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The (Un)Changing Nature of Constructions of South Asian
Muslim Women Post-9/11

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Abstract

This thesis is concerned with making connections between institutional expressions of Islamophobia and corresponding cultural manifestations of Islamophobic rhetoric. My starting and ending points are the constructions of South Asian Muslim women as understood through multiply layered systems of oppression, and the broad argument of the thesis will be one that seeks to examine ethically responsible encounters that look, and look again, at such connections. The thesis examines the construction of South Asian Muslim women as characters in cultural products, as 'concerns' in political discourse, and as figures of representation in news and social media. This research is also invested in exploring the subsequent mental impact of such burdens of representation, and how, if at all, we can move past and through these constructions. Each chapter places a range of different mediums (policy documents, literature, film, news media, social media, music) together in order to, firstly, interrogate the context from which these constructions are cultivated, and secondly, to examine the ensuing flowering of affective impacts upon seeing oneself constructed in texts.

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Introduction

"This is a story about the power of stories. It is also a warning that those who live by the tale will, in time, fall prey to their own narrative. If you spend your energy creating monsters, don't be surprised when they eat you up. It is a story about storytellers, about how people who tell tales about others are really talking about themselves." – Gargi Bhattacharyya, Tales of Dark-Skinned Women (1998, p. 26-27)

Background and scope

The past two decades have seen age-old systems of Islamophobia and Orientalism freshly renewed with the vigour of post-9/11 campaigns of death, subjugation, and terror. Treatments of what and who "post-9/11" captures have been taken up by academic fields as far flung as literature, sociology, anthropology, law, and politics, alongside sustained attention from media organisations, social media users, and other cultural producers. In short, writing concerned with Muslims and terrorism is writing part of a topic formed by a wide variety of disciplines, for a range of audience demographics. Importantly, for those with literal skin in the game this interest is one which is not only highly saturated with meaning, but also highly emotional.

In this thesis, such an emotional investment will be imbued in every section – my interest in this area is not one that begins with geopolitics or academic intellectual exercises, but with life experiences and a belonging to various types of Muslim communities. I have no recourse that allows me to put down my interest and move on to something else, I have no strategy for withdrawal, nor a technique that makes any of the ensuing discussions abstract exercises sectioned off from the realities of the death and violence which characterise contemporary iterations of Islamophobia. With this in mind, throughout the thesis I will explore the methods that are required when writing about one's own communities, and the methods necessary for anti-racist praxis which must work creatively to stand out in a potentially over-saturated field. This saturation speaks not only to the amount of work which theorizes Muslims, but also to the uniquely peculiar feeling of seeing oneself constantly (re)theorised. The combination of these two encounters, being gazed at and gazing back, require an elision of methodology and subject matter: the approach to the subject matter, the methodology, is an active praxis with methodological conclusions in addition to the conclusions stemming directly from textual analysis. At its core, each of the coming chapters is concerned with making connections between institutional expressions of Islamophobia and corresponding cultural manifestations of Islamophobic rhetoric.

My starting and ending points are the constructions of South Asian Muslim women as understood through multiply layered systems of oppression, and the broad argument of the thesis will be one that seeks to examine ethically responsible encounters that look, and look again, at such connections. The thesis examines the construction of South Asian Muslim women as characters in cultural products, as 'concerns' in political discourse, and as figures of representation in news and social media. Finally, the thesis is invested in exploring the subsequent mental impact of such burdens of representation, and how, if at all, we can move past and through these constructions. Each chapter places a range of different mediums (policy documents, literature, film, news media, social media, music) together in order to, firstly, interrogate the context from which these constructions are cultivated, and secondly, to examine the ensuing flowering of affective impacts upon seeing oneself constructed in texts.

This introduction will, as with the body of the thesis itself, move between the boundaries of concepts – it is difficult to parse out the contexts and backgrounds that set the stage precisely because they are intertwined with one another. First, I will consider the processes of knowledge production involved in understandings of key terms for this thesis, before moving to a discussion about the fields of terrorism studies and anti-racist scholarship in relation to 9/11 and white supremacy. This will be followed by an examination of intersectionality in relation to constructions of the self as researcher, before returning to a final discussion of knowledge production in terms of methodology that aims to bring together these sections. That said, each of these sections do bleed into one another because the connection between Islamophobia, 9/11, and anti-racism intersect through the prism of white supremacy which, in turn, engenders a universalising effect upon knowledge production.

The specifics of these aims will be explored further at the close of this introduction, but for now I will turn to the aforementioned personal investments in this research project – definitional understandings of key terms are both a required foundation and a necessary evil. Academia does not position itself as an arena for conceptual understandings that are grounded upon lived experience and one's own encounters with the world, and this understanding of intellectualism within academia is influenced by notions of what can be considered factual or truthful. As Patricia Hill Collins states, 'no one group has a clear angle of vision. No one group possesses the theory or methodology that allows it to discover the absolute "truth"'

(Collins 1990, p. 234). Authenticity implies that a researcher can burrow deep enough to a nugget of truth that captures the essence of what it is to be "South Asian" or "Muslim," as though uncovering such innate definitions will reveal heretofore hidden knowledge for the benefit of uncomprehending whites. It is for this reason that this introduction will be peppered with what the thesis does not strive to do, and what it cannot do – for example, I cannot speak for "South Asian Muslim women" as a homogenous group as such a grouping does not exist, and nor would I strive to. Further, authenticity or truth are precisely the notions that this thesis works against, namely that knowledge production should not centre whiteness nor be beholden to it in order to register as valuable. My belonging to the communities I research is no guarantee of well-crafted insight, but it is no hindrance either. Linda Alcoff, when also discussing identity politics, states that she finds:

> Western hermeneutic and phenomenological traditions...seriously deficient, not because they assume the justification of our existing beliefs but because they tend to portray our situation as if it were coherent, monocultural, and internally consistent in all respects. A necessary complication for the account of identity arises when we consider the incoherences, multiplicities, and hybrid aspects of selves, cultures, communities, and horizons (2006, p. 124).

Alcoff foregrounds the centrality of pluralities to conversations about identities, and my own experiences over the course of this project have demonstrated that the assumption of finality or conclusion is pointless at best, and profoundly arrogant at worst, characteristically so for Western ontology. Any definitions elaborated upon will have to be restrained by the knowledge that there can be no singular truth that exists cohesively. Admissions of complexity and of conclusions that are tempered with a contributional, rather than totalising, end point are the context and framework of this thesis. In other words, knowledge production which is aware of being a contribution towards knowledge in precise and clearly stated areas appears eminently more useful for academic praxis than more traditional methods.

The content of this thesis explores such central terms as "diaspora" and "Islamophobia," and provides more expansive explorations of their functions in anti-racist praxis. Thus, the following considerations are here to present a backdrop of the usage of these terms, for

further exploration later in the thesis. Brian Keith Axel critiques understandings of diaspora and diasporic communities as constituted through the notion of a homeland that is left behind. Instead, Axel proposes a move towards a diasporic imaginary wherein, firstly, violence in different forms is central to understanding diaspora formation and, secondly, that diaspora formation is not linked only to a concrete understanding of a place that is left behind but is instead "a process of identification generative of diasporic subjects" (2002, p. 412). Axel makes the distinction that "rather than conceiving of the homeland as something that creates the diaspora, it may be more productive to consider the diaspora as something that creates the homeland" (2002, p. 426). This elaboration takes us towards an understanding of movement that positions diaspora as a perpetually growing and changing relationship between the individual and the movements that came to us; in other words, Axel's framework allows for discussion of the systemic and structural violence which necessitates global movement, and the continual processing of such violence over time. Diaspora carries within it the implication that an individual came to the West – an altogether backward understanding that disregards the coloniality embedded within diasporic movements. After all, the British empire "came" to the majority of countries around the world and, with regards to South Asians, the occupation of India and the later genocide during its partition has considerable weight in discussions of why South Asians are a relatively sizeable community in Britain. Setting aside these colonial contexts and beginning the historical narrative with South Asians coming to Britain is a severely limited understanding of the function of diaspora as a term. Axel's work is an example of scholarship which seeks to open up and push concepts further in apprehending how violence coalesces around many concepts related to the immigrant imaginary (Hesse & Sayyid 2006, p. 23).

In a similar vein, Salman Sayyid opens up the definition of Islamophobia and its contemporary, post-9/11 functions by arguing that:

> more than an expression of hatred or fear, Islamophobia needs to be understood as an undermining of the ability of Muslims as Muslims, to project themselves into the future. The manners in which Islamophobia is expressed and made manifest are diverse. This makes it difficult to say that Islamophobia has one specific feature that is hidden behind all its various occurrences. There is no essence to Islamophobia; instead there is a series of

overlapping elements that constitute a coherence based around a notion of what Wittgenstein described as a family resemblance. It is possible to see how a gesture, a speech, and a police action can all be aspects of Islamophobia reflecting not an underlying unity, but a series of overlapping similarities (2014, p. 14).

Sayyid demonstrates that the definition of Islamophobia does not hinge upon an understanding of who makes up a Muslim as a singular entity, but rather that we can track Islamophobia as a series of palimpsestic, multiply-layered encounters which together form a map of belonging based upon simultaneities that leave room for differences. In arguing that "there is no essence to Islamophobia" Sayyid is able to de-essentialise conceptions of Muslims as one singular, homogenous entity and this correspondingly opens up how the term Islamophobia functions and what it encompasses. The claim that "Islamophobia needs to be understood as an undermining of the ability of Muslims as Muslims, to project themselves into the future" is central to understanding what is at stake in definitions of Islamophobia and racism, and within that, who is at stake. The ability to see oneself, intact, in the future has long underwritten the work of anti-racist praxis and Sayyid neatly articulates that for Muslims to imagine ourselves in the future, to be alive, is testament to the work of death that constitutes white supremacy, racism, and Islamophobia.

Relatedly, this thesis, in being about racism that defines the shapes of Islamophobia, is a thesis that is about contributing to building up different types of knowledge around the types of people and communities who are routinely invisibilized structurally, institutionally, physically, and in a range of other ways. It is therefore important to begin with a context that is alive to contributory knowledge and, as stated earlier, an active working towards seeing more, and seeing better.

Terrorism studies and anti-racist scholarship

By virtue of examining Islamophobia this thesis straddles both terrorism studies and anti-racist scholarship. More accurately, this work is situated firmly within anti-racist scholarship as I aim to unfold understandings of gender, race, and nationhood within the

context of specifically chosen parameters. Terrorism studies, however, is much more of a hanger-on in that it is called to mind, rather than purposely summoned, in studies of this nature. A range of seminal texts in this field assert that terrorism studies did not begin with 9/11 and the ensuing onslaught of thinking and scholarship, but rather existed before this marker of contemporary upheaval. In their edited collection Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda (2009), Jackson, Smyth, and Gunning acknowledge that the field is beset with a political bias towards the West (p. 3) which understates both the function of terrorism studies and Western approaches to valuing non-Western lives.

In the same collection, Ranstorp critiques terrorism studies for searching for a singular definition of terrorism, whilst acknowledging that "academics have been criticised for being ensconced in ivory towers" (2009, p. 17) and concludes that "policymakers and researchers are mutually reinforcing each other's claims as authoritative" (2009, p. 25). Ranstorp's characterisation of both academia and terrorism studies is no accidental entwinement, given that traditionally Western ontologies are valued as the best kinds of authentic knowledge production that deserve to influence policy making. Maintaining the status quo of separating knowledge for academic arbiters of Western values is a kind of work which is actively upheld and, in the case of terrorism studies, upholds an understanding of terrorism in relation to 9/11 as one which draws a connecting line between threats to Western states as threats to the very concepts of civilisation and democracy.

Richard Jackson elaborates on the introductory claim of Western critique by outlining that "most of what is accepted as well-founded 'knowledge' in terrorism studies is, in fact, highly debatable and unstable" (2009, p. 74). Jackson uses the example of terrorism by state actors and its relative lack of attention within terrorism studies as a central element in understanding the ways in which terrorism studies upholds oppressive structures – by categorising certain non-state actors as threats to the security of states, Jackson argues, definitions of terrorism play a vital role in constructing a certain reality for public entities including citizens, media organisations, politicians, and law enforcement (2009, p. 75-76). Jackson's critique is one which makes links between the Western exceptionalism embedded in terrorism studies scholars who refuse to categorise state actors as capable of terrorism, and the range of impacts this has upon public, media, legal, and political arenas engaged in discourse which

speaks to the reach of knowledge production in affirming or decrying Islamophobic constructions of Muslims.

This calls to mind Dauphinee and Masters' edited collection The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror where they argue that the war on terror is a production of grief which manifests across which kinds of lives are considered valuable, and which are not (2007, p. xv). Indeed, Jackson goes on to conclude that "the dominant terrorism discourse can and has been used by political elites to justify and promote a whole range of political projects" including "expanding the powers and jurisdiction of state security agencies and the executive branch...controlling wider social and political dissent, restricting human rights, and setting the parameters for acceptable public debate" (2009, p. 79). Whilst terrorism studies certainly existed before 9/11, and the field includes thinking on terrorism beyond Islamist terrorism, it is also evident that 9/11 and its particular evolutionary development of what terrorism means to the modern world has eclipsed what terrorism studies may have been pre-9/11. This discussion is not intended as a commentary upon the mistakes or potential futures of terrorism studies, but instead a reminder that "terrorism" has come to hold a particular history which is inextricably intertwined with the valuation of life; of both Muslim and non-Muslim victims of terrorism, of how we understand terrorism enacted by state actors, by non-Muslim and white non-state actors, and by Muslim actors. The backdrops of increased state securitisation, the monitoring of Muslims, and, as Jackson mentions, the parameters of acceptable public debate, ask loud questions of academics who work in any capacity that could be regarded as terrorism studies both in what is argued, and what is ignored.

The notion of state actors as capable of, and committing, terrorism is one which is an important baseline in understanding what terrorism is, and how its constituting borders position certain beings as terrorist, potential terrorist, or as citizen. As will become evident throughout the course of this thesis, many academics and other writers who paint pictures of events that can be regarded as "post-9/11" often weave together narratives of state subjugation and terrorism which include Western invasion into Iraq and Afghanistan, torture in Abu Ghraib, illegal detainment in Guantanamo Bay, and incidences of random selection and stop and search of those who look visibly Muslim. By having such violent and deathly policies become widely regarded as part of acceptable public discourse and part of a social

consciousness that elicits hegemonic prominence, another kind of grief is enacted for Muslim communities which, as Dauphinee and Masters outline earlier, sits firmly at the heart of which lives are valued and which are disposed of. Masters goes on to argue in her own chapter that the justification of increased state securitisation happens "at the expense of radical insecurity for most of the people and places upon which these practices play out" (2007, p. 55) whilst Michael Stohl outlines that "the legitimacy of the national state is itself normally conceived as providing legitimacy to actions that would be condemned as terrorism if such behaviors were executed by nonstate actors" (1984, p. 43). The coming explorations of the impact of terrorism on the cultural and social construction of South Asian Muslim women characters operates on the principle that terrorism cannot be understood only as wielded by non-state actors, but instead the existence of states as terrorists whose increased securitisation harms Muslim citizens. The security of the state, and for the purposes of this thesis, the security of Western states, is positioned as coming before the lives of its own Muslim citizens or Muslim citizens foreign to the state. The thesis will consider constructions of Muslims in media texts but with a keen eye focused upon the machinations of knowledge production that provide a broad understanding to the depth of textual analysis. In other words, the thesis is concerned with not only the constructions of Muslims in film, policy analysis, and other media, but also with the nature of representations that position such knowledge as somehow authoritative or truthful.

Barnor Hesse speaks to the relationship between state actors and state power with an outline of the double bind which states that "the international concept of racism is doubly bound into revealing its imprints in nationalism and concealing its anchorage in liberalism; or recognising extremist ideology while denying routine governmentality" (2004, p. 9). The values of the nation state as upholding democracy, freedom, and liberty are values which have always been conditional for people of colour and, as this thesis will articulate, for Muslim people of colour. Terrorism studies only becomes useful for understanding post-9/11 terrorism when it moves beyond itself in order to critique Western ontology, as argued above in relation to Western academia, and Hesse's conceptualisation of the functions of racism as aligned with particular ideals of nationalism and liberalism communicates the cognitive dissonance inherent in upholding Western ontology – the implementation of the functions of

the state in protecting citizens and upholding freedom as filtered through nationalism comes at the cost of certain lives.

Another backdrop for this thesis is that of anti-racist scholarship, and it is perhaps this consideration of white supremacy which moves the project away from conventional terrorism studies and towards anti-racist praxis. The research process was broken up with the EU referendum in Britain where the Leave campaign won a narrow victory, even with barely anything constituting an escape plan, whilst the election of white supremacist Donald Trump in the US saw a general swing to far right politics around the world. Not a single one of these political events represents new information for those who have been paying attention, or more accurately, those who have been forced to pay attention due to the historical marginalisation of the communities to which we belong. What these events have provided, however, is a renewed sense of the machinations and reach of white supremacy in all its guises, and it is with this in mind that I turn to Sara Ahmed's work on affective economies.

Ahmed examines global economies of fear and their position within economies of hatred. In other words – the coming together of fear and hatred in white supremacist logics that seek to protect notions of "home" from outside invaders. I will return to the connections Ahmed makes between fear and the possibility of the future at the conclusion of the thesis, but for now we will consider the reading provided by Ahmed reacting to Frantz Fanon's retelling of an encounter where a white boy is scared of a black man, and mistakes the black man's shivering apprehension as shaking rage. Ahmed argues that whilst fear envelops both these bodies,

> this is not to say that the fear comes from the white body, as if it is the origin of that fear (and its author). Rather, fear opens up past histories that stick to the present...and allow the white body to be constructed as apart from the black body (2004, p. 126).

Here, Ahmed is pointing out that white supremacy does not function through innate identity, but is instead a series of multi-directional, overlapping, series of simultaneities which constitute a "stickiness" that speaks to the prevalence of forms of white supremacy at every conceivable level of social, political, cultural spheres. These concepts are not specific to

certain white people, or to certain periods of history, but instead characterise the functions of white supremacy as enacted through a stickiness of which kinds of bodies are thought of as disposable bodies, and which kinds of bodies are thought of as human beings with innate value and rights to life. Undertaking studies of terrorism and its cultural and social reaches requires us to begin with apprehending white supremacy as central to understanding differences in valuation of life, and the prisms through which these valuations differ. Whilst this thesis is not speaking to whiteness, it is inescapable that examining Western manifestations of Islamophobia and the intersecting oppressions at play in constructions of South Asian Muslim women requires understandings of the supremacy of whiteness – the structure must be understood in order for the functions to be apprehended.

Intersections/assemblages - forming the self

Given the personal attachments discussed above, and the stakes involved in writing about white supremacy as the business of death, it follows that I have concerns about the morality and ethics of how I unfold the thesis. White supremacy is, by definition, imbricated within morality and ethics given that it is a system of supremacy which relies upon structural and symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2004) that, as Ahmed argues, works through the stickiness of historical weight and a consumption of constructed truths about the Other, the colonised, the savage. Writing about white supremacy thus necessitates a grappling with the ethics of the claims I make as a researcher in relation to the lived experiences and theorised outcomes of communities of colour. A consistently reliable check and balance of this has been that of the Black feminist concept of intersectionality, first used by Kimberle Crenshaw in a legal judgment.

Whilst it is arguable that the recent popularity of the term has led to a dilution of its original use (Nash 2008), I aim to use the term in its original context of describing intersecting systems of oppression. The term is particularly useful in thinking through, deconstructing, and articulating that "people's lives and the organisation of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class, but by many axes that work together and influence each other" (Collins & Bilge 2016.

p. 2). They go on to argue that "intersectionality as a form of critical inquiry and praxis gains its meaning within specific social contexts" (2016, p. 199). This argument posits that intersectionality must remain fluid if it is to be successful in both theory and practice. They point out that intersectionality cannot be treated as another field of study because "there is no one intersectional framework that can be applied to each field. Rather, varying academic fields of study take up different aspects of intersectionality in relation to their specific concerns" (2016, p. 99). The guiding principle of intersectionality is fundamentally that people experience more than one oppression at a time but, as Collins and Bilge argue, this alone is no basis for a theoretical model.

Instead, they recommend that intersectionality is used in synergy with the specific concerns of the study. This creates space for messiness and fluidity that is better able to accommodate the complexities and nuances necessary when communicating the specific concerns of a piece of work. Collins and Bilge recommend a merging of scholarship and praxis when using intersectionality, seeing them as "intimately linked and mutually informing each other" (2016, p. 42). Intersectionality is not just a framework, but an active participation, a doing word. Further, it is not a theory which purports to demonstrate the multiply layered facets of identity categories, but rather demonstrates the intersection of oppression of multiply layered identities, an important distinction that drives at understanding the world, and an individual's place within it. As Sayyid, Hesse, and Ahmed cover, anti-racist work routinely involves overlapping simultaneities that constitute a palimpsest of difference. Intersectionality is well-suited to this thesis specifically for the mirroring it provides to the range of media in the thesis that, in turn, demonstrates an overall painting of contributions that revel in both difference and sameness.

By this stage, the topics this introduction covers are feeling more like a series of loosely organised warning shots, of what this thesis is not, of what I wish to be careful about, and how to address misapprehensions and misrecognitions rife in academia, terrorism studies, and work concerning Muslim women. Throughout the project, I have felt the burdening expectation placed upon people of colour in the academy to write about and from the self: the expectation is that if you are writing about communities to whom you belong you must slice your self open in the name of identity, of reflexivity, of a kind of "authentic truth" accessed

by introspection. I am not interested in proving this claim, as it is one that has been so bitterly felt throughout the research process that I fear to do so would be to string myself out further. The inclusion of this claim has been undertaken on the basis that it stems from my carefully thought through experiences, and has been supported with conversations with fellow colleagues of colour in a range of settings. Writing from trauma is no way to process trauma, and yet, many researchers of colour are guided towards writing from the self in a way that is beholden, usually entirely inadvertently, to whiteness – a hungry whiteness which demands the stringing out of the self from those who trespass there. This process of stringing out is one which seeks to consume the anecdotal pain of racist encounters within institutions that position us as deviant objects to be studied. Conversely, the presence of white colleagues who are not implicitly asked to explain their presence and their emotional connection to the work is testament to whiteness in academia and, once again, the difference in research outputs when one has skin in the game.

Valuing knowledge productions

It is little wonder, then, that we return to a discussion of the types of knowledge production that are valued as scholarly, academic, and rigorous. Evidently, the academy is a space committed to white supremacist logics and, as valuable as the scholars who resist these logics through a range of work on intersecting oppressions, the increasing commodification of education and research does not position academia as a radical, inclusive, and welcoming space. Gargi Bhattacharyya examines the pressures of academics being required to link research outputs to tactics of public engagement, stating that "one scholar's engagement with the community is another manager's identification of a new market" (2013, p. 1414). Bhattacharyya outlines the issues embroiled within doing activist work in conservative institutions, and advocates for careful decision making that balances imagining a better future which is not beholden to separating academia from the public, nor of quickly produced hot takes of complex movements – "what fool does not understand that state-funded institutions are unwilling to support and fund the work of revolutionary movements or to promote ideas that propose their own demise? I am not completely silly and I understand that all of us make choices about the political work that we do and the possibilities that may be opened through

even quite modest initiatives" (p. 1417). Instead, what is outlined here is a call to renew commitment to activist praxis which recognises that the academy is no benign friend to anti-racist resistance, but requires the researcher to continuously reflect on how these illiberal systems are reproduced and knowledge restricted.

With this in mind, it follows that researchers are forced to work creatively in order to engage with this reality, to work against it, and to work outside of it. As mentioned previously, the topic of this thesis arises in a particularly saturated field, but this is not to say that the discussion is always insightful or accurate for those whom it claims to study. The beginning of this introduction outlined the range of media to be included in the thesis and this range is intended to provide the foundation for an interdisciplinarity which engenders multi-faceted conclusions around the public construction of South Asian Muslim women. Amongst this diversity of media, the discussion often moves from literary analysis, policy analysis, sociological methods, cultural studies, and film analysis. This range of contexts are placed together as an attempt to highlight the connections that are waiting to be made across disciplines; an unexpected or unconventional analytical mode intended to foreground the argument being made rather than being beholden to conventions within disciplines. This is not to say that these conventions are incorrect or useless; rather placing literature and policy texts together (or using social media sources in conjunction with canonical literary theory) are techniques that borrow from across disciplines in order to ensure that the analytical framework remains sharp. Too often, conventional academic modes of analysis within separate disciplines are upheld in order to maintain conventional praxis for the sake of upholding conventional praxis.

Rey Chow considers the questions that follow academics when considering one's place within a discipline and considering "what does it mean for me and my group to have been made invisible?" (2001, p. 1386). Chow is writing from the perspective of film studies and considers the centrality of the image in allowing film studies to transcend disciplinary boundaries readily and with seemingly easy applicability. Chow argues that the rise of film and film critique has allowed a focus upon the image and visual narratives which has "its own demands, interrogations, and political agendas" which means that "one can no longer speak of the image as such but must become willing to subject the image to these processes of

re-viewing, reimagine, reassembling" (2001, p. 1391). The argument that unfolds is one which urges looking again at the image and, whilst Chow uses the example of East Asian cinema as a cinema which white viewers seek to find authenticity within through the accessibility of the visual, speaks to the concerns for "me and my group." Throughout, Chow lays out a convincing argument that visual arts can provide an accessibility of consumption whilst encouraging us to look again and to look better at the manner of construction of representations, and examining for whom these constructions strike a chord. Given the simultaneous over-saturation of the image of the South Asian Muslim woman alongside its entrenchment within Orientalistic, racist, white supremacist ways of looking, Chow's argument is a reminder of the importance of re-visioning analytical modes in order to look better, to look more imaginatively, and between assemblages.

From creativity in discipline connections, the project also aims to function by further making connections between pop culture, South Asian cultural products, and social media alongside literary theory and more canonical or traditional texts. A central thread through each of the chapters is my reflections as a researcher upon the progress of the project, the political events that transpired during the course of the PhD and the personal impact these changes had on my own emotional state. This decision to include forms of knowledge – knowing yourself, treating pop culture and so-called "low brow" culture as knowledge – speaks to alternative knowledge praxis which has become commonplace for many communities of colour who have long had to find ways to speak to one another, to listen with more compassion and heart, to be heard by a range of audiences in situations which are trying to silence, intimidate, deport, enslave, or kill us. The methods used in this thesis, the texts selected, the melding of traditional with non-traditional, the straddling across disciplines, is not particularly radical nor new, but it instead is borne from the frustration and deep-seated pain of working within academia and seeing, for this thesis South Asian Muslim women but also a range of communities of colour more broadly, be sidelined in academic spaces, to say nothing of political, social, and cultural spaces.

