncomfortable feeling. It's quite uncomfortable cos to me it's like I'm, I'm never sure what time is right for you to take it out.

(Zainab, 21, not a regular public abaya wearer)

Zainab questions her performance of religiosity as she removes the material layer used to construct sacred spaces (and the prayer room). Her discomfort speaks to the imagining of performances of religiosity wherein the headscarf is positioned as *the* way to present one's body as Muslim. Failure to wear the headscarf outside of the prayer room then becomes attached to an inability to present her body as Muslim.

In layering her clothes, Zainab notes the precarity attached to her movement across spaces (and gazes). There are distinct audiences that she imagines her clothing practices negotiating, and the presence of one performance in a space designated for the other (even temporarily) produces a sense of discomfort. Through her concern that 'someone might see,' there is an illustration of how layering can be seen as a failed performance, particularly when one layer is insufficiently disguising a hidden layer. The framework of layering exposes which presentations we use to situate ourselves in the spaces we encounter and the social norms that construct our uses of different layers within these spaces.

As was stated previously, layering does not read as a stable or fixed performance onto the way we interact with different audiences and spaces. Rather it focuses on the complexity intertwined with our shifting (visible) presentation. For Zainab, the performative layer used to assist her movement in and out of the prayer room was fraught because of how this movement could position her as failing to construct a fitting visibility in either space. However, this movement is reinforced when she notices (and racializes) other Black Muslim women moving across these spaces in a

similar fashion, enabling her to put on/remove her scarf with greater comfort. She then connects this manoeuvring to a practice learned when praying in Nigeria.

This speaks to the way Blackness was explicitly referenced when discussing prayer with participants: it was connected to learning to use different layers or to specific national identities. Although experiences of racialisation were often spoken about (particularly in relation to police brutality or Black Lives Matter activism) more broadly, they were only briefly reflected upon in relation to clothing specifically. Some of this is because of the focus on *clothing*, as it connects to presentations that are (or are not) associated with being visibly Muslim. This is very different from, for example, a project that focuses on how one's skin-tone affected the presentation of one's body across different spaces.

However, this in and of itself speaks to the function of Blackness in the lives of Black Muslim women. It is not always explicitly about the racializing of one's skin through different spaces, but how this skin is layered with other performances, some of which are assumed to eclipse others. Layering holds onto these different performances instead of focusing on one over an Othered.

It is within this context that I push against the conceptualisation of sacred spaces (or religious performances more broadly) as creating de-racialized bodies. When Zainab's performance across public spaces and the prayer room was questioned or understood as precarious, she used a connection to an imagined community of Black (Nigerian) Muslim women to centre and ground her own performance as part of the norm. The performative layer that enables her to move between these different spaces also distances her own presentation from the immediate gazes felt within the prayer room. This layer is reinforced through her holding onto past performances that are used to form connections with visible Black Muslim women. This illustrates an ever-developing negotiation of being a Black Muslim woman through the different bodies, gazes and spaces that we interact with.

4.6 Conclusions

This chapter has used prayer to highlight how experiences of being a Black Muslim woman are layered as we move across different spaces. Whilst I have intentionally focused on snapshots of the clothing practices of Black Muslim women, layering assists in holding onto the partiality of these different presentations, only some of which were made visible to me through the research relationship. It is the simultaneity of the (hidden and visible, material and performative) layers that surround the body that moves away from any fixed understanding of our presentations. Layering exposes our performances as fluid and in continuous construction through the different gazes and spaces that we interact with.

By discussing the function of prayer (and specifically prayer time), this chapter has contributed to work on national temporalities, and more broadly, banal nationalisms. It has pushed for an exploration of the temporal codes that structure prayer and position

it as off-beat (or a racialized Other) to the rhythms set by national temporal codes. Within this context, it is vital to understand how prayer (for many participants) became incorporated into daily rhythms. This moves away from defining prayer and/or the sacred as “other” worldly, and instead situates it as shaping (and being shaped by) our everyday performances across different spaces.

From here, it is important to expand understandings of what it means to pray through defining sacred spaces and performances of religiosity. Whilst sacred spaces were set up as spaces connecting one to a performance of piety, the performance of religiosity is understood as broader than the explicitly ‘pious.’ These definitions helped to nuance performances of prayer beyond a homogeneously defined religion whilst still holding onto the piety and sacrality that some Black Muslim women attributed to prayer. These definitions enabled a careful exploration of how prayer is entwined with other processes of identification.

This is illustrated through the concept of layering. When discussing experiences of praying at home, layering highlighted the co-existence of differing presentations that all contributed to an experience of being within the boundaries of home. This also expands on comfort as a shifting process: comfort in one presentation can be understood in relation to spaces where that same presentation may elicit discomfort. It moves away from any fixed understanding of presentations based on the layer that might be most visible to external gazes.

It is the cumulative experience across different layers that we use when negotiating which garments can or should be worn where. This was exposed through the experiences shared regarding the mosque, particularly through participants who used abayas for the explicit purpose of fitting into these institutionally sacred spaces. The visibility that was felt as non-regular public abaya wearers moved from the mosque to public spaces speaks to the changing (material and performative) layers used to negotiate these spaces. It reflects our negotiations of the different gazes (and bodies) that are normalised within different spaces.

This was expanded upon in the section on praying in public where I explored how specific practices (and by extension, the bodies that engage in these practices) can be positioned as out of place. This pushed an understanding of how bodies are normalised, accommodated and/or racialized through public spaces. These three processes highlight different ways that Black Muslim women relate to their visibility as we move across public spaces. It began to unpack how we negotiate different experiences of visibility beyond any isolated space. Through this, there is a move to understand Blackness as layered with other performances that might be pushed to the forefront depending on the spaces and gazes that are being negotiated. Layering enables a holding onto the complexity of performances by recognising both the visible and the hidden (only some of which can be known by any external gaze).

Importantly, this has begun a discussion regarding how layering is used to negotiate different experiences of visibility. In other words, layering exposes how Black Muslim

women negotiate *seeing themselves being seen*. This is expanded upon through Interlude III by focusing on the different functions of visibility in the lives of Black Muslim women in Britain.

Interlude III: Visibility

Throughout this project, a number of visual terms illustrate the different relationships Black Muslim women have to our experiences of visibility. Whether we are negotiating gazes, onlookers, starers or audiences, there is a need to unpack the different ways Black Muslim women see ourselves being seen. This is explored within this interlude by theorising how Black Muslim women negotiate shifting visibilities within white-dominated societies. By centring the experiences of racialized bodies that are gazed at (as out of place within normative social discourses), I push research on visual studies, critical race studies and phenomenology forward.

This interlude begins with Fanon (2008[1952]) who addresses the mutual construction of visibility and social discourses. In the oft-analysed interaction between the white child onlooker and Fanon (wherein the child exclaimed 'Look, a Negro!'), the child's look communicates a wider history within which Fanon situates his visibility and the 'fact' of his Blackness:

I was responsible at the same time for my body, for my race, for my ancestors. I subjected myself to an objective examination, I discovered my blackness, my ethnic characteristics; and I was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects, slave-ships, and above all else, above all: "Sho' good eatin'" (Fanon, 2008[1952]: 84-85).

Through discovering his Blackness, Fanon illustrates how our visibility is produced through the socio-historical discourses that construct the spaces we interact with. We learn how to position (and respond to) our visibility because of the state regulatory processes that produce and perpetuate social discourses (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]).

This moves away from focusing on any 'real' or 'imagined' gaze, as the very process of looking or noticing one's body being looked at includes the *production* of a visible subject 'within a constantly shifting matrix of unconscious memories' (Silverman, 1996: 3). This speaks to the power embedded in 'seeing' racialized bodies: as Fleetwood (2011: 7) points out, "the field of vision is a formation that renders racial marking, producing the viewing subject who is, to paraphrase Norman Bryson, 'inserted into systems of visual discourse that saw the world before' the particular subject came into being."

By situating the production of racialized visibilities within social discourses, I develop my own understanding of the gaze from which this research is built. This grows from Foucault's (1991: 203) work on the Panoptic gaze, which highlights how those being observed (through the central watchtower) 'become principles of [their] own subjection.' Rather than discussing the spatial dimensions of the Panopticon, I am particularly interested in the Panoptic gaze as a process of subjectification. The Panoptic gaze is not constructed through the observed necessarily *seeing* someone watching them: it is about 'their very awareness or knowledge of the possibility that they could be watched' (Crossley, 1993: 403).

Yet within this understanding of the Panoptic gaze, there is a lack of clarity regarding how power is transmitted through the gaze (Crossley, 1993). To overcome this, I look to Foucault's work in *The Birth of The Clinic*:

[... By] saying what one sees, one integrates it spontaneously into knowledge; it is also to learn to see, because it means giving the key of a language that masters the visible (1973: 203).

Gazes are thus linked to the very language we use to understand what we are gazing at. Importantly, the different functions of the Panoptic and clinical gaze highlights how different gazes are built through social codes. They are situated within the social discourses that perpetuate (and push against) constructions of the visible world.

Once situating gazes as both constructing and constructed through social discourses, it is also possible to expand on different functions of gazing. One such example is an audience's gaze which refers to the disembodied social norms that are felt to construct our visibility as marked bodies in relation to the spaces that we navigate. This is contrasted with the gaze of the starrer or onlooker. Although I distinguish the stare from the look through the temporality attached to each performance (i.e. staring implying a longevity that the look is without), both are examples of an embodied gaze. Even as social discourses are used to construct how a body becomes visible through the look or the stare, the onlooker/starrer is also embodied and visible to those subject to their gaze. This is illustrated through Fanon's interaction with the white child: whilst Fanon feels his body being made visible, he is also responding to (and constructing) the visibility of the child. This nuances different relationships built to gazes by highlighting shifting experiences of visibility.

These experiences of visibility must also be situated within an understanding of processes of racialisation. As it stands, debates around gazes have been unable (or unwilling) to turn a critical eye towards the way racialization informs how one is gazed at as well as one's ability to gaze at others (e.g. Bartky, 2003; Crossley, 1993; Foucault, 1991; Skelton, 2002; Urry, 1992). This is particularly disturbing as Fanon (2008[1952]: 84) points to the 'racial epiderma schema' that constructs his visibility as an object to be fearful of. This can be contrasted with Ahmed's work on how strangers are recognised:

Strangers are not simply those who are not known in their dwelling, but those who are, in their very proximity, *already recognised as not belonging*, as being out of place (2000: 21, emphasis in original).

The racial epiderma schema that marks bodies as strangers/dangerous Others is also involved in the construction of gazes. Through gazing, we draw from languages describing how bodies are (or can be) visible as racially marked. Gazes produce and are produced by the same social discourses that construct racialized bodies as out of place within our (white dominated) surroundings.

There has been significant research critiquing the way Black (and) Muslim bodies become racialized (e.g. Alloula, 1986; Aranke, 2017; Fleetwood, 2011; Haldrup et al.,

2006; hooks, 1981; Tyrer and Sayyid, 2012). Such work has pushed understandings of critical race studies forward by detailing the processes through which racialized bodies are made visible. I build upon such work by centring Black Muslim women and focusing on how *we* feel our bodies becoming visible. In doing so, I shift the way processes of racialisation and visibility are and can be discussed.

Through focusing on racist and colonial systems, the previously mentioned critical race researchers have made important challenges against normative (and neutralised) gazes and social discourses. However, this still focuses on the way onlookers might know (i.e. see) racialized bodies. This differs from how we might come to know ourselves when negotiating what it means to be visible. In feeling one's body being looked at and looking back, I contribute to different (and needed) knowledge about how these socio-historical discourses are negotiated as Black Muslim women move through different spaces.

This builds from Fanon's work on the social discourses that construct his understanding of the child's gaze at his Black body. However, I move beyond this by focusing on how we *negotiate* these social discourses through our presentations across different spaces.

In centring how Black Muslim women experience our own visibility, I look at the production of social space to ask Lefebvre's (1991[1974]: 69) questions of 'Who produces? What? How? Why and for Whom?' These questions are pertinent to an understanding of the social codes used to construct visible bodies. Research on gazes can only partially explain the social codes that produce our visibility: it is also necessary to explore the function of social codes through the way we present ourselves as bodies that are gazed upon.

This is particularly important when social space is understood as a 'configuration of a multiplicity of histories all in the process of being made' (Massey, 2000: 229). As was seen through layering in Chapter 4, these histories are ever-developing, and in a continuous state of (re)shaping our presentations as we move. Negotiating visibility speaks to the way social discourses (and histories) meet, are layered, and are constructed through the production of social space.

In understanding how Black Muslim women negotiate their own visibility, I return to Hind and her discomfort in the abaya and headscarf on Eid day (before reaching Baker Street). As someone who is not a regular public abaya or headscarf wearer, she reflects on her body's visibility when moving towards the mosque through the streets of London:

I think there is some sort of self-consciousness and there's also this whole kind of like... things go through your head. You're just like, oh, what people think about Saudi Arabia, what people think about Muslims, what people think about bla bla bla. But actually, it's happened a few times where people, loads of the general public are like "Mubarak" [religious congratulatory greeting] to us and such and such which is kinda nice. But then I guess you do get the old

stare of people who just keep on staring at you... they always turn out to be American [both laugh] and you just kinda stare right back at them [she laughs].