A number of white women and scholars of colour have been vital in providing frameworks for existing, surviving, and further, thriving. Their work can be found throughout this project, but one central text has been Gargi Bhattacharyya's work Tales of Dark-Skinned Women

(1998) which begins with tales from Scheherazade's 100 nights and melds metaphor and fantasy as tools to discuss the tales of a model, a sportswoman, a newsreader, and an entertainer. Each of these tales serve as conduits for discussing gender, race, capitalism and labour, representational politics, and a number of other intersections. What ensues is an allegorical discussion of these topics and cultural commentary that engages with Western ontology and knowledge production that neatly allows those who think of themselves as dark skinned women a knowing wink and deft movement into the text and its conclusions. The use of fantasy and allegory create space for a creative avenue into discussing often difficult and complex emotional topics with a melding of fiction, critical theory, and textual analysis. The style and structure of the work is an important example of the creative approaches necessary to circumvent academic convention for the sake of academic convention, in favour of work which writes about, but also for, those whom it speaks.

For example, Bhattacharyya positions standardised notions of truth as directly aligned with Western standards of truth, arguing that "as the big theorists say, the concept of reiterability has a special status in Western cultures: this is what makes truth, the ability to repeat and check" (1998, p. 7). The repetition of the same lie by Western actors forms a solidity in truth for other Western actors, and, when discussing the burden of proof and evidence in constructing truthful knowledge, Bhattacharyya points out that "other senses can reveal the shape of an argument, surely?" (1998, p. 58) This argument revolves around an understanding of Western ontology as steeped in the repetition of untruths about those in the East; untruths, however, that are repeated in the West until Western imagination is narrowed to a singular notion of what it is to be Eastern, or Oriental.

Broadly speaking, this argument is also one which is critical of totalising meta-narratives, whilst acknowledging that many of us must engage and work through these same narratives with our sense of self intact. The problem of repetition constituting meaning-making in terms of what is considered truthful, is explored through a discussion that advocates for using more than one sense to judge the draw and relevance of an argument – precisely the kind of creative approach mentioned earlier. Considering other senses during the process of knowledge production, considering in other words what is felt, heard, and evoked, should be a part of the process as much as intellectual faculties. For those of us who belong to the

communities we write about, emotional personal investment comes with the territory and Bhattacharyya's style of writing and argument throughout this work provide an encouragement for the use of multiple senses. With this understanding of knowledge production in mind, then, we can see how the lack of academic writing on certain topics that pertain to marginalised communities, such as intricacies of the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim women, means little to nothing – we do not cease to exist in particular ways simply because these particular ways are not theorised. As such, Tales of Dark-Skinned Women anticipates the limitation of imagination built into structures of oppression on the part of oppressors:

> As long as the great men believed their own stories, they felt justified in using violence to maintain their privilege; after all, this was the right and natural order. As long as the rest of the world believed at least some of the great men's stories, they remained feeling sad and powerless, unable to imagine routes out of social structures which accorded them no value. Worse still, they could make no connection between themselves and others (1998, p. 31)

As much as the upholding of these structures limits who oppressors are able to see as human and capable of possessing intricate inner lives we must not miss the violence embedded within this process of meaning making. Bhattacharyya continues that:

> There seemed to be no way out of the dilemma: tell tales or keep silent, both ways you lost. Knowledge remained mysterious, life remained frightening. Narrative held little relation to truth, but also could not be easily distinguished from it. We agreed to keep going, because stopping seemed no better. All sorts of stories went on being told (1998, p. 46).

The epistemological bind here is one which speaks to the dissonance of working within the academy against much of what the academy stands for. It is no surprise that this call to keep going, and of continuing to speak and to listen no matter how frightening, is echoed in the work of other women of colour – Gloria Anzaldúa calls for us to act and not only react to oppressive structures (2007, p. 101); Toni Morrison warns about the distraction of explaining your self to racist structures (1975); and Rey Chow advocates for resistance that does not just

position itself on the outside looking for a way in (2002, p. 185). There are many more calls from women academics of colour which urge the continuation of looking again, of looking better, and listening further, of using all your senses. Knowledge production requires, then, a constant revisioning wherein there can be no final point of a perfect framework nor the correct analytical method, but of a continuous engagement with what is required of anti-racist praxis for communities of colour.

Outline of thesis

"Looking was such a contained sensation — troubling complications could be cut out of the frame, the lookers could make believe that they controlled what they saw…everything in the European dream of possession rests on witnessing, a witnessing understood as a form of significant and representative seeing. To see is to secure the truth of what might otherwise be deemed incredible." (Bhattacharyya 1998, p. 73-75)

Thus far, this introduction has set the scene for the coming chapters by situating the work amongst the fields of terrorism studies and anti-racist scholarship, and outlined some of the pitfalls and goals of both disciplines. As will soon become clear, each of these chapters engages to some degree with positionality and the interaction of gaze in these aforementioned encounters. Whilst the chapters themselves explore the uses and limits of gaze theory, my departure point for the connection between gaze and power is one which is touched upon in Tales of Dark-Skinned Women, and it is this connection which is central to its inclusion here. The consuming gaze of the coloniser is one that is creepingly familiar to dark-skinned women, as well as its ability to hold totalising truths that aim to form solid meanings imposingly onto those it gazes upon. Gaze in interaction has much to say to us about power relations and focusing upon its currency in such encounters reveals connections that are made and connections that are missed.

Part 1 of the thesis contains two chapters that both use literary and filmic texts to examine British policy documents that purport to tackle the problem of anti-terrorism strategies and legislation alongside issues of multiculturalism and assimilation. This first part of the thesis

speaks directly to whiteness across academic disciplines. The policy documents are used to make connections between institutional forms of Islamophobia and cultural manifestations of Islamophobia, with the movement between politics, sociology, literary analysis, and film analysis intended to provide a backdrop which makes such connections move forwards towards us.

Chapter 1 uses Khaled Hosseini's bestselling novel A Thousand Splendid Suns (2007) alongside Command Paper 9148 (2015), a 2015 counter-extremism strategy published by the Home Office of the British government. The ensuing discussion concerns the institutional splitting apart of ideology and religion for the government's understanding of the Islamic faith. This chapter coalesces around the central issue of British values and is concerned with constructions of statehood in relation to the kind of citizens which do and do not adhere to a state's values. The conversation is bookended with an exploration of Orientalism and ignorance using the works of Edward Said and Samuel Huntington. They provide the critical backdrop to the Islamophobia embedded in both the novel and the policy document, two texts produced almost a decade apart. Both Hosseini's text and the policy document, as I will argue, position Muslim women as a litmus test for the liberalism of Muslims residing in Western countries, along with the implied question of which part of the Orient they hail from. I will also argue that constructions of statehood which propagate the policy of Muslims as Other and as consistently carrying the potential for terrorism position the state's own Muslim citizens as enemies within, carrying weighty implications for the value of citizenship across identity categories.

Chapter 2 takes these ideas on citizenship and belonging to discuss the implications of British Muslims as enemies of the state in relation to the delimiting effects this has upon freedom. This is framed with Achille Mbembe's work on necropolitics which positions power and sovereignty as the work of death; those who wield power also wield death. Sara Ahmed's work on phenomenology and Jasbir Puar's work on US exceptionalism provide models for Western statehood, as well as frameworks through which to approach encounters wherein states press conditional citizenships upon their subjects. Here, the two pieces for textual analysis are the films Yasmin (2004) and Brick Lane (2008), both of which depict South Asian women shown to be attempting to integrate into British society in the middle of 9/11

and the war on terror. The policy document used is The Casey Review (2016), a review into the state of integration and assimilation in Britain. Here, there is a sustained discussion of orientation, optics, and gaze when it comes to determining the systemic and symbolic violence of a state towards its Muslim citizens. Gaze theory is used to argue that Muslim citizens being viewed as enemy/alien/stranger/others is weaponized through particular understandings of where 'home' is located for citizens marked as Other – in this instance through my focus on South Asian Muslim women, but more broadly speaking, through the lived experiences of people of colour in Britain.

Part 2 of the thesis contains two chapters which both use non-traditional sources for textual analysis, and use trauma theory to consider the impact of being positioned as an enemy stranger on South Asian Muslim women. This section of the thesis begins with a consideration of the self as a South Asian Muslim woman, and ends with a consideration of how South Asians interact with Black Muslims, in order to examine movements of trauma and racism across communities of colour beyond speaking to or explaining ourselves to whiteness. This section is also concerned with formations of Islamophobia that do not centre whiteness and instead consider some of the different ways in which Muslims experience both Islam and Islamophobia. Both chapters include explicit methodology sections, unlike in Part 1, in order to reflect this move away from speaking to whiteness and instead towards generating creative and critical output that seeks to enact theoretical conversations through textual analysis.

Chapter 3 begins with a consideration of the gaps in conventional trauma theory in accounting for the experiences of Black and brown people, and instead turns to more contemporary forms of trauma theory which not only consider trauma beyond the battlefield but trauma beyond the West and within a globalised online culture. This prompts a consideration of designations of trauma and which kinds of people and communities can be thought of as possessing grief, trauma, sadness, and other kinds of emotional pain in relation to terrorist attacks. This discussion on models of trauma is bridged with a brief discourse analysis of Muslim memes on Twitter in order to interrogate the confluence of these discussions of trauma alongside jokes all on the same platform.

Next, the chapter turns to hauntology as a possible avenue of trauma theory amenable to discussing community grief in reaction to terrorist attacks. Ghosts are used to unseat linear notions of time, and to fuel an allegorical discussion of white supremacy in relation to the gaze theory present in haunting encounters. Ghosts are thus used as a metaphor that accounts for the absence of grief and community processing available to communities of South Asian Muslims, particularly in light of the earlier discussion of conditional citizenship and belonging. This section of the chapter is intended to draw parallels between non-linear time, ghostly hauntings, and manifestations of Islamophobia which are difficult to articulate, namely that of Muslims as presenting a threat to the state and thus deserving conditional citizenship. Finally, the chapter moves to more specific instances of policed grief through another discourse analysis of headlines from news organisations post-terror attack. This analysis reflects upon the conclusions of trauma theory reached earlier in the chapter and pays direct attention to figures of Muslims – be they Muslim women, potential male terrorists, and reacting politicians. The argument of this chapter revolves around Muslims in the public eye – the focus is less on specifically Muslim women, but speaks more broadly to the news media construction of Muslims and the cognitive dissonance that flowers from haunting figures who exist as human beings.

Until this point of the thesis each chapter considers South Asian Muslim communities, whilst Chapter 4 considers solidarity in anti-racist praxis within the context of shared Muslim communities amongst South Asians and Black Muslims. The chapter is about the limits of solidarity and is concerned with how discourses of Islamophobia and anti-racism might not lead to inclusive and welcoming spaces for the people they claim to represent. This discussion begins with a consideration of trauma that accounts for the notion of multi-directional trauma. That is, a consideration of South Asian Muslims being considered as signifiers of danger in a deeply traumatising manner, but also being capable of erasing Black Muslims from 'belonging' to Islam through anti-Black logics of colourism. This interaction forms the core of the chapter, and is intended to allow us to examine a complicating of both trauma and anti-racism as robust challenges to the limits of solidarity.

The chapter begins with a discussion of the term "politically Black" and considers both racial and religious mis/recognition in relation to how we understand individuals as belonging to a

race or religious community. The uses of unity in anti-racist praxis are considered and these conceptual discussions about Islam and anti-Blackness are explored in relation to a series of South Asian produced content. This allows for a discussion of anti-Blackness from the perspective of the researcher, myself, as a South Asian. The next section of the chapter then moves on to interpretive strategies as anti-racist praxis and examines examples of literature, music, and the Qur'an as examples of the multiple ways of seeing and consuming in textual analysis. The chapter concludes with a series of case studies which provide examples of social injustices involving Muslims and anti-Blackness as a manner of tying together the theoretical and conceptual discussions from the first couple of sections. The argument of this chapter is one which seeks to push the limitations of solidarity to a more expansive and inclusive definition, and to examine the multi-directional nature of trauma theory, gaze theory, and understandings of Islamophobia.

This thesis hopes to make connections across mediums that facilitate a contribution of knowledge that encompasses both intellect and feeling in order to allow for an interrogation of how South Asian Muslim women are made visible in popular and academic discourses. The themes of this introduction – conceptions of terrorism, efforts for anti-racist praxis, interrogations of knowledge production – underwrite the approaches and outcomes of this thesis and will continue to be explored in the main body of work. The effort of this thesis is geared towards better understanding the emotional and mental impact upon South Asian Muslim women to be pulled in different directions of representation and political motivation, and each of the chapters are threaded together with a consideration of more than an intellectual sense, but also an emotional sense.

Part 1

Chapter 1

Constructions of Statehood in Relation to Muslim Citizens as 'Enemies'

"There is a difference between knowledge of other peoples and other times that is the result of understanding, compassion, careful study and analysis for their own sakes, and on the other hand knowledge – if that is what it is – that is part of an overall campaign of self-affirmation, belligerency and outright war." – Edward Said, Orientalism (2003, p. xiv)

Looking East

9/11 has come to signify an extension of age-old Orientalism, with the so-called "war on terror" carrying expansive consequences for much of the world. The attacks themselves were a breach not only of geographical space and the murder of civilians, but were also received as a symbolic attack on American freedom and Western values more broadly. Arjun Appadurai argues that the "moral, punitive, and pedagogical quality to the attacks of 9/11 have led some observers to turn to Samuel Huntington's infamous model of the clash of civilisations" and that these attacks sparked the justification for "a new willingness to conduct extreme acts of war in the name of specific ideas of moral purity" (2006, p. 17). Much of the political discourse emerging from Western nations has depicted this 'war on terror' as a clash of civilisations[1], drawing from Samuel Huntington's flawed but influential work of the same name that warns of the destruction of Western values by diametrically opposed Muslims and 'Confucians' [sic] (1996). Huntington's claim saw a revival in popularity with post-9/11 rhetoric but many scholars and activists have challenged his thesis robustly[2]; indeed, Appadurai goes on to argue that Huntington ignores "the dialogues and debates within geographical regions" and "evacuates history from culture, leaving only geography" (2006, p. 115). The argument of the clash of civilisations flattens historical and cultural realities in favour of broad and sweeping generalisations that fail to accurately characterise the geopolitical landscapes both of the time and since.

Amongst the robust criticism of Huntington's work, Edward Said's piece entitled "The Clash of Ignorance" is particularly useful in capturing the thrust of the critiques:

> certainly neither Huntington nor [Bernard] Lewis has much time to spare for the internal
> dynamics and plurality of every civilization, or for the fact that the major contest in most

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[1] See Hamdani, Abbas. (2010). Is the War on Terrorism a Clash of Civilisations? Digest of Middle East Studies. 11:1, pp. 45-64; Kone, Aminata. (2013). America's Misguided 'War on Terror': Contrasting Samuel Huntington's Clash of Civilisations with Ibn Khaldun's Theory of Social Solidarity. Inquiries Journal. **5**:9

[2] See Salter, Mark. (2003). The Clash of Civilisations and the War on Terror(ists): An Imperialist Discourse. Global Dialogue. 5:½. Pp. 116-125; Naím, Moisés/ (2015). The Clash Within Civilizations. The Atlantic. [Online]. 1 July. [Accessed 7th May 2019]. Available from: https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/07/isis-clash-within-civilizations/397430/

modern cultures concerns the definition or interpretation of each culture, or for the unattractive possibility that a great deal of demagogy and downright ignorance is involved in presuming to speak for a whole religion or civilization (2001, para. 3).

As with Appadurai's apprehension of the clash of civilisations thesis, Said also critiques the lack of specificity and detail in the regions described: Huntington's thesis is a failure in apprehending both the broad scopes of geopolitical structures present in understanding vast regions and religions, in addition to its failure to account for the vastly varied functioning of Muslims, and indeed Westerners. Said goes on to label Huntington an "inelegant thinker" (para. 4) who fails to possess the "critical understanding of the bewildering interdependence of our time" (para. 15). I will go on to discuss the post-9/11 popularity of Huntington's thesis further, but it is important to begin with clarity in understanding The Clash of Civilisations as a text – it is not only a clumsy and ill-informed argument, but one which lacks the critical thinking necessary for useful discussion of inevitably complex definitions of the West and its perceived threats. Its renewed popularity is testament to the lure of Orientalist structures that enamour the West with its own power on geopolitical stages.

With this context in mind, we turn to Said's seminal 1978 work Orientalism (2003) which interrogates this very rhetoric and presents a powerful critique of the aforementioned binary opposition of Muslims of colour as the threat in an ideological conflict threatening the West. Said's definition of Orientalism reads as follows:

> Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient...without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage–and even produce–the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period (2003, p. 3).

The pressing weight of authority, or power, over the Orient is at the centre of Western approaches towards apprehension and domination of the East and its associated religions and cultures. Orientalism is a discourse which accounts for how the Occident, or the West, constructs itself in direct opposition to the East, as well as a framework for understanding the

relations of power which manifest over Western definitions of events like 9/11 which come to be seen as catastrophic and immutable in their total attack on Western values, beliefs, and strength of civilisation.

In a later discussion of values communicated through "textual attitudes," Said explains the need to pay attention to how and why texts, of any medium, put forward particular positions but also the "complex didactic of reinforcement by which the experiences of readers in reality are determined by what they have read" (2003, p. 94). Said argues that versions of reality are normalised through the repetition of ideas but also through a reader's choice of personal canon that irrevocably forms their understanding of 'truth' in any given topic. As such, "texts can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe" (2003, p. 94). Just as Huntington's thesis contributes to the corpus of texts covering Islam, Muslims, terrorism, and the West, so too do the wide variety of texts, be they literature, film, or otherwise, build a personal reality for each reader's encounter with such texts. It follows, then, that the repetition of concepts within genres build a particular kind of knowledge for readers with access to them; in other words, if a reader has access to novels that focus upon the experiences of ex-military turned security personnel in the Middle East, that would build a particular knowledge around the state of the Middle East, Islam, Muslims, terrorism, and the role of the West. Of course, critique and discourse have their role to play in this process but it is nevertheless the case that knowledge is no innate entity that exists in a vacuum (Sian, 2013 p. 72), but instead textual attitudes are communicated and contribute to constructions of reality that build up over time in order to present a version of truth.

With this in mind, I turn to Khaled Hosseini's novel A Thousand Splendid Suns (2007). Hosseini's text is part of an ever-growing subset of literature that seeks to represent Muslim women in majority Muslim countries. More specifically, these Muslim women are placed in a seemingly unending variety of horrific situations involving rape, torture, and often death. Hosseini's novel spent several weeks at the top of the New York Times Bestseller list and the context in which the novel was written – a post-9/11 setting which deals explicitly with the ramifications of the war on terror – is one which has since gripped the literary world. Mohan Ramanan examines precisely this phenomenon and begins with an acknowledgement that "terror is now part of our lives...if the world changed after 9/11, literature also changed"

(2010, pp. 125-126). Ramanan begins his study with 9/11 fiction from Don DeLillo, John Updike, and Ian McEwan before moving on to Mohsin Hamid and Khaled Hosseini, also with the context of Huntington's thesis in mind. Ramanan is careful to restrict the scope of his work to examining the ethics of representing traumatic aftermaths without supporting one type of representation over another, and concludes that "location and cultural identity determine the way representations of traumatic identity are done" (2010, p. 134). Ramanan is advocating for the specificities of cultural representation that Huntington was criticised for ignoring, and evidently the issues that arise in representations written and consumed by Western people looking East do so when these kind of novels depict a pattern of morbid writing about Muslim women where all roads appear to lead to pain and death. My engagement with A Thousand Splendid Suns is due in part to its huge popularity, but also its functioning as an excellent example of the entrapment of Muslim women in literary and physical dead ends. The novel is part of a larger pattern that constructs a particular knowledge and a particular reality that ostensibly centres Muslim women within their narratives, but also takes us apart culturally, ideologically, and socially. Its inclusion in this chapter, like Ramanan's work, is not to deal only in issues of representation but also to examine the process of textual attitudes communicating a set of values in relation to the perception of South Asian Muslim women as signifiers of various representations, rather than full human beings.

As the Introduction discussed, the sheer flood of writings concerning Muslim women requires a creative approach in order to be heard over the noise and I will therefore compare my close reading of the fiction with close reading of an altogether different medium. I will be discussing the current Conservative British government's counter-extremism strategy, Command Paper 9148 (Great Britain 2015). The policy document outlines the government's definition of extremism, suggests solutions and future goals, and demonstrates the ideological approach of the government in tackling their understanding of extremism. This particular policy document is useful in examining the policy definitions of what the government considers to be the problem of terrorism in Britain, and how definitions of central terms have been reached and applied.

The reasoning behind comparing these two texts is primarily to allow us to make connections between institutional movements of Islamophobia and their manifestations in cultural and social products. This is not to suggest that this process is linear or moves only in one direction, but rather that Islamophobia and Orientalism intersect across spaces. Not only are they discourses, as in the work of Stuart Hall (1992), they also cannot be characterised as one single concept only. Further, the eight year gap between the publication of both documents is a marker for the developing manifestations of Islamophobia over time: ATSS was published relatively soon after 9/11, whilst the policy document was published in 2015 and communicates a more recent version of Islamophobia that draws not only from the after effects of 9/11 but responds to other terrorist incidents, wars overseas, and increased securitisation at home in Britain. The backdrop of defining the influence of The Clash of Civilisations and Orientalism over time is one which will move forwards to interact with the texts; moving around time and through different spaces will allow the central discussion of Muslims, and specifically South Asian Muslim women, in Britain to be foregrounded within political, social, and cultural contexts.

Policy analysis as narrative deconstruction

Before we begin, then, a brief discussion on the use of policy analysis alongside fiction. Policy documents, generally speaking, operate with three main functions: firstly, they identify an issue to be addressed by the state; secondly, they consider actions to be taken for the public good; and finally, they outline actions to be taken by the government, and how these actions will be implemented. Such a structure is more of a tradition in politics and sociology than in literature or, at the very least, a more explicit structure that remains implicit in fiction and literary criticism. As much as the explicit structure of these disciplines appears to demarcate itself with a focus on methodology and praxis for policy, and more representational concerns in literature, it will become apparent that definitional and representational fields coalesce in both mediums. I also aim to demonstrate that literary analysis of a policy document in comparison with literary analysis of a novel can be a useful avenue in confronting the sheer size of post-9/11 discourse and allow for a number of avenues into the core discussion of South Asian Muslims in Britain.

A recent debate between policy analysis researchers has seen a move from empirical approaches to constructivism and critical realism. Mark Bevir isolates a moment from his work with R. A. W Rhodes that is particularly useful for practising traditional fiction analysis with a nonfiction methodology. Bevir and Rhodes move away from a tradition of empiricism and outline a framework they name "meaning holism" (2003, p. 184) as an alternative approach more attuned to social realities and the process of formulation of meaning, or as Said would say, textual attitude. Bevir states that "no proposition ever confronts the world in splendid isolation. Evidence only ever confronts overarching webs of belief, and even then the evidence is saturated by theories that are part of the relevant webs of belief" (2016, p. 188). For Bevir, the notion of states behaving as social agents cognizant of belief systems and cultural narratives is a concept central to good policy analysis. However, the centrality of context still does not account for the process and relative veracity of how any particular context is read into a text by the reader; there is no checklist of relevant contexts or absolute truths. For example, this chapter will read post-9/11 culture through the lens of postcolonial and decolonial feminism cognizant of Western colonialism and imperialism because it is a context relevant to anti-extremism legislation in terms of the historical status of Britain as an imperial and colonial power. That said, these contexts are read into the text based upon my expertise in the area, itself cultivated by my life experiences. Each text of any medium builds its own webs of belief, as Foucault (1980) would argue, and the acknowledgement of constructions of contextual knowledge and background allows analysis to begin at a collaborative and open standpoint, rather than closed, or belligerent, self-affirmation.

Stuart McAnulla extends these concerns by taking issue with the role agency plays in Bevir and Rhodes' conception of the self-reflexive praxis of policy makers themselves. McAnulla questions the apparent straightforwardness of their articulation of contextualised meaning, instead arguing that there is a distinction between how webs of belief are "in reality" and how individuals come to perceive those webs. For McAnulla, it is important to assert that whilst the agency of individuals (both in policy making and receiving) is fluid and subject to change based on context and history, it is limited by tradition and by the social responsibilities placed upon individuals (McAnulla 2006, p. 116). These constraints can be mitigated, according to McAnulla, through the inclusion of social structures in this model to acknowledge that both

entities are changed by the "impact of the external world on actors", itself a recognition of the fluctuating nature of personal belief systems (2006, p. 123). That context cannot be assumed to form the entirety of a "relevant web of belief" but, rather, questions the reception and dissemination of policy documents. In other words, as much as the contexts and influences behind political thought need to be foregrounded, McAnulla counters that a flexible position alive to developing contexts and impact upon social change on the part of both policy makers and policy readers is also vital.

However, McAnulla himself, in positing a separation between beliefs in reality and how individuals interpret that reality, betrays a troubling conceptualisation at the heart of his model of policy analysis. As Patricia Hill Collins states, "no one group has a clear angle of vision. No one group possesses the theory or methodology that allows it to discover the absolute 'truth'" (Collins 1990, p. 234). The relevance of Collins' work both in the Introduction and in this chapter is telling – Collins writes in a similar tradition to Said of questioning epistemological and ontological conventions that are repeated and solidified into fact or "truth" as both writers lead us to a reading that critiques McAnulla's deployment of agency as a clumsy articulation of the construction and formation on the part of readers of texts[3]. Implying that the "external world" is a discrete dimension which can be separated from the reader in turn implies that agency can also be switched on and off. The practice of paying attention to readers of policy documents is an important one, given that policy documents come from states for the ostensible good of citizens. Agency, however, is not the concern as much as awareness of knowledge formation is, and how subsequent value judgements equip agency.

In developing the relevant methodology or theory for policy analysis the issue is not sifting truthful reality from perceptions of reality. Rather, it is more an issue of acknowledging and ascertaining perceptions of culture, society and history and, as Bevir and Rhodes advocate, perceiving a sense of storytelling within policy analysis so as to better formulate a picture of the context of policy analysis, and how it is received or discussed within different time periods and contexts, similar in structure to literary analysis.