(Hind, 26, Manchester)

Hind's clothing is positioned as a deviance, as out of place amongst the 'people' in London. In connecting her visibility to 'what people think of Saudi Arabia,' she locates her body, Muslims and Saudi Arabia as bodies/objects outside of the normative 'general public' audience. Hind's presentation is assumed to be visible as deviant from these 'people' that are unmarked as non-Muslims. The normative non-Muslim gaze is disembodied and speaks to the regulatory social discourses that construct her understandings of movement through central London in a visibly Muslim presentation.

It is within this context that Hind notes a surprise when religious greetings are offered by 'loads of the general public.' This builds a connection between her visibility and these audiences that alters her experience of visibility as Muslim through the rest of her journey in city centre London. When she does encounter 'the old stare,' she layers this with other experiences of moving through London and positions the starrer as out of place (pointing to how 'they always turn out to be American'). Rather than being a part of a normative non-Muslim gaze, the 'American' starrer is embodied and stared back at. Through this, Hind speaks back the starrer's visibility as deviant from the normative bodies imagined as an extension of London. This differs significantly from the way her visibility is felt when confronting the disembodied general public that she and other visible Muslims are assumed to be outside of.

This begins to unpack the different values attached to gazes as well. Whilst the 'old stare' could be dismissed by Hind as an American, her visibility to a normative non-Muslim audience leads to a discomfort in the abaya and headscarf. These differing examples of negotiating visibility leads me to ask: how are these gazes valued in relation to one another? How do these valuations alter our negotiation of the spaces we are encountering? These questions are answered by framing an economy of gazes.

This economy of gazes is developed from Ahmed's (2004) 'Affective Economies' which provides a language for the transferral of emotions between objects, bodies and communities.

In such affective economies, emotions *do things*, and they align individuals with communities – or bodily space with social space – through the very intensity of their attachments. Rather than seeing emotions as psychological dispositions, we need to consider how they work, in concrete and particular ways, to mediate the relationship between the psychic and the social, and between the individual and the collective (Ahmed, 2004: 119, emphasis in original).

Affective economies speak to the making and re-making of the spaces that we interact with. Emotions function by sticking certain signs together and creating subjects through this process e.g. 'the bodies who "could be terrorists" are the ones who might

“look Muslim” (Ahmed, 2004: 132).⁴⁴ An economy of gazes does a similar job to that of emotion in Ahmed’s work: gazes are understood (and valued) through relationships to different bodies, objects and spaces that are also being created.

There is a crucial difference between this understanding of an economy of gazes, and Ahmed’s (2000) work on visual economies. Visual economies explore the different ways of seeing and recognising (familiar and strange) others: such work implicitly focuses on a normative gaze that is seeing Othered (and familiar) bodies. I move forward with this work by unmasking the function and valuing of many different gazes. This centres those subject to a visibility as Other by highlighting relationships built across different gazes, only some of which construct the racialized Black Muslim woman as Other.

This exploration of how Black Muslim women experience their visibility highlights how different knowledges regarding the production of social space is valued. Developing an understanding of the economy of gazes unmasks the power embedded in certain bodies that are afforded the gaze of this unmarked ‘general public’ or audience. This can (and will be) contrasted with those gazes that are embodied and/or racialized. Our negotiation of these different gazes speaks to wider discourses and relations that construct social spaces.

The presentations that we engage with when moving through different spaces are reflective of the valuing of these different gazes. These presentations explore the negotiation of social discourses that shape our understandings of our body’s visibility. Importantly, it is not just about how we situate our bodies’ visibility, but how this visibility is negotiated through clothing practices. This is explored in the following chapter by focusing on the outfits Black Muslim women wear to work.

⁴⁴ A similar stickiness could be found between the way the abaya, burqa and/or niqab become attached to the assumed oppression of Muslim women.

Chapter 5 Work Outfits

5.1 Introduction

This chapter expands on the previous discussion around visibility by focusing on the outfits worn to work in public spaces.⁴⁵ How do we experience and negotiate visibility across these public spaces?

This question is posed in relation to Puwar's (2004) work on *Space Invaders*. Puwar points to the repeated positioning of white masculine bodies as the norm across different public institutions. This repetition develops 'a sedimented relationship between the [white] masculine body' and different public spaces (Puwar, 2004: 78). By contrast, Black Muslim women are marked and made visible as space invaders: our very presence in the outfits attached to this somatic norm appear unbecoming and ill-fitting.

We therefore require an understanding of how Black Muslim women wiggle in these outfits to create room to be. The term outfit is used here to address the relationship between clothing practices and (public) space. How do we present ourselves as ready (i.e. fit) to go out? How do we fit ourselves into these spaces that we negotiate 'out'side of home?

To address these questions, this chapter has been structured as follows: first, I detail the construction of a 'professional' outfit when one's body is positioned as outside the somatic norm. This explores what it means for us to feel our visibility, and to look back at those we feel to be looking at us. Second, these points are expanded upon through the (work or school) uniform. Here, I also situate different gazes within an economy of gazes, and discuss how we begin to negotiate these gazes through our presentations. Third, I explore how we learn to present and position ourselves as Black Muslim women by focusing on the student outfit.

It is important to recognise that these three (professional, uniform and student) outfits are not donned in isolation to other spaces. Therefore, the final section focuses on our movements within these outfits as we enter/leave work. By ending on this movement within and around public spaces, I highlight how our presentations shift as we negotiate different gazes and spaces.

5.2 The professional outfit

This section sets up how Black Muslim women perceive themselves as visible. By focusing on professional outfits, I explore how unmarked bodies can be neutralised within these outfits. This leads to a discussion on how different bodies (and outfits) can be constructed as out of place, and what we do to negotiate this.

⁴⁵ I recognise that there are many forms of (paid and unpaid) work, many of which are hidden within private spaces like the home boundary. However, participants primarily spoke of working in relation to public spaces, and so that is what will be focused upon.

These themes are developed through two parts: first, I focus on the comportment of our bodies as we create professional outfits. Second, I focus on the different gazes we feel constructing our visibility as we attempt to look professional.

5.2.1 *Creating a professional outfit*

I feel like whenever you go into the department and people are in a professional setting where they're working and they're wearing suits or they're wearing plain clothing... I feel like I already stand out by wearing a scarf in the first place, because a lot of them are not? So I try and make my abaya (so the dress that I'm wearing) and the scarf that I'm wearing plain, so that it at least looks like I'm trying to adhere to some kind of dress code, of trying to come across as professional. Cos I feel like if I wore all flowery kind of scarves and stuff, it would look like I've just come a bit informal to a professional setting.

(Aaliyah, 25, PhD student in Education department)⁴⁶

Aaliyah summarises what is at stake when we develop professional outfits: by noticing the suits and plain clothing that surround her, she is also reflecting on how her body could be positioned as out of place. This professional outfit is not overtly uniform, particularly within university spaces where one's presentation reflects the role of the scholar as a 'universal figure of academic knowledge' (Puwar, 2004: 45). This universal figure is constructed as neutral compared to how racialized bodies (like Aaliyah as a headscarf and abaya wearing Black Muslim) are visible, with their differences brought to the forefront.⁴⁷

I contrast these professional outfits with Aaliyah's abaya (and headscarf) by reflecting on Longhurst's (2001) reading of the clothes used to present managerial bodies. With 'firm, straight lines and starch creases,' these clothing practices 'give the appearance of a body that is impervious to outside penetration' (Longhurst, 2001: 99) The managerial (and professional) outfit is thus intertwined with developing and maintaining a sense of authority through its impervious presentation.

Developing a professional outfit thus includes this desire to present one's body as an authority that can be properly managed and controlled (Longhurst, 2001). This speaks to the Panoptic gaze: whilst the prisoner must feel they are being watched for their deviance from the norm, the person(s) who can (potentially) occupy the central watchtower represent an extension of the social norms that construct certain bodies (i.e. the prisoners) as deviant from the norm. Their very presence in the central watchtower is entangled with the power *to* gaze (regardless of whether they are looking or not). By contrast, those outside the watchtower run the risk of being gazed

⁴⁶ In this chapter, I use the job titles of relevant workplaces to highlight how work outfits are developed in relation to the spaces (and roles) that we are navigating. It is important to note that some participants had more than one job, meaning the title used might alter in relation to the spaces being discussed.

⁴⁷ This discussion can be situated within wider conversations regarding how racialized bodies are marked within university institutions (Johnson and Joseph-Salisbury, forthcoming; Puwar, 2004; Tate, 2016), and the under-representation of Black academics within universities (Adams, 2017).

at. In the context of the professional outfit, if one's body is seen to be ill-managed, one can be subject to the gaze of those who are unmarked by these social discourses (and located within the central watchtower).

The implications of the professional outfit differ from the boundaries enforced through the abaya: with soft and flowy edges laid over the body from shoulder to ankle, this is a presentation that speaks to a belonging within a Muslim identity.⁴⁸ Because of the wider social discourses that perpetuate a divide between Islam and 'the West' (Haldrup et al., 2006; Massad, 2015), a visibility as belonging within this identity is associated with deviance: as Mir (2011: 560) point out, "Muslim, immigrant non-whites must be invisible as Muslims, immigrants and non-whites." The wearing of the abaya therefore signals a steady rejection of an invisibility as Muslim in public spaces. Rather, it is a presentation that lays claim to public spaces through the boundaries constructed around the multi-dimensional hijab. This must be read alongside the long history of colonial obsession with "unveiling" the Muslim woman and forcing the removal of these boundaries around the body (Alloula, 1986; Fanon, 2004[1960]); the very presence of the abaya can be situated as pushing against this process.

It is the clashing of the abaya and the professional outfit within the workplace that produces Aaliyah's experience of visibility. Through noticing the ways in which the somatic norm is attached to these straight lines and starch creases, the abaya's ability to deny certain forms of visibility is jeopardised. In this context, the abaya becomes visible *because* of the boundaries which it represents. The abaya's soft and determined edges mismatch with the firm straight lines that are attached to the professional outfit.

It is this positioning as outside the somatic norm that makes being visible as 'unprofessional' an undesirable presentation for Aaliyah. Her awareness of the abaya and headscarf's visibility within these spaces speaks to a tension between her wanting to be visible as a Muslim, and how that visibility might be constructed as deviant. In negotiating this, she uses plain scarves and abayas so that 'it at least *looks* like I'm trying to adhere to some kind of dress code' (emphasis added). She develops techniques to get as close to (her understanding of) a professional outfit, whilst knowing that her positioning as Muslim would still make her visible.

This avoidance of 'flowery kind of scarves' and use of plain colours and styles to portray her professionalism is an interesting counter-point to the growing literature on Islamic fashion as stylizing 'modish modesty by engaging with mainstream fashion' (Lewis, 2013a: 3). Although Lewis challenges the uniformity that has come to be associated with *the* Muslim woman's clothing practices, it is important to recognise the ways in which the colourful 'cool postmodern bricolage' that Lewis (2009: 69) heralds

⁴⁸ I am cautious of making any further remarks regarding the different meanings participants might attach to the abaya (see chapter 4 regarding the abaya's positioning as an extension of sacred spaces). However, it is clear that there is (at least) a connection to a visibly Muslim community through the donning of the abaya.

is not always desirable, particularly when it might diminish one's credibility as belonging to this professional setting.

The credibility gained or lost in constructing these professional outfits is implicitly connected to a performance of professional authority. For Babs, it is this potential positioning as lacking authority that is intertwined with the visibility she negotiates as a Black Muslim woman.

I feel like I have to assert my authority, because I'm short and because of my face, it looks so young, so people often think I'm the med student in the room or they think that I've not graduated yet or qualified. Those things I find frustrating. And then it's difficult because if you're coming to tell somebody your management plan, and they're kind of thinking 'oh no, this is a child in the room,' they're not going to take it on board, and I think that also changes some of the therapeutic effect. You know, it takes away from the fact that you know what you're doing and you've got something that will actually help them.

(Babs, 26, doctor in psychiatry ward)

It was not just Babs' headscarf and skin tone that she felt marked her visibility within the workplace – she also reflects on the role her age plays in the perception of her body. This is a vital part of understanding how we get to know our bodies and develop professional outfits. Black (and) Muslim bodies cannot (and should not) be understood in a vacuum as it limits our understanding of the complexity behind processes of racialization. In order to understand how to manage her body 'properly,' Babs navigates how her racialization, gender and age work together to position her as visibly less 'qualified.'

When she attempts to push against this performance (through the use of colourful scarves or particular jewellery that speaks to her personality), she notes her visibility as deviant from the hierarchical relationship built between the 'professional' and the 'service user' (or the 'teacher' and the 'student'). In order to avoid this positioning as unable to fit into her role as the professional, Babs works to perpetuate the social norms surrounding professionalism.

Even as these social norms are perpetuated, our very presence also acts to trouble them. Our bodies represent a challenge to the bodies that are unmarked and positioned as inherently compatible with the professional outfit. Although Longhurst (2001) begins to unpack how the female body is constructed as soft and susceptible to leakage in comparison to the male body within these public spaces, this is done without contextualising processes of racialization. There is more to be said around how this is experienced for Black Muslim women, especially for headscarf and abaya wearers like Aaliyah. As Franklin (2001: 144) says, "choosing clothes for work is often a case of risking being associated with one stereotype so as not to be confused with another even more personally despised or organisationally-inappropriate image." Both Babs and Aaliyah attempted to align their bodies more explicitly with a position of authority so as to prevent their bodies being fixed as visibly deviant. This negotiation was used to

limit the way one's visibility as deviant would (according to Babs) 'take away from the fact that you know what you're doing.'