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[3] See Rorty, Richard. (1991). Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

This revised model impacts government policy analysis in that it acknowledges that specificity and nuances are vital for understanding the centrality of storytelling or narrativization to policy analysis. As Command Paper 9148 concerns preventative counter-terrorism measures that involve Muslim extremists, the context and history that I will have to be mindful of is one that many countries are experiencing at the moment. The constructed narrative I am reminded of is that of 9/11, 7/7, attacks in Madrid and Paris, wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya, US torture and illegal detainment in Abu Ghraib, and drone operations in Pakistan and Afghanistan. This list is neither comprehensive nor nuanced and paints a very crude picture in detailing this context. It also calls to mind oppositions of good and evil, and cause and effect, themes which, once again, Huntington deploys in his thesis which gained further popularity after 9/11 (Benhabib 2002). Having such a backdrop in mind allows us to, once again, begin at a point of analysis which is epistemologically alive to constructions of knowledge, and of the geopolitical impacts that pertain to the textual attitudes embedded in both the policy document and the fiction.

Juxtaposed Ideologies

The Counter Extremism Strategy (Great Britain. Home Office. 2015) policy document defines extremism from a governmental perspective and outlines relevant problems and solutions. Its publication came on the back of increased securitisation (Lander 2016, p. 274) following not only 9/11 and 7/7, but specifically in relation to the government's concern at the apparent increasing radicalisation of Muslims online, the rise of ISIS, and attacks on Britons abroad (Great Britain. Home Office. P. 10). However realistic, the government's apprehension of the potential threat to state and citizen is itself a statement of priorities for intervention. By its very nature, the policy document involves an assessment of the state's understanding of what extremism is, why it is a problem, and how it will protect itself from this threat. As such, any assessment of this nature is a political position which cannot claim neutrality.

Then-Prime Minister David Cameron and then-Home Secretary Theresa May introduce the document. Since the publication of the document, Theresa May has become the British Prime Minister, and in view of the following themes of increased securitisation and suspicion turned towards certain citizens it would be prudent to mention Theresa May's storied past with regressive immigration policies as both Home Secretary and Prime Minister. These involve, but are by no means limited to, a consistent support for the snoopers' charter which legislates surveillance of "suspicious" citizens; an Immigration Act designed to create, in her own words, "a hostile environment"; her embroilment with the Windrush scandal; her support for a denunciation of the Human Rights Act (Travis 2016). In other words, May has demonstrated a commitment to regressive policies which seek to differentiate between those who are full British citizens and those whose citizenship is stripped away in increments due to suspicion as to their loyalty to Britain.

The policy document begins by mentioning the centrality of "British values", with Cameron defining "distinct British values" as "the liberty we cherish, the rights we enjoy and the democratic institutions that help protect them" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 5). May includes "democracy, free speech, mutual respect, and opportunity for all" in these values (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 7). The phrase "British values" is repeated throughout and frequently used to justify the necessity for action in defence of these values. They establish a binary opposition with "extremism" as "the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 9). The pronoun "our" cements the binary and roots this conflict as one that is 'us' against 'them'. This notion is further underscored by the infrequent, yet powerful, assertion that British society is "successful" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 5) because it is a "diverse, multi-racial, multi-faith society" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 9). In positioning Britain as a successful pluralistic society invested in racial and religious diversity the document constructs British society as a utopia open to all, a utopia forced to defend itself from the scourge of extremism. Given that all of the above quotations fall under the heading of "Chapter 1 - The Threat from Extremism" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 9) the implication is that those individuals characterised as "extremists" would therefore be anti-diversity, anti-free-speech and anti-democracy. Cameron calls extremism a "poisonous ideology" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 5) whilst May vows to combat extremist ideology by "exposing it for the lie it is" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 7). At this

early juncture of the text, extremism is defined as contravening ostensibly British values of diversity, free speech, and democracy; to contravene these is to be positioned as an extremist and proponent of extremism itself as an ideology of transgressions.

The document does clarify that "our values are not exclusive to Britain...they have been shaped by our history...in which we have seen injustice, misery and damage caused by discrimination on the basis of religion, race, gender, disability or sexual orientation" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 9). This overly general assessment tumbles across various atrocities and injustices, and the use of the passive "we have seen" communicates the sense that any past injustices, whilst they shaped British values, were not perpetrated by Britain. In a parallel with the government's construction of reality, this particular narrative strand cements Britain's position of a passive victim of various injustices (implicitly a perpetrator of none) and upholder of values.

Meanwhile, A Thousand Splendid Suns is focalised through two protagonists, Mariam and Laila, two young women who come to be married to the same man, Rasheed – the narrative follows their lives from childhood to adulthood in Afghanistan. In a similar manner to the policy document, the novel also embeds ahistorical and reductive political stances into the text. For example, protagonist Laila's pointedly liberal father is constructed as a bookish and likeable intellectual. Whilst explaining the presence of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, he declares that whatever the ethnicities of fellow Afghanis "all that matters" is the fact that they are "all Afghans." (Hosseini 2007, p. 128). He is a mild-mannered individual, who is described as a "small man, with narrow shoulders and slim, delicate hands, almost like a woman's" (Hosseini 2007, p. 108). Babi represents the effeminately weak intellectual whose education has provided him with a favourable view of the West and a loyalty to Afghanistan curiously rooted in a flattening of political and cultural differences across the country. This is compounded by Babi's dream of moving his family to America because he believes American people to be "generous" and accommodating of multiculturalism (Hosseini 2007, p. 133). America represents a dream or utopia that can allow his family to flourish, and in a similar manner to the policy document, flattens a complex and storied history. In both instances, this flattening is a political choice of constructions of history that serve to convey a particular image of the statehood of Britain and America.

Meanwhile, Rasheed, Mariam's sadistic and altogether more 'traditional' husband, who is described as fat and brutish, demonstrates his lack of political knowledge by stating that the Soviets believe in "Karl Marxist" (Hosseini 2007, p. 97) and later that the Taliban are "pure and incorruptible…at least when they come, they will clean up this place" (Hosseini 2007, p. 267). The juxtaposition between the two characters of a more "modern" and educated man against an ignorant, "traditional" and abusive man is one which crudely uses these characters as outlets to reveal the political positioning of the text. Rasheed's mis-speaking of Marx and his belief in the Taliban foreshadows his brutish nature; he is not a cultured man, and his ignorance is tied to Laila's father as an enactment of "good" and "bad" binaries; Rasheed even explicitly ties these "modern men, intellectuals" as living in "the richer parts of Kabul" (Hosseini, 2007, p. 68). The character in favour of US intervention and America as a safe haven is a politically liberal and cultured man; the character in favour of the Taliban is pointedly an outspoken Muslim with an ignorance of political and social matters, poorer than the intellectual and altogether uncultured. Whilst the policy document ahistoricises Britain's past involvement with structures of discrimination, ATSS takes an insular view of global politics and paints Afghanistan as an occasionally homogenous nation under attack from the Soviets but liberated by a benevolent Western regime in the shape of the US army (2007, p. 148). Already, in both ATSS and the policy document, we can see the stage being set for a separation of "good" and "bad" citizens as inextricably tied to the support of the state under question.

The construction of British values holding fast against extremism as a threat to the state can be further elucidated by another favoured pattern in the policy document — the description of certain Muslim teachings as "ideology" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 10). When discussing "the harm extremism causes", the text states that "across the country there is evidence of extremists, driven by ideology, promoting or justifying actions which run directly contrary to our shared values" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 10). Notable again is the use of "our" – the fact of this being state policy is the only indication needed to remind us that an institution's use of "our" is always politically charged and defined by who is not included, as much as who is. This elision is further confused by the term "extremist ideology" which largely addresses what the document calls "Islamist extremism," and yet it is also states that

"extremism is not just Islamist. Extreme right-wing and neo-Nazi groups use their ideologies to drive a core hatred of minorities, or to promote Islamophobic or anti-semitic views" (Great Britain. Home Office, p. 22). The beginning of the sentence underscores the state's implicit position that extremism is primarily the domain of Muslims in terms of threatening free speech, democracy, and freedom. The inclusion of "Islamist extremism" in the same category as Islamophobia and the other hate crimes of anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism speaks to the deep-seated ineffectiveness of referring to extremism as an ideology. It is an epistemologically questionable decision to place Islamic extremism and racist, Islamophobic hate crimes in the same ideological grouping, to say nothing of placing neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism in the same group. To do so erases the vastly different societal functions of each, and it is thus impossible to provide solutions for them within a single category.

Instead, the document works to outline the concept of extremist ideology as a justification for turning suspicion upon Muslims irrespective of nationality. Gargi Bhattacharyya outlines how cultural difference is aligned with ideological difference and this, in turn, "is posited as the danger requiring the rational and justifiable response of state racism" (2008, p. 75). This is best evidenced by the document's reference to the Trojan Horse scandal, a conspiracy which claimed that Islamist thinkers were attempting to infiltrate schools in Birmingham – "children can be vulnerable to purposeful efforts by extremists to take control of their schools and create a space where extremist ideologies can be spread unchallenged" (Great Britain. Home Office, p. 26). Both this scandal and the Prevent policy document provide a framework for the ostensible prevention of the spread of extremist ideologies in various workplaces, including schools. The state's commitment to positioning Islam as an extremist ideology is one based upon potentiality, even to the extent that the surveillance and questioning of children is seen as a viable policy choice in order to protect the state. For example, Sian (2015) interviewed primary school teachers who had undertaken Prevent training and found that teachers had been instructed to look for 'suspicious' activity in young children such as "holidays to Pakistan," "making contraptions with shampoo bottles," and "having video cameras out all the time." (p. 191). Further, Farid Panjwani argues that " the underlying assumption of the whole Prevent strategy was (and is) that radicalisation was primarily an ideological issue, countering Islam...became the key measure against extremism" (2016, p. 330). For this policy document, which directly builds upon the work of Prevent, here the use

of "ideology" is a pointedly vague choice of word, implying a cohesive, overarching system whereby extremists are able to function and navigate against the equally vague, yet implausibly cohesive, British values. The phrase is intriguingly used again with the assertion that "there is a clear distinction between Islam — a religion followed peacefully by millions — and the ideology promoted by Islamist extremists" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 21). This rhetoric creates an opposition, between "values" and "ideology". "Values" is used in conjunction with phrases like "shared" and "community", implying togetherness and benefits for all. Here, "ideology" is altogether more sinister, implying dogmatism and a concerted effort to defeat these less threatening "values", a more benign word that is left to connote the associated implication of being an "extremist" Muslim. This implication is further heightened given that a distinction between "religion" as acceptable and "ideology" as a mutation of the former paints a narrative of harmless Muslim subjects and harmful Muslim subjects. The harmful Muslim has, then, been established in opposition to foundational British values and is thus marginalised within the text to occupy a linguistically and analytically menacing position.

ATSS also utilises binary oppositions in order to delineate the boundaries between acceptable political grandstanding, and unacceptable political allegiances. Babi, who is often used as a mouthpiece for desirable opinions, explains to a young Laila that Kabul is "relatively liberal and progressive" but regions closer to the Pakistani border "where men lived by ancient tribal laws" were far more treacherous for women (Hosseini 2007, p. 133). Here, the thinly-veiled implication is that Afghani politics can cohesively, and reductively, be separated into either educated and progressive, or tribal and misogynist. In presenting these views, once again, through mouthpieces masquerading as characters the narrative is locked into an overly-simplistic outlook that erases any possibility of a nuanced and historically open understanding of Afghani political and social spheres. This opposition once again draws lines between the values that can be considered to be safe and politically liberal, and those that are altogether more menacing. The question, of course, is menacing for whom? Just as the policy document assigns values to citizens that can be considered safe, versus those that are imbued with danger, so too does ATSS distinguish between the two.

The policy document and ATSS present the need for action as being rooted in the defence of fundamental values threatened by concerted effort from outside Others to destabilise the nation, with the bloc of Western countries positioned as benevolent and understanding saviours against the backwards, traditional and misogynist influence of Islam. Given this stark binary opposition it is little wonder that arguments like that in Huntington's Clash of Civilisations are so widespread and popular. In an interview before his death in 2008, Huntington reiterated his support for his clash of civilisations thesis post-9/11 and commented that "the central Western value going back centuries is individualism. That is the value that Asian societies have never really held very central" (2013, p. 47). As is often the case with Huntington, his sweeping generalisations flatten unfathomably complex social and cultural machinations, and his alignment of individualism with the West is an alignment rooted in the notion of the West as the seat of cultured, developed, and civilised principles (Sayyid 2014, pp. 101-104) in direct opposition to the implied mass mentality of the uncultured, undeveloped, and uncivilised Asians – which Asians precisely is left unclear. Huntington goes on to claim that "Osama bin Laden has declared war on Western civilisation, and in particular the United States. If the Muslim community to which bin Laden is appealing rallies to him, then it will become a clash of civilisations" (2013, p. 51). Huntington's own acknowledgement of the renewed popularity of his thesis post-9/11 opportunistically and without basis aligns his already inelegant and oversimplified thesis (Rizvi 2011, p. 228) to an increasingly tumultuous and complex political scene. The policy document in particular echoes Huntington's warnings of an oncoming clash, but both these texts convey an attitude that neatly, but carefully, positions certain citizens as good and safe, and other citizens as, at best, worthy of suspicion due to their political views and attitudes towards the West's right to power as a global entity.

When presented as the only option of analysis, the conflict of terrorism comes to be viewed as a wildly oversimplified clash of juxtaposed ideologies where, at least in these texts, the narrative constitutes an accurate description of reality. The history and context of Britain as a colonial and imperial nation that conquered a large proportion of the world is not a narrative strand conducive to the picture being painted either of Britain under attack or Britain's place in Western interventions. In presenting the binary of modern/traditional and, correspondingly, progressive/regressive as the only analytical framework available for depictions of Muslims

these texts work hard to reinvigorate theses like Huntington's that mark out which citizens are full and worthy citizens, and which are inching towards a status of enmity.

Good Muslims/Bad Muslims

The construction of restrictive oppositions is further exemplified by the repeated opposition of a marginalised voice gaining a mainstream reception. The text states that "a small number of strident extremists drown out the mainstream majority, both in person and online" and concludes "we're now going to actively encourage the reforming and moderate Muslim voices" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 31). Firstly, this calls to mind David Tyrer's analysis on the separation of moderate Muslims as somehow only a little bit Muslim, and 'extreme' Muslims as rather more dogmatic and conservative (2013, p.111) Once again, such rhetoric embeds the dichotomy of a helpless Muslim, who is therefore open to cooperation, versus a harmful Muslim, who is thus closed to the values of Britain and actively looking to attack these values. The relationship between isolated and marginalised voices gaining traction appears to involve a degree of cognitive dissonance, but the implication is clearly that the Internet acts as a great leveller, a platform bringing social reach to a small group. Leaving aside the complex endeavour of encouraging citizens to police other citizens, this policy recommendation is one which further entrenches the opposition of those who spy and those who are spied upon as objects of suspicion and potential threats to the state.

This opposition serves to support the government's proposed solution of recruiting the voices of "individuals and groups who have credibility and experience fighting extremism within their communities" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 31). This leaves no room for "moderate" Muslims who are not extremists but are still critical of government policy towards Muslims. This is a thorny and complex understanding of Islam that has long prevailed in post-9/11 rhetoric. The image of the moderate Muslim is imbricated within the assumption that "moderate" means "uncritical of the West" which signifies an individual that is deserving of the right to citizenship. The proposed solutions of the text are based on the principle of how the "government cannot do this alone" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 16) and encourages individuals to confront extremists online, in addition to calling for Internet companies to

restrict and censor platforms for extremism. As demonstrated earlier, the definitions for extremism and terrorism are under the purview of the government, along with the "credibility" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 31) of individuals who may confront online extremism. The dichotomy constructed around the role of British Muslims, then, is one which is centred not so much on the "government cannot do this alone," but rather on "you're either with us, or you are with the terrorists" (Bush 2001, para. 30). This positioning constitutes a stifling dichotomy that capitalises on a narrative of juxtaposition which in turn isolates "moderate'" Muslims further away from governmental acceptability.

Explicitly, the text claims that moderate Muslims are acceptable Muslims that can integrate seamlessly into British culture, but implicitly the text communicates a deeper mistrust of Islam and those who are deemed to fall outside of this category of Western-forward Islam. By definition, integration requires an outside entity that is incorporated into the "home" fold; if a citizen is outside of civilised society they cannot fully be thought of as a citizen, but as an enemy. The construction of terrorists, and implicitly Muslim terrorists, follows a pattern both within other government policies and within British media that portray Muslims as inherently malevolent and worthy of suspicion. The role of the media in constructions of Muslims as suspicious will be explored more extensively in Chapter Three, but for now, the link between the representation of Muslims and state-sanctioned violence against Muslims needs only the context of the past 15 or so years of conflict in order to be characterised as a structural system of oppression built on the actions of a minority.

Muslims in ATSS are also contorted in similar stiflingly binary conceptions. Mariam's mother Nana chooses to live in a hovel on the fringes of the village and Jalil, Mariam's estranged father occasionally visits, as does the local Imam to teach Mariam the Qur'an. Nana's parenting involves lies, emotional manipulation, blackmail and other forms of abuse. Nana is painted as entirely irredeemable to an almost cartoonish extent. Mariam is their illegitimate child and it would appear that Nana is the only person grieved by this – given that Jalil's other children live with him and are openly acknowledged, this is not entirely without basis. Nana refuses to allow Mariam to go to school because she insists that the only skill she will require is to "endure…it's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have" (Hosseini 2007, p. 17). Within the textual world, this is transparently manipulative and

outside the textual world this interaction is an explicit articulation of attitudes and perceptions of the humanity of Muslim women. Mariam is made an example of, unable to overcome the circumstances of her birth that involve not only poverty but also devoutly religious parents as an indicator of her lot in life: she cannot overcome the anti-Western insular values of her parents and this positions her as a tragic figure. As Jalil arrives to take Mariam to live with him, Nana cycles through transparently emotionally abusive tactics, telling Mariam in quick succession

> How dare you abandon me like this, you treacherous little harami...what a stupid girl you are! You think you matter to him, that you're wanted in his house...when I'm gone you'll have nothing. You'll have nothing. You are nothing!...I'll die if you go...don't leave me, Mariam jo...you know I love you (Hosseini 2007, p. 26-27).

Once Mariam does leave with Jalil, Nana is rarely mentioned as Mariam moves on to be emotionally abused by her father's family and later by her husband. Once again, within the context of the last 15 years of polarising ideological debates and increasingly entrenched stereotyping of Muslim men and women, this frequent alignment of Muslim characters with dogmatism and abusive behaviour is one that does not challenge or provoke a sprawling history of narrowly imagined preconceptions of Muslims. The sum total of stereotypical tropes in ATSS positions the construction of its protagonist, Mariam, as a choice wedded to restrictive binaries that cannot accurately capture the nuances of abusive family situations or conservative religious values. Whilst it is almost a certainty that women will be in abusive situations irrespective of being Muslim or not, the choice to tell this particular narrative in the context of post-9/11 and a particularly heightened interest in consuming narratives of backward Muslims is at best unoriginal and reductive, at worst actively harmful. ATSS is not about abusive relationships within family structures, and abuse is not explored as much as it is a vehicle for conveying a textual attitude about the world Hosseini builds, composed of binaristic and flattened Muslim characters.

Contemporary audiences have the background of botched Western intervention in Afghanistan, with the Taliban continuing to operate relatively freely, and Western military operations destabilising the region significantly. The, probably unintended, dramatic irony

conveys how ill-thought out the opinions of both liberal and conservative characters are. Rasheed, especially, is overjoyed at the rise to power of the Taliban and the subsequent list of things banned under the new rule – books, films, birds, singing, charming clothes, women speaking to men (Hosseini 2007, p. 270-271) – is decontextualized and depoliticized, thus appearing childish and superficial in their depiction of life under Taliban rule. It would appear that the intended effect of conveying the barbaric nature of conservative Islam and the radical Taliban is heavily undermined by the caricature-ish depictions of Mariam and Laila's life. The question 'who is this written for?' is at the heart of understanding why this novel has been so popular in the last fifteen years. The separation of Muslims into simple binary opposites, or at least Muslim men (given that Muslim women either use religion as a comfort in their harsh lives or demonstrate no religious agency), speaks to a white, Western audience enamoured with Orientalist portraitures of a backward, oppressive, and exotic religion.

This is further exemplified near the end of the novel, when once Laila and Tariq have escaped into Pakistan with their young children, the two parents watch 9/11 happen on a TV screen and immediately anticipate the subsequent incoming invasion from America (Hosseini 2007, p. 372). This serves to cast a pointed view of the rest of the novel as a justification for the Afghanistan invasion; after all, given the trials Mariam and Laila have suffered, and the compounded catastrophe of 9/11, how could America afford not to enact a civilising mission on Afghanistan? 9/11 is thus a central plot device for novels such as ATSS as they are primarily about 9/11 as a world-changing catastrophe which structures the lives of all Muslims. It is this same structure which underpins the policy document's separation of 'good' Muslims against 'bad' Muslims and the effect in both texts is the same – a separation of Muslims into symbols of acceptability (unwaveringly supportive of Western regimes, entirely open to any governmental policy) and unacceptability. For the policy document in particular, this tells us much about who the state considers to be a "good" citizen and troublingly leaves the heavy implication that the corresponding "bad" citizens are on the route to eroding their very citizenship, and constitute a threat to the state. ATSS' separation of good and bad Muslims operates in a similar manner, and the sum total of these representations is to comprehensively dehumanise Muslims and treat them as a cohesive group entirely defined by certain markers through time – the symbol of a woman in a veil, 9/11, the Taliban regime and

persistent stereotypes of barbaric backwardness, thus imbuing and marking some citizens as safe, and some citizens as dangerous.

Denouements

ISIL

ISIL is a terrorist organisation that is predominantly based in Syria and Iraq, but also has a presence outside of the region in the form of seven ISIL branches in Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the Khorasan (across the Afghanistan/Pakistan border), and the North Caucasus.

ISIL was preceded by the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), an Al Qa'ida (AQ) affiliated group established in 2006. Following the group's expansion into Syria and its consistent disobeying of orders from AQ's leadership, AQ issued a statement disowning ISIL in early 2014. In June 2014, ISIL spokesperson Abu Muhammad al-Adnani declared it had established an Islamic caliphate, with its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the self-proclaimed Caliph Ibrahim.

ISIL shares much of the ideology it inherited from AQ, centred around the formation and consolidation of an Islamic caliphate, although its brutality and indiscriminate killing of other Muslims distinguishes it. ISIL rejects the legitimacy of all other jihadi organisations and considers itself exclusive in its representation as the only legitimate religious authority.

ISIL's activity in the region and its professional media output have led to an unprecedented number of attacks carried out in its name, exporting the threat to countries with little or no history of terrorism, and inspiring groups to break former allegiances.

54. Extreme Islamists draw on the supposed incompatibility between liberal democracy and their interpretation of the Muslim faith to promote the idea of a "war on Islam" to create a "them and us" narrative and stoke division. Their ideology includes the uncompromising belief that people cannot be Muslim and British, and insists that those who do not agree with them are not true Muslims.

55. ISIL is a particularly grotesque manifestation of an extreme Islamist narrative, which seeks to impose a new Islamic state governed by a harsh interpretation of Shari'a as state law and totally rejects liberal values such as democracy, the rule of law and equality.

56. But extremism is not just Islamist. Extreme right-wing and neo-Nazi groups use their ideologies to drive a core hatred of minorities, or to promote Islamophobic or antisemitic views. These ideologies are typically based on the superiority of one racial and religious group to the detriment of all others. Such extremists often argue that Western civilization faces an impending "race war", or that a multicultural society will lead to "white genocide". These ideas are used to instil fear, in order to convince the white population that different races or religions threaten their way of life. A number of extreme right-wing and neo-Nazi groups operate in Britain, including Blood & Honour.

Figure 1 (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 22)

In keeping with the pattern of generalising statements, the policy document tackles thousands of years of Islamic history compressed into reductively small sections (see Figure 1) that cannot reasonably purport to represent what they claim. Instead, the reader is forced to deduce central issues, such as governmental definitions of Islamic extremism, the link

between Islamic history and contemporary Islam, and variations in Islamic beliefs amongst Muslims. This reductive and decontextualized approach to defining both Islam and Islamic extremism is best typified with regards to the Muslim British women mentioned in the text. The only instance of singling out a specific sub-group comes when Muslim women are mentioned, of course as a homogenous group with no attention paid to variances across race, ethnicity, class, or sexuality. When discussing the impact of ignoring both Islamic extremism and other forms of hate crime, Theresa May writes that the end result would be the erosion of "women's rights" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 7). By drawing this conclusion, May establishes a tendentious link between unopposed Islamic extremism as subsequently generating a loss of rights for women. This is repeated later with the same phrasing; fewer rights for women (assuming such rights are quantifiable) are tied to an increase of Islamic terrorism. The document constructs an image of terrorist figures as able to weaken the "social fabric of our country" because they hail from places where "women's rights are fundamentally eroded" and where "there is discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religious belief or sexual orientation" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 10). Such a suggestion contributes to a pernicious and widespread narrative of backwards, brown men subjugating brown women.

As Gayatri Spivak outlines in her seminal essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" this stereotype leaves a situation where "white men are saving brown women from brown men" (1994, p. 93). Brown men are further demonised in order to elevate the status of white saviours, thereby leaving brown women stranded in the middle as objects of oppression. Claims of oppression against women overseas are not contextualised amongst the intersecting oppressions women in Britain face; that particular failing is reserved for other, more suspicious, states. Tariq Amin Khan, whilst discussing the renewed vigour supplied to Western hegemony via Huntington's thesis, makes a connection between Orientalism and white supremacy – "while this article critically examines new Orientalism, xenophobia, and anti-Muslim racism, it is also attentive to the underlying trigger: white culturalism or nationalism" (2012, p. 1599). The use of Orientalism is not to be mistaken for a lack of attention to white supremacy; the two are symbiotic structures which contribute to accounts of Western interaction with both citizens and states that are 'Other.' Khan's description of incendiary racism from British media is a phrase which covers the rage and upset caused by

deployments of updated Orientalism and white supremacy (2012, p. 1602). The different junctures of time here – Huntington's thesis from 1996, references to 9/11 in 2001, the allusion to timeless oppression of women in the Orient, ATSS from 2007, and the policy document from 2015 – demonstrate the seemingly unending weight of time that generate incendiary rage. Such broad generalisations from the British government are a choice that deploys historical racism and xenophobia in order to characterise Muslims as Other, and thus enemy, citizens. These generalisations uproot linear understandings of time and narratives of history in order to propagate the ideals of Western freedom and Western democracy that the policy document in turn positions as specifically British; time is weaponised in order to protect a Western sense of civilisation and protection of the state against threat.

This is further exemplified by a chapter headed "The Extremist Threat" which posits that extremists "reject the very principle upon which democracy is based" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 7). It is this claim that precedes a section under the heading of "harmful and illegal cultural practices" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 13) where female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour-based violence are discussed. Public discourse on these three issues has historically aligned them as issues rife in Muslim communities and it is no coincidence that the section ends with the line, "we must tackle the root causes that mean certain communities continue to propagate such harmful practices" (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 13, my italics). Rather than explicitly addressing the harmful stereotype of these conditions as exclusive or widespread within Muslim communities, the text chooses to implicitly align the two, rather than exploring the existence of these highly complex and constantly evolving issues within the social context that they originate from. Once again, the text constructs a narrative of oppositions that positions the superiority of Western culture directly against a subordinate and backward Other, the Muslim woman.

ATSS actively engages in these stereotypes about women in the manner in which it constructs the narrative arcs of both Mariam and Laila. Here, the analysis requires an expansive view of narrative moments that affect Mariam in order to examine not only the representational impacts of her life but what they convey of textual attitudes in relation to Muslim women. After the death of her mother, she moves into her birth father's house, only for her stepmothers to arrange her marriage to a significantly older man – Rasheed. Initially, Rasheed

is nice to Mariam and allows her to explore Kabul by his side, albeit with the burkha that he insists she wears. As time goes on, Mariam fails to produce a son and has trouble with carrying pregnancies to full term, enraging Rasheed. He begins to isolate Mariam whilst physically and sexually abusing her.

Laila lives on the same street with her aforementioned liberal parents. Laila's brothers die whilst fighting against the Soviet invasion, which leads Laila's mother, a once happy and vivacious woman, to sink into a deep depression whilst Laila's father is forced to give up his job under the new Taliban regime. Laila's life is relatively pleasant, her flirtation and friendship with her neighbour Tariq a brief reprieve from her family's desire for her to finish her education as best she can during widespread political and social unrest. When a bomb blast kills both her parents (just as they are about to leave for America), Laila finds herself taken in by Rasheed, who has designs on marrying her. Laila agrees to the marriage and soon gives birth to a daughter, and later a son.

These plot lines represent about two thirds of the novel and continue the pervasive theme of binary oppositions structuring how women are represented, as well as men. For instance, Mariam is uneducated; Laila is educated, Mariam is religious; Laila is not shown to be religious; Mariam is hardened with abuse from almost every person in her life; Laila has had a pleasant life until she too is passed around between males, Mariam is naïve; Laila is resourceful and intelligent. Mariam thereby represents the uneducated, simple, devout Muslim girl whilst Laila represents the intelligent and vivacious girl from a Muslim family, and, as the last third of the novel unfolds, they both find themselves entirely at the mercy of Rasheed's misogynistic and abusive behaviour.

Hosseini's choice to tell these particular storylines – forced marriage, forced veiling, a general lack of agency on the part of women – confirms the existence of the "harmful cultural practices" noted in the policy document. Their inclusion in the novel points to some kind of basis in fact about the 'nature' of Orientalist countries, and this inclusion also speaks for the book's popularity (Ahmad 2006) – it cannot be mere coincidence that a novel which appears to confirm the stereotypes about oppressed Muslim women and brutish Muslim men tops bestseller lists around the West which looks to categorise and dominate the Muslim Other.

Gargi Bhattacharyya points out that the linking of these aforementioned "harmful cultural practices" with justification for anti-immigration agendas as one which both "compromises the effectiveness of initiatives against forced marriage" and "also confirms suspicions that even long-settled communities continue to be regarded as problematic immigrants" (2009, p. 22). What Bhattacharyya describes here is the impact of categorising "Other" cultures as homogeneously dangerous or harmful – not only are communities stigmatised, but they are institutionally isolated and remain positioned as separate, backward, and regressive, irrespective of the amount of time spent in the West. We can see, therefore, that portrayals like Hosseini's are positioned as authoritative and revealing an innate truth of communities of immigrants which, as Said argued at the beginning of the chapter, tell us more about Western values than Muslim cultural practices.

The use of Muslim women as a litmus test for the rate of civilisation in non-Western states is repeated time and again in the novel, and focusing on the narrative denouements of both Laila and Mariam reveals much about the novel's political alignments. Laila is inexplicably reunited with her ex-boyfriend, whom she thought to be dead but in actual fact survived the events of the narrative. In representational terms it is no coincidence that Tariq survived, as his politics and upbringing provide a stark counter-narrative to Rasheed's conservative political and social values. Tariq, meanwhile, had an upbringing similar to Laila's – not explicitly religious and recognisably liberal to a Western audience (premarital sex, playfulness, easy-going parents and the pointed absence of religious pressures from family).

Laila's narrative concludes with her moving to Pakistan with Tariq and her children, finally free from Rasheed. She has the choice to recognise that she would one day like to move back to Afghanistan, which she still considers her home, and the implication of a change in state politics precipitating the move is implicit. Mariam, meanwhile, remains back in Afghanistan in order to wait for the narrative denouement due her by the narrative constraints of her conservative Muslim family. Both Mariam and Laila come to resent Rasheed's treatment of them and the two decide to sneak away from him, and upon this discovery Rasheed begins to beat Laila who is aided by Mariam. The two women murder him and Mariam decides to give herself up to the police in order to allow Laila and her children to move away, in spite of Laila's insistence that Mariam travel with them. This ending suggests ATSS is a novel about

abusive partners and the trials of women who attempt to escape, but given the restrictive and flattening writing choices Hosseini takes in subjecting female characters to abuse at the hands of brown and religiously conservative men, it is instead a novel that depicts a post-9/11 terrain which retrospectively justifies the war on terror. The subjugation of these women is so torturous and horrific that the United States can only be justified in invading Afghanistan not only to protect its own citizens, but also to protect women abroad like Mariam and Laila.

Mariam's death

After Rasheed's death, Mariam is left to the mercy of the Islamic court of law that the Taliban have established in Afghanistan. What follows is a harrowing sequence of scenes that drive home the horror, not only of what becomes of Mariam, but also of the symbolic and representational effect of who she is and what can be imagined for people like her. As she is led to the stadium where she is due to die, she thinks "though there had been moments of beauty in it, Mariam knew that life for the most part had been unkind to her. But as she walked the final twenty paces, she could not help but wish for more of it" (Hosseini 2007, p. 360). A paragraph later, as Mariam finishes reflecting on what she would like to do with more time, she realises: "Mariam wished for so much in those final moments. Yet as she closed her eyes, it was not regret any longer but a sensation of abundant peace that washed over her" (Hosseini 2007, p. 360). It is difficult to believe that just as Mariam's life began to incorporate a better future and hope of being away from the abusive men in her life, that she would be so willing to die. Her life has constituted abuse at the hands of various protectors and guardians, a series of unrelenting pain and trauma. It is absurd to think of her as reaching any kind of peace before being slaughtered in a stadium. Concurrently, the indication of peace speaks to the intellectual and emotional voids at work in the novel that are a necessary presence in order to make an example of Mariam and women like her. To have her die at the end of the novel, whilst her cultured and liberal version escapes, is to herald the death of women like Mariam who are abused and traumatised as inevitable and palatable to some degree. Spivak argues that "the figure of the woman, moving from clan to clan and family to family as daughter/sister and wife/mother, syntaxes patriarchal continuity even as she is

herself drained of proper identity" (1996, p. 231). Mariam as a character has no identity, other than a vessel for suffering under specifically brown patriarchy.

In sacrificing her life to allow Laila to escape with her children, Mariam's last act is the only one relatively of her own volition, as the final line of the chapter concludes:

> "Kneel," the Talib said.
> O my lord! Forgive and have mercy, for you are the best of the merciful ones.
> "Kneel here, hamshira. And look down."
> One last time, Mariam did as she was told (Hosseini 2007, p. 361).

Until this point, Mariam's life has been a series of increasingly harrowing abuses as she is shunted from man to man entirely at the mercy of others. In representational terms she is a symbol for oppressed, Muslim women - a symbol that is notably constructed on the basis of the person who is looking. Mariam's apparent choice to die by giving herself up to the Taliban only goes so far as to elevate her status of symbol to sacrificial symbol. Earlier in the novel, Laila is said to marvel at what both her own body and Mariam's have been through – "Laila never would have believed that a human body could withstand this much beating, this viciously, this regularly, and keep functioning" (Hosseini 2007, p. 315). This stands starkly against one of the final descriptions of Mariam's death, where Hosseini writes that "Mariam is in Laila's own heart, where she shines with the bursting radiance of a thousand suns" (2007, p. 401). Mariam, especially, is abused physically, sexually, and emotionally throughout her life and Laila's brief recognition of this is one of the few moments where the novel lingers upon this abuse. To position Mariam's death as one that could in any way be peaceful or reminiscent of a thousand suns is to ignore the materiality of abuse and torture over a lifetime; it is a political choice to carefully place aside the devastation and patriarchal structures which destroyed Mariam's life, and instead to linger upon a cleansing metaphor which, again, flattens the realities of Mariam's existence. Even in death, her pain is treated as immaterial and becomes a moralising, yet tragic, story of hope; this tragedy closes off other possible imaginations for her character, and leave us with a single story.

The policy document, on the other hand, achieves the same dehumanisation through a previously discussed tactic - whilst concluding with a desire for a cohesive community, the text claims that isolation from a wider community is a major root cause of radicalisation and that such isolation breeds "values" which can take hold and promote

> behaviour which is deeply discriminatory to women and girls, such as limiting equal access to education, justice, and employment, thereby creating an environment where a range of illegal cultural practices including so-called Honour-Based Violence, FGM [female genital mutilation) and Forced Marriage are perpetuated (Great Britain. Home Office. p. 37).

The attitude conveyed within the text, then, is one which positions the historical and social background of Muslim culture to be one which is inherently opposed to rights for women, and, if allowed to spiral from a belief into an ideology, will bring its misogyny into Western cultures. Indeed, Spivak continues that the subaltern woman as a symbol constitutes the "repeated emptying of her meaning as instrument" (1996, p. 231). Spivak's framing of brown women as empty vessels resonates with Bhattacharyya's earlier argument about the role of culture and ideology as markers of difference which spell out a justification on the part of the West to continue regressive state policies. Both Spivak and Bhattacharyya identify the limitations of womanhood in relation to Muslim women, wherein the West's encounter with such women is first and foremost with women as empty symbols ready and waiting to serve as the bodily battlegrounds for manipulations of cultural and ideological understandings of the West, and of Islam.

In order to further understand these two moments, of Mariam's sacrificial death and of the policy document's apparent concern for people like Mariam, I will turn to Jasbir Puar's model of US exceptionalism which builds upon Spivak and Bhattacharyya's articulation of the position of brown women in relation to larger systems of political policy and rhetoric. Puar describes "US sexual exceptionalism" (2007, p. 2) as a strategy that consolidates the nation's self-ordained position as a liberated and liberating global power. Puar uses the optics of queer theory to elaborate upon the US using the appearance of liberalism to advance the rhetoric of a civilised and liberated West against a sexually-repressed and oppressive (particularly

towards women) Muslim world in the East (2007, p. 39). Bhattacharyya, meanwhile, also uses the frame of "sex as freedom" (2008, p. 16) to examine how "the War on Terror is a deeply sexualised endeavour" (2008, p. 12). It is no surprise that both Puar and Bhattacharyya's work is concerned with the intricacies of masculinity and femininity mapped onto the war on terror as useful tools for examining values and ideals in terrorism studies. Whilst both writers apply their respective approaches to sexual torture at Abu Ghraib and the media coverage of the events, they also provide an interesting context to this policy document framing British values as being under attack from a Muslim threat. This particular policy document, and indeed British foreign policy, has demonstrated a proclivity for constructing an opposition of explicitly progressive, even utopic, British values against an implicitly regressive and overtly oppressive culture of Islam in the East. As Puar argues in her work, American, and in this case British, formations of identity and self-knowledge are predicated on the construction, and often denigration, of the Other (2007, p. 41). It is politically, socially and culturally desirable to engender a clash based on conflicting ideology, rather than confronting alternative historical narratives. Bhattacharyya also states that

> the associative chain linking terrorism, extremism, the repression of women, and minority cultures has proved more influential in this process than any number of dubious reports about weapons of mass destruction (35-36).

The accusation of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq is now widely regarded as a false flag operation (Duelfer & Dyson 2011; Kull, Ramsay & Lewis 2003) on the part of the US and its allies, and it is inescapable that the linking Bhattacharyya describes mirrors the textual attitudes Said outlines at the beginning of this chapter, as well as Bhattacharyya's own understanding of truth as that which is repeated often (see: Introduction). The strategy of the US and its allies in the war on terror to link together terrorism with Islam, extremism with Islam, the repression of women with Islam, is a strategy which works to position women as the symbolic nexus of the barbarism of the Islamic world.

Thus, it is not a notable innovation that Muslim women are paid particular attention from the likes of Hosseini. Indeed, women are positioned as a litmus test for a successful society and come to symbolise a conflict that has often used the image of Muslim women in various veils

as synonymous with oppression and an indication of a backward community. Ultimately, the policy document reveals a position of British superiority and, it can be assumed, Britain as a haven of equal rights for women in direct opposition to the apparent barbarism of Islamic culture, or, as the text would name it, Islamic ideology. The text utilises a foundation of historical oppositions based on 'clashes of culture' in order to engineer a further ideological conflict where mounting a defence (and, indeed, definition) of "our" values is only conceivable within the arena of ideological conflict. Women, then, become puppets of discourse that are used to signify the space between warring ideologies, both as individuals and as a group. In other words, in both texts women become symbols that can be manipulated for political and cultural manoeuvring. As Spivak argues, women are emptied out in order to fulfil their use as instruments, but also as instruments which equip states to exercise exceptionalism that sustains incendiary racism and white supremacy through the guise of ideological conflicts.

Puar builds a notion of US exceptionalism by explaining that:

> discourses of American exceptionalism are embedded in the history of US nation-state formation, from early immigration narratives to cold war narratives to the rise of the age of terrorism. These narratives about the centrality of exceptionalism to the formation of the United States imply that doctrination à la exceptionalism is part of the disciplining of the American citizen (2007, p.5).

Given Britain's recent histories of colonisation and imperialism, and the contemporary neo-colonial imperialism of both Britain and the United States, Puar's outline applies to both states. The war on terror and the subsequent manifestation of post-9/11 environments, as depicted in ATSS and Command Paper 9148, have seen the impetus of ideological conflict added to the discourses of power which determine citizens that are supportive of state policies and therefore invested in state security, the good citizens. Meanwhile, citizens who are marked by skin colour and religion and thus harbour the capacity for ideological distance from Western civilization who would see the state come to harm, are the bad citizens, or, enemies of the state. It is these same states which define their power through the exceptionalism Puar describes, and weaponise Muslim women on the battlefield of

ideological conflict using the same self-defining principles outlined in Said's *Orientalism*. The stripping away of citizenship is no euphemism or analytical tool; the policy document explicitly states that :

> We will strengthen the 'good character' requirement in citizenship applications to include whether a individual has promoted extremist views, or acted in a way which undermines our values. In our review we will also consider who should be automatically entitled to citizenship and how we can more easily revoke citizenship from those who reject our values (Great Britain. Home Office. P. 47).

The ability to erode or remove citizenship dependant upon the complex and highly charged machinations of British values speaks to the narrative work carried out in ATSS which works to justify Western intervention and both texts centralise civilising missions as core to their functional principles. Both texts portray authoritarian and fascist ideals which seek to implement and control conditions for citizenship and civil liberties.

Interlude

"The chain of complicity does not halt at the closure of an essay." - Gayatri C. Spivak (1996, p. 232)

Values

Whilst the introduction to this thesis articulated the motivations for this piece of research as driven by an investment in alternative systems of knowledge, I have found the inclusion of interludes to be central to exploring these concerns and to reflect on the methods and conclusions of chapters. Indeed, it feels freeing to do so explicitly outside the structure of a chapter that is beholden to the construction of a cohesive argument; this is instead a collection of ideas that reflect upon the experience of writing the preceding chapter, and my role as a researcher.

The conclusion of Chapter 1 saw Jasbir Puar's work used to explore citizenship and enmity within state power formations, and I again turn to Puar for a definition of intersectionality which involves the use of "imbricated identities" (2007, p. 204) as a marker of the palimpsestic nature of intersectional formations of identity categories in order to examine how various intersections are enacted as both a researcher and a citizen. As an individual, race has often played the first and most explicit role in interactions, but as is often the case with intersectional understandings of the self, there are myriad elements of identity that can be considered. During the first half of my four year thesis experience, I often found myself returning to this particular definition of intersectionality and attempting to explicitly write myself into my work. In fact, an earlier version of this interlude contained an explanation and list of identity categories which I considered pertinent to my work and sense of self. During the second half of my research, however, I am altogether more reticent to include such a list; I find it increasingly questionable how exactly this enhances my work or the reading experience of this project. Over the course of several conversations with women of colour I consider friends and colleagues I have explored ideas of the evolving use of intersectionality and the confessional style often adopted, for better or worse, by academics who are women of colour. The list of identity categories in particular felt, at the time, to be something I must include in order for my work to be read in the "right" context. That is, in the context which I imagined to be pertinent to my study. Over time, this impulse felt more like the yearning to be seen as a person, and as this thesis will explore in the coming chapters, this yearning requires looking back at the oncoming gaze in order to examine motivation and impact.

What does feel pertinent at this stage is to discuss how my investment in my research is deeply tied to my own sense of identity. As much as I believe that labelling can be a restrictive process, especially given that the predominant manner of approaching labelling is entrenched in Western cisnormative, heteronormative and white supremacist loci of understanding, it is still a form of communication that impacts how we operate with one another. I have, irrespective of intention, written myself both into and outside of my PhD. I have written myself into it because it is about people like me (as well as people unlike me who still share some common ground), and because my association with it swirls into my own sense of self as researcher and as a person. I find myself written out of it by the arms of academia which work to preserve a canon-based, Western, white, male hierarchy that emphatically and actively devalues the strength of personal experience in academic research.

It has taken me a long time to get to the stage where I am able to write about issues that could possibly be connected to my identity. If, as Zora Neale Hurston said, "I feel most coloured when I am thrown against a sharp white background" (2015, p. 9), the white background and white logic of academia is a pernicious system built to accommodate white bodies and white thoughts. Actually starting a PhD in areas that are intrinsically enveloped in working against white principles (yet mired in useless white dominance) - terrorism studies, races studies, intersectionality, feminist studies - has been a struggle. I think part of the reason for that has been, as the things I've talked about so far have shown, is that my work is so tied up in my sense of self that the emotional aspect of my research is quite paralysing. It's far too big for me to be able to turn it into something productive, into something that is legible to my white and non-Muslim supervisors and institutions. To cut a long and difficult story short, this process has often been a living nightmare.

Researching terrorism

Chapter 1 involved a joint analysis of Khalid Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns and Command Paper 9148 issued by the British Home Office in order to define and tackle extremism in Britain. The use of a policy document was a difficult reading and writing

process because, as mentioned above, the subject of this text is no hypothetical; the definitions and recommendations provided by the government spoke of me as a Muslim, they spoke of my family and loved ones, and the environments I have grown up in. This reading was often completed alongside colleagues working on their own PhD projects with a greater sense of detachment from their subjects. The contexts of reading this text often produced extremely emotional and traumatising reactions throughout the process of writing.

The same can be said of my experience with A Thousand Splendid Suns, a novel I first read as a 15 year old which represented my first encounter with a character of the same name, Mariam. The protagonists of the text, Mariam and Laila, are emotionally abused, raped, physically abused, gaslighted, and live inexplicably torturous lives throughout the narrative. Having to read this and produce something has been incredibly difficult; both these texts often induced terrifying bouts of anxiety and deep depression. This is yet another context which I wish to preserve in the reading of Chapter 1. It feels disingenuous to the reading process to fail to mention it, precisely because I have such a tie to my own research. I do not wish to use my academic work as a tool with which to tear myself apart in the name of academic knowledge production. It feels altogether more useful and affirming to have it acknowledged that when researching marginalised communities one belongs to alters basic processes of thinking, reading, writing, and editing. This process has been far from smooth, and it would be a disservice to the arguments of the chapter to presume the conclusions easy or smooth.

Being read

So, we turn to questions about how such deeply personal work will be read, received, and disseminated. Whilst I still feel, through the course of writing and speaking this paper that there is nothing I can do to show you how deeply the experience of trying to write about this novel has affected me, in a similar manner to how I cannot communicate the totality of my identity politics to you. And I don't need to. I can't control how my writing will be received in terms of identity politics and, really, that's not my concern. I think the anxiety around inserting personal experiences and emotional labour in academic work revolves around how it

will be read, and whilst it's a difficult thing to remember: you cannot control how people will receive the work that you have put yourself into, and it is not your responsibility to do so.

To try and unpack that idea a little bit I want to talk about Sara Ahmed's Strange Encounters where, in the penultimate chapter, she carries out an exercise of reading where she encourages herself, in the position of reader, to demonstrate the affective impact of reading and encountering an other ethically. In one particular moment Ahmed describes the "conditions of possibility" necessary for any encounter:

> Rather than thinking of gender and race as something that this other has (which would thematise this other as always gendered and racialised in a certain way), we can consider how such differences are determined at the level of the encounter, insofar as the immediacy of the face to face is affected by broader social processes, that also operate elsewhere (2000, p. 145).

Ahmed's model of careful reading/encountering is built on the principle of taking in not only the text in front of you but also the "conditions of possibility" that have led you to the text. Before beginning either of the texts and only having researched them, I bring my own political alignments and investments in intersectional feminism, postcolonial and decolonial narratives, and my expertise in understanding a post-9/11 environment that fetishises and hypervisiblises narratives of Muslim victimhood, and Muslim women specifically. Before I even opened the novel I was already wary of white saviour complexes that look to paint brown Muslim women as projects to be saved from their innate oppression, as convenient vessels of symbology that define Westerners as infinitely more civilised than their Eastern counterparts.

I found the process of writing so traumatising precisely because of the fact that being outside of my brain opened it up to reception, critique and most importantly encounter with those who are not willing or able to consume it along with my identity politics and contexts. In researching the intersections of my own communities I have, however unwittingly, put myself in a position where I am to be consumed. Western academia presumes it can consume the entirety of a text; we are taught to "understand" and to interpret in such a way that totality and

wholeness and cohesiveness signify good academic practice. Instead, I am coming to realise that such a form of teaching and encountering is not conducive to work that aims to decolonise (and to a larger extent, question the system that built it).

In positioning something as "understandable" it is also placed as "consumable." Instead, it may well be a more ethical and more realistic reading to encounter textual interpretations as a process which points out certain threads of analysis and no more. You do not have to pretend to consume it in its entirety and churn out a seemingly cohesive and totalizing analysis for it to be valuable. Ahmed's model is one which works to force a confrontation of the economy of consumability - in other words, to force you to choke on your interpretation. My position as a Westerner working in a Western academic institution enables me to encounter Ahmed in the first instance; this model is, after all, only available to me because of my conditions of possibility that carry me towards such a reading. In other words, my response to the text.

Ethics beyond whiteness

I spoke before about how you cannot control the way in which you are received. That's something I believe in, but concurrently, the work I'm doing is occurring in order to fulfill the requirements of a PhD. It is a historical convention that academic institutions do not value personal experiences within academic work, as this would fly in the face of the in-built model of Western epistemology, namely, objectivism.

Personally, I do not feel it would be ethically or morally viable to present any analysis I have of governmental policy concerning Muslims or any critique of A Thousand Splendid Suns without foregrounding my own conditions of possibility and demonstrating the difficulties of interpretation, analysis and writing. I need it to be known that my conditions of existence enable me not only to work within this institution but also to complicate understandings of how I see and how I am seen. It could be that this process happens without academic institutions appreciating it, but let us be realistic – that has long been the case for non-white academics whose work has persisted.

A Thousand Splendid Suns has deep significance for my conceptions of Muslim women as represented in media and for its looming significance for my PhD. To pretend that the process of analysis has been easy is to do a disservice to the wider context of postcolonial and intersectional feminism; the very fact of being difficult work is the conclusion of my study.

I could not get A Thousand Splendid Suns out of my brain because of the hostile encounters that I imagined were waiting, the very hostile encounters that created the conditions of possibility for such a text to enjoy weeks at the top of bestseller lists around the West. I feel that it would not be an ethical encounter for me to disregard the emotions, and the logic of those emotions, in the final version of my writing.

I'm reminded of Ahmed's work again as she goes on to state that:

> The possibility of something giving - not me or you - but something giving in the very encounter between a 'me' and a 'you,' begins only with a recognition of the debts that are already accrued and which assimilate bodies, already recognised as strange or familiar, into economies of difference. But the question remains, how can we encounter an other in such a way, in a better way, that allows something to give? (2000, p. 154)

Within the politics of interpretation, of decoloniality, of intersectionality, is the question of why you are doing your research. When you're trying to write something that has derailed your mental health with disturbing regularity, the question of "why" is one that overtakes the ability to enact "how". I can't say that I can answer that question when it comes to my research, but I can say that the skill - and it is most certainly something that you must work on and develop - of performing giving research is one that is anchored in not losing yourself, in not being the thing that gives or breaks.

Part 1

Chapter 2

British Muslims as Alien Enemies: Degradation of Citizenship in State Necropolitics

"Whether read from the perspective of slavery or of colonial occupation, death and freedom are irrevocably interwoven" (Achille Mbembe 2001, p. 38)

The self meets the other

State formation and perpetuation are imbricated in the classification of citizens within the institutional framework; it is impossible to separate out the two given that citizens constitute the state, and the state constitutes citizens[4]. For British Muslims, the weighted history of immigration and Empire is a history which forms the realities for conditional citizenship and is fraught with social, political, and cultural landscapes that revolve around a self meeting the other; the centre looking out; facing what is approaching the state.

Sara Ahmed treats the Orient as an object that is to be faced, and in doing so deconstructs the process of state formation in the West. She states:

> The Orient is reachable, after all. It is already on the horizon; it has already been perceived as the Orient. The Orient is not only reachable, but "it" has already been reached if "it" is to be available as an object of perception in the first place...the object function of the Orient, then, is not simply a sign of the presence of the West– of where it "finds its way"–but also a measure of how the West has "directed" its time, energy, and resources (2000, p. 117).