These attempts to construct a professional outfit are therefore done in relation to the boundaries around the workplace. It is also done in relation to who we imagine to be looking and how we look back at the spaces we move through. The following section picks this up by focusing on the different gazes that are felt to inform our professional outfits.

5.2.2 *Looking professional*

This section focuses on how we develop a professional outfit in relation to the gazes that we encounter. What does it mean to construct one's outfit in relation to different gazes? For Hind (who works in a predominantly male department), this was reflected through her discomfort in wearing skirts to the workplace. She posits a dilemma around how to dress within a professional outfit whilst being 'fully conscious of where you are.'

My office is like just by the kitchen, there's like a common area and there's a kitchen and there's a bathroom. So anytime I wanna go to the bathroom I'm passing by this common area, anytime I'm going to the kitchen as well, and you just kinda, you're walking amongst this like **sea** of like white guys and you're just dressed in a skirt, you just kinda feel like.. hmmm

(Hind, 26, PhD student in Maths Department)

The bodies that Hind sees as potentially looking are racialized and gendered as white men. These white men are made visible through Hind's awareness of her own visibility as a Black woman within this '**sea** of white guys.'⁴⁹

Yet this sea of white guys are not necessarily assumed to be looking. Rather, this illustrates a previous point regarding how bodies located in (or as an extension of) the central watchtower have the *right* to gaze at those bodies (like Hind's) that deviate from the somatic norm. Whether or not they actually look is beside the point: their normalised presence produces an awareness of how bodies that look like Hind's are absent from this space. This speaks to the affective experience of being looked at. Hind takes this in and uses this to look back at this space through the outfits she uses or avoids.

In understanding this process of being looked at, Barthes outlines how our bodies are reproduced once we face a camera/gaze.

Once I feel myself observed by the [camera] lens, [...] everything changes: I constitute myself in the process of 'posing.' I instantaneously make another body for myself, I transform myself

⁴⁹ I deliberately use Black women here to highlight the different ways Black Muslim women who do not present as visibly Muslim might experience their visibility. This is understood in relation to the somatic norm, and the way other Black Muslim women note their specific visibility as Muslim.

in advance into an image. ... I feel that the Photograph creates my body or mortifies it (Barthes cited in Silverman, 1996: 150).

Our presentations are thus constituted through the way we feel ourselves being gazed at. This helps to situate Hind's discomfort with wearing a skirt to the workplace. She takes into consideration the bodies (and potential gazes) that she is likely to encounter and the way a skirt would/could remind her of her visibility as outside this somatic norm. In doing so, she develops techniques to present herself as a part of the professional outfit within this workplace.

Umm Yusuf evinces a similar processing of the gazes she is likely to encounter when going for a job interview. She recalls her decision to wear baggy trousers and a blazer instead of the abaya that was a part of her everyday clothing practices:

I definitely think that by that point – I mean, this is now 2013 - I definitely felt at that point that the abaya could potentially be a hindrance. Because sometimes people can't get past that. I shouldn't have had to do it, but I genuinely feel some places, they wouldn't be able to see past that. So I did conform to something that I shouldn't. I shouldn't have done it. I should have stood by my principles, but I felt that that is what I needed to do to be **genuinely** considered.

(Umm Yusuf, 28, project manager)

By imagining the audiences that are looking, she also looks back at her own body through its potential precarity as visibly Muslim (and thus a 'hindrance' to her achieving her economic goals). This picks up from the work done previously on the need to present one's body as effectively managed: in thinking through the visibility of the abaya as Other, Umm Yusuf is aware of how this could position her as incapable of fitting the professional outfit, stopping her from being '**genuinely** considered.' Thus she presents her body to signal a distance from the visibility of the abaya-wearer to the interviewer's gaze.

Although Umm Yusuf refers to the interviewer's gaze, the language of 'sometimes *people* can't get past that' (emphasis added) speaks to a generalised and disembodied audience. Yet the 'people' who wouldn't be able to 'get past it' are assumed to see the abaya as a deviant practice within the workplace. In imagining what gazes are likely (or able) to fix her visibility, Umm Yusuf's remarks are also speaking to how Other(ed) Muslim bodies are likely to be fixed as spectacle by this disembodied gaze.

It is interesting to note how she looks back at her choice in clothing as she interacts with and positions me as a fellow Muslim. Whilst the generalised people are still assumed to be judgmental of her presentation as a Muslim body, she becomes more critical of the techniques she used to navigate this gaze. Through the presence of another Muslim body (that is also assumed to be looking at her negotiation), the decision to wear trousers is looked back at as a transgression. It is retrospectively seen as an attempt to conform to social norms and to create a distance from other visibly Muslim bodies that she could develop a connection with (like mine).

From here, Umm Yusuf justifies her change in clothing by drawing from a common understanding of Islamophobia and how it can be used to fix our bodies. Through addressing the temporality within which she was going to the interview, she enables a consideration of how space and time work together to position our bodies (and specific presentations of those bodies) as out of place (and time).

In negotiating these different gazes, it is also important to note how we feel our visibility within Muslim majority spaces. Asiya discussed her experience of visibility in relation to her colleagues at an Islamic secondary school wherein some of her colleagues positioned the black abaya as too “extreme.” However, Asiya responded by locating herself within Britishness and looking back at her colleagues:

She was saying she was going to Morocco and she was like, “oh I wouldn't wear black anyways.”

Oh ok... like, why?

She was saying, “I'd just be wearing brightly coloured kaftans and things like that.” So I was like, [sceptical face] “...ok, so in a non-Muslim country you wear your abaya, but when you go to a Muslim country, suddenly it's ok to not wear your abaya anymore because you have to be afraid of wearing it, cos you'll "stand out?" If anything shouldn't they know more about this and be a bit more 'ohh, Masha Allah!' than 'eww.'” It seems like there's a dodgy way of looking at things, cos here, you can complain about living here, but at least here I'm allowed to wear what I want. Whereas if I go there, there seems to be a lot of stigma for other Muslims which for me is completely illogical and kinda crazy.

(Asiya, 23, teaching assistant at Muslim secondary school)

Within this example, the strangeness that her colleague ascribes to the black abaya is not located on the abaya for Asiya. Rather, she looks back at her colleagues and position the onlooker's gaze as ‘completely illogical and kinda crazy.’

This requires an exploration of how visibility is valued in relation to the gazes that are felt to be looking (i.e. an economy of gazes). Her colleagues' looking at the black abaya can be seen as ‘illogical’ as neither Asiya nor her colleague are located within the ‘logic’ offered by the neutralised norm of whiteness. As a result, Asiya can position her colleague's gaze as out of place within Britain wherein ‘I'm allowed to wear what I want.’ In other words, she positions herself as part of the diversity expected when ‘living here’ whilst positioning her colleague's performance as deviant from the diversity possible through our existence within Britishness.⁵⁰

This begins to illustrate how presentations are negotiated in relation to an economy of gazes. However, what happens to our relationship to this economy of gazes when clothing practices are explicitly regulated through uniforms? How do we negotiate the

⁵⁰ It is important to note how belonging to this diverse nation is premised on our positioning as a stranger within (see Ahmed, 2000; Ang, 1996), but I focus here on Asiya's reading of her positioning in relation to her colleague.

different gazes that inform these explicitly regulated spaces? These questions are addressed in the next section through focusing on the (work and school) uniform.

5.3 The uniform

Whilst the professional outfit perpetuates social norms around clothing without explicitly regulating them, the uniform works to make social (and specifically gendered) norms explicit. Whereas Black Muslim women needed to create their own professional outfits to negotiate their visibility, the uniform involves negotiating outfits that have already been pre-determined. It is therefore important to explore the relationship between these explicitly regulated clothing practices and the way our bodies are looked at and presented in these outfits.

This section is divided into two parts: first, I focus on Sahra's work uniform and how visibility is negotiated in relation to the gazes constructing the workplace (and how to be a Black Muslim woman within the workplace). Second, I focus on the role of parents (and specifically mothers) as we develop our presentations across different spaces. These sections assist in exploring the economy of gazes being negotiated through the uniform (and clothing practices more broadly).

5.3.1 Constructing Sahra's uniform

I begin this section with Sahra's reflections on wearing a uniform whilst working in ASDA.⁵¹ Although the ASDA uniform policy was meant to regulate how bodies could/should be presented as belonging to this corporate identity, Sahra's experiences question how belonging to the corporate identity takes place. After all, Sahra remains aware of how her headscarf and Blackness marks her visibility within this workplace. This is evident through the conversations she had with her (white) co-workers about where she could potentially be from.

After a couple of like weeks of me working there, they were like "oh, so are you Pakistani?" and I was like "no" and they were like "are you Indian?" and I was like "no" and they were like "so what are you then?" and I was like "I'm Somali" and they were like "so is that in Asia?"

Noooooo

And I was like "no, it's Africa" [she laughs] That's not the worst, somebody once actually said "oh, so what part of Islam are you from?"

Noooo, no

And then they got really embarrassed and they were like "I thought Islam was a place" and I was like "No, Islam" - I feel like I'm educating them a bit - but I was just like "No, Islam is a religion [she laughs] actually"

(Sahra, 19, uniform worker at ASDA)

⁵¹ ASDA is a superstore that is associated with Walmart in U.S.A.

It is interesting to place her relaying of this encounter to me as a Black Muslim woman who expresses surprise (and annoyance) at the questions that she has to respond to. Her presentation marks her body as not quite able to fit into the corporate uniform, whilst also positioning her as a part of the monolith that becomes Islam. In comparison, her relaying of this tale to me (as someone that also positions themselves as a Black Muslim woman) enables us to situate this process of misrecognition as the spectacle (rather than our bodies). This can be reflected upon with laughter, whilst acknowledging the burden of representation that is placed on Sahra's body through these encounters to represent "Islam" and to take on the role of educator as a foreign body within this (supposedly) uniform workplace.

This speaks to the layers used to negotiate performances across different spaces. Sahra's interactions with her work colleagues were negotiated alongside interactions with other Black Muslim women (including myself) wherein there was an opportunity to look back at her colleagues and centre her own presentation. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, our visibility is not fixed but shifts in relation to the different gazes and spaces that we are navigating. Layering moves away from fixing one's presentation as deviant in relation to any one space: instead, there is an understanding of how presentations and experiences are built through relations across multiple spaces.

Despite this layered understanding of our visibility, there are still particular negotiations that occur through the workplace that must be uncovered. For Sahra, negotiations of how to present herself within the workplace began when she found out that trousers had to be worn as part of the uniform:

When I first went to work I'd never really worn trousers before and my mum was kind of like, "don't take this job." Well she wanted me to take it because I'd been looking for work for so long, but she was like "it's trousers though, can't you wear a skirt?" So I went and asked. Because they said on the form that you could get wide leg trousers, like, if you were Muslim. So I asked for a wide leg trousers uniform but they gave me the regular trousers. And I was like, "don't you do wide leg?" And she [manager] was like, "no, this is the only trousers we do," and I was like "But it says on there that you do wide leg" and she was like "No, this is the only trousers we do." [...] So I was just like, "ok." But like, now I've like gone out and bought my own wide leg trousers

(Sahra, 19, uniform worker at ASDA)

Although she had asked for wide leg trousers, her interactions with her manager exemplified how we can become aware of which bodies are accommodated (or not) within these public spaces. Through the denial of her request to wear wide-leg trousers, Sahra notes the boundaries of performances regulated through the workplace, and how her own presentation can be positioned as deviant from this. This is reinforced through her manager's insistence that an accommodation cannot be made: there is a repetition of the social norms regulating how one's body (and through this, which bodies) should exist within the workplace.

However, she is also able to push against the boundaries of the workplace uniform, wiggling to present her body in the uniform as visibly Muslim. By using her workplace dress code, she presents her body in a manner she assumes was built for other Muslims. Through wearing wide leg trousers, her visibility within the workplace is still connected to an explicitly Muslim performance which provides a sense of ease.

This positioning as Muslim was particularly important because of the negotiations made with her mother around presentations outside of the home. Trousers deviated from her mother's understanding of how to present one's body as a Black Muslim woman. Yet for her mother, this was also considered alongside Sahra's need to find a job after 'looking for work for so long.' In working through how to fit into the work outfit, Sahra was also negotiating her mother's expectations of how she should present herself in public spaces.

This marks a shift in the way audiences and gazes have been discussed within this chapter – not only are we seen in relation to unknown audiences or starers in public spaces, we also negotiate the gazes of people intimately connected with the way we learn how to present our bodies (including mothers). By asking whether it is possible to wear a skirt as part of her uniform, Sahra's mother attempts to instruct her on how to present one's body as a visibly Muslim woman whilst also finding a way to fit in the workplace.

Although her mother's gaze is explicitly reflected upon, the implicit social norms attached to the uniform (and the need to wear trousers) is pushed to the background. Thus in understanding how gazes are valued, we also see how gazes might be highlighted or neutralised. In the following section, I explore how presentations in uniforms are developed in relation to mothers. This illustrates how an economy of gazes is negotiated by Black Muslim women.

5.3.2 Dressing with mothers

Research has already been done on how parents' gazes inform how Muslim girls learn to present their bodies (e.g. Dwyer, 1999; Hamzeh, 2011). I develop this further by focusing on mothers and situating them within an economy of gazes. Some of these gazes are explicitly communicating how one's visibility might be positioned as deviant (e.g. Sahra's mother in asking if she can avoid wearing trousers to work). However, other gazes are neutralised even as they regulate the social norms embedded in workplaces (e.g. the ASDA uniform policy). To understand how we learn to present our bodies, I investigate the relationships Black Muslim women have to multiple gazes.

This relationship is illustrated through Sahra's negotiation of her mother and teachers through the dress code at her secondary school.

I wore the jumper for like the whole, I think the whole of Year Seven. And then at the start of Year Eight, she [mum] was like, "she has boobs, she has to wear abaya now," and then they [teachers] were like "no, she has to wear a skirt." My mum was like, "no, she's going to wear like a long jumper on top," but I never wore the

jumper [over the abaya]. And at first they were like protesting and after a bit they were like, “it’s fine.” I was like, I’m just not going to wear the – because the jumper was like so annoying, and they get really boring.

(Sahra, 19, undergraduate student in Department of Biological Sciences)

Sahra works through how to present her body in relation to her school and her mother. A compromise is reached between the two gazes looking to construct Sahra’s body to fit within the school environment and within her mother’s conception of how to dress as she gets older. Yet this compromise still needs to be enacted by Sahra. In removing the jumper, she creates room for her own comfort within both the school and the abaya. She wiggles against the reproduction of social codes on how to be (or rather look like) a Black Muslim woman within her school.

Up until this point, Sahra was happy to wear the clothing which conformed to the expected dress regulations by the school and her mother. This moment of disagreement on how to dress her (increasingly gendered as an adult female) body served as an opportunity to disrupt the expectation of conformity. In learning how to wear outfits within the school environment, Sahra draws from and pushes against previous (and expected future) performances that have been accepted as part of belonging within the school. Her chosen outfit may have been called into question by her teachers (for the removal of the jumper), but it still provided her with her own developing sense of how to be a Black Muslim woman within these public spaces.

Although Dwyer (1999) heralds schools as spaces where Muslim girls can experiment with performances of femininity (e.g. make-up or taking on/off the headscarf), I refute the neutrality that this assumes of the gender norms perpetuated through the schooling system. Instead, I focus on how these spaces of learning are spaces where we learn how our bodies are seen by a multitude of gazes (in this case teachers and parents, but also classmates). These spaces of social normative learning teach us how to negotiate different forms of visibility as Black Muslim women.

These spaces of learning also teach parents how to negotiate their children’s visibility. This was highlighted by Mistura whose schooling had taken place in Nigeria, and who had to develop techniques to assist her daughters in presenting their Black bodies within a primary school with only two other Black children (that Mistura could recall). Although her children did not have to wear uniforms for most of their schooling, she recalls the use of different braided hairstyles to help her daughters develop confidence as racialized and gendered bodies in predominantly white spaces.

I tried to do all kind of styles that I could remember then. Just because I think confidence-wise (also as a young African girl) it did give you a lot of confidence when you went into school and your hair was done. And you got to pick which style you wanted.

(Mistura, 51, teacher at Islamic secondary school)

Mistura was negotiating school spaces where she felt her daughters would be visible through their Blackness. Within this context, she used the tools that were available to her (that 'I could remember') to develop her daughters' confidence rather than discomfort (as out of place). She used different styles of braiding so that her daughters' hair texture could be felt as a connection to their own 'African' heritage.⁵² This develops a counter-narrative to her daughters' visibility as Black bodies within predominantly white spaces. The styles learnt in Nigeria take on a new meaning when practiced here to provide a connection to Nigeria but also to provide confidence in the hair textures of 'young African girls.'

Both Mistura and Sahra's mother use their own experiences to construct presentations for the 'new' spaces their daughters were navigating. This illustrates how one's experiences do not stop at the individual: the function of performative layers is not limited to constructing an individual's understandings of how to present one's self across different spaces. We also share and pass these experiences on through the way we gaze at others and understand their visibility across different spaces.

This is not to say that the performative layers used to negotiate different spaces do not change from generation to generation. Although one is subject to the gazes of parents, this is not the same as repeating the same presentations across different generations. Instead, Mistura's daughters and Sahra develop their own performative layers which include the negotiation of their parents' gazes (amongst others). They learn how (and where) to wear different outfits through tools learnt from parents, and their own experiences of presenting their bodies as they grow and learn how to be Black Muslim women.

This process of learning how to negotiate our visibility is developed through the third (and final) outfit in this chapter: the student outfit.

5.4 The Student Outfit

In this section, I explore the student outfit due to its entwinement with different forms of learning. I focus on how Black Muslim women learn to present themselves as racialized and gendered bodies within public spaces.

This begins with Aneesa recalling an interaction that she had as a ten-year-old with a Somali parent that was outside of her school gate.

I didn't wear a scarf then and I remember a lady called me, cos I was playing in the playground, and a lady called me, like "you, are you Somali?" And I was like, "yeah" and she started telling me off

Wait, what??

Yeah, telling me off [...] like "oh, you should not be wearing this, you should be more covered up, bla bla bla" and like, I remember being shocked like oh my god. That's when I realise like, like how other

⁵² It is interesting to note how this discussion regarding 'African hair' also reifies the hair texture that is often associated with Blackness, but an exploration of this is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

people perceive me and then I started to get a bit more self-conscious about what I was wearing

(Aneesa, 24, social worker)

This interaction was recalled in relation to conversations had with her mother, who 'didn't dictate like 'oh, you should cover yourself, you should cover yourself more.'" In holding these interactions with her mother and the stranger together, Aneesa learns how her presentation might be called into question as deviating from 'appropriate' performances for Somali girls. She begins to question which outfits will be positioned as out of place for gazes beyond those within her home.

This event illustrates the development of performative layers around the body. After the parent establishes a commonality with Aneesa over their positioning as Somali within a British context, she is capable of projecting an idea of what it means to look (and be seen as) Somali within this space. Through this interaction with the Somali parent at a playground, Aneesa begins to see her own presentation within this context of a racialized and gendered visibility. This is a moment of learning how to orientate our bodies in relation to the gazes that are part of the spaces we move through.

These experiences of learning how to be Black Muslim women are not limited to our interactions as children. Rather, they are evident in our perpetuations of imaginings of how to 'be' Black (and) Muslim onto other bodies. Specifically, Asiya spoke about her role as a teacher at an Islamic secondary school and interacting with young Muslims within the classrooms who were expressing anger at media representations of Muslims:

I was like... you guys have to be seriously... it was like a 10 minute lecture where I was basically going on saying 'there is freedom of speech and then there is being a Muslim.' You don't have the same rights. There are things that we can't say because, we'll get in... you know, we'll face some serious consequences. So yes, have your opinion, but realise your opinion isn't something that you can always express.

(Asiya, 23, teaching assistant at Islamic secondary school)

Asiya's self-policing as a Muslim is projected onto the students, illustrating how one's voice (situated within a Muslim presentation) can be hemmed in. Asiya teaches these boundaries around one's expressions, sharing what it means to be seen (and to comport one's body in relation to being seen) as strange within the British context. Her gaze at the students reflects her own understandings and negotiations of her visibility as a Muslim.

The way Asiya gazes at her students must also be situated within the gazes that inform how she constructs her own visibility as Muslim. The 'serious consequences' that 'we'll face' was learnt within a system that situates Muslim anger as a dangerous and racialized threat to a normalised whiteness. Asiya's 'lecture' was given within a context of this disembodied (white) gaze which regulates what being a Muslim should (or

should not) look like (and sound like). It is against the backdrop of negotiating this disembodied gaze that Asiya also gazes at her students.

This negotiation of our own (and Others') visibility within an economy of gazes is detailed further through Cookie's experiences. After moving to the U.K. for her postgraduate degrees, she spoke through her desire to be distinguished from Black Jamaican communities:

Jamaican girls are always fighting with themselves and scratching their hair and behaving very, again, unsavoury. You don't want to be associated with that kind of behaviour. So you just do what you need to do, and get the hell out. [...] I actually met, doing the Masters, I met a lady that was Jamaican. She was also a Masters student, so shared some of these concerns with me. She felt that she always had to fight to be different, like explain herself. She had a kid, a daughter and she always used to tell her "You should not be that stereotypical... Have enough knowledge to not be what they want you to be or that you know what, that you're different."

(Cookie, 28, PhD Student in Geography Department)

The connection with another Black woman on her Masters course is worth unpicking as it reflected a common distancing from the 'unsavoury' Black Other. Her friend speaks to her daughter about the social discourses that could make their Black bodies visible as deviant (or 'what they want you to be'). Importantly, this is a disembodied gaze that fixes Black bodies to this deviant positioning, highlighting an awareness of how Black bodies become marked in contrast to this unmarked (white) gaze.

In negotiating around these racist discourses, Cookie and her friend look (and make visible) Othered Black bodies as those that represent this 'unsavoury' behaviour. By creating this distance, Cookie's friend attempts to instil a confidence in her daughter through the 'knowledge' that 'you're different': these racist tropes are located on Othered bodies. Through this, Cookie and her friend illustrate the 'everyday strategies we use to escape stigma' (Mir, 2009: 241).

Cookie's looking at Othered Black bodies is also layered with her awareness of how her body could be racialized within Britain. Her status as part of the upper middle-class in Nigeria was entangled with the precarity of her positioning as an immigrant in Britain, as '[they] make you remember the colour of your passport.' Therefore, she distances herself from performances of Blackness that (she feels) would make her presence more visible and vulnerable (since 'you don't want to be associated with that kind of behaviour').

This speaks to the difficulties that 'first-generation' immigrants face when (re)learning how to be Black (and) Muslim in Britain, i.e. learning the way the British grammar of race constructs Black (and) Muslim bodies. Zainab discusses the ridicule that one of her friends opened himself up to when wearing national clothing to university on a Friday like he would have done when in Nigeria:

I know there was some guy that was in his Masters and he was, he was fresh, and on his first Friday, he wore ankara [national clothing] to uni, and everyone laughed at him [she laughs]

Did they?

I'm just like 'really?' and since then he's never worn it again. [...] I understood but it was just funny like, oh shame on you, you gotta move, you don't do that. But yes, I guess, in this country I'd never do that, but in Nigeria it's more acceptable because everyone is doing the same thing, erm, yeah.

(Zainab, 21, undergraduate student in School of Business)

As someone who moved from Nigeria to Britain as a teenager, Zainab escapes the stigma that comes with being positioned as a newer immigrant (as 'fresh') by ridiculing and locating that stigma on her friend's mismatching outfit. Zainab illustrates how she has learned to present herself within a British context where being visible as Nigerian could open her up to being seen as a spectacle (since 'everyone [is not] doing the same thing' over here). This lesson of self-policing is picked up by her friend as 'he's never worn it again.'

It is vital to explore how wearing ankara to university was associated with 'shame' in the eyes of Zainab and her friends; there is an implicit gaze which informs their ability to ridicule their friend for this performance. By stating that 'in this country, I'd never do that,' Zainab hints at how she understands social discourses within Britain to function. These social discourses perpetuate a construction of the Black (and in this case, specifically Nigerian) body as Other to Britishness. In negotiating her own way to exist within Britain, Zainab (and her friends) position the ankara-wearer as the deviant Other because of its role in signifying an explicit belonging within Blackness. This presentation becomes attached to an inability to 'move' (to fit in) and thus to shame.

So far, this section has illustrated how different forms of distancing can be used to negotiate one's potential visibility as out of place. However, Laila highlights some of the tensions within this process of distancing. She recalls her friend's surprise at her involvement in this research project:

I was telling her a little bit about you, and she said "yes, you're African, yes you're Sudanese, yes you're Black, but you don't really dress as if you're a combination of all three" [...]. This was her impression, like "you just dress normally." And so I was like, maybe I'll be the anomaly, but like, I **am** all of these things.

[...] I have a secret weapon in my armour that I use and I use it when dealing with everyone and that is... I love being the unexpected or, I love people to judge me and then they find out, like, in the sense that I love playing the dumb blonde. I do that with everyone all the time in the sense of what I wear, how you perceive me. It's just so much fun because like they judge, they assume, they throw whatever assessments they've done at you and I'll never correct them but like it'll be funny.

(Laila, 25, Masters student in Engineering department)

The trope of 'the blonde' is inherently associated with whiteness and Laila uses this to move away from a fixed visibility as a Black Muslim woman. In using this trope, she positions herself as outside the 'assessments they've done' by constructing a particular performance of visibility. Her use of the blonde enables her to move beyond a fixture as the Black Other, and towards the mimicking of a white Self (even if that mimicking is done through the use of a caricature regarding white femininity).

Through this, Laila creates room for her to be ('the unexpected'), and pushes against the fixing of visible Black (and) Muslim bodies to particular social discourses. Yet in positioning herself as the unexpected (or as the potential anomaly), she also perpetuates what can/should be 'expected' when viewing Black Muslim women. In her desire to move beyond discourses that fix Black Muslim women, she proceeds to locate those same discourses on Othered Black Muslim women who might not (according to her friend) 'dress normally.' Fitting in with her group of friends involves distancing herself from a visibility located on the Othered Black Muslim women.

However, it is important to note her insistence that 'I **am** all of these things.' This illustrates the bind that comes from distancing one's body from racist tropes used to fix Black (and) Muslim bodies as deviant (or as part of those that don't 'dress normally'). By positioning herself as beyond this particular form of visibility, her positioning as a Black Muslim woman is called into question. Even as she (as an individual) distances herself from the tropes that could fix her body, the social processes that racialize and Other specific presentations (as Black, Sudanese and Muslim) remains intact.