Here, 'reachable' indicates the ability to grasp something, be it knowledge or more tangible materials. For the Orient to be reachable, it must be grasped at, or at the very least faced, by the grasper – the West. Ahmed goes on to argue that "we can begin here to rethink how groups are formed out of shared direction. To put this in simple terms, a "we" emerges as an effect of a shared direction toward an object" (2000, p. 119). Not only does the West define itself against the Orient, but, through repetition, it has positioned itself as capable of holding the Orient, of grasping it, naming it, and being the lens through which it is viewed. The centring of Western epistemology is what Ahmed has described, and as she states, "the object

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[4] As the terms "citizen" and "citizenship are contested, their inclusion here is influenced by Walter Mignolo's work on "the hidden connections between the figure of the citizen, the coloniality of being, and the coloniality of knowledge" (2006, p.312) which outlines how conditions of citizenship still rely upon hierarchies of racialization stemming from colonial logics. See: Mignolo, Walter. (2006). Citizenship, Knowledge, and the Limits of Humanity. American Literary History. 18:2, pp. 312-331.

"in front" of the "we" might be better described as "behind" it, as what allows the "we" to emerge" (2000, p. 119). She further elaborates:

> objects become objects only as an effect of the repetition of this tending "toward" them, which produces the subject as that which the world is "around." The orient is then "orientated;" it is reachable as an object given how the world takes shape "around" certain bodies (2000, p. 120).

Ahmed has demonstrated that she has positioned an 'object' as that which can be faced, irrespective of materiality, and the 'subject' as the one which does the facing. Said's corpus of works makes it clear that the West defines itself against the Orient, and Ahmed's work is useful in delineating the process of object and subject formation; critical race scholarship has often turned to the concept of "the Other" in describing the savage, the immigrant, the refugee (Chow 1993; Bhabha 1994; Spivak 1996; Mohanty 2003). In a discussion focused upon the limits of citizenship such a formation reveals much about those who look and reach to grasp, to control, to possess the Orient, and those who are said to be grasped. In other words, the position of British Muslims in representational and political terms is a depiction and application of understanding not only rooted in Orientalism but also one that constructs them as beings that are graspable and able to be faced in control and classification.

Jasbir Puar's work on exceptionalism paints a fuller picture of the Western states under discussion here, and Puar also contends that single-axis analysis of subjecthood is doomed to failure, but also expresses concern at the "taken-for-granted presence of the subject and its permutations of content and form, rather than an investigation of the predominance of subjecthood itself" (2007, p. 206). This introduces a much-needed element of caution to discourse on subjects, objects, and the liminal space between the two as this has often led to subject construction being placed as a term denoting lack of agency. In other words, the subjecthood implicit in denotations of enemy, stranger, Other, are rhetorical devices intended for discourse, rather than explorations of the lived experiences of said subjects. It would be a mistake to assume that subject and object divisions can be drawn clearly or comprehensively as wholly indicative of the totality of experiences of those that are written about. Interestingly, Puar also goes on to quote Rey Chow in articulating the difference between

subject and object as "between those who theorize and those who are theorized about" (2007, p. 25). This is an apt reminder of the dominance of whiteness both historically and in contemporary academia, a critique that needs to be ever-present if understandings of objecthood and subjecthood are to take stock of the context of race and intersectionality. It is analytically useful to consider the role of subjects and objects in the pattern of Western states and citizens looking to the Orient both geographically and at those that are marked as signifiers of the Orient, irrespective of location. The questions this chapter is interested in answering are: how does state power cohere itself onto the bodies of South Asian British Muslim women? How is the citizenship of these women limited and boundless in relation to their position as both subjects and objects of the Oriental gaze, and what happens when we consider the materiality and reality, as well as the analytical, of women like us?

Puar acknowledges the many facets of US exceptionalism – "artistic expression, aesthetic production...social and political life, immigration history, liberal democracy, and industrialization and patterns of capitalism" (2007, p. 5) – but Terrorist Assemblages is more concerned with queer and gender exceptionalism. More precisely, Puar uses Inderpal Grewal's work to examine how "moral superiority has become part of emergent global feminism, constructing American women as saviors and rescuers of the 'oppressed women'" (2007, p. 5). As we saw in the previous chapter, the concern of white and Western people for women and girls in the Orient is geared more towards benevolent rescue narratives underpinned by the moral and cultural inferiority of the Orient and the subsequent symbiotic moral and cultural superiority of the West. As Puar argues, "gender exceptionalism works as a missionary discourse to rescue Muslim women from their oppressive male counterparts" (2007, p. 5); evidently, the trope of rescuing of brown women from brown men has persisted. Puar categorises this apparent benevolence towards the Other as a hallmark of contemporary white liberalism, arguing that "to be excused from a critique of one's own power manipulations is the appeal of white liberalism" (2007, p. 31). To be clear, terms like 'object' and 'subject' are used to examine the process of state exceptionalism and a pattern of behaviour enacted by white supremacy. A central facet of exceptionalism is a commitment to revisionist history which disregards past crimes on the part of the state, and wipes the slate clean when it comes to reacting with horror to contemporary events. Exceptionalism is a tool, then, of white liberalism and white supremacy and Puar goes on to clarify that white

liberalism "is not strictly delimited to white subjects, though it is bound to multiculturalism as defined and deployed by whiteness" (2007, p. 31). One does not have to be white to enact white supremacy, and so it follows that one does not have to be white to enact white liberalism. Instead, what Puar is describing is the structural process through which whiteness conceives of and controls the subject or the Other. Any individual under white supremacy is capable of perpetuating it, and definitions of multiculturalism[5] begin and end with whiteness[6] as a structuring principle. In other words, whiteness is the prism through which the Orient is reached, gazed upon, and controlled.

Muslim citizen

We turn now to the shape of citizens who are also Muslim, and here Puar references Leti Volpp's claim of the association of Middle Eastern and Arab people with "Muslim," an elision that forms a hegemonic picture of who 'looks' Mualim – "this consolidation reflects a racialization wherein members of this group are identified as terrorists and disidentified as citizens" (2007, p. 38). Here, the racialization process described is twofold: firstly, through the association of Middle Eastern and Arab people as aligned with what it is to be 'Muslim,' and secondly, with such Muslims as terrorists who no longer possess the conditions of possibility for citizenship, if they ever did. Said and Ahmed's close attention to the process of Western state formation is the context of this discussion, and Puar's work, whilst primarily focused upon the figure of the terrorist as one of queer exceptionalism, also provides an understanding of exceptionalism in relation to terrorism. I will be using these concepts to examine the figure of the Muslim citizen as it exists within the notion of Britain as a multicultural society which, according to British values defined by the British government, reference freedom, tolerance, and respect. The relationship between being Muslim and being

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[5] The use of multiculturalism is here heavily influenced by Stuart Hall's work, particularly a 2007 interview with Colin Maccabe wherein Hall acknowledges that multiculturalism has evolved from questions of the possibility of social cohesion to issues around assimilation, to now being required to undergo a shift – "other things change, you're going to find it positioned somewhere else," (p. 39) as other issues and terms complicate movement in Britain, and thus require developed understandings and terms for the place of people of colour in Britain.
[6] Ruth Frankenberg's work provides a useful backdrop here, partly through her seminal text White Women, Race Matters (1993), in addition to her article on the construction of whiteness in relation to 9/11 which provides on outline of the psychic history of whiteness in relation to US responses to terror (2005).

a citizen of a state is one which calls back to the status of Black and brown immigrants in Britain as one which is implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, aligned with a rhetoric of multiculturalism and integration. In other words, it is Black and brown immigrants who have to put in work to mitigate for ethnicity and race (Hesse & Sayyid 2006) in order to be incorporated into the fold as a British citizen.

The previous chapter saw an analysis of A Thousand Splendid Suns as a representative text for a pattern of depicting Muslim women as a litmus test for the civilisation of states outside of the West. This chapter will use a similar technique but, in order to further pull apart the formations of statehood and citizenship for British, Muslim, South Asian women, this chapter will focus on the films Yasmin (2004) and Brick Lane (2008). Film criticism allows for an analysis that is firmly rooted in visual culture both in terms of what is on the screen, but also as a tool that brings to life Ahmed's metaphor of facing the Orient and examining the process of construction of citizens. Again, as with the previous chapter I will place my textual analysis alongside a policy document in order to draw out the precise constructions of Muslims in all three texts. The end of 2016 saw the publication of The Casey Review (Great Britain, Department for Communities and Local Government 2016), a review of "opportunity and integration" by Dame Louise Casey and its focus on isolated and deprived communities saw plenty of attention paid to Muslim communities in Britain.

All three texts engage with Muslims in Britain and the films are part of tropes within cultural products that concern themselves with depicting Muslims, and almost exclusively Muslim men, as the simultaneously cohesive and beatable enemy. Context is central to how these films are both produced and disseminated; to ignore contexts is to ignore the social, political and cultural commentaries that inextricably form the foundation and structure of these films. American Sniper (2014), Zero Dark Thirty (2012), and Eye in the Sky (2016) are notable examples of films that use George W. Bush's rallying cry of the "war on terror" as the backdrop for their treatment of Muslim terrorists. All three concern themselves with the 'difficult decisions' army personnel take, whilst framing Muslims as either collaborators with Western intelligence agencies or bodies that exist to be shown in abject poverty, dying or dead. The three films mentioned above represent a type of film that depicts US or Western

forces as taking difficult, but ultimately necessary decisions, in protecting the interests of the US, and Western culture, in the ongoing battle against terror.

These films communicate the suspicion that Muslims have been tarred with after 9/11, alongside various other terrorist attacks carried out under the name of Islam. They disregard any real life issues of Muslims that do not gravitate solely around 9/11 and this single-axis focus reduces Muslim people to a homogenous group that can exist only within the context of 9/11. Another pattern of these films is to focus upon Muslim men as potential terror threats, and Muslim women primarily as often abused and sidelined characters beholden to the geopolitics of a post-9/11 landscapes that their husbands are busy reacting to. Brick Lane and Yasmin are more like A Thousand Splendid Suns in placing Muslim women at the centre of the narrative, but this is not to say that the structural patterns outlined above are not also played out. Both these films focus upon Muslims who are stifled under the weight of the suspicion and paranoia that has informed their lives under western eyes. As these two films span a period of four years they have been selected to demonstrate snapshots of developments in cultural and political rhetoric alongside the more recent policy document.

Before I move on to consider these issues, however, I am concerned about the emotionally dense and politically charged contexts that make up any study of citizenship and statehood. Chapter one saw the discussion framed around a theme of civilizational praxis in order to better analyse the chosen texts. Here, I will spend a considerable amount of time examining the formation of the concept of enemy citizens and of how such citizens come to be gazed upon. As a film chapter, this portion of the thesis is concerned with the visual culture expanded upon in the film texts, but also in the theoretical texts which have influenced the film readings. Thus, what follows is a consideration of the visual connections to be made across theorists who work on optics, borders, and citizenship.

The enemy at home in citizen formation

The work of death

Before looking at the formation of the Muslim citizen in Britain, it is necessary to examine the makeup of the state and how its power is sustained. Said's Orientalism and Puar's framework of exceptionalism hold up the framework of Britain as a colonial and imperial state not only through geographical invasion, but also as part of its national psyche. Coloniality is the bedrock of Britain's values, however much British values may flatten and distance the state from its history. Achille Mbembe's work on necropolitics makes connections between death and state sovereignty; necropolitics is the study of the power of death in arranging and constituting state power, in direct opposition to biopolitics and the examination of the power of life. Mbembe uses the examples of slavery, colonialism, Apartheid, and Palestine as explorations of the manifestation of power through a wielding of control and death. Palestine is particularly placed as an example of "late-modern colonial occupation [that] is a concatenation of multiple powers: disciplinary, biopolitical, and necropolitical" (2003, p. 29). Evidently, necropolitics spans power formations over time and is an expansionist theory in that it accounts for power iterations that take in state formation within living memory. Each of these examples speaks to the deployment of state power that functions through the state's control of who lives and, more precisely, who dies in order for the state to continue to flourish in power. Each of these examples is also linked to racial subjugation and Mbembe states that "the politics of race is ultimately linked to the politics of death" (2003, p. 17). Control of citizens, and control of their death, is a work that crosses state boundaries – war is no longer confined to the battlefield, and the advent of technology means that state power and death remain as intertwined as ever, if altered in method. Necropolitics speaks to the necessity of death in order for states to remain powerful and sovereign, and it is with this in mind that I turn back to the context of this chapter: how does death figure into the formation of the British Muslim citizen? As discussed previously, the very need to bring together "British" and "Muslim" is itself a marker that "Muslim" is separate and outside of "British" – they require a linguistic coming together in order to communicate that Britishness allows Muslims to be taken into the state, as separate but equal. The diasporic nature of Muslims in Britain means many British Muslim citizens carry with them the status of refugees, economic migrants, and however many generations removed, immigrants. The premise of The Casey Review as a review of opportunity and integration recalls this same logic: residence and citizenship in Britain means very little if your

citizenship carries an extra marker before or after "British." The examples Mbembe uses – slavery, colonialism – still impact both state power and citizenship as belonging to a state. Bhattacharyya's understanding of the function of borders in relation to the politics of multiculturalism and assimilation points out that "assertive control of state borders, accompanied by much public fanfare, appears to have become an important demonstration of sovereignty" (2009, p. 26). The control of borders requires the maintenance of sovereignty Bhattacharyya mentions, which as Mbembe demonstrates, constitutes the work of death. Bhattacharyya's Dangerous Brown Men provides an understanding of the place of the citizen within Mbembe's world-building theorisation:

> Who can refuse the values of equality, human rights, freedom and the right freely to form affective relations as a mark of our deepest humanity? We know as we witness the horror carried out in our name that this war debases these values, but our witness is characterised by bad faith, for to defend the truth of such values must imply that this is in essence a good war, if only it could be returned to its central values. The rulers of the world do not seek to soften this dilemma or to hide it from us – our discomfort places us in the global public as properly disciplined subjects of new processes of governance quite as effectively as gung-ho obedience. (2008, p. 144)

Exceptionalism on the part of state values, power, and sovereignty are central to understanding the role of the citizen in such nation states. The dilemma of how "we," a collective citizenship, can explicitly and implicitly sanction the work of death that is the work of border control and state sovereignty is no dilemma at all once exceptionalism is introduced into the equation. Indeed, as Bhattacharyya concludes, any such discomfort is swiftly effaced by the notion of "properly disciplined subjects" – to belong to the state, to be of the state is to be a properly disciplined citizen with all of the nationalistic and patriotic trappings such an allegiance requires. Mbembe and Bhattacharyya's arguments allow for connections to be made between sovereignty and death as connections which speak to the heart of state power and citizenship, namely, the state's enactment of deathly policies upon its own citizens, and the separation of full citizens and marked citizens, who may well challenge the nationalism and patriotism that uphold and sanction state maintainence.

Orientation/optics/gaze

By this juncture, Said, Ahmed, Puar, and Mbembe's works have painted a picture of state power that relies upon grasping for control of the Other; state power that needs to be viewed expansively in order to make connections between death and sovereignty; state power that impresses itself through the histories and identity categories of citizens; and, in turn, citizenship that is dependant on the fluctuating power relations of the corresponding state. In order to further understand and sit with these ideas, I will return to Ahmed's phenomenological work where a model is developed that brings to the surface the process of being faced with an object, as in her earlier work Strange Encounters. Ahmed argues that:

> Orientations are about the direction we take that puts some things and not others in our reach. So the object, which is apprehending only by exceeding my gaze, can be apprehended only insofar as it has to come to be available to me: its reachability is not simply a matter of place or location...but instead is shaped by the orientations that I have taken that mean I face some ways more than others (2000, p. 56).

Here, the "object" in question is the depiction of Muslims that purports to represent the realities of the war on terror – in foregrounding the process of watching or encountering, Ahmed's model is one that serves to highlight the position of the person holding a gaze, particularly in filmic terms. In other words, the conditions of possibility that lead to an encounter encompass intersectional contexts that irrevocably colour how the object is seen, as well as what is seen. The recognition of people seeing different things when looking at the same object is an important one, especially when thinking through racial politics.

Ahmed asserts that "whiteness becomes a social and bodily orientation given that some bodies will be more at home in a world that is orientated around whiteness. If we began instead with disorientation, with the body that loses its chair, then the descriptions we offer will be quite different" (2000, p. 138). White supremacy, and not only the most extreme version of it, but also the everyday versions of white supremacy that structure contemporary life, is the primary orientation through which objects are faced. Ahmed's

contention is that disorientation, or in other words a disregard and scepticism both of and for whiteness, is a bountiful starting point, particularly when considering the racialized systems at play post-9/11. Earlier, we saw the Orient as an object to be faced and controlled, and here, Ahmed impresses upon us the weighted history of repeating this process; repetition over time engenders hegemony and, eventually, the normalisation of state expressions of power which bring symbolic and structural violence and death justified as the very means of sustaining the state and protecting its citizens. Analytically and emotionally speaking, this process is difficult to parse out by its very nature, and so Ahmed's description of the body that loses its chair, is an advocation of a phenomenological approach which serves as a check and balance system. In other words, we are examining the process of holding a gaze and noticing who looks back, and how this process is transplanted onto the geopolitics of the work of racism and death, but all whilst considering the structural movements at play that allow us to understand the past, present, and future – the body that is brought to the chair.

Jasbir Puar also focuses on the process of seeing, describing seeing as not an act of "direct perception" but "the act of seeing" as "simultaneously an act of reading [and] a specific interpretation of the visual" (2007, p. 183). Both Ahmed and Puar go back to the moment of encountering or seeing as one which requires the holder of the gaze to examine their standpoint, thus allowing for a chance at ascertaining their gaps in vision and knowledge. Their work is reminiscent of Edward Said's description of textual attitudes that are repeated over time, as discussed in Chapter 1, and focus attention on the moment of encounter as a moment that is comprised not only of the physical act of seeing but also the emotional, social, cultural, and political influences behind what one sees, and how one sees it.

Here, I am reminded of Laura Mulvey's seminal film theory on the male gaze. Mulvey posits that "the image of woman as (passive) raw material for the (active) male gaze of man takes the argument a step further into the structure of representation, adding a further layer demanded by the ideology of the patriarchal order as it is worked out in its favourite cinematic form - illusionistic narrative film" (2003, p.67). Whilst Mulvey's work is still critical and important for contemporary cinematic analysis, in keeping its focus along a single axis it universalizes, and thereby restricts, the impact it can have on gender relations. The

prevalence of gaze theory speaks to its utility as a model that allows for perspective and looking again, for a process of reading and seeing, rather than a singular moment. The inclusion of film texts in this chapter has a direct application for Ahmed, Puar, and Mulvey's check and balance system but it is also the case that the description of the process is a useful beginning that requires the work of Ahmed and Puar in order to make optics and orientation a useful model beyond white gender relations.

Another step further for Mulvey's model of gaze theory is to consider Rey Chow's work on the other or the native: Chow uses the phrase "the big Other" (1993, p. 50) precisely to combat the straightforward relationship of the native being gazed upon by the colonizer (1993, p. 51). In so doing, this relationship is complicated and brings forward the possibility of the native gazing back at the colonizer. Chow's outline of this process helps break apart a gaze towards the Orient, or the repetition that the subaltern cannot speak, into an encounter which reasons that if the Other can be seen, it follows that the Other can also see back. As much as it is useful and necessary to examine the construction of state sovereignty on the back of deeply embedded Orientalism, Chow's work presents an extension to this thinking that is explicitly aware of the materialities and realities of the person being gazed upon:

> The agency of the native cannot simply be imagined in terms of a resistance against the image–that is, after the image has been formed–nor in terms of a subjectivity that existed before, beneath, inside, or outside the image. It needs to be rethought as that which bears witness to its own demolition–in a form which is at once image and gaze, but a gaze that exceeds the moment of colonization. (1993, p. 51)

The status of being both the image – the one that is gazed upon – and the gaze –the one that looks back – is a recognition that this discussion is not merely abstract but concerns material and real conditions that people live under. The pull back of perspective is useful, and indeed central, in determining structural and systemic subjugation and systems of oppression but the notion of the subject of the gaze looking back towards the colonizer is one which carries with it the subjecthood of the individual that was always implicit in models or orientation and gaze theory. Chow goes on to say that:

I want to argue that it is actually the colonizer who feels looked at by the native's gaze. This gaze, which is neither a threat nor a retaliation, makes the colonizer "conscious" of himself, leading to his need to turn the gaze around and look at himself, henceforth "reflected" in the native-object. It is the self-reflection of the colonizer that produces the colonizer as subject (potent gaze, source of meaning and action) and the native as his image...Western Man henceforth became "self-conscious," that is, uneasy and uncomfortable, in his "own" environment. (1993, p. 51)

The very existence of The Casey Review is testament to the anxiety of the British state at the marked Others existing within the nation, an expression of self-consciousness. In an introduction to the edited collection Ethnicities and Values in a Changing World, Gargi Bhattacharyya considers the engagements of former British Prime Ministers, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, with multiculturalism. Bhattacharyya categorises Blair's "Respect" agenda as one which solidifies or even creates certain terms in reaction to political events through the use of assimilationist legislation – Bhattacharyya argues that such legislation "allows space for the state to institute showpiece legislation with minimal controversy and present an appearance of disciplining unruly cultural minorities to a wider electorate" (2009, p. 16). Reviews such as The Casey Review are no outliers – the state must be seen to react to political turmoil, which is itself constituted of events that are considered disastrous when the Western Man is made to feel self-conscious by the presence of marked Others. There is certainly a very credible argument that the post-9/11 landscape of invasion and control is a landscape borne upon the anxiety of the Other, of the potential threat to Western civilisation and Western values, in other words, the threat to the sovereignty of the state. Evidently, for a colonizer to become conscious and to look at itself is to trigger discomfort which manifests as an exercise of sovereignty through the work of death. This seemingly circular process is one which is well captured by Chow's argument of picking apart the process of the gaze; apprehension of the self and the Other is embroiled in the necropolitical understanding of modern state sovereignty.

Enemy/other/alien/stranger

We turn, then, from an invigoration of the Other as able to gaze back, to exist outside of postcolonial or phenomenological frameworks, to the position of such individuals in an affective sense. Sara Ahmed's work on the figures of the enemy/stranger/alien are highly influential in my understanding of "enemies within." Strange Encounters sees Ahmed explores the familiarity of strangers, as well as the boundary of 'stranger' as one that is determined by the position (and outlook) of the person who encounters the stranger. Ahmed posits that "if we think of 'home' purely as proximity and familiarity, then we fail to recognise the relationships of estrangement and distance within the home" (2000, p. 139). In this line of argument, the 'enemy' or 'stranger' is a figure that has to have some proximity to the 'home' in order to be encounterable:

aliens allow the demarcation of spaces by belonging: by coming too close to home, they establish the very necessity of policing the borders of knowable and inhabitable terrains...through strange encounters, the figure of the 'stranger' is produced, not as that which we fail to recognise, but as that which we have already recognised as 'a stranger' (2000, p. 3).

Here, Ash Amin's work on the biopolitics of risk is useful – Amin uses the figure of the stranger in order to analyse racism in Britain by "exploring stranger relations in different spaces of encounter: urban public space, the European public sphere, collaborative work and imagined community" (2013, p. 3). Amin's work provides grounded analysis for the figure of the stranger and the categorisation of strangers as central to understanding race in Britain is an important baseline. As such, the notion of 'the enemy within' is then best explained through an understanding of the enemy as interchangeable with 'stranger' or 'alien' – a trespasser, a transgressor of boundaries. Granted, 'enemy' carries with it a layer of cohesive attention that conveys a kind of strategy when enemy units come together, however 'stranger' and 'alien' paint a fuller picture of how enemies come to be constituted. As Ahmed argues, for a body to be designated as 'enemy,' it is necessary for that body to occupy a space close to bodies which hold the gaze, and can thereby designate others as enemy.

Ahmed goes on to state that:

The marking out of the border which defines the subject - the constitutive outside - is the condition of possibility for the subject, the process through which it can come into being. This subject is precisely the subject who determines the formation of home - the space one inhabits as liveable - and whose access to subjectivity is determined through being at home - the centre from which other beings are expelled. The subject who can act and move in the world with ease - the white, masculine, heterosexual, subject - does so through expelling those other beings from this zone of the living. (2000, p. 52)

It is, therefore, not enough only to examine enemies but, also to examine the types of identity categories that are in such a position to determine bodies that are to be considered enemies. Ahmed categorises the functions of white supremacy relevant to studying the 'stranger' and it is an analysis that is extremely useful here - if Muslims have been categorised as the 'enemy within' then it is because other bodies have been categorised in direct opposition as 'safe' or 'home.' It is a function of white supremacy to position certain, white, bodies as emblematic of safety and trust, with deviations from this line labelled as enemy. With this argument in mind, then, it is easy to see how and why Muslims have come to be labelled as the enemy within: 9/11 certainly accelerated this process but it would be a mistake to describe Islamophobia as originating from 9/11. A faceless and hidden enemy (Bhattacharyya 2008, p. 60) lends itself to understanding the apparent propagation of Muslim enemies who can blend into 'our' worlds and bide their time. This kind of enmity functions from "processes of dehumanisation familiar from other wars of occupation" (Bhattacharyya 2009, p. 27) which call to mind "racism without racism" (Bhattacharyya 2009, p. 27) where the categorisation of Muslim enmity as one which is a moral imperative necessary for the good of the state and the state's values, rather than racism. In actuality, we see centuries of Orientalist rhetoric and racism, as well as racialized sexism, that have led to such an orientation becoming a tenable choice, with post-9/11 environments representing a focus of the discourse surrounding Islam and enmity.

Positioning and focalisation

I turn now to focus upon Yasmin (2004), which is set in Keighley, West Yorkshire and features Archie Panjabi's character Yasmin and her family living in relative poverty amongst

racist white co-workers, and reacting to the racial slurs that follow 9/11. Yasmin has a pronounced Yorkshire accent, and the film is set largely on a small cobbled street. The nearby hills are often used as a transitory point for Yasmin as she travels into work and her house is directly opposite her father and brother's home. There are often children playing in the streets, with neighbours watching almost continuously. Throughout the film, Yasmin is often shown to be in conflict: with her father's wishes, with her brother's desire to leave, with her co-worker's racial slurs, with her husband; with her love interest; with herself. The film signifies in multiple ways its politics in terms of an engagement with Orientalism, and its position on Muslims integrating into British white culture. I will firstly consider the motifs which are repeated throughout the film as markers of the film's politics and treatment of British Muslims.

The very first shot of the film is of a boy reciting the azaan over the loudspeakers at the mosque. This call reverberates over the first location shot of Yorkshire hills and local cobbled streets. At this point, Yasmin is shown, by the roadside, changing into a pair of jeans and leaving her scarf in the back of the car. Already, the film is enacting a kind of melding of apparently distinct cultures. The azaan is included more as a marker of difference than of multiculturalism, and the choice to show Yasmin living a double life, as the tagline of the film claims, directly feeds into and sustains the clash of civilisations narrative that already positions being brown and Muslim as distinct and separate from British culture. The next instance where the azaan rings out is after 9/11 has happened in the plotline, and Yasmin's home is stormed by armed police, for reasons that remain unexplained, other than an obscure allusion to a "terror threat." Once again, part of the azaan is heard alongside a shot of hills, building upon the previous demarcation of identity to signal that there is no going back now – things have changed. 9/11 serves not as a narrative disruption, but as a narrative continuation that entrenches the "Muslims" and the "British" as distinctly different and separate, however equal. The final time we hear the azaan is alongside one of the very last shots of the film, except this time, it is broadcast over the mosque loudspeaker from a tape recorder, as Nasir, Yasmin's brother, has done what scores of Muslims have not, and joined the Taliban. The film's use of the azaan as an attempt at poignancy is one that entrenches the characters as separate and different, the longer the narrative continues. Indeed, alongside the use of the azaan as a narrative marker, we often see Yasmin putting on her scarf and taking it off. Given

the weaponization and process of symbology that the hijab has been imbued with by Orientalist discourse, this is evidently not an article of clothing only.

Much has been written about veiling practices, and before I continue to discuss Yasmin's engagement with veiling I will briefly summarise the backdrop of a discussion that has often, as argued in Chapter One, dehumanised Muslim women and used them as empty vessels capable of qualifying the level of civilisation of states, religions, and cultures. Shakira Hussein argues against "the limits of force/choice discourses in discussing Muslim women's dress codes" (2007, p. 1) – a discussion which shapes discourse on veiling practices as shaped by either the notion that Muslim women are forced to veil by their culture, their religion, their male relatives or that Muslim women choose to veil of their own volition. Hussein's argument critiques the limiting capacity of the force/choice paradigm and instead complicates what "choice" means for different women. Here, the argument is that we must expand the boundaries of debate and later the landscape through which veiling is understood. This argument advocates for a more complex understanding of veiling practices for Muslim women, a wider understanding of what constitutes 'hijab,' and a robust challenging of racist discourses which fall back upon Orientalist assumptions about the agency of Muslim women and the liberalism of Islam. Similarly, Sirma Bilge also argues against this stifling dichotomy through an examination of the nature of agency and its relative usefulness in conversations about veiling. Bilge advocates for a movement beyond the teleology of emancipation for Muslim women and moves to disconnect the hijab from such a discussion (2010, p. 22), and such a move, as with Hussein's argument is one which allows for a focus on the lived experiences of Muslim women rather than a binary discourse which restricts dialogue to a clash of civilisations style argument; complexity and nuance demand it.

Back to Yasmin where, at the beginning of the film, Yasmin's quick removal of the scarf is an alignment of the character's allegiance with her white colleagues. She wants nothing to do with her family, from whom she hides how she dresses at work, the drinks she has with colleagues, and her general demeanour. By the end of the film, Yasmin realises the racist attitudes of her co-workers and the differences felt by her white friend are insurmountable; she is shown to happily wear a scarf in front of her white friend and they both literally go their separate ways, him to the pub, and her to the mosque. The resolution of the film is a

continuation of the attitudes it began with, specifically that whilst Yasmin may live an integrated, read Western, life in wearing jeans, and driving, and having a job, there are facets of her identity which mean she will always be markedly different. This quick overview of the narrative structuring of the film demonstrates that Yasmin is wholly invested in telling a story about British Muslims which marks them as irredeemably different – sympathetic upon occasion, but largely separate from white British culture, occasionally yearning to fit in, but ultimately choosing their 'own' culture. This separation speaks to the orientation process of looking to the symbolic East – if the centre remains white as a synonym for Britain, then integration and assimilation appear to be the only option for those who are not white in Britain. Yasmin uses the empty vessels of brown women, here Yasmin's movements around her wearing of a scarf, to tap into a lazy discourse of force/choice which exists to propagate reductive Orientalist discourses about the clash of civilisations enacted on the bodies of Muslim women. This is a gaze enacted through, as argued earlier, the prism of whiteness and the construction of this kind of protagonist sets up Yasmin as, however relatable, separate and at odds with British culture.

The film Brick Lane, based on a novel of the same name by Monica Ali, came out in 2007 and was first released at the Telluride Film Festival. The protagonist Nazneen is married to a significantly older man, and moves with him from Bangladesh to London and, unlike the book, the narrative opens with their two young daughters living in a small flat whilst their parents struggle to make ends meet. Whilst Nazneen's husband is a central figure in her life, much of the plot is concerned with developing a nuanced picture of her life both in London and back in Bangladesh. In a similar manner to Yasmin, Nazneen's life is also depicted as taking place in a relatively poor area, with children often running around outside and neighbours watching from windows and doorsteps. In Yasmin, the neighbours watching were always South Asian, and their quiet gazes were a signal of the small and tight-knit community. In Brick Lane, however, there are instances of other brown people watching Nazneen in a mixture of both surveillance and caution, but also white people watching her as she goes to the shops in her sari. This particular gaze recalls Chow's model of optics wherein the choice of perspective in the film means that the white gaze is acknowledged as a context, and then put aside whilst Nazneen continues with her day. Yasmin's engagement with the white gaze and the spectre of the colonizer is altogether different, punctured as it is with

racial slurs and guns pointed at her by the police. Even so, Yasmin is more explicitly a film that centres the white West and chooses to engage with a clash of civilisations narrative; this is not to say Brick Lane entirely escapes this, if that were even possible, but it is altogether more focused upon exploring Nazneen's character and where she most fits in. Both films, then, are concerned with ideas of home and assimilation, and achieve this in distinctly separate manners.

From the outset, Nazneen's relationship with her sister Hasina is the one which conveys most about her character since she is frequently shown reading and writing to her sister and often has flashbacks to their childhood. The opening scene of the film features Nazneen's voiceover whilst her mother kills herself by walking in to a body of water. This moment, and the memory of her sister are are central to her motivations and development of character throughout the film. Her mother is frequently quoted at various junctures of the film – "our mother told us we cannot run from our fate." This tenet haunts the first half of the film as Nazneen is shown to be timid, silent, and passive. By opening with her mother's death and allowing her belief in succumbing to fate permeate throughout the film, a generational difference is gradually built; as Nazneen's timidity stands up to the challenges of her husband's desire to move to Bangladesh as a family unit, her mother's words hold less influence. Her words are also reminiscent of Nana's words to Mariam in A Thousand Splendid Suns – "it's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have" (Hosseini 2007, p. 17). Evidently, the fatalism of both parents fits into the evocative narrative of the clash of civilisations; try as they might, these brown people are doomed to a tragic story which serves as a moral to the white centre. As much as Nazneen grows beyond these words, it remains that the spectre of her mother is forever doomed to pain and duty and it is this context which speaks to Yasmin's own sense of entrapment. Their entrapment is, in all three texts, due to poverty and patriarchal demands rather than an implicit fact of brownness.

It is also troubling that we never see Nazneen's mother's face – we only ever see the back of her body as she slowly walks into a lake, drowns, and is removed by a group of women. There are a number of suggestions as to the representational power of Nazneen's mother's suicide: a generalisation about attitudes of older generations of South Asian people that focus on surviving rather than thriving; of the impact it has on Nazneen who takes to heart her

mother's words and shrinks herself to be as small as possible. The very possibility however, of the film guiding us to such suggestions through demonstrating the importance and influence of Nazneen's mother upon Nazneen, is testament to the film's engagement with nuance. The creation of possibilities, of showing Nazneen's mother's worldview and giving Nazneen the space to engage with it throughout the film is a choice of focalisation that allows the gaze to be held by women; in doing so, the film positions Nazneen and her mother as subjects who look back, and adjust their lives themselves. As her mother drops underwater, her red sari floats to the surface and is an evocative image amongst the muddied water and her slowly sinking body. The red is a euphemism for the violence of her suicide, which is shot with muted tones and soft music in the background. Yasmin by contrast engages in no such euphemism and instead depicts Yasmin in often dark lighting, an attempt to foreground the pointedly gritty surroundings of her run-down neighbourhood. Whilst Brick Lane has similar standards of poverty, the dark lighting is instead counterbalanced with the repetition of yellow backgrounds behind Nazneen, signifying her slow but steady emergence into her own personality. Brick Lane feels less stifling than Yasmin precisely because the colouring is lighter and warmer throughout. Yellow is noticeable in scenes of importance to Nazneen's growth, whether her quiet companionship with her husband, her playful interactions with her daughters, her conversations with Kareem, or her presence alone in her flat. Both films begin with decidedly different avenues into narrative trajectories that are concerned with home and assimilation in working class British society, and that is precisely what is clear from the outset – the fact of having an entity that must integrate and fit into a larger society is precisely the problem. Given that Yasmin appears to have been born in Britain and Nazneen immigrates into the country, their different perspectives but similar contexts of narrative show that white Britishness requires assimilation from those marked as brown.

These variances in how these two characters are positioned in their relationship with Britain is not given much traction in The Casey Review which concerns itself primarily with assimilation and integration, and from the outset identifies Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities as the primary targets for segregation in Britain:

I know that for some, the content of this review will be hard to read, and I have wrestled with what to put in and what to leave out, particularly because I know that putting some

communities under the spotlight - particularly communities in which there are high concentrations of Muslims of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage - will add to the pressure that they already feel (2016, p. 5-6)

Casey claims that levels of segregation in Britain are highest for Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities (2016, p. 43), and focuses a significant portion of the document on addressing this. There is an elision throughout that aligns Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities as largely Muslim, and homogenous in political and cultural thought that is ascribed to both religion and culture. To state from the outset that Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities are particularly "sensitive" is to pre-empt possible criticism for the methods and conclusions of the review from the very people it studies. Clearly, Casey is aware of Islamophobic systems and structures which hypervisibilise Muslims politically, socially, and culturally - euphemistically called "pressure" - and this carefully calculated framing is designed to undermine any possible objections to the review. Casey also calls for these communities to "engage constructively in a debate" (2016, p. 120) and this takes us to the heart of the issue: for Casey, and indeed for white and non-Muslim British citizens that this is only a theoretical debate. For Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims, their existence in Britain, their social, political, and cultural ways of being - their biopolitics - are under review. The flattening of perspective is a major failing of the review and the introduction above to Yasmin and Nazneen sits starkly against the aims of The Casey Review. Yasmin and Nazneen both represent particular things about British Muslim South Asian women, and here Casey presents these same women as part of communities who choose to segregate and isolate themselves. The issue here, once again, is that multiculturalism and integration presumes a white centre into which anything other must be subsumed (Hesse & Sayyid 2006). Casey acknowledges that communities may segregate for practical reasons, such as access to mosques and halal shops, but this remains two sentences worth of consideration in a 200 page document. The failure to consider this in conjunction with the working class backgrounds we see in Yasmin and Brick Lane severely limits the effectiveness and impact of the review. What is achieved is an ignorance of the fact that being British is aligned with being white, that no matter how long a citizen has resided in Britain, they are always "something else" and British, be it British Muslim or otherwise (Hesse & Sayyid 2006). The structural nature of this label would go some way to exploring the economic, political, and practical reasons

behind segregation, but instead the effect is to presume rejection from the communities that are theorised about and to narrow the gaze of the review.

This is further exemplified when Casey recalls how students in a school with a high Asian population were asked to estimate the percentage of Asians in Britain and estimates ranged between 50% to 90% - "the actual figure is 7%" – and Casey writes that such an overestimation "presumably" reflects "their experience in the local community, and a relative lack of knowledge about the country as a whole" (2016, p. 49). Rather than reflecting the people these children are around, it is rather a reflection of the disproportionate attention South Asian Muslims receive in the media (Poole 2006) being externalised by children who have been taught that Muslims present a threat to the state and its values, as well as to Western civilisation. Instead, Casey chooses to frame the review as one where public officials are reticent to speak about segregation due to "worrying about being labelled racist" (2016, p. 15). Once again, Casey has not considered that anxiety about looking racist trumps anxiety around actually being racist. Casey frames the entire review as a frank and truthful engagement with a subject people find difficult to talk about; beginning from this point leaves the only inevitable conclusion as one that Muslims are, in the very best of circumstances, Other citizens in Britain. All three texts begin steeped in Orientalist discourse, and though they diverge significantly as they progress, the beginning point is the same: that Muslims are outside of what it means to be British, and that Muslims are marked by skin colour, with the total signification being one of strangers in Britain who cannot, or will not, assimilate into the host culture.

Construction of the self/mirroring

The moments during Yasmin where the titular character is alone are often shot in partial darkness, whilst she smokes and listens to music. She rarely looks in the direction of the camera and is often hunched over, yelling, or anxious. One of the few quiet moments she has comes as she's getting ready to go on a night out with her work colleagues after rowing with her father. She sits at the vanity, and the three mirrors show us her reflection over her shoulder. This is an especially poignant part of the film, as so often the camera lingers over

Yasmin in snapshots; her silhouette as she prays; her silhouette as she changes into jeans by the side of the road; her furious contemplation after a row with her husband. At the mirror, however, we see a manifestation of how the audience is guided to see Yasmin, as a woman taken apart by the pressures of culture and cultural obligation.

This pressure is most pointedly played out with Yasmin's relationship to her husband. Her husband is an immigrant from Pakistan who communicates largely in Punjabi with the occasional fragment of English, but even his native tongue is portrayed largely through grunts and incoherent sounds, without subtitles. The noises he makes are understandable to a Punjabi speaker, and, given that this is otherwise an English language film, his noises are evidently subject to the same principle of the use of the azaan, as a marker of difference rather than an expression of culture. His wild hair and lack of backstory positions him as a kind of savage native who finds himself unable to fit into his alien environment. Yasmin tolerates his presence in her house, but insists on sleeping separately and, troublingly, often yells "dirty Paki" at him whenever he strays too close to her. These moments are frequent and discomfiting; Yasmin's use of the slur "Paki" is neatly juxtaposed with shots of "Pakis go home" scrawled on local buildings, and communicates the internalised hatred that is at the core of her character. She has a flirtation with a colleague at work, John, who is her only work colleague that does not hurl racist insults at her, albeit he does advise her to merely "ignore them." Within the film's narrative world Yasmin's husband does not hold any power - his status as non-Westerner, as native of Pakistan, as a brown Muslim man, is one that places him at a distinct disadvantage: he cannot converse with locals; he cannot defend himself against charges from the police; he does not understand his wife's disdain for his habits; he is, in other words, a thoroughly out of place object because it is not within his reach to orient himself as his wife is able to do.

Another manner in which Yasmin is taken apart and seen from a particular perspective comes from examining the presentational context of the film in order to answer the question of who this film has positioned itself as for. The notoriously racist and sexist Daily Mail is quoted on the cover of the DVD reviewing the film as "a superlative and utterly convincing production." This itself is indication of damnation by association; the Daily Mail routinely and notoriously paints Muslims in a racist, xenophobic and reactionary manner and its

labelling of the film as "convincing" is suspect at best, and tenuous at worst. Elizabeth Poole's work examines the state of the British press in relation to coverage of Muslims and finds that the norm across political spectrums operate from the principles that "Islam is static and that Muslims are resistant to progress, engage in antiquated and repressive practices that abuse human rights, and often use their religion to manipulative ends" (2002, p. 250); Van Djik's study of racism in the press finds that "in the right wing Press, ethnic events are primarily evaluated as a conflict between 'us' and 'them,' against the background of a conservative ideology that prominently features such concepts as order, authority, loyalty, patriotism, and 'freedom' (1991, p. 246). The tagline for the film is "one woman, two lives" and this plays into a rather basic stereotype that has its roots in Orientalist views that presumes life as a Muslim to be one that can be characterised by a clash of civilisations. It presents the life of this one woman, and thereby other women similar to her, as one which is a constant struggle between the values or "ideology" of Western civilisation and the presumed influence of conservative, patriarchal, Muslim society. Already, before anything has to happen on the screen, these two details place the film in a position where it would appear to fall into the categories of a stereotypical and lazy depiction of Muslim women, that is, at best, racist and ill-conceptualised.

The DVD cover shows a mid-close-up of Yasmin's face whilst she wears a scarf, with the colouring adjusted to a harsh black and white. This colouring evokes a claim to 'grittiness,' calls to mind the films mentioned earlier in the chapter, Zero Dark Thirty, American Sniper, and Eye in the Sky, all of whom are more 'serious' depictions of the fight against terror. This presentation of grittiness becomes a byword for depictions that are enamoured with their own sense of realism, that they care little for accuracy or sensitivity. The blurb of the DVD cover claims that the story is about a "goat-herder" meeting "the vivacious, Westernised Yasmin. After the shocking events of 9/11, Yasmin's life begins to change," and it claims to confront "what it means to be Asian, Muslim and British in the 21st century." Already the film has explicitly set its parameters as able to represent the obviously wide-ranging and multi-faceted experience of being Asian and Muslim in Britain. This already guides us to read the experiences depicted in the film as representative of all Asians and Muslims living in Britain, as though the film has a unique insight into 'authentic' portrayals.

This ill-conceived drive for authenticity, grittiness, or even truth is one that leads back to the question of who this film is for. The obvious conclusion here is that the film's presentational context guides us to expect an audience of white, Western and non-Muslim people, not because those identifiers are any sort of 'opposite' to Asian and Muslim people, but because those foremost categories are structurally dominant in a global system of white and Western supremacy. This is further compounded in the film itself in the manner in which the characters move between Punjabi and English. There are no subtitles available on the DVD for either language, and this means that in the instances where characters speak Punjabi, monolingual speakers of English would be shut out. Whilst on the surface this may indicate that sections of the dialogue are for Punjabi speakers, the language is not utilised so simply. For example, there are disjointed phrases or half-sentences exchanged between Punjabi-speaking characters that are not the primary focus of dialogue. It is extremely rare to the point of non-existence to have a speaking character proceed in Punjabi. This indicates that the film is happy to include Punjabi as an element of 'authenticity,' whilst leaving the majority of the dialogue in English for an English-speaking audience. Each of these details must be seen in conjunction with one another, as together they paint a picture of an intended audience made up primarily of non-Muslim Westerners. Sara Ahmed's theories of orientation are useful here as, once again, what can be seen is dependant upon where one stands. This film orientates itself around Muslim and Asian identity but does so for non-Muslim and Western identities, as an insight into the lives of Muslims in Britain. Those identities are thus positioned as alien, as distinctly separate from what can be considered 'normal' or 'everyday.'

In Brick Lane, Nazneen's narrative progression is also shaped around her relationships to her husband, Channu, and the man she is having an affair with, Karim. She meets Karim when she takes a job as a seamstress working from home in order to send money to Hasina, with Channu pointedly declaring himself a "modern man" who finds such an arrangement acceptable. Karim initially visits to deliver cloth to Nazneen for sewing, but soon finds himself talking to Nazneen about his nervous Bengali, his overbearing father and local politics. Their first sexual encounter is shot alongside a mirror and it is this technique that symbolises their burgeoning relationship as one wherein Nazneen comes to hold her own gaze – we can see reflections of both characters as they move closer to one another. This is

directly countered with the use of mirrors when Channu and Nazneen share screen time. For example, in one shot we see Channu's top half through a mirror as he lies in bed; the camera has to move in order to bring Nazneen into view at the foot of the bed, clipping his toe nails. With Karim, however, the camera doesn't have to move to accommodate Nazneen as she is central in the shot with Karim, with both reflected in the mirror as they slowly make love to one another. Calmness is enacted in their sex scenes; they move slowly, the camera moves slowly, mirrors reflect the both of them and they share long looks. Sex scenes with Channu meanwhile, are devoid of any glances into one another's eyes, there are no reflections in mirrors, and Channu briskly finishes his business whilst Nazneen lies still and waits for it to be over. Their style of sex communicate their relationships with Nazneen: Karim listens to her opinions, and engages in conversation with her. Channu, meanwhile, frequently talks at Nazneen, over her, but never to her. He imposes his lifestyle and outlooks upon her and their children, with little regard for any possible response from his wife. He does so in a jolly manner, puffed up with his own self-importance as he drives towards his latest scheme.

Once again, Nazneen is centred in this film through the depiction of her relationships with others. Whilst this is a relatively low expectation of protagonists, it is a low expectation made necessary by films like Yasmin. Both Channu and Karim are fleshed out characters and their narrative motivations are fully explicated based on the character profiles that are built up. Regardless of how these romantic entanglements are resolved, it is important to note that these characters, and their later political affiliations, are contextualised within the time period of the film and are not treated as universalising depictions of Muslim men. Once again, such a decision places the film in a position where, at least for the first third of the film, they are given focalisation which in turn places them in the position of subjects.

Further, Nazneen also has a similar scene to Yasmin where no other characters are in frame, and she is shot over the shoulder with her reflection in a hallway mirror available to us. Brick Lane is careful to pepper these moments throughout the film in order to communicate Nazneen's growing sense of self. However, both mirror shots in Yasmin and Brick Lane demonstrate moments of quiet self-reflection on the part of these characters, and a location of the individual citizen amongst the representational politics of belonging, home, and Britishness. Nazneen, in particular, has a journey which is a slow unfolding of her quiet and

steady personality best exemplified through her relationship with her daughter, Shahna. Nazneen is often the mediator when Channu loses his temper and tires to beat Shahna for her supposed insolence, but in the last third of the film, Nazneen holds Shahna's gaze both literally and metaphorically. Literally, she stares back at her oldest daughter whose youthful outbursts are reserved only for her mother; metaphorically, she grows to side with her daughters who wish to stay in London whilst their father leaves for Bangladesh. It is this gaze which holds up Nazneen's unfolding and positions Nazneen at the centre looking outwards into a rethinking of home, identity, and belonging.

The use of mirrors in both films reveals a lot about how the audience is guided to see these two protagonists, how they see themselves, and where they are positioned in terms of the optics of orientalisation. The Casey Review also hems itself into the familiar Orientalist discourse that fatally restricts its conclusions, and this can be further extended through how the review itself gazes at Britain through revisionist colonial history, and the particular vision of Britain it constructs. Casey writes:

> We have always been at our strongest when most united. We are better for being open and inclusive as a society. Every person, in every community, in every part of Britain, should feel a part of our nation and have every opportunity to succeed in it. There can be no exceptions to that by gender, colour or creed. Those are our rights. Those are our values. That is our history. It must be our future too. (2016, p. 6).

This statement of unity and openness is especially galling given that the review was published mere months after the EU referendum which saw Britain vote to leave the European Union. Openness and inclusivity were the opposite values undertaken by a Leave campaign which organised under racist, xenophobic, and anti-immigrant dog whistling (Virdee & McGeever 2018; Khalili 2017; Burnett 2017). This not only mischaracterizes Britain's current values, but also, in a similar manner to Command Paper 9148, offers a revisionist history of Britain's colonial campaigns. This calls to mind Puar's analysis of white liberal consciousness working to push its own state as exceptional, of continually cleaning the historical slate in order to present a view of social cohesion that promises a rose-tinted future. This is further supported by Casey's specific characterisation of empire:

Britain is, of course, used to immigration. It has a long history of immigration through the Roman Empire and subsequent Anglo-Saxon, Viking and Norman invasions and migrations. Since the end of the Second World War, immigration patterns have been driven mainly by British nationality law - in particular from the Republic of Ireland and from former colonies and territories of the British Empire (2016, p. 29).

Britain may well be "used to" immigration but repeated movement into the country has no correlation with Britain's historical treatment of immigrants. Indeed, as Said and Mbembe's work has demonstrated, Britain has a central role in the history of modern colonialism, and Casey's analysis once again works to flatten this into the same bland calls for tolerance as espoused by the British government's use of "British values." Casey does note that "following the EU referendum, reported incidents of hate crime rose again, possibly reflecting another such spike, with perpetrators feeling emboldened by the result." (2016, p. 15) This is not commented upon again and is an implicit connection, intended or otherwise, between the Leave campaign, the subsequent machinations required to make Brexit happen and the characterisation of these as racist dog whistles. Casey fails to make a connection between the growing atmosphere of mistrust, anxiety, and fear that brought about the EU referendum which now characterises the process of Brexit negotiations and in doing so demonstrates a commitment to discussing social cohesion and integration in Britain from the perspective of a constructed and exceptionalising mirror image that sees Britain as a benevolent world leader who has committed no harms, and could not do so in the future. This leaves the review in a position where it fails to discuss anxieties around British identity and unease around racist and xenophobic attitudes in Britain with any kind of concentrated focus, precisely because the framework it sets out for itself allows it only to see an exceptionally blinkered view of Britain.

This framing of The Casey Review and other governmental attitudes like it is central to understanding why narratives of clash of civilisations in Yasmin or the fatalistic exoticisation in texts like Brick Lane are so frustrating – they begin with frameworks chosen to trap the ensuing discourse in a limited, revisionist, and unrealistic scope that fails to see with both breadth and depth.

9/11 as a plot device

As mentioned briefly above, Yasmin was released soon after 9/11, and its proximity to the early rhetoric of the war on terror is reflected throughout the film with frequent voiceovers from George W. Bush and Tony Blair that bleed from a diegetic standpoint to extra-diegetic sound. In a similar manner to the repetition of the azaan and a focus on Yasmin's clothing choices, the decision to include Bush and Blair demonstrates the film's engagement with contemporary political rhetoric as one which remains mired in the initial calls for a "war on terror" that would rein in the scourge of Islamist terrorism. For example, whilst Yasmin secretly changes into a pair of jeans at a roadside, an excerpt from the radio hears Bush state that "the United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for this callous…" The narrative is framed with the notion that Yasmin has to live a double life, itself a tagline of the film - "one woman, two lives" - positioning her as an example of a Muslim woman whose life is dominated by the opposition between Western life, apparently having a job, driving a car, wearing jeans, leaving hair uncovered, against the expectations from her Muslim family of remaining at home, not wearing jeans, not drinking and covering her hair. Once again, this reinforces totalising Orientalist discourse about culture clash and suggests South Asians struggle to negotiate between so-called Western values and the implied traditional and conservative South Asian values (Sian 2013). Thus, the juxtaposition of Yasmin changing into jeans with Bush's voiceover in the background is one which has permeated post-9/11 representations of Muslim women and is more symbol and stereotype, than it is original content.