This section has highlighted how Black Muslim women learn to negotiate their visibility in relation to different gazes. However, our presentations are not fixed but shift in relation to the different spaces that we move through. It is therefore necessary to highlight how experiences of visibility shifts through our movements: this is addressed in the final section of this chapter.

5.5 Moving between outfits

So far, I have addressed how Black Muslim women experience and negotiate their visibility across different public spaces. However, the chapter's structure has implied fixed outfits corresponding to stable and distinct constructions of public space. This is not the case: the boundaries around workplaces were often blurred or interrupted. This final section pays attention to movement between spaces and outfits to highlight how presentations shift across spaces.

There are three movements around public spaces that this chapter focuses on. First, I use movement through the city centre to discuss how Black Muslim women present themselves in relation to the spaces they are moving through. Second, I focus on the social norms that construct transitional spaces by exploring how Black Muslim women prepare for prayer. Finally, I reflect on movements around the home to explore how we negotiate comfort through different experiences of visibility.

5.5.1 Moving through the City Centre

For most of the women interviewed, the city centre was spoken about as an in-between space used to move through different performances. This is exemplified by Cookie: her presentations were dependent on where she planned on going after moving through the city centre.

Because I'm just quick, do whatever, come back [home], cook, blah blah blah. But if I was going to school from town, obviously I would be dressed more- what's the word- appropriately, in the sense that I like to put myself together. [...] Because it's a different space, it's where there're a lot of people that are going to see you, so you can't be the way you would be at home in school.

(Cookie, 28, PhD student in Geography department)

Cookie's negotiation of 'town' is intertwined with the speed that she associated with different movements, comparable to discussions regarding taking bins out when at home (see Chapter 3). Whilst preparing for work, she comports her body in relation to those people 'that are going to *see* you' (emphasis added). This can be contrasted with her presentation when moving to and from home: the city centre then becomes an extension of the boundary constructed around home, even as her 'quick' movements speak to the precarity of these extended boundaries (again, see Chapter 3).

Whilst Cookie's movements included shifting boundaries around the city centre as part of a home or professional performance, Sahra's use of the city centre reflected the construction of a boundary around the workplace. For her, the workplace uniform was a necessary negotiation to be worn when in ASDA: she would change into (or out of) this uniform when entering (or leaving) work.

When at work, her presentation had to fit into the boundaries and social discourses that regulate the workplace. Belonging to this corporate identity was dependent on her removal of the abaya and the boundaries constructed through its soft and flowy edges. Once leaving her workplace, Sahra could re-establish her own boundaries within spaces where she did not '**have** to show people [her] legs' (emphasis in original). She could move out of this uniform and into a comfort produced through the boundaries of the abaya.

However, this movement in and out of the uniform was still questioned by her work colleagues:

They're always like, 'does your mum make you [change into the abaya when going to/from work]?' And it's like even if my mum did, it was kind of mine to have to engage in. So I mean if I could drive, then I wouldn't, and she wouldn't expect me to. But because I'm going into town I'd feel awful if I didn't. But like if I didn't have to wear an abaya and skirt (because mum doesn't like us wearing trousers), I don't know, I can't imagine not wearing it.

(Sahra, 19, uniform worker at ASDA)

Although Sahra spoke of friendly connections made with her colleagues, these relationships were developed within the context of her workplace. This is important to note as the workplace regulates both how bodies should be presented, and which presentations should be absented from this corporate identity. As her abaya is absented from the workplace, there are limitations to the potential within these friendly interactions with her colleagues. Once she leaves the workplace and wears the abaya again, her colleagues still attach her body (in the abaya) to that of the oppressed Muslim woman.

The deviance attached to the abaya leads Sahra to justify her discomfort in trousers when moving outside of the boundary around the workplace. This justification pushes against the assumption of her oppression: by using a language of choice and individual freedom, Sahra looks to disrupt the assumed distance between Islam and Western liberal democracy (Massad, 2015).

This liberal language ignores how all presentations are negotiated in relation to different gazes and spaces, and illustrates the bind that Muslims are located within. Here, Sahra implicitly positions herself as an isolated actor to push against the trope of the oppressed Muslim woman. Yet this positioning of one's presentation as an isolated actor also works to perpetuate imaginings of Other(ed) oppressed Muslim women. Through the provided justification, she speaks to and pushes against Western liberal imaginations of what it means to be a Muslim woman.

Sahra's movement across outfits speaks to how she encounters different gazes, as well as her negotiation of social discourses that construct our presentations and interactions. This illustrates the need to further explore the function of these social discourses as we move across spaces. I do this in the following section by focusing on how Black Muslim women prepare for prayer.

5.5.2 *Preparing for prayer*

This section explores the function of social norms by examining our movements when preparing for prayer whilst in public spaces. This begins with Zainab's use of make-up when going to university, and her removal of the make-up when performing *wudu'* in preparation for prayer in the university prayer room.

I've got my friends and boyfriend telling me "that's a waste of make-up, if you're gonna do it for 3 hours" [she laughs]. I don't know why I do it, because I like looking at myself in the morning and being like "oh good, I look fresh" [both laugh]. I feel like I have to have that make up, but as soon as I get to uni, I wipe it off? I don't know why I do that to myself.

(Zainab, 21, undergraduate student in Business department)

In wanting to 'look fresh,' Zainab reflects the way make-up is used to ease her entrance into the student outfit (within public spaces). However, the act of prayer necessitates the removal of this layer to construct a performance of religiosity. In moving between these two layers, she recognises the way her change in outfits might be questioned by

those around her (and to a certain degree, herself).⁵³ Nonetheless, that does not stop her from making room for both performances within her lived experience as a Black Muslim woman.

It is also important to explore how changes in performances can (or cannot) be accommodated within the same space. For Khadijah, the 'female' toilets were used to make *wudu*' and change in and out of her abaya when preparing for prayer. As she uses this space for her change in outfits, she begins to notice how different bodies are not accommodated within this space.

It was only as I was showing you that [...] I went, 'oh wow, this is amazing, I'm creating my own personal religious space in my work space,' which is interesting.

[...] the other day I was going into the bathroom, and I was looking for [...] like sanitary towels and tampons in the corner, right, the bathroom didn't have one. So I was like, ok that's fine. Took a look, all the bins had been taken out, right, there's like 3 bathrooms to every floor, [...] But I dunno, it's like the idea of, the idea of something that's so important, you know, to 50% of the people that use this building, it's gone. Like bins, Azeezat, **bins**, where you put away your thingy, gone. That's awful.

(Khadijah, 24, PhD student in Law department)

As she discusses the use of toilets to prepare her body for prayer as an extension of the 'personal religious space' created at work, she thinks through the way these toilet spaces do not accommodate '50% of the people that use this building.' Through her frustration, there is a perpetuation of which bodies one *expects* to be normalised. This is contrasted with her lack of expectation that there would or should be similar accommodations made to assist her in making *wudu*', e.g. the accommodations (which included a lower sink and chair) made in Mistura's majority Muslim workplace (see figure 6).

⁵³ It is interesting to note that the people she sees questioning her removal of make-up are non-Muslim gazes that are negotiated outside of the prayer room.

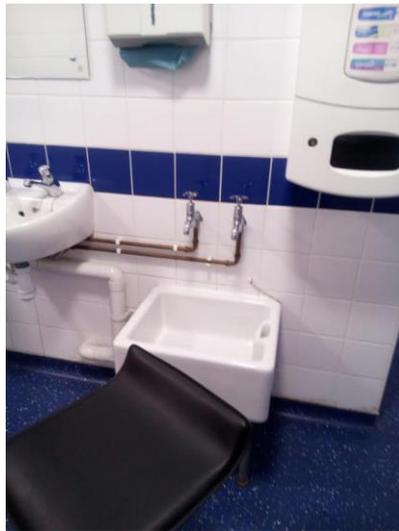


Figure 6: Accommodations in toilets (Mistura's clothes journal, 01/09/2016)

Whilst Khadijah needed to create her 'own personal religious space,' bins (and their implicit role in disposing tampons and menstruation pads) were seen as 'so important' because of the way normative gendered bodies were constructed as using this space. Through this, she perpetuates social discourses surrounding how normative bodies should be using this toilet space. Yet this is happening alongside her own use of toilet spaces in a manner that deviates from normalized performances within this space.

This highlights the way we push against and perpetuate social discourses through our movements across different spaces. This is developed further through the following section which focuses on how we negotiate work outfits in relation to constructions of home.

5.5.3 Layering work and home

Aneesa explained the release felt when changing out of the clothes used to contain her body within her work outfit.

I get home, I drop off my bag, first thing that comes off is the hijab [she laughs] and then –

I love the 'throw it away' motion that you just did

-and then get changed, and then a dirac [shiid]. And then the make-up comes off, straight away as well. Get a wet wipe, wipe it off, wash it, moisturise, done.

(Aneesa, 24, social worker)

Aneesa's change as she moves into home speaks to the gazes constructed as a part of her work outfit. In dressing for work, she puts on a headscarf and make-up to prepare herself for the gazes that she feels she negotiates through these public spaces. The shiid (much like the ankara for Zainab's friend) is positioned as deviant when worn outside of the boundary of home and is thus removed to enable a particular form of visibility within public spaces. Once within the home, this shiid is not viewed as a potential source of deviance, and a different kind of presentation is possible.

By situating these changes in relation to one another, it is evident how we layer multiple presentations of our beings across different spaces. Aneesa's changing clothing practices show the importance of understanding our presentations beyond any fixed visibility as Black (and/or) Muslim women. She illustrates the shifting presentations of individual Black Muslim women, and assists in moving away from homogenising this grouping of Black Muslim women as fixed to any particular presentation.

These shifting experiences of being a Black Muslim woman are also highlighted through a conversation with Laila regarding different experiences of migration and constructions of home and public spaces.

*I guess the move from Manchester to Sheffield is always going to be a little bit weird because Manchester... Because I was living at home, erm, it was more of a family situation and I was surrounded by a lot of other Muslims. And all of a sudden when I'm in Sheffield, and back in the university situation and speaking to like a lot of white people, like **a lot** of white people all the time. I guess I was really aware of not seeing many Muslims, not seeing many Black people all the time and that made me kind of... nervous after a while*

Really?

Yeah

I think maybe it's the opposite for me. Because, erm, the fact that I grew up in Saudi and then moved here and in both places it was predominantly white. So it got weird when I saw Black girls like "woow, there are actually Black people, there are Asian people, there are different cultures." So yeah, it's interesting that you would find that weird.

(Laila, 25, university student in Engineering department)

It is clear that we are speaking of home on different registers: whilst I refer to 'a family situation' and a move across cities, Laila is thinking more broadly about the countries that she was located in prior to her move to the UK. However, both of our experiences of visibility are understood through previous interactions that construct our comfort (and discomfort) in the spaces we now navigate. Whilst I reflected on feeling the visibility of my racialized positioning more explicitly through the move to Sheffield, Laila reflected on her experience as a child in Saudi Arabia to feel a comfort within her visibility amongst a wider variety of racialized minorities within the British context. In both cases, our understandings of being (visible and comfortable as) Black Muslim women are layered through experiences across different spaces.

5.6 Conclusions

This chapter has examined how Black Muslim women feel and negotiate visibility within work outfits. This is part of an overarching task to explore different experiences of being Black Muslim women: how do we situate ourselves when feeling visible as deviant from the somatic norm? This chapter unpacked some of the different ways such a visibility was negotiated as we move through different outfits in public spaces.

This began by illustrating how such a visibility could be produced when abaya-wearers (like Aaliyah) were attempting to construct a professional outfit. Through this, the firm, straight lines that Longhurst (2001) attributes to the managerial body (i.e. a professional outfit) are contrasted with the soft, flowy edges of the abaya. Within this context, the boundaries of the abaya clash with those imposed through the professional outfit. Abaya-wearers notice their visibility through the abaya's deviance from the somatic norm of the professional outfit.

This deviance from the professional outfit is vital to explore because of the professional outfit's role in presenting a properly 'managed' body. In attempting to fit into the professional outfit, there is an awareness of how one's body could be seen as mismanaged, and through this, mismatched with a position of authority. This leads to the use (or avoidance) of specific clothing practices so as to construct an outfit that we feel positions us as part of the professional outfit, and (by extension) a part of the bodies that have been managed effectively. However, even as we attempt to perpetuate social norms to build this position of authority, our very presence (as space invaders) troubles these social norms.

This speaks to the ambivalence surrounding our attempts to construct outfits to fit into these spaces whilst negotiating gazes that are felt to position us as out of place. These gazes do not need to be explicitly looking; rather, it is about how certain bodies have a *right* to look due to their positioning as part of the somatic norm (or as an extension of the social norms that make up the central watchtower in the Panopticon). Such an understanding of the function of gazes builds from work on the Panoptic by connecting gazes to the bodies that are able to gaze within different spaces.

This also works to situate our presentations in relation to the valuing of different gazes. Whilst some are felt to be explicitly looking and regulating presentations across different spaces (e.g. uniform guidelines enforced by managers/teachers), others are implicit (such as the social discourses that perpetuate the somatic norm). In exploring how these gazes are felt and valued, there is an understanding of shifting negotiations of visibility in relation to an economy of gazes. This nuances the different gazes negotiated across (and within) different spaces.

This nuancing of gazes is illustrated through the role mothers play in the process of learning how to present ourselves within and beyond the home. As mothers notice their own (and their children's) racialized visibility, they use a maternal gaze to pass on understanding of how (or how not) to present one's body. This is explored as one of the ways in which we negotiate our visibility as Black Muslim women. We both draw from and push against the social codes perpetuated through these intimate gazes to construct our understandings of how to be a Black Muslim woman.

In returning to this concept of an economy of gazes, parental gazes should also be situated alongside the role of schools as spaces of social normative learning. These spaces are amongst the first encounters we have where we learn how our bodies may

be visible as deviant from the somatic norm. These are moments where we learn how to orientate our bodies in relation to different gazes within these public spaces.

These spaces of social normative learning also illustrate how we attempt to distance ourselves from a visibility that is felt to fix our bodies as racialized objects. However, in constructing this distance, we can also end up locating these processes of racialisation on Other(ed) Black bodies. Although this perpetuates the process of stigmatization that we are looking to push against, it also exposes the difficult negotiations made to avoid visibility as a spectacle. This speaks to the implicit function of social discourses that position Black Muslim women as out of place within Britain more broadly. Any discussion on how Black Muslim women might gaze at one another (or other racialized bodies) must be situated within an understanding of how the British grammar of race functions, and how it teaches racialized bodies to function.

Within this context, we can understand our presentations as shifting in relation to different gazes (and specifically, social norms) negotiated through our movements. Black Muslim women are thus constantly reworking negotiations of our visibility in relation to the different bodies and audiences we feel looking at us (and who we look back at). These experiences are a part of the ever-developing performative layers we use to negotiate presentations across different spaces (and temporalities). Through our movements, we layer multiple presentations of how to be a Black Muslim women, and illustrate the necessity of challenging the fixing of Black Muslim women to any single presentation.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

I am what time, circumstance, history, have made of me, certainly,
but I am also, much more than that. So are we all. (James Baldwin,
Notes of a Native Son)

This thesis has used the clothing practices of Black Muslim women to explore our beings as more than ‘what time, circumstance, history, have made of me.’ Indeed, this project grew from a need to explore the ‘much more than that’ of our beings which Baldwin references above. I began this work because of my commitment to expanding understandings of what it means to be a Black Muslim woman: our beings are continuously developing as we interact with different objects, bodies, gazes and spaces. This is situated amongst the work of anti-racist scholars that have worked to centre people of colour as more than objects of racialized oppression (e.g. Alloula, 1986; Baldwin, 1963; Combahee River Collective, 1978; hooks, 1981; Mir, 2011; Said, 2003; Tate, 2005). Thus the tools developed throughout the interludes and empirical chapters are only a part of the contributions that are made through this thesis: I use this research as an illustration of the potential knowledges that could be explored if researchers *began* from the lived experiences of those that are usually marginalised, objectified, or situated as an ‘additional’ intersection.

This final chapter brings the different parts of this project together by highlighting the broader contributions that have been made through the geographies of Black Muslim women. It has been divided into three parts: first, I synthesize key arguments by focusing on three themes that underpin and run through this thesis. My research contributions are thus situated within wider literatures, and I illustrate the iterative process through which this thesis was written. Second, I expand on future directions for this research to grow. Finally, I conclude by addressing the significance of this research and the potential that I see within Geography (and broadly, Social Sciences) to build on some of the interventions that have been made.

6.1 Key contributions

There are three themes that underpin this thesis, assuming salience at different points in the research project. Although a structure had to be imposed for the purposes of presenting this thesis, these contributions were continuously developed across the interludes and empirical chapters.

To highlight these contributions, I begin by setting up my contributions to understandings of knowledge production, research on intersectionality, and the British grammar of race. Second, I expand on the importance of developing research through a focus on clothing practices and the material body. Finally, I highlight the possibilities in expanding our understandings of social discourses by centring our beings as Black Muslim women in Britain. By bringing these themes together, I address the questions that framed this research project:

RQ1 What analytical tools can be developed to understand how Black Muslim women negotiate presentations beyond a fixed categorisation of our beings?

RQ2 How do clothing practices highlight different experiences of being Black Muslim women across a multitude of spaces?

These themes are used to synthesize key points across chapters and to situate this research in relation to wider contributions to the literature.

6.1.1 Knowledge production, intersectionality & the British grammar of race

As was stated previously, this project begins from my positioning as a Black Muslim woman who wanted to see work that explored the similarities and differences across our beings. This builds from the embodied and critically reflexive work that many Black feminists have previously done (e.g. Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 2015; hooks, 1981; Noxolo, 1999; Spillers, 1987; Tate, 2005): it recognises the possibilities in producing a wealth of knowledge when exploring our experiences of being as more than marginal within the functioning of social discourses around race, religion, gender and nationalisms. This speaks across **RQ1** and **RQ2** as it is this commitment that is foregrounded in this project (see research aims in Chapter 1).

This reflection on the politics of knowledge production was extended through my research methodology (see **Chapter 2**). It was through my own embodied and reflexive relationship to this research project that I developed an ethical framework for how to conduct research. Notably, this contributes to research on double-consciousness by reworking it as a methodological tool that speaks to Black Muslim women's relationship to a limiting (white) Self/(racialised) Other binary. In other words, it is through re-purposing double-consciousness that I speak to the relationship Black Muslim women have to identity categories without fixing our bodies to these categorisations. By extension, research relationships are reframed as spaces where knowledge is shared (rather than 'data' that is mined and then transformed into superior 'knowledge' by the researcher): both the participant and I were using the research relationship to understand multiple performances of being Black Muslim women beyond a fixed location as Other.

Whilst significant work has already been developed about interviews and Black feminist dialoguing (e.g. Collins, 2000; hooks, 1989; Noxolo, 1999), the clothes journals were an innovative illustration of how to conduct research on the presentation of bodies across different spaces. This moves beyond work that uses wardrobe research (e.g. Skov, 2011; Woodward, 2005), as I focus on the affective attachments built through our movements (and interactions) within these clothes over (at least) a four-day period. These recorded changes in clothing practices were used to discuss our performances of being across multiple spaces during the following interview: it was part of my commitment to explore how our beings were produced in relation to different clothing practices, gazes, bodies and spaces.

By using clothes journals and interviews, I was also able to speak back to **RQ2** and highlight the shifting function of identity categories as we interact across different spaces.⁵⁴ Throughout the thesis, the function of different social categories (specifically Blackness, Muslim identity, Britishness and womanhood) come in and out of focus in relation to the presentations and spaces that are being negotiated. This furthers a nuanced understanding of these social categories in and of themselves: they shift in their articulation depending on the different experiences that are being negotiated.

My explicit focus on clothing practices also speaks to my contributions to work within critical race studies and social geography. Specifically, I use clothing practices to illustrate how our performances of being construct and are constructed by different spaces: this is connected to a wider grammar of race that informs how racialised bodies have been produced (and marginalised) within Britain. Through this, I not only build on the work of social geographers like Kobayashi and Peake (1994) who developed an understanding of the social production of bodies and spaces, I also use the British grammar of race as a tool to centre the experiences of those racialised within understandings of the co-production of spaces and bodies.

This British grammar race is a particularly important tool because it is developed as a response to criticisms of intersectionality. These critics point to how intersectionality situates identity categories as implicitly separate and only meeting at particular 'intersections' (Collins, 2015), thus preventing a critical conversation regarding the historical formation of these categories (Puar, 2013). In **Chapter 1**, I situate intersectionality within a wider grammar that informs how racialized bodies have been constructed in Britain. This pushes against research on Blackness as separable from Muslim identities and vice versa (e.g. Archer, 2001; Gilroy, 1987; Phillips, 2015; Tyrer and Sayyid, 2012; Werbner, 2001); it connects these individual studies on processes of racialisation to a wider grammar within Britain. In taking this approach, I expose the social histories that have informed understandings of different identity processes as separable (in Britain).

This speaks to the politics of knowledge production more broadly, as it highlights how research on experiences of Othering can be reframed to move beyond an essentialising of what it means to be Black, Muslim, British and/or a woman. The British grammar of race pays attention to how identity categories are formed and perpetuated: this pushes against an essentialisation by focusing on the manner in which these categories have been (and continue to be) constructed within this grammar. In short, being a Black Muslim woman is understood as continuously developing, and more than the meeting of identity processes at any particular 'intersection.'

Whether or not the function of specific social categories are made explicit within a particular performance (or space), it is still part of the layered experience of *being* a Black Muslim woman (as was stated in **Interlude II** and **Chapter 4**). This is one of the

⁵⁴ This includes interviews and clothes journals as spaces wherein myself and participants are interacting.

contributions that is made through the use of layering. It builds on work by Tolia-Kelly (2006b), Miller (1986) and Noble (2004) on how objects communicate wider personal histories, and speaks back to the implicit and explicit functioning of social categories. However, rather than focusing on *objects* that are separated from our bodies, I build a use of layering to explore the communication of *embodied* realities across spaces and temporalities. This bridges research on material culture with that of performativity, highlighting how both the material and the performance are known in relation to the other.

This is illustrated throughout the thesis: for example, in **Chapter 5**, Sahra's feelings of visibility as The Muslim Woman at work (as her colleague asks her what part of Islam she is from) can be reflected upon with laughter during the interview process when she is no longer visible as out of place. Her being is thus understood as broader than her encounters within the work uniform: this pushes against the overwhelming focus on Muslim women's presence within public spaces (e.g. Dwyer, 2008; Salvatore, 2004). Layering furthers an understanding of different performances in relation to one another; by extension, it highlights how identity processes are interrelated as different social discourses are (seen to be) more or less explicitly articulated across different spaces. In other words, centring the layered beings of Black Muslim women furthers an understanding of the implicit and explicit functioning of social categories.

I see the expansion of these social categories as a by-product of the need to centre our beings as Black Muslim women. These different categorisations are expanded upon to ensure that they do not render the Black Muslim woman as an object within these categories. There is a continuous distinction made between our beings and the processes that categorise us as Other. Importantly, I anchor these theoretical conversations in the material body and our clothing practices: this leads to the second theme running through this thesis.

6.1.2 Clothing practices and the body

In centring the clothing practices of Black Muslim women, there has been an intentional anchoring of the body within understandings of identity categorisation. This is not particularly new: Black (and) feminist scholars have long produced research which highlights the importance of examining the register of the body (e.g. Butler, 1993; Fanon, 2008[1952]; hooks, 1981; Longhurst, 1995; Tate, 2015; Yancy, 2008; Young, 1996). However, throughout this project there is an intentional focus on *changing* clothing practices *across* different spaces. This began from a need to move beyond a focus on headscarves within public spaces, yet it also contributes to wider discussions on the construction of our beings: what it means to be a Black Muslim woman shifts as we interact with different gazes, bodies and spaces. This section is used to unpack the broader contributions made through this focus on shifting clothing practices, and addresses **RQ2**.

Beyond this expanded focus on shifts across clothing practices, I build on work by Lewis (2009), Tulloch (2004) and Tarlo (2010) by exploring the functioning of social

discourses through the lens of Black Muslim stylisation. Whilst this speaks back to broader research on the function of social categories (e.g. Butler, 1993; Spillers, 1987), it also speaks to an understanding of social categories through a critical centring of the materiality of our bodies and clothing practices as Black Muslim women.

In particular, this nuanced understanding of the function of social categories is built through my focus on the *body as a space* with shifting boundaries surrounding it. In **Chapter 3**, I outlined how the body interacts with other spaces to produce social performances. For example, as Sahra takes off her abaya and headscarf and moves into the shiida, the boundary around the body (established through the abaya and headscarf) is re-imagined through the boundary around the house as home. Similarly, when Zainab wore 'sexy' clothing within her home, she was conscious of presenting herself as desirable to a male gaze (and thus distant from the stereotyped 'covered covered' Muslim woman). However, importantly, she was also constructing an intimate *boundary* around her bedroom that her boyfriend is included within through his ability to see these 'sexy' clothing practices. These examples illustrate how the performance of being is shifting in relation to different boundaries constructed around the home and the body.

Both of these examples also highlight my contribution to work like Massey's (2000) on the multiple social trajectories that construct spaces. Specifically, I expand this conversation through using Mernissi's (1991) multi-dimensional hijab which functions as a boundary around the body. By bringing these two analytics together, I address how boundaries around the body are also interacting with the multiple trajectories that make up space. In other words, I further an understanding of the interactions that occur across bodies and spaces.

This is evident in **Chapter 5**, as I re-examine Longhurst's (2001) description of the 'firm, straight lines' that construct the managerial body to explore how boundaries across different bodies and spaces could be constructed as clashing or out of place. After all, it is the boundaries enforced through the soft, flowy edges of the abaya and headscarf that produces Aaliyah's feelings of visibility (as deviant from the somatic norm). By focusing on the boundaries constructed around the abaya and this normative professional outfit, this thesis extends an understanding of how social discourses (particularly racialisation and gendering) produce and are produced in relation to these different clothing practices and spaces.