The next instance of a voiceover from Bush occurs after Yasmin's father berates his son for claiming that 9/11 had "style." The interaction draws out the impact of generational difference in framing 9/11; Yasmin's father claims to be ashamed of the terrorists, tying his shame with how grateful for he is to Britain for providing a "home" for him. Nasir, Yasmin's brother, claims they're about to be "sent back home" and positions himself, and by implication the terrorists who committed 9/11, as "freedom fighters." This fraught scene is immediately followed with shots of children playing outside in the backstreet with Bush's

voice moving from the television to a voiceover: "the attack on our nation was also an attack on the ideals that make our nation...we value every life, our enemies value none, not even the innocent." The insertion of the voiceover undercuts the complexity of the earlier scene; Yasmin's father's opinions are conveyed in the position of an angry father berating a son. The generational differences in political opinion speak to the immediate aftermath of 9/11 as one of shock, horror, and terror. The 'our' he references carries with it an implication of being non-Muslim, as well as an ideological attack that separates out "our" very ways of life from the implied 'them' of the "enemies." Bush paints a picture of a brutal, uncompromising, and cohesive enemy - there are no subtleties of symbolism necessary here; the core of the film is concerned with engaging with a way of life for Muslims framed around a "clash of civilisations" narrative wherein Muslims in the West are positioned as insider outsiders. For all Yasmin's father's protestations about how they should be grateful for having a home in Britain, Bush's comments are a decisive reminder of an institutional position taken in regards to Muslims, a separation between who is at home and who is an enemy.

The latter half of the film concerns Yasmin trying to get a divorce from her husband after he tries to rape her (another trope that falls under the category of native savage by way of uncontrollable sexual desire, as briefly touched upon in the previous chapter with Puar and Bhattacharyya's work), attempting to have him released from a local police station, and negotiating her position after the ramifications of 9/11 continue to unfold in her life. Her father repeatedly reinforces that he has given her too much "freedom," that he can bear her having a job, but not her getting a divorce, neatly encapsulating the kind of agency under the spotlight here - an agency entirely at the whims of men in her family, and every level of choice in her life mediated by the men in her life. It is here that a context mindful of patriarchal structures across race, of patriarchal expectations of women, and of men as subjects, dictates the focalisation of Yasmin. Both she and her husband are gazed at, and there is an element of her husband being painted as the savage from the Far East who cannot be assimilated into British society. The context, however, of Yasmin being rejected by her co-workers, of struggling to mould her life into one befitting white, British expectations against her father's expectations is one that solidifies her position as contextual object, to the patriarchal subject.

The second half of the film that sees the escalation of these narrative disruptions is symbolically triggered by 9/11. Yasmin and her co-workers watch the twin towers come down on a television screen at work, and immediately look upon Yasmin with suspicion. Even a day after 9/11, it would be possible to understand her co-workers' reaction but, in the narrative world of the film, this reaction is inexplicable – it is impossible that civilians watching the attack unfold live on television would have any hint that it was perpetrated by Al-Qaeda, and thus have any kind of association with Muslims. Such an unseating of time – a film released in 2004 which projects 2004 Islamophobia onto a narrative moment which exists in 2001 – demonstrates the commitment of the film to a linear narrative of suspicion and mistrust of Muslims, retrospectively pieced together. As it is, Yasmin's white and female co-workers call her Osama, accuse her of being in the Taliban, and pointedly refuse to interact with her. Whilst these incidents of racism technically happen after 9/11 in the narrative world of Yasmin, it remains that the characters' reaction to 9/11 and immediate distrust of Yasmin herself speaks to the retroactive reaction to 9/11 which erupts in both time and space; the real-world timing of the film means that the narrative behaves as though 9/11 was always going to happen, and that the structural settling of an updated iteration of Islamophobia was going to feel as though it had always been there. Yasmin's movement through the space of her narrative world was only ever leading to this moment, this singularly horrifying moment, and her subsequent actions were only going to unfold in the manner they do precisely because of 9/11 and the post-9/11 landscape.

As with Yasmin, 9/11 is, perhaps disrespectfully, used in Brick Lane as a plot device that complicates and disrupts the narrative equilibrium. In this instance, Nazneen and Karim's eyes meet on a crowded street and they allow themselves a rare moment of publicly acknowledging their relationship, if only between themselves. This is disrupted with people rushing into a nearby shop to see the now familiar sight of the twin towers crumbling down, which the audience sees on multiple screens. Just as the film punctuates Nazneen's character growth with images of her reflection dispersed throughout the narrative, so too is the reach of 9/11 broadcast simultaneously on multiple tv screens within sight of Nazneen. Interestingly however, the very next scene showing Channu's reaction as the family watches the footage at home is to insist that the family pack their bags, as they must go "home" to Bangladesh. 9/11 accelerates a process that, for Channu, had already begun. Nazneen had wanted to return to

Bangladesh to be with her sister, and, whilst still watching the news footage of 9/11, Nazneen states "the world has gone mad." As with Yasmin, voiceovers from Bush and Blair punctuate the narrative disruption with Blair stating "there are no adequate words of condemnation. Their barbarism will stand as their shame for all eternity." The mention of barbarism particularly connotes the racialised stereotypes of non-white people, and Muslims and South Asians here, as barbaric, savage and uncontrollable (see: Salter 2002; Said 2003). For us, however, this is undercut with Channu racing around the flat declaring that the family must leave Britain as soon as they possibly can because of the "backlash" he anticipates. Channu's reaction is one that many Muslims were faced with in both the immediate and continued aftermath of 9/11 and, given the context of films like Yasmin, it is an unexpected choice from filmmakers to depict this in a film that is not directly "about" 9/11. A voiceover from a newsreader goes on to state that "many claim in the last seven days 'Muslim' has become a dirty word," interspersed with shots of the family's neighbours yelling at Muslims "go! You fucking terrorists! Get out!" along with an anti-Iraq war rally on the news. By including this context of racist backlash and anti-war rallies, the film complicates any straightforward readings of post-9/11 environments and it is here that Yasmin and Brick Lane acknowledge the hate crimes that followed, and follow, 9/11. Brick Lane, however, focuses upon an explicit conversation about home, where both Channu and Nazneen's status as immigrants from Bangladesh speeds up their previous plans to return "home." For many people marked as Other in Britain, the concept of multiple homes or a "return" to some other space outside of Britain is an ever-present sign of split allegiances as far as The Casey Review's understanding of integration and social cohesion is concerned, rather than a sign of global multiculturalism. In various ways, the reaction to the protagonists from both films immediately coalesce around notions of home and belonging. Reviews like Dame Casey's are restricted in their incapability, and perhaps unwillingness, to consider with any kind of extended compassion the emotional connections and responses to events like 9/11 for those who are striving to stay in Britain, as their home, obscured as the conclusions of these reviews are by Orientalist and Islamophobic views of how such Muslims experience life in Britain.

Relatedly, Rey Chow asserts that "the original that is supposed to be replicated is no longer the white man or his culture but rather an image, a stereotyped view of the ethnic" (1993, p. 92). Brick Lane's choice to surround Nazneen with women from her racial group to build her

character is a choice that begins to do some of this work. Not only her mother, but her sister who she frequently writes to, cares for and is shown to love; her two daughters Shahna and Bibi whom she respects and loves; her neighbour and friend Shazia; the domineering moneylender Mrs Ahmed; various white and South Asian women in the background of shots – all contribute to showing a range of South Asian women. This is in direct contrast to Yasmin, where only one background character who is also South Asian is shown to interact with Yasmin. A large section of the film is devoted to the relationship between Yasmin's father and son – this is not to say such a relationship should not be explored, disjointed and ill-developed as it is, but that it is a choice not to use other women in Yasmin's life in order to demonstrate a range of depictions that open up the possibilities of representation in the film. In fact, the most time devoted to women in Yasmin's life comes from a group of white women at work who racially abuse her.

The women around Nazneen, however, are an indication of the politics of the film, as a politics that builds towards her character without attempts at totalizing or universalising narratives. The effect of this is to build a strong foundation that can hold the possibility of representing women as subjects who look back, as well as subjects capable of having a range of women's experiences and narratives. Many of Yasmin's actions are not well explained, going so far as to appear inexplicable because her world is not conveyed in a manner conducive to believability. In Brick Lane, however, there are elements of choice – of narrative, of focalisation, of time spent on world building – that work to paint a believable and convincing depiction of who Nazneen is, where she comes from and where she may go. In other words, women who have potential from the opening of the film to not be enemies from the outset. Granted, the status of "not enemy" is nothing particularly meaningful but, as the discussion will go on to demonstrate, the designation of "enemy" is one which operates in shades of grey rather than within easily recognisable boundaries. It is never a consideration in the beginning of this film that Nazneen could be an enemy whereas Yasmin, as demonstrated earlier, is about tired and lazy binary oppositions before the film even begins. Brick Lane provides context through building up layers of focalisation that position Nazneen as within a conflict about her position in her family, her marriage, and her country of residence, but never as innately in conflict by virtue of presumed "facts" of existence. Both films engage with themes of aliens residing in Britain and of aliens looking to return home, and this trope pivots

directly upon the inclusion of 9/11 as a major plot point. It is 9/11 that coheres the filmic discourse around where these women belong, of how they negotiate their life choices and their futures. 9/11 is temporally and spatially removed from its place in linear understandings of American history – 9/11 happens in the middle of the film, but the audience begins watching the film in a decidedly post-9/11 world – and instead occupies a place within the narrative worlds of these two films as an emotional touchstone for moral understandings of humans and citizens. The unseating of 9/11 from time and space is an unseating which is deployed in order to restate the centrality of the war on terror and the notion of Muslims as enemies within or aliens yearning for home as the central principle through which Yasmin and Nazneen exist as citizens in Britain. It becomes the moral centre of these films and structures the construction of these characters; all avenues lead to 9/11 in these narrative worlds.

The taking apart of linear time in relation to 9/11, of constructing media content that centralises 9/11 as a permanent fixture in Muslim subconsciousness speaks to The Casey Review's confidence in a future for Britain built upon an inclusive society, which rests upon a construction of Britain as a state inexplicably free of the necropolitical strategies Mbembe outlines. Indeed, Mbembe argues that,

> what connects terror, death, and freedom is an ecstatic notion of temporality and politics. The future, here, can be authentically anticipated, but not in the present. The present itself is but a moment of vision–vision of the freedom not yet come (2003, p. 39).

It is a fundamental truth of any nation state that its status of power and sovereignty rests upon a linkage between death and freedom. The most modern iteration for Britain draws directly upon a post-9/11 status which links the death of Muslims as freedom for Britain. The Casey Review's imagination of a future for Britain that involves integration and assimilation is a future gazed upon with the core belief of British Muslims as strangers, at best, and enemies at worst, in white British culture. Here, the iteration of terror is both the politicised version of "Islamist" terror which connects to death, and which in turn connects to freedom: Casey's definition of freedom is one built upon social cohesion.

This social cohesion, however, is largely defined as Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities integrating to white British communities:

> Despite the apparent wider distribution of ethnic minority groups across Britain, White British and Irish ethnic groups are least likely to have ethnically mixed social networks, while people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnicity are least likely to have friends from outside their neighbourhood. Black African and Mixed ethnicity groups, on the other hand, are most likely to have friends from outside their neighbourhood (2016, p. 56)

Integration amongst other communities of colour is not measured; only integration and social cohesion with whites. The review is well aware of the fact that the 2011 census shows 81.5% of the population were White British (50 million), whilst only 7.1% were Asian (4.4 million) (2016, p. 24) and it is an analytical choice to devote the vast majority of the document to decrying the apparent insularity of Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. The document would be unable to see why Nazneen's growth as a character gathers strength from others in her community, and would instead question her circle of friends as problematic for not including white people. It is epistemologically and morally questionable as to the review's motivations in focusing upon the less than 7% of the population as failing to integrate, rather than examining the structural and community-led reasons as to why the majority ethnicity in the country have failed to promote and enact social cohesion.

The best example of the document's failure in this regard arises from discussions of unemployment around the country - Casey writes that people from Black, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi ethnic communities are three times more likely to be unemployed than people from white ethnic groups (2016, p. 89), and acknowledges that this gap in unemployment is more pronounced in the north of Britain. These disparities are central to understanding issues of access, social mobility, education attainment gaps, and mental health issues faced by communities of all ethnicities across Britain. This, combined with the fact of white lack of integration, is largely ignored by the document in favour of examining the "cultural attitudes" that mean South Asian women have one of the highest rates of unemployment in the country. In refusing to make connections between class conditions and realities of housing, education, and employment, the review chooses single-axis analysis that perpetuates xenophobic and

anti-immigrant attitudes towards Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities; and in so doing, refuses to make connections between terror, death, and freedom that Mbembe describes.

War on Islam

Both films involve storylines which concern the confrontation of South Asian Muslim women with their place in newly 9/11 contexts, and both also react to the questions around what being a Muslim involves, and how to participate in global Muslim communities. In Yasmin, after she has her home raided by armed police, with guns pointed at her father and brother, Tariq, her younger brother, is outraged and attends a meeting with a number of other young brown men. Here, the other men cite Chechnya, Palestine, and Afghanistan as various sites of atrocities committed against Muslims in other countries, as well as the racism faced by them in northern England. Tariq inexplicably claims he is leaving to join the Taliban and disappears from the narrative without further explanation or exposition. Yasmin does briefly object to his leaving, and warns him against going but it is apparently ineffective, particularly given Tariq's belief that he is morally obligated to do something. Prior to this, he is shown as a belligerent teenager interested only in sex with white girls and smoking weed. His moral objections aren't given much treatment by the film, and his eventual exit is barely touched upon, indicating a lack of commitment to the themes of his narrative exit.

This construction of the globality of Islam is also explored in Brick Lane when Nazneen and Channu attend a Bengal Tigers local meeting to discuss action to be taken after a spate of racist attacks. Here, Karim, Nazneen's love interest, expresses a need for unity and Muslim brotherhood amongst the community that urges them to pay attention to injustice both at home in Britain and abroad. This is in direct contrast to Yasmin where Tariq's concerns are barely given any attention and are seen as reactive and impulsive, but, nevertheless, both films are concerned with a global understanding of Muslim communities beyond Britain and making connections through religion. Channu, however, objects strongly to this call for unity and declares that:

"you think Islam unites us? Islam is not where you are from. Islam is not a country. You think you are my brother more than the next man on the street because we are both Muslims? Three million died in East Pakistan in this lifetime, what was that? Brotherly love? It was a Muslim killing a Muslim

and goes on to conclude that "Islam is in my heart" as it is "not a country." It is strange to have this come from Channu, who usually potters around the flat talking over and at people about how cultured, educated, and, intelligent he is. More often than not he is a figure of quiet ridicule and to see him express his opinions in this manner and, unknowingly, to the man his wife is having an affair with makes it a moment where one is unsure as to how to take his speech. Channu's reference to the millions of Bangladeshi people dying at the hands of a Pakistani government before Bangladesh was actually formed is a poignant reminder of the kind of unity the community is dealing with, but his assertion that Muslims kill Muslims too is oddly out of place and derails the conversation the group are having from being about how to deal with Islamophobic and racist abuse in their homes to an abstract one of inter-Muslim unity. Channu's claim that Islam is in his heart is a veiled communication that he need not express it outwardly, and the rejoinder for Karim and his organising friends is that Islam does not have the power to bring its adherents together under political and moral imperatives. This, of course, misses those who are marked as Muslim, notably Muslim women who wear hijab and the elision of those who are visibly Arab or South Asian as Muslim. This complex moment aligns with Tariq's objections in Yasmin where the same countries – Chechnya, Afghanistan, Palestine – are cited as evidence of structural and global Islamophobia. Channu's argument against this is one which steers the conversation away from these injustices and instead questions the possibility of unity amongst a naturally complex and fractured global history of Muslims. Both films tap into the sense of injustice felt at the lack of historical acknowledgement of social injustices and the discourse that follows, whilst frequently limited, adds an important context to the functioning of necropolitics for British Muslims: connections between terror and death and freedom require the psyche of nations or states. To live without this is to live with state denial which adds to the harm caused by such forms of violence.

Both these films are complex engagements with being a South Asian Muslim woman in Britain and, for someone like Yasmin, who is shown to become "more" Muslim and is therefore rejected by her white counterparts, signals an engagement primarily with and for white British non-Muslim audiences. Regardless of intention, the impact is to orientate Muslim men and women in traditionally patriarchal roles that position them as separate from mainstream society. Yasmin leaves us with the sense that however interesting and gritty the portrayal of Muslims, it is these very same Muslims that must remain at an ideological and physical distance for the very protection of British ideals and sense of history. Meanwhile, the ending of Brick Lane sees Nazneen also negotiating her relationship with the men in her life, as she follows the pleas of her daughters to remain in England – the question of home continues to rear its head as Karim proposes marriage to Nazneen. He had earlier explained that his attraction to her had been because he believes there are two types of girls, those that are "Westernised and religious," whom he finds to have excess expectations, and another type of girl from the village who he calls the "real thing." Until this point in the narrative, Nazneen and Karim have found themselves to be rather compatible with one another, and so it is a little surprising when Nazneen tells him, "I do not want to marry you. I am no longer the real thing. I am no longer the girl from the village" and clarifies what their relationship had meant to her: "I just wanted to feel like I was at home." For Nazneen, Karim represented a kind of home in a number of ways – partly that she loved him and enjoyed the sex, but also that his British nationality meant that she could connect to England through him, and thus to her physical home. Her use of "I am no longer" indicates that she has undergone a change wherein her understanding of herself, and therefore of what home means to her, has shifted in some fundamental way.

Before this moment is explored further, it is important to note that directly after this scene Nazneen has her first voiceover of the film. Whilst Channu fills the space of their home with his meandering and self-important chatter, Nazneen begins to take up space of her own and talks of her understanding of love as one that can grow over time as well as all at once, the implication being that she loves Channu in her own way but she still cannot be with him: she tells him he must go to Bangladesh alone and she will remain on Brick Lane with her daughters. Channu pretends it was his decision, and the girls are clearly overjoyed. The moments of Nazneen rejecting the men in her life and choosing herself and her daughters, are

moments which spring from the foundation of having women in the film who occupy varied roles and thus represent the varied narrative spaces Nazneen has available. Nazneen's choice of relationship and lifestyle also mirrors the films attitude towards politics. Ultimately she rejects, or at the very least disregards, Karim's anti-racist politics, and Channu's politics that are critical of calls for unity. She chooses to be with her daughters and the film is, from a distance, about Nazneen empowering herself and that empowerment being believably portrayed for an audience. As much as 9/11 functions as a plot device, it is not a plot device that decisively and wholly changes the lives of all Muslims in the film, as with Yasmin. Here, 9/11 alters the course of Nazneen's life, but more as a reminder to hold her own gaze and make decisions based upon her own desires.

In choosing to represent "home" as a fluid and changeable entity, Brick Lane goes some way in both acknowledging the view of some, such as racists yelling at them to go home on the streets, whilst also acknowledging Nazneen's own personal view of where she feels at home. For Nazneen, home is simultaneously England, Bangladesh, the love of a man, the love of her sister and mother, the love of her daughters. At the very end, Nazneen reflects that:

> "I am torn between two worlds, leaving you [Hasina] behind. But then I wake and see that it is not you but me who has been running, searching for a place that has already been found."

The conclusion the film guides us towards, in a similar end point as Yasmin, is one that proclaims Nazneen was home all along and all she had to do was realise this. This neat ending carries with it a troubling undercurrent, as it orientates audiences towards a politics of assimilation. Whilst assimilation is not outwardly negative, it appears so when one considers that in order to assimilate, something must have been outside the norm/strange/alien. The process of Nazneen realising she can stay "at home" is an internal one and the implication is therefore that her memories of 'back home' in Bangladesh drew her away from considering England as her home. Assimilation requires an alien characteristic that can be brought into the fold and, for much of the film, Nazneen and her family were strangers/outsiders/enemies by virtue of being brown and Muslim. 9/11 exacerbated these tensions and heightened their differences, and so Nazneen's choice to remain at home is both a conclusion of empowerment

but also a testament to the difficult politics of those bodies designated as enemy or strange. Both conclusions hold the centre of Brick Lane together. There certainly is a strong foundation that works hard to position both men and women as subjects who are afforded focalisation which in turn allows for complicated representations; there is also a thread running throughout the film that positions Nazneen as outside of the "norm," a norm that is white and non-Muslim. Both women shed the brown men in their life and choose to remain alone; this carries with it the pernicious trope of brown men as exceptionally patriarchal in direct opposition to well-meaning white men, and the notion of home being within them all along is an indicator of how both films choose to leave their audiences with the idea that assimilation through individual negotiation is possible once the individual under question places Britain above brown men.

Conclusion

This chapter began with a consideration of Muslim citizenship within Western states; the work of Sara Ahmed and Edward Said guided us towards an understanding of the process of encounter. The ensuing discussion of both the films and the policy document unfolded through a comprehension that encounter with Orientalising structures is a type of encounter which requires one to pay attention to optics and orientation. All three texts can convincingly occupy the status of being formed through the prism of whiteness, and their apprehension thus requires us to look and look again at the ensuing issues of representation. Both these films are examples of careful constructions of British Muslim South Asian women who are shown to have to work to integrate; the moment of obtaining citizenship is not the moment of belonging. Belonging is instead predicated upon some element of the respective protagonists being in negotiation; their very beings are tested by events such as 9/11 and they must reconcile themselves and their surroundings to repeatedly prove their internal understanding of home. Their belonging, and thus their citizenship, is conditional and it is precisely this instability which allows us to make a connection between state sovereignty and death. The mentions in the texts of the deaths of Muslims outside of Britain are a reminder of the currency of death; ethnicity and religion alter the value of both a citizen's life and a citizen's

death. It is the work of the state, the work of death, which corresponds to the values imbued in citizens in both life and death.

Exceptionalism in state building and maintenance creates properly disciplined subjects who in turn support and sanction the maintenance of the state through any means necessary. Yasmin and Nazneen are repeatedly positioned as separate and Other in some manner. In having the markers of being brown and Muslim, both women carry the potentiality for enmity – this leads to connections they make with other brown women being seen in texts like The Casey Review as connections of segregation and isolation, rather than community building and emotionally supportive networks. The dichotomy of choice throughout the film, be it practices of veiling, relations with brown Muslim men, reactions to racism, is one which is largely predicated around notions of double lives being lived, of clashes of culture. Instead, the theme of mirroring peppered throughout both films has less to do with the character's conceptions of themselves, and more to do with Britain's conception of itself in the geopolitical arena. The Casey Review is an expression of anxiety that is concerned with properly disciplining subjects, to use Bhattacharya's wording, who represent potential enmity to the state through their alien/strange/Other nature. This disciplining manifests through the intervention of voiceovers in both films, but most robustly through the engagement of all three texts with which bodies can be said to be at home, and to belong.

For The Casey Review this is best encapsulated with its finishing list of recommendations that call for increased intervention from local authorities, for increased facilitation of social cohesion, for the promotion of British values, for a review of the British citizenship process (including a proposed Oath of Integration with British Values and Society), for attention to standards in housing, education, and public office in a drive to facilitate integration (2016, p. 167-169). Whilst some of these are structural recommendations looking to address systemic social inequality, it is difficult to consider them seriously in light of the unstable foundations of the document, to say nothing of Theresa May's government's ability or intention of doing so. Of particular note for this chapter is the proposition of an oath of integration and a review of the citizenship progress. These limitations upon immigration suggest there are individuals coming into the country who do not wish to integrate, and must promise to do so in order to be full citizens. Throughout the document, whiteness has been considered the neutral base of

knowledge production and this has severely limited the analytical prowess of The Casey Review and the conclusions it reaches. Beginning from this juncture has created a persistent and clear agenda of suspicion and mischaracterisation of immigrant communities in Britain, and contributed more towards a consideration of Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities as culturally regressive and insular; in other words as aliens and strangers to Western civilisation. Social inequalities, pay and unemployment gaps, housing, and education deficiencies are ignored in favour of a xenophobic and racist gaze towards British Muslims marked as Other.

Interlude

"Underlying every interpretation of other cultures–especially of Islam–is the choice facing the individual scholar or intellectual: whether to put intellect at the service of power or at the service of criticism, community, and moral sense."

(Edward Said 1981, p. 164)

This chapter has seen many iterations: solely as a piece of film writing; additions of policy on integration; a version published as a book chapter; a version revised as a conference paper delivered at film conferences. Over the past three years, much has changed in British politics. In many ways, however, nothing has changed. The first draft of this chapter was written as the EU referendum saw campaigning from both Remain and Leave; the addition of The Casey Review came a few months after the confirmation that Britain had voted to leave the EU; its delivery at conferences and publications happened as Donald Trump was elected in the United States; the final draft happened whilst Shamima Begum had her British citizenship revoked.

Shamima left Britain at the age of 15 to join ISIS in Syria and had three children whilst living in a refugee camp, two of whom died. At the age of 19 she requested to come back home to Britain, only to have her British citizenship revoked by Home Secretary Sajid Javid (Ahsan 2019). In revoking her citizenship, Begum has been left stateless, in contravention of international citizenship laws. The British government maintains that Begum is able to claim Bangladeshi citizenship due to her mother being a Bangladeshi national, in spite of the fact that Begum was born in Britain and has never even been to Bangladesh.

There is much to say about the legality of such a move, and much more has been said about whether Begum "deserves" to return to Britain. The commentary following the revocation of citizenship has been dizzying, with calls for her never to be allowed back in the country, for her to stand trial in Britain as a terrorist, for an acknowledgement that she was groomed as a child of 15, for her to remain in Syria with ISIS, and for her to be stripped of citizenship. The discussion here is not one which is overly concerned with parsing out these viewpoints and arranging them into an argument; my intention instead is to discuss the context of this chapter in relation to a British citizen being stripped of their home status and made stateless.

Throughout my reading of Jasbir Puar and Achille Mbembe in particular, I have been able to examine the state of exceptionalism that underpins the most powerful Western states and find a language for the periodic amnesia undertaken by Britain in global politics. Mbembe's work has provided a language for the imbrication of death with the creation and maintenance of any state, its citizens, and its borders. Seeing Shamima Begum have her citizenship revoked,

away from the right to stand trial, and to illegally be made stateless, particularly whilst editing a chapter that deals with British Muslims as aliens and enemies has been particularly terrifying and heart-breaking. The casual nature with which commentators and journalists are willing to question a British citizen's right to reside in her country of birth speaks directly to the understandings of power that Puar and Mbembe lay out. The dissemination of what should be a civil right for Shamima Begum is rooted in the dehumanisation of Muslims, of young brown women playing out on an institutional scale.

This knowledge dissemination calls to mind Edward Said's work on Covering Islam which examines the role of the media in reporting about Muslims. When considering the knowledge production of academia, itself directly impacting and cohering with media reporting, Said writes that:

> Far from challenging the vulgar stereotypes circulated in the media, the academic experts on Islam are as a body neutralized in their isolated, immediately functional role as status symbols of relevant authority on Islam, and also dependent on the whole system constituting and legitimating their function within it: and it is this system which the media, in their reliance upon stereotypes based on fear and ignorance, reflect (1981, p. 148).