Through exploring our changing clothing practices across spaces, I also highlight the importance of understanding our beings as ever-developing. This was illustrated through the act of prayer and the (potential) construction of sacred space in **Chapter 4**: as prayer is not fixed to any material space, it requires the researcher to address its changing iterations across different spaces. For example, when Babs layers her short-sleeved top and shorts with a big scarf to pray, she is constructing her experience of prayer through the boundaries constructed around her home (even as the clothes used also hold the imprints of other homes in Sudan where her grandmother made the

garment). Focusing on the differences across these performances moves beyond work within geographies of religion which focuses on how religion “speaks back” through its own specificities’ (Yorgason and della Dora cited in Tse, 2014: 202; also see Holloway, 2003). Instead, I highlight how religiosity is intertwined with the other social discourses that produce our clothing practices and spaces.

By extension, these performances are understood as developing in relation to the different objects, bodies, gazes and spaces that are being negotiated. For example, when Mimi decides to wait until she gets home to ‘catch up’ with her prayer rather than deal with a series of questions from her students (at a school with a small Muslim population), she is attempting to navigate which spaces and temporalities enable her to feel comfortable when praying (see **Chapter 4**). Her inability to pray when at her current job is layered with the knowledge that she could feel comfortable when praying at home. As she imagines which spaces are conducive to prayer, prayer is understood as a racialized performance and temporality: this picks up from Noxolo’s (1999) work on racialized temporalities to expand on Edensor (2006) and Lefebvre’s (2004) research on banal national temporalities. This extends understandings of how our beings are developed by focusing on the production of particular performances as out of place and/or time.

Importantly, these explorations into clothing practices and embodied experiences are done through a focus on how Black Muslim women see and feel themselves becoming visible across different spaces. In centring our beings as more than a static Other, I illustrate the possibilities in developing critical (and oft-marginalised) knowledges about these broader social discourses. This speaks to the third theme explored throughout this thesis.

6.1.3 Moving beyond the Other: centring Black Muslim women

There were three tools developed within this thesis to explore how Black Muslim women negotiate lived experiences beyond a categorisation as Other. The concepts of visibility, layering and comfort speak back to **RQ1** and push research on critical race and affect, identity performance, visual studies, and material studies forward by centring what it means to be a Black Muslim woman. This section highlights the contributions made through these concepts and the importance in unpacking these tools in relation to one another.

As previously mentioned, research on visibility was developed in **Interlude III** by focusing on how social discourses produce the *feeling* of being visible as a body out of place. Scholars within critical race studies and visual studies have (at the very least) acknowledged how gaze(s) produce our understandings of different (and deviant) bodies through the functioning of language (e.g. Fanon, 2008 [1952]; Fleetwood, 2011; Foucault, 1973; Silverman, 1996). However, this has not translated into an in-depth examination of how racialized bodies experience and construct the gazes that are felt to be interacting with our bodies. I have focused on moving away from a primary focus on those with the power *to gaze*, and towards those *that feel themselves being gazed*

upon. By focusing on how we feel ourselves becoming visible, I extend understandings of how racialisation and visibility can be discussed. This is done through exploring how Black Muslim women feel the British grammar of race functioning across different spaces.

Chapter 5 extended this discussion around visibility by paying attention to how different gazes are/were valued (and sometimes normalised) within an economy of gazes. As Sahra recalls negotiating school clothes, the role of her mother *and* her school teachers in dictating specific performances of femininity becomes apparent. Yet research on Muslim girls focuses on the role of the parental gaze whilst constructing schools as spaces where one can experiment with performances of femininity (e.g. Dwyer, 1999; Hamzeh, 2011). I push against the neutrality which this assumes (regarding learned performances of femininity within the classroom), and build a language that addresses how these gazes exist in relation to one another. This provides a nuancing of how social discourses construct gazes, visibility and racialized bodies. It illustrates the possibilities in exploring the function of racialisation whilst centring those that are racialized.

Exploring these processes of Othering whilst centring those that have been Othered is also extended through the deployment of comfort in **Interlude I**. Comfort is interrogated for its analytical use for those bodies that are positioned as a source of society's discomfort. There is a distinction built here between a public comfort (accessible to white cis-normative male bodies) and our ability to be comfortable (as visibly racialised bodies); this extends work on how affect and racialisation are entwined (e.g. Ahmed, 2014a; Tolia-Kelly, 2006a).

Importantly, comfort has been developed in relation to different experiences of visibility. In **Chapter 3**, Aneesa reimagines the boundaries of her home to maintain her sense of comfort in the shiida and to move around gazes constructed as outside of this bounded performance. In **Chapter 4**, Babs' discomfort in the local surroundings of the mosque is connected to her feeling of visibility within the abaya at that time of night. In **Chapter 5**, Sahra's decision to wear the abaya over her work uniform as she left work and moved through the city centre spoke to a discomfort with '**having** to show people [her] legs' outside of the workplace. In each of these examples, discomfort was produced through experiencing one's visibility as deviant in relation to the gazes and bodies that Black Muslim women were navigating. Yet this discomfort is not static: it is layered through an awareness of other spaces where presentations are not visible as deviant. Understandings of visibility are thus enriched through this focus on affective encounters and vice versa. This exploration into comfort speaks to how different performances and spaces are felt and produced in relation to one another.

It is layering that develops a language for how our beings are built across a multitude of spaces (see **Interlude II**). This offers an opportunity of speaking to (material and performative) layers that are both visible and hidden. Through this, there is an important holding onto that which cannot be known by external gazes (including

myself as the researcher). This extends research on material culture which is still dependent on *knowing* or seeing an empirical object (e.g. Gell, 1998; Miller, 2008). In a project that aims to push against the fixing of Black Muslim women as Other, layering provides a way to write about this important impossibility of seeing everything there is to know about Black Muslim women. Thus, Black Muslim women are not fixed to a particular intersection: our beings are ever-developing and shifting as we interact with different bodies, gazes and spaces. Carbado et al. (2013) have discussed the importance in seeing intersectionality as an incomplete analytic that can be mobilised to address a range of knowledges that have been historically silenced. Through the use of layering, I develop a language that explicitly recognises those bodies and experiences that remain marginalised and/or unknown in relation to these processes of categorisation. This is a necessary part of reframing Black (and) Muslim women as more than a fixed Other to a white Self.

6.2 Avenues for future research

Whilst the previous section highlighted key contributions made through this thesis, there are also research avenues that move beyond this particular project. I use this section to set up four questions that have been raised regarding future research.

Q1: What are the tensions between addressing clothing practices and the materiality of the Black body?

In Chapter 4, I referenced the ways in which the Black body is layered with other presentations, and how Blackness is figured through my explicit focus on clothing practices. Although this speaks to the function of Blackness in relation to the other identity signifiers being negotiated, it would be interesting to explore the tensions that can occur when clothing practices and signifiers of Blackness are constructed as clashing. In other words, I am interested in exploring how Blackness is seen to be performed (or erased) through the different clothing practices that Black Muslim women engage with. Pushing this work further would enable a continued expansion of the different functions of Blackness through this register of the clothed body.

This would also provide an opportunity to expand on the role of layering within the construction of our beings. This enables me to build on work that currently exists around the construction and performance of Blackness across different spaces (e.g. Fleetwood, 2011; Tate, 2005; Yancy, 2008), but through a specific examination of Black Muslim stylization. Although there have been a few studies recently that examine Black Muslim clothing practices (most notably, see Nayel, 2017), I propose to extend this work through an explicit focus on the grammar of race that constructs specific performances of Blackness within Britain and marginalises Others.

Q2: Where can an exploration of the British grammar of race take us?

The above consideration regarding Black Muslim stylization leads to my primary focus on developing this notion of the British grammar of race further. This is the where I see my own work moving towards: I propose a wider detailing of the histories that construct the British grammar of race, including a specific consideration of how these

social histories have shifted in the current post-Brexit socio-political moment (and the racialised language of 'migration' within this). Whilst I have been using this British grammar of race as a tool to situate the experiences of Black Muslim women in Britain within a wider history, this grammar has significant scope to be developed in and of itself.

Within this thesis, it is also important to recognise that most of the literature around Blackness travelled from U.S.A. where there is a different socio-historical context that produced (and continues to produce) the racialisation of Black (and Muslim) bodies. Part of pushing this work further includes exploring how these literatures translate within the British context. I also see this as part of a broader task of situating different grammars of racialisation in relation to one another to understand how these grammars are connected, how they differ, and how they have grown over time. This looks back at processes of racialisation (by figuring how they have been historically constructed) rather than locating these processes on bodies racialized as Other.

Q3: What are the opportunities and limitations of comfort as a theoretical concept?

Whilst my use of comfort has contributed and expanded on queer and anti-racist phenomenological readings of comfort (e.g. Ahmed, 2014a), it also pushes for a nuancing of the different functions of racism beyond a focus on either systems of oppression or microaggressions. This speaks to the possibilities in exploring a range of affective encounters through addressing the role of racialisation.

However, it has also opened questions regarding how far comfort can push understandings of being a Black Muslim woman. I was speaking to participants and thinking about comfort within a particular socio-political moment that has shifted significantly following the Brexit referendum. With this change, what it means to recognise one's body as 'comfortable' (or not) has shifted as well. When thinking of the spike in explicit racial violence immediately after the Brexit vote (Forster, 2016), and the anxiety that was felt when moving through public space, is *discomfort* the right word to describe this? In other words, I am interested in exploring discomfort as an analytic whilst holding onto the (physical and psychological) violence of racial terror. This requires some further thinking regarding what work comfort/discomfort can and cannot do.

Q4: How can we research movements through space and movements through time?

This understanding of comfort across different socio-political moments also speaks to wider concerns with how to account for movements across time, rather than focusing solely on movements across spaces. The bulk of the writing for this thesis was done in the lead up to the Brexit referendum, or after the vote had taken place: this was a very different socio-political moment than those associated with the interviews and clothes journals (or even the initial conception of this project). When thinking about where this research can grow, how do we write about these shifting experiences across temporalities?

Even when I do reference the different ways that Black Muslim women learn how to present their bodies as they grow older (see Chapters 3 and 5), this is still discussed as a snapshot in time that exposes relations across different spaces.⁵⁵ Whilst this project has built understandings of our beings as relational to movement across different spaces, it should also be expanded to further explore our beings as relational to different temporalities. This would provide a wider theorisation of that which cannot be known across different spaces *and* temporalities.

6.3 Final remarks

By centring the geographies of Black Muslim women, this project has both expanded understandings of what Black Muslim women wear across different spaces and what it means to be Black, Muslim and/or a woman in Britain. This has been important to explore within a discipline like Geography that has (some of) the tools needed to pay attention to our beings as constructed across spaces.

Yet these tools have been reframed within this project through the centring of those bodies that are often objectified, marginalised and positioned as out of place. This is part of a larger task across the Social Sciences wherein there is an opportunity to redevelop and move beyond tools that have been used to fix racialized bodies as Other. I situate this project within such work: it is in centring the clothing practices of Black Muslim women in Britain that research on race, religion, gender, nationalism and material culture is expanded and understood through their entwinements.

By starting from the critical knowledges that Black Muslim women develop to negotiate our surroundings, I show how our understandings of different research (most notably work on visibility, affective encounters, performativity and material culture) ends up limiting itself by treating racialized bodies as a homogeneous and/or fixed Other. This is what Noxolo et al. (2008: 157) speak to when criticising British geography as a discipline that 'attempts to theorise a globalised world of flows and multiple perspectives, whilst denying the multivocal, decentralised, postcolonial discipline that is inside its own belly.' By situating my work within the growing field of intersectionality, I offer up this thesis as an example of the 'messiness' of identities without marginalising one experience so as to fix one's being at an intersection.

It is through clothing practices that I have pushed for the possibilities in recognising differences across experiences of being. This takes Lorde's (1996: 163) call for us to use our differences as 'a springboard for creative change' seriously, by repeatedly examining differing experiences whilst remaining critical of the ways in which certain bodies are objectified. In other words, this project has been an opportunity to learn how to write and talk about processes of racialisation and marginalisation without reinscribing these processes onto Black Muslim women. This ethical standpoint is embedded in my decision to conduct this research, my usage of *us*, *we* and *our*

⁵⁵ In Chapter 5, this was evident in relation to both Sahra and Khadijah: their recollections were used to highlight the process of learning how to navigate different gazes across home and school.

throughout the project, and the analysis that was developed from learning about the similarities and differences across our experiences. This moves beyond the disembodied (and oft-white) role of the research to address the possibilities in building knowledges that speak to a relationality across our experiences.

It is from this standpoint that I situate my own hope for future research more broadly. By exploring our similarities and differences, we get to grips with the possibilities in creating new ways of relating across experiences. This builds tools that move beyond Othering and towards recognising (and relishing in) the complexity of our beings.

This is part of the legacy of Black feminist thinking which I contribute to. When writing about the possibilities in moving beyond the Othering that Khadijah identified in the thesis' title, I borrow (again) from Beyoncé's Lemonade,

If we're gonna heal, let it be glorious.

So let us begin to heal.

BLACK MUSLIM WOMEN: RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Salaam,

My name is Azeezat and I am working with Black Muslim Women who live in Manchester and Sheffield to look at our different experiences in life, the different clothes we wear and places that we go to.

I am now looking for more participants to interview. Each interview will take no more than 1 hour and can be done wherever is easiest for you.

If you would like to hear more about this project, please get in touch!!

Name: Azeezat Johnson

Email: ajohnson6@sheffield.ac.uk

This project is done as part of my PhD at The University of Sheffield

Azeezat Johnson
ajohnson6@sheffield.ac.uk

Appendix B: Information Sheet



Experiences of Black Muslim Women through clothing

Purpose of the research project

I want to work with you to understand the experiences and clothing of Black Muslim Women in Britain. I am interested in the diversity that exists in our communities, moving away from the focus on the headscarf by looking at all of the other clothes that we wear.