A lack of critical thinking has become the hallmark of many works produced on understanding Islam. The uncritical treatment of knowledge production, and the types of communities this protects and sustains, is central to the reproduction of stereotypes and restrictive thinking. Said's analysis is, as ever, a pertinent and astute reminder of the connections between harmful knowledge produced by academics and the media alike.

Said's warning has been at the forefront of my mind throughout the editing process, and whilst thinking about Shamima Begum. Knowledge is produced by academics, by the media, by states, and it would be morally remiss to leave this production unexamined and unquestioned. As much as my own discussion involves theoretical and textual analysis the grain of salt that it must be taken with is that real communities, real citizens, real people are being theorised about and written about. The process of orientation and the work of necropolitics are products of knowledge which are useful tools that contribute to fuller

pictures, but none of this work can afford to divorce itself from the fact that a range of different violent and harmful state policies, media judgements, academic knowledge productions deepen and produce further harm for people.

Chapter 3

Section 1
Islamophobia as Trauma

From the margins of the interlude to the centre of the text

Both interludes thus far have discussed the difficulties of researching your self and the various communities one belongs to. At this juncture of the thesis, the preceding chapters have concerned themselves with a more formal understanding of justice and the formation of representational qualities; the coming chapters will deal with a more affective concern with the construction of South Asian British Muslim women that pays attention to the signification process which constructs us as being looked at, and written about. As the interludes communicated the anxieties of writing and existing with these various intersecting experiences, this chapter will test out the communication of these anxieties within the chapter itself in order to examine the entwining of emotional communication within knowledge production. More specifically, the realities of statehood and citizenship underpin the experiences of South Asian Muslim women, but the pressures of dehumanisation and hypervisibilisation cannot be overstated nor over-explored, and it is these same pressures that provide a framework for understanding the impact upon individuals of unstable notions of home and freedom. This chapter will focus on the coming together of these experiences within the context of the pernicious and consistent nature of Islamophobic racism alongside concepts of trauma and being traumatised. Firstly, the chapter will examine the nature of this connection between statehood and citizenship. It will then consider modes of communication that constitute this connection by undertaking a discourse analysis that foregrounds the moment of encounter with traumatising materials. Finally. We will turn to a reflection on the intersections of Islamophobia and trauma.

Connections to trauma in Islamophobia

The years 2016 and 2017 have seen considerable upheaval in global politics that have heralded a shift to far-right and regressive politics in many nations. Brexit and the elections of various fascists around the world have confirmed what people of colour have known, and spoken about, for a long time - white supremacy is a gripping and ever-shifting system (Johnson 2018).

Overnight, Britain confirmed its departure from the EU in a characteristic fit of xenophobic, racist and anti-immigrant rhetoric. Writer Aisha Mirza describes what it felt like to discover the results of the referendum as a British citizen living in the US:

> Despite moving to New York on a scholarship to study the mental health effects of oppression, I am finding it so, so hard to admit to myself that a news story is making me feel like I'm dying so many times a day. I wish the white people telling me that I need to be gentle, that I should talk to those who are different from me, had any idea what it feels like to be this tired (2017, p. 170).

The reality for many people of colour in an age of notifications and news alerts has been one of having moments of terror delivered directly to your phone. This is the kind of trauma I'm going to be discussing: the relentless pace of the news delivered to Muslims of colour residing in the West who are simultaneously targeted by state-sanctioned Islamophobia and racism. To give an example from many - the first weekend of the abrupt unfolding of Trump's attempt to enact a Muslim ban (2017) saw first the shock of such a quickly drafted executive order early on in Trump's reign, followed by the horror, support, and dissent from people inside and outside the US. Tweets, Facebook posts, and video footage from those caught up in the chaos of the order set the terrifying tone of Trump's initial flurry of executive orders. To see citizens frightened in airports, to think of the prospect of an increasingly disgusting and inhumane response to the refugee crisis, to imagine those we love and those in our communities be explicitly terrorised by the largest global power in the world felt like dying; continually. Mirza's reaction to Brexit is one which brings forward the horror and dread that moves through your body as you see people you love and people in your communities terrorised by state machines. The uncertainty of what is to come for different Muslim communities and the impact on policy from a number of the most powerful states is an uncertainty which brings the very physical effects of trauma: disassociation, numbness, dread, fear, panic, shock, anxiety, hopelessness[7]. Mirza's inclusion of commentary upon personal and emotional impact in the face of massive political shifts also represents the plane

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[7] These terms are taken from the definition of trauma and stress-related definitions as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th Edition (American Psychiatric Association 2013).

of thought on which my definition of trauma will build upon, as one which begins from the perspective of brown people who are, as Rey Chow would argue, theorised about: those for whom policies and strategies are drafted in order to surveill, control, and define them.

Throughout the course of this chapter I will continue to provide similarly contemporary examples of trauma stemming from Islamophobic racism. These coming discussions begin from the contention that trauma theory as envisioned and espoused in the West does not begin from the orientation of recognising the experiences of non-white and non-Western people as traumatic. Whilst these same notions of trauma certainly have relevance for the experiences of people of colour, they do not epistemologically originate from the intersecting oppressions that shape our lives and are critical of colonial structures in an epistemological manner. In order to explore this thought further, I will now turn to contemporary notions of trauma which, firstly, recognise the weight of Western and colonial influences upon conceptions of trauma, and secondly, include cultural media within understandings of trauma alongside questions of race.

Social realities in designations of trauma

Some of the most influential names in trauma theory comes from the likes of Sigmund Freud, Cathy Caruth (1995), Ann E. Kaplan (2005), Dominick LaCapra (2001), and various other theorists of trauma seen through the lens of the Holocaust. The grouping of these theorists as influential derives largely from Roger Luckhurst's outline of what he terms "cultural trauma" (2008 p. 4) as influenced by these theorists, with particular influence attributed to Cathy Caruth. Some of these theorists will be discussed later on in this section, but for now I will turn to a discussion of contemporary theorists who have worked on the specific coming together of trauma theory in relation to contemporary and non-traditional settings. Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman's The Empire of Trauma (2007) goes some way to encapsulating the most modern iterations of trauma. Importantly, they begin with framing the limitations of their work as based upon Western conceptions, understandings, and applications of trauma that should not be universalised. This is a necessary, if startlingly low bar for academic practice, but nevertheless, a standpoint that sets a solid foundation for

acknowledging the vast deficiencies in mainstream trauma theory in accounting for racism and non-Western historical injustices as a starting point.

The authors go on to draw at least two important lines in the sand. The first is to position trauma as 'commonplace of the contemporary world' (2007, p. 2). This allows for the possibility that not only are attacks in the West traumatic, but so too are injustices and attacks outside of the West. Further, this trauma takes differing forms for those who experience incidents online and through other news mediums - a definitive move away from a historical understanding of trauma as only tied to the battlefield. For example, Fassin and Rechtman use the example of trauma as experienced by Palestinian citizens after Israeli attacks (2007, p. 189). In choosing to conceptualise these specific experiences as traumatic, Fassin and Rechtman reveal their political and cultural standpoints in moving not only beyond the battlefield but also to contemporary battlefields whose locus is centred not upon one area but upon geopolitical arenas (Mbembe 2003, p. 30). This demonstrates the political standpoints embedded within designations of trauma.

This takes us onto the second point which argues for reading critiques of social realities into trauma in order to interrogate the roles of morality and violence in understanding trauma. Fassin and Rechtman are careful to demonstrate that there can be no such thing as an objective reading of trauma, and no opinion can separate itself from moral judgements. Their methodology hinges upon inserting socially conscious readings of contemporary society into trauma theory, in order to bring forward the value judgements embedded within judging which events are to be designated as traumatic and which are not. This movement is one which works against traditional academic, Western, and, white notions of objectivity which are themselves based upon imagining certain bodies as worthy of the designation of trauma. Instead, Fassin and Rechtman reimagine the process of trauma and thus the kind of bodies upon which trauma can be bestowed.

This example brings forward the modern iteration of trauma theory unfolding in new spaces; 9/11 and 7/7 demonstrated trauma enacted in the age of information (Castells 2002). Fassin and Rechtman use 9/11 and 7/7 as examples of watershed events which were widely considered traumatising for those involved and those watching them unfold. Whether people

experienced these attacks directly at the scene, or indirectly through various news mediums, this news was received with a hegemonic acceptance that the whole world had stopped to watch these events unfold. It has come to be a given that it is understandable for one to be shaken and haunted by what unfolded. These were attacks upon the US, upon the UK, and Western civilisation. They were presented as universalised, coherent, ideological attacks on the heart of ostensibly Western values of tolerance, freedom, and respect. The facts of shock, visceral terror, and devastation of 9/11 and 7/7 are representative of almost total societal acceptance, and therefore validation, that these events were traumatic for those involved in any way –as long as those receiving the news were Western, white, or non-Muslim.

It is important to interject, then, with the notion that designations of trauma are often imbricated within hierarchies of identity. Of course, I do not wish to contest the status of those events as traumatic, but what I do wish to point out is that such an acceptance and validation of trauma is sorely lacking from collective and individual conceptualisations of terrorist attacks outside of the West – the victims of those attacks do not possess the same public and political consciousness as their Western and white counterparts. To be considered "other" in Western society is to be placed outside of this collective trauma, and thus outside of societal support for grieving, mourning, and processing.

Post-terror attack

One avenue into determining how certain bodies can be thought of as traumatised is to examine the kind of backlash enacted towards British Muslims post-terror attack. For example, these tweets responding to the Westminster attacks (2017) exemplify the unique position of British Muslims, who are in this instance South Asians, expressing their initial reactions to the incident. (See Figures 1, 2, and 3). The attacks themselves will be discussed later in the chapter but for now, this represents a microcosm of what has now come to be a learned response - the fear in the pit of your stomach, your heart clenching as you wait to hear whether the attacker is Muslim and you will be blamed for it, or if it is a non-Muslim and there won't be a spate of related hate crimes and the story will largely fritter itself away. The presence of Twitter as a platform that allows such expression which is freely and instantly available for other Muslims is one which works to see small moments of expressions of

trauma and fear that will not be covered in traditional media. Connections between Muslims that facilitate discussions some may not be able to partake in otherwise are small, but important, spikes in community - however much these spikes are outside of hegemonically agreed-upon discourse.

Figure 1 (Amna, 2017a)

Amna ✔
@AGlasgowGirl

Following ⌄

We get ready to brace ourselves incase its "one of us" so we can mentally prepare for the consequences of some unrelated dickheads actions

RETWEETS
193

LIKES
232
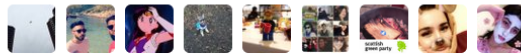
4:47 PM - 22 Mar 2017

↩ 16   ⟳ 193   ♥ **232**

Figure 2 (Amna, 2017b)

Ahmad a
@123_ahmad_321

👤+ Follow ⌄

We Muslims cannot grieve for the victims of the terror attack in #Westminster . Instead we just pray the attacker isn't Muslim.

6:11 PM - 22 Mar 2017

↩ 1   ⟳   ♡

| Tweet your reply |

Ahmad a @123_ahmad_321 · Mar 22   ⌄
because we fear the backlash. People like tommy Robinson are already calling for war against us.

↩ 2   ⟳   ♡

Figure 3 (Ahmad 2017)

Of course, since Westminster there have been other flashpoints that have sparked similar reactions for many Muslims, namely the attacks at London Bridge (2017) and at the Manchester Arena (2017). These events do not allow Muslims to grieve and partake in the collective trauma because sites likes Twitter also bring forward the racial abuse and blame directed at us. Hate crimes spike after these events - notably the attack at Finsbury Park where a white man purposely drove his van into a group of Muslim men returning home from the mosque, killing one man and injuring at least eight others (Siddique & Topping 2017), in addition to the 500% rise in Islamophobic hate crimes after the attack at the Manchester arena (Halliday 2017).

The way in which various attacks are disseminated based upon global politics encapsulates one of the functions of white supremacy whereupon experiences of racism are routinely disbelieved, questioned, and thus any subsequent emotional and mental toll as a result of suffering racism is cast as illegitimate or non-existent. Already, whilst looking at this at a general level, a fundamental element of trauma - to believe victims and their accounts of their own trauma - is missing. Experiences of racism are not afforded the designation of trauma, and so, are not positioned as requiring collective care, healing or condemnation. To care or feel strong emotions in relation to racist experiences is not societally accepted as emotionally traumatising, because racism itself is denied and disbelieved.[8]

Traditional trauma theory

I will now move on to discuss the spectre and weight of traditional trauma theory. Trauma theory in its conventional and Western form is incapable of seeing any body that is a non-universalised subject. That said, it is important to state that whilst there has been some work done to acknowledge modern day, post-9/11 influenced trauma, there have also been many Black academics who have made connections between race and a kind of trauma,

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[8] See: Susana Ming Lowe, Yuki Okubo, Michael F. Reilly. (2012). A Qualitative Inquiry Into Racism, Trauma, and Coping: Implications for Supporting Victims of Racism. Professional Psychology: Research and Practice. 43:3, pp. 190-198; Janis V. Sanchez-Hucles. (1999). Racism: Emotional Abusiveness and Psychological Trauma for Ethnic Minorities. Journal of Emotional Abuse. 1:2, pp. 69-87.

particularly Hortense Spillers' work on the trauma of slavery being passed down through generations, bell hooks' work on the healing necessary for black feminists, and Frantz Fanon's central work on the psychological viciousness of whiteness.[9] This work has enabled many connections between trauma (whether labelled as such or indirectly referenced as such) and race to be made, but has not been considered as canonical and central to understanding trauma as the works of Freud and Caruth. This epistemological choice speaks, once again, to the standpoints and moral judgements made in designations of trauma, as well as the subsequent violent limitations of knowledge production.

As the works of Freud and Caruth have been positioned as instrumental in establishing a language of trauma, I will now confront their work before moving on. Their work has been canonised by the Western academy and paying attention to who can be read into the text can be a fruitful exercise in demonstrating where the future of trauma and race studies does not lie.

In The Trauma Question, Roger Luckhurst summarises Freud as arguing:

> Repetition compulsion has become a cultural shorthand for the consequences of traumatic events: individuals, collectives and nations risk trapping themselves in cycles of uncomprehending repetition unless the traumatic event is translated from repetition to the healthy analytic process of 'working through' (2008, p. 9).

When placing this against the concept of experiences of racism in general, and specifically Islamophobia, its weaknesses become immediately obvious. The term "healthy" is extremely dubious here - Freud, and subsequent interpreters of his work, have presumed that the correct way to experience trauma is to work through it in order to recover from it. This presumes the singularity of a traumatic event, as well as the origin of the trauma distancing itself through the recovery process. When theorising experiences of Islamophobic racism, such a model is evidently insufficient; experiences of racism are experienced repeatedly and incessantly.

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[9] See: Hortense Spillers 'Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book,' Diacritics 17(2), 64-81.; bell hooks Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery. New York: Routledge, 2015; Frantz Fanon Black Skin White Masks. London: Pluto Press, 1986.

Whilst they can all be categorised as 'racist,' other intersections of classism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism also diversify these traumatic experiences, and, each singular experience of racism is unique yet also palimpsestic in its own right.

Further, Freud's idea of 'translating' trauma from repetition to 'working through' also presumes that the trauma can be worked through. This is by no means to argue that those who experience racism are doomed to be traumatised by racism indefinitely, but rather that, in order for the trauma to be confronted in the model Freud outlines, white supremacy (and its contingent impacts such as classism, homophobia, transphobia, disability prejudices) would have to be robustly and comprehensively dismantled.

In a similar vein to Freud, Caruth states that:

> The traumatised, we might say, carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess. (1995, p. 5).

The insertion of impossibility – of being unable to process, move on from, or confront trauma – is central to understanding Western, white trauma theory. I question, however, if it is useful, or indeed accurate, to consider trauma in relation to its impossible nature. It is certainly true that experiences of racism are steeped in white disbelief which re-traumatises the victim; our societies are not structured to place non-white people as victims, particularly when it comes to bestowing the status of victimhood on someone because they have experienced racism. In that sense, victims of racism are not able to possess their own history. However, this is not a function or symptom of trauma but, rather, an offshoot of white supremacy which places people in the position of having to defend their humanity before they can be considered victims.

To discuss the "impossibility" of incorporating traumatic memories into an individual's psyche, or to frame the issue as one which can be solved by confronting it in therapy, are approaches which forego both the agency of the traumatised individual, and the social agency of that individual. To tackle those structures of, often state-sanctioned, violence would be an avenue into dealing with traumatising experiences of racism. This is not to say that such a

thing is any more possible than Caruth or Freud's suggestions, but rather that their bodies of work do not pay attention to the intersections I have mentioned and so cannot hold the capacity to apprehend or explore them and push us forwards.

Processes of humanisation

The question remains: with this daunting wall of racist and Islamophobic structures, how is anybody supposed to get through a day? Why would anybody want to? These are questions that have been pointedly missing from mainstream trauma theory, and which should be central to trauma theory.

Here, I turn to a selection of memes from Twitter that largely require familiarity with Islamic praxis, as a microcosm of the kind of things that can help get people through a day (see figures 4, 5, 6, and 7). This is an important dynamic in the dissemination of these memes - as jokes, memes lose their impact if one attempts to explain them, and so understanding the references in the memes below requires varying levels of familiarity with Islamic language and thereby hermeneitically allows certain audiences in, whilst shutting others out.

Figure 4 (Younis 2016).

Masouma
@mxsoumxo

Follow

Listen Hafsa, I know you're from London, but you can't shout "BARS" when Qur'an is being recited

RETWEETS 133   LIKES 153

1:11 PM - 11 Sep 2016

Figure 5 (Masouma, 2016).

angry canjeelo™
@versacejabi

Follow

ukhti aisha I know you're from New York but you can't finish every dua with "deadass"

RETWEETS 2,416   LIKES 2,528

5:41 PM - 8 Sep 2016

26   2.4K   2.5K

Figure 6 (Angry Canjeelo ™ (sic) 2016).

Figure 7 (Faizal Rosly, 2016).

These images are testament to a concept central to existing in worlds within which you are not supposed to exist. The movement between Muslims going from Twitter to Instagram, or other social media sites, is a movement which carries grief and distraction and humour and abuse and love all together. Seeing other people who look like you or share your cultural and political beliefs and backgrounds widens your personal capacity for what people like you are seen to do, and therefore can do. In other words, it allows you to see yourself, and to be seen, as a human. Here is the crux of this discussion - systemic and comprehensive dehumanisation prohibits any chance of certain bodies, Muslim and South Asian in this thesis, of being seen as worthy. And yet, here are communities of people creating anyway in the face of "impossibility." Encounter in social media, as in this series of memes, depends on the enmeshment of knowledge of slang, of Islamic concepts, of meme formats, and of popular culture produced by fellow brown people. Such a space is indicative of the movements available to people who do not have to translate culture in order to consume it; it is for them at its inception.

Whilst trauma theory can be central to articulating the violence inherent in experiences of Islamophobia, it cannot be the end point for discussion. Leaving the discussion here would be to entrench oneself in a theory which does not, at present, allow for thriving instead of surviving. Structures of white supremacy and patriarchy are embedded into our societies, and so examples of a range of interactions on social media represent people existing in spite of, in addition to, and over traumatic experiences of Islamophobia.

When framing the kind of trauma that comes from micro-aggressions (particularly examples that are documented in social media) it is difficult to separate your self from the noise of violence and despair. The thread I've run through this paper has been one of feelings - feeling like you're dying, feeling like your humanity is not reflected back at you, feeling like it is impossible to thrive. There is no real answer to why people continue to survive, and there is no singular answer to how people continue to do so. In feeling out the ramifications of Islamophobic violence that has sharply intensified since 9/11, (and given Prevent legislation and the Muslim ban is likely to continue to do so) I have demonstrated that there is value to identifying patterns that people use to see themselves. In doing so, we can carve spaces on social media for communities of Muslims with a diverse range of experiences and standpoints - a far cry from the work of traditional trauma theory.

Much of what I have said, of course, has larger applicability to the experiences of people of colour in general, but I think it's important to be able to have spaces where we share the specificities of our experiences. I would like to leave this section with the following questions - what does it mean that we are at a point where we are still establishing the link between trauma and racism (and indeed that these areas of thought are hotly contested even as separate entities)? How does that impact the conversations we have with older generations with regard to what trauma looks like? How do we tie up trauma stemming from racism and situate it amongst the more "everyday" experiences of mental illnesses people in brown communities face? These are not theoretical expositions upon "what is to be done" about conceptualisations of trauma amongst South Asian Muslim communities, but questions that hope to push forward how we can better support one another in a time of great instability and violence.

Section 2

Ghost in the Machine

Notable ghosts

Thus far, the thesis' central points of analysis and movement have all revolved around death in some form. Death is wielded by states exercising power, decisions around citizenship and subject formation within the state are decisions that are rooted in death, questions of home and belonging, and even of assimilation, involve an engagement with death in the past, present, and future. The analysis so far has seen an understanding of death in its physical finality, in structural and systemic death that swirls through state machinations, in the feeling of death as one of being gripped by terror: in other words, expressions of trauma that require a structural and expansive gaze. This harkens back to Cathy Caruth's notions of returning (1995); of the trauma that cannot be fully apprehended and so will continually bring itself back to its subject. This reading of trauma is one which hauntological theorists[10] can find some traction with, given that it fits into a model of a site of trauma that conjures up a haunting of return. As discussed previously, however, Caruth's work presumes that there is a singular event of trauma that is situated firmly in the past. The type of trauma being discussed here is not beholden to linear conceptions of time and when people of colour are included in models of trauma. It is important to note that these depictions often involve allegories or extended metaphors where anxiety around the presence of Black and brown people is manifested through the presence of monsters, zombies, ghouls, and assorted creatures with no conscience (Jameela 2016). These figures are sometimes an evil that must be defeated or at least assimilated, and occasionally can become functioning members of society whilst retaining their otherness. There is a compelling backdrop here to thoughts of considering these monstrous genres: racial allegory is the drive behind their moral compasses. Whiteness is discomfited by itself and will go to great lengths to avoid looking back at its own constructions of threats and danger.

One particular figure popular in horror and fantasy genres that use monsters to work through white anxiety is that of ghosts, particularly in relation to how trauma is processed and moved on from. Ghostly apparitions in fiction have a long history of representing a past trauma, or

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[10] Hauntology as a term was originally coined by Jacques Derrida in Specters of Marx, a text to which we will shortly turn.

requiring action in order to exorcise them and their unfinished business. Toni Morrison's Beloved (1987) is a particularly notable example of the use of ghosts. The novel is set during the American civil war and sees the titular character Beloved, a ghost, return to haunt a family with a vivid deployment of intense guilt. The novel is often cited during discussions on ghostliness and haunting, and the novel's inspiration is from the story of Margaret Garner, a slave who was forced to kill her own children in order to keep her family safe. Avery Gordon writes that if we listen to Morrison's work on the slave narrative "we will hear not only "their" story, the old story of the past, but how we are in this story, even now, even if we do not want to be" (2008, p. 190). Beloved unseats white America's sense of time, place, and space through the use of ghostliness and in doing so places a connection between the history of American slavery as the history of America; the unfinished business of Beloved is the business of reckoning with the suffocating guilt that has been misplaced in an American consciousness which sees slavery as a remnant of a far-off past. Similarly, Edwidge Danticat's The Dew Breaker (2004) is a series of loosely connected short stories set in Haiti that feature, amongst other techniques, night talkers. Dany talks in his sleep and explores his traumas only whilst unconscious and this manner of processing, a subconscious haunting, speaks to not only a theme of return but also broadly reckons with the colonisation of Haiti and the impact it has upon the psyche of the characters. A more contemporary example of writing that deals with similar themes of white guilt, social injustice, and haunting is Jewell Powell's Ghost Boys (2018) which draws from the murder of 12 year old Tamir Rice by a white police officer – in the novel 12 year old Jerome is shot and killed by a police officer on the first page. The rest of the novel sees Jerome's ghost unfold a narrative which moves around time from before, after, and during his death. Powell's novel is a modern articulation of Morrison's work, specifically the devaluing of Black people's lives in America in structural, societal, and cultural ways. Each of these novels utilises the concept of a return of some kind to complicate the relationship between the past and the present. Slavery and colonisation, particularly, are routinely positioned as national events which "we" have moved on from and are consigned to the far off past. These novels use the conceit of ghosts to demonstrate the still-present trauma, pain, and violence that transcend the boundaries of liminal time and make connections between structural injustice that stems from multiple iterations of racism and the continual processing and return of pain from said injustice.

Ghosts have notably been utilised to communicate the weight of trauma and the perpetually unfinished business of historic racism.

Haunting the future

Ghosts are a reminder of the elisions between past, present, and future, particularly in relation to national history and social consciousness. The study of ghosts utilises a number of synonyms – spectre, phantom, haunting, spirit, soul, presence – and hauntology has an expansive and varied range of applications. In a shared chapter of their edited collection, The Spectralities Reader, Maria del Pilar Blanco and Esther Pereen state that the objective of the volume is to focus "on the way ghosts and haunting, even when used as conceptual metaphors, cannot be abstracted from specific formations of subjectivity" (2013, p. 310). Subjectivity is central to their project; acknowledging the construction of a subject allows for analysis alive to the temporal and spatial disunities at work in hauntology. The previous two chapters have approached the construction of South Asian, Muslim, female subjectivities in relation to constructions of those categories in film and literature in a drive to make connections between institutional Islamophobia and socio-cultural Islamophobia. This chapter is concerned with continuing to examine this same subjecthood, but on a conceptual and more abstract plane. The storied history of hauntological texts is one which speaks to the nature of racialised Others as internal enemies, aliens, strangers, outsiders. Hauntology can do much to tease out the functioning of Others, and particularly in relation to the contemporary boogeyman of Muslim subjectivities.

Carla Freccero defines spectrality as invoking

> collectivity, a collectivity of unknown or known, "uncanny" (both familiar and yet not) strangers who arrive to frequent us. To speak of ghosts is to speak of the social...haunting, ghostly apparition, reminds us that the past and the present are neither discrete nor sequential. The borderline between then and now wavers, wobbles, and does not hold still (2013, p. 337).

Freccero brings forward the elisions and overlaps involved in comprehensions of time and positions ghosts as a part of the social. In other words, ghosts are an interaction at the social level – they are engaged in culture and society as their very presence so often serves as a commentary upon the state of society, and is a jarring reminder of the wobbliness and subjectivity of time. Further, Freccero's work introduces a fundamental dimension