What will happen during the project?

I will ask for 2 interviews and for a clothes journal to be kept.

Interviews:

Each interview will be approximately 1 hour and will be recorded.

Interview 1 will be about your background.

Interview 2 will be more about the different clothes that you wear in different places.

Clothes Journal:

Since I want to talk through the clothes that we wear at different times and in different places, I would like to ask you to keep a journal for 3-4 days (including Saturday and/or Sunday).

This would mean sending a quick picture or written description each time you change clothes (e.g. completely by putting on home clothes, pyjamas, a jacket or a prayer scarf) and letting me know where you are in those clothes.

This could be done through WhatsApp, text message, email or Facebook depending on which you prefer.

Any pictures which you send me will be used to help me remember the conversations we had. None of the photographs will be used in the project without your clear agreement.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of the study will be used for the completion of this PhD and could be used for papers, blogs, articles and book chapters.

If you would like to receive an information sheet with key points from the research, please let me know and this will be sent to you.

Who can I contact if I have further questions?

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, Azeezat Johnson:

Email: ajohnson6@sheffield.ac.uk

Telephone: 07929295823

Appendix C: Consent form



Azeezat Johnson
Department of Geography
University of Sheffield, S10 1TN
Email: ajohnson6@sheffield.ac.uk
Tel: 07929295823

Consent form

Title of Project: Clothing practices of Black Muslim Women in Britain

Supervisors: Richard Phillips, Eric Olund and Yasmin Hussain

PhD Student: Azeezat Johnson

Before we begin this interview, I (the interview participant) agree to the following:

- All personal information relating to me (specifically, name, age and chosen alias) will be kept in a separate file from all recordings, transcripts and notes from these interviews.
- Azeezat will be audio-recording this interview and will keep any transcripts or notes in a password locked external hard drive separate from any personal information.
- All recordings, transcripts and notes will be kept under a false name (alias) that I have chosen (filled out below).
- I am not required to answer any questions that make me feel uncomfortable.
- If I do regret any answers given (from now until 1 year after this date), I can exercise my right to have that information excluded from the project.
- I have not been bribed or forced into helping with this project.
- I will not be paid for my contribution to this project.
- Any recordings, transcripts or notes made from my participation in this project can be re-used for future research (e.g. papers, articles, book chapters).

Chosen Alias: _____

Interview Participant Full Name: _____

Contact detail: _____ Age: _____

Interview Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Azeezat Johnson's Signature: _____

Appendix D: Asiya's clothes journal

Communicated via sms

Monday 05/01/2015

09:53: *As salaam u alaykum! Just to remind you of the photo journal today! Have a good day and all*

20:53 Asalaamu-alaykum, today I wore:

outdoor- jilbaab

Underneath it – Abaya, black leggings, black long sleeve top with a navy blue+white polka dot dress on top, a black+white neck scarf, bright wooly cardigan. It was kinda cold :/

20:54: I've just come home & am going to put on a shiid (long shapeless cotton dress) & some pyjama bottoms.

20:55: *Salaam, sorry to hear it! Where did you go when you went out during the day?*

20:57: Work at school. During the day I take off the extra cardigan, the neck scarf & the extra pair of socks I wear. Did I mean that I wore two pair of socks?

Tuesday 06/01/2015

10:14: *As Salaam u alaykum! Hope you're doing alright today – just a reminder about the photo journal.*

18:24: Wa-alaykumsalaam! Today consisted of:

jilbaab & abaya

black leggings

black&blue Star Wars t-shirt

grey long sleeve top

b&w neck scarf

khaki batwing cardigan

Again the cardigan, scarf & extra socks come off at school.

18:25: Now I'm it's pj time, which is always a shiid & bottoms.

20:50: *Thanks for letting me know! Wa Salaam Azeezat*

Wednesday 07/01/2015

11:49: *Salaam u alaykum! Just to remind you of the photo journal today! Have a good day and all*

20:09: Wa-alaykumusalaam! Ok, jilbaab & abaya, plus:

leggings

grey vest

aztec print summer dress

cream+red stripey t-shirt

grey long sleeve top
& the same scarf & cardigan as yesterday – same removal.
Home = shiid & pj bottom.

Thursday 08/01/2015

10:25: *Salaam u alaykum! Thanks for sending the details yesterday – did you go anywhere other than school? Also, just sending a reminder for the journal today!*

Friday 09/01/2015

11:06: *As salaam u alaykum! Just a reminder of the journal today – where did you go yesterday and what did you wear?*

19:58: *Wa-alaykumusalaam! Yesterday, jilbaab & abaya, plus:*
leggings
multicoloured summer dress
grey t-shirt
grey long sleeve top
khaki cardigan & the same scarf – same removal at school.
Home = shiid & pj bottom.

20:00: *Today, jilbaab & abaya, plus:*
leggings
multicoloured summer dress
grey long sleeved smock top & the same scarf – same removal at school.
Home = shiid & pj bottom.
During the week it's pretty much work/home.

20:00: *Thanks for letting me know! Wa Salaam Azeezat*

Appendix E: Khadijah's clothes journal

Communicated via WhatsApp

Sunday 02/11/2014

17:57: Hi hun! I just realised, in the event I go home and change into pj's I'll just write down flannel pyjamas or something? Sending photos of me in pyjamas may be a tad awkward

17:59: *That's cool for sure!*

Monday 03/11/2014

09:56: *Thanks for agreeing to help out with this photo journal! I'll send a message around this time each day this week just to check how it's going and whatnot. Best, Azeezat*

10:28: Hard fine, i'll send a Photo now.... this morning i took a Photo of this



10:29: Because i remember you asking what goes on under the hijab... Most of the time (as today) it's tied back with a middle parting

10:29: I'm teaching today so I'll send a photo of my outfit too.

10:30: *Sweeet! How long does it take you to do your hair in the morning?*

10:31: 5 mins, I literally run a comb through it and apply coconut oil to my ends and that pink TGI bedhead leave in conditioner to style it back

10:32: Using a paddle brush

10:32: *Ok cool*

10:34: I'm teaching so it's black slim fit trousers tucked in boots. Black blouse khaki long blazer and black and white hijab



10:34: See also my flowery gym bag lol

10:35: Err make up wise it's black top liner kohl at bottom, bright pink lipstick and some bronzer

10:35: It's the same everyday but the lipstick colour varies

10:36: I mean kohl at bottom inside my eye, I try to keep it looking neat

10:36: *Thanks for sharing this - are you going to the gym after?*

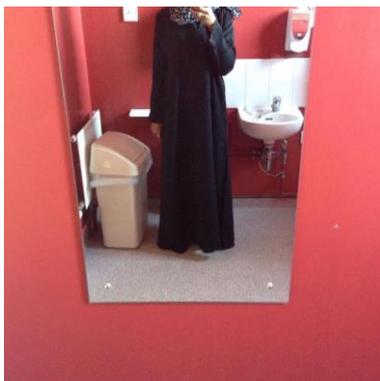
10:37: Yes! You shall see my gym outfit later babe

10:37: It doesn't change either, Cept for the tshirt I steal of my brother

10:37: It usually is some form of anime design, today it's marvel superheroes

10:37: More PG [laughing face, thumbs up sign]

10:38: *[laughing face] cool*



12:30: Dhuhr prayer time. This is the abaya i keep by my desk for prayer

12:30: *Nice - where are you going to pray?*

12:31: In the department today

12:31: When I go the Union prayer room I tend to use what's there.

12:31: *Ok cool*

12:31: In both instances I usually just pull an abaya/dress over what I'm wearing

12:35: I don't think there's much point sending the same photo for the next prayers I will do at work (asr and Maghrib), so probs should say this is the abaya I change into 3 x a day to pray in over my working week? If I do pop into the union I'll take a picture of the prayer clothes I wear there?

12:36: im sure I'll pop into the union at some point during the week anyway x

12:37: Yeah, for sure - could you text just to let me know the time you go to the next prayers? But yeah, I agree no worries about taking another picture each time you pray xx

14:16: Coolio, it's asr now

14:17: If it helps I use this timetable:

14:17: <http://www.mwhs.org.uk/includes/MWHSPrayerTimetable.pdf>

16:23: I'm teaching now till 6, so maghrib will be prayed late. Probably with isha at 6ish x

16:23: Ok

18:45: Weathers nice ish so instead of gym Im opting for a jog

18:46: Ok, where are you going for a jog?

18:56: 5kmish from uni to endcliffe park and then home.



19:01: Tried to do a hijab selfie in a way which doesn't show my full face and flopping. Although I am proud of the way I do my "sports hijab"



19:08: *For sure you should be man [thumbs up sign]*

21:29: Cheers love, I came home and showered up and changed into pj's

21:29: So flannel bottoms and a plain tshirt

21:30: *Cool - Thanks for the continuous updates, hope it's not too much hassle!*

21:30: It's not, I have a bad memory though so keep reminding me!

21:30: It's no problem at all :-).

21:30: *Will do!*

Tuesday 04/11/2014

10:41: *Morning! Hope you're doing alright today - just a reminder about the photo journal. Hope you have a good day!*

12:14: Just prayed dhuhhr at the union



12:15: This is the dress I always wear

12:15: When praying at the union. It's bright

12:15: I owe you an outfit of the day photo too

12:16: And will send that to you sometime this afternoon

12:57: *Great, thanks!*



14:00: Make up free day :-). Hair tied same way as yesterday



14:02: I wore my Casio watch yesterday too... My only accessory on both days x

14:54: *Ok cool - where are you going/have you been today?*

14:56: Err I had a driving lesson in morning, a shut up and write session after that. Then in office since

14:56: I brought my gym bag but will only go to the gym depending on how many words are on paper.

20:03: Just finished off at the gym.



20:31: Good stuff! Where did you go to the gym?

20:31: Ponds forge

20:34: I change at the gym and shower up there

21:03: *Ok cool*

Wednesday 05/11/2014

10:02: *Morning! Just to remind you of the photo journal today! What did you change into when you went home? Have a good day today!*

11:15: Changed info pi's and went to bed! Will show you a Photo of what im wearing this afternoon x

11:32: *Thanks! Xx*



12:35: Praying dhuhr now x

12:42: Make up wise, Im wearing eyeliner, mascara and a light pink lip butter

13:39: *Thanks for letting me know - did you go to the union or stay in the office?*

15:39: Stayed in office

15:57: I'm praying asr now too, in the office x

16:48: Just prayed Maghrib in office x

16:51: *Thanks for letting me know xx*

21:27: Gym, home, pj's x

21:27: *Good night! Xx*

21:32: Goodnight xx

Thursday 06/11/2014

11:22: *Morning(ish)! Hope you're doing alright today - just a reminder about the photo journal.*



20:52: Just got in (i spent the day in the office, did all my prayers there then after work had dinner with a friend who was my camera woman here). I'll shower up and change into pj's x

23:44: *Thanks for letting me know (also thank your friend with the helping)! Good night xx*

23:44: Nite nite xx

Friday 07/11/2014

12:28: *Morning! Just to remind you of the photo journal today! Have a good day and all*

12:28: [thumbs up emoticon]



12:44: Doing a presentation with school kids today

12:44: This is my interpretation of smart/casual... Although in all honesty all my smart clothes are a combination of smart/casual

12:45: Pink lips, bronzed cheeks, eyeliner x

12:49: *Ok cool - have fun with the students!*

12:49: Thanks hun xx

Saturday 08/11/2014

09:47: *Hey, last two days of the photo journal! What different clothes did you wear yesterday evening (and where did you go?) Happy weekend!*

10:56: Came home wore pjs

10:56: Had plenty of lemsip because I'm coming down with a cold

10:56: Now I have tajweed classes at the mosque



10:57: *Sorry to hear it, hope you're feeling better today*

10:57: *Thanks for sending the picture though*

13:54: Somali house dress, aka a dirac

13:54: they come in 2 forms, the ones in cotton are the ones we wear at home like this one



13:55: The ones made out of silk we wear in weddings, like this one (worn at my brothers nikkah)



13:56: They usually come with an underskirt for volume

13:57: And I belt it (at weddings etc) because otherwise I drown in them or look shapeless

13:58: Anyways usually when I'm home I wear pj's or a cotton dirac...if I'm expecting guests I'll wear a nice dirac (the one I'm wearing today is very plain)

14:00: Thanks for sending both pics - Are you going to be home for the rest of the day? And by pj's what do you mean?

14:25: Flannel bottoms and a tshirt

14:25: I will probably laze at home and take some calpol, I feel pretty fluey still so a pyama day will do me good :D

14:27: Pyjama days do us all good [thumbs up emoticon] hope you feel better soon though!

14:54: Thank you xx

Sunday 09/11/2014

11:26: Hey I genuinely didn't do much yesterday but I feel much better for it tofsy

11:26: *today... I changed into a hoody and flannel pyjama bottoms last night

11:26: And I'm just on my way out now



11:27: Thanks for letting me know, glad you're feeling better today!

11:27: Where are you going?

11:28: I'm going to visit an aunt and then have lunch with a friend

18:05: Came home... Changed into a dirac



19:17: On my way out for an impromptu bite to eat with some friends x

19:32: Thanks for letting me know! Xx

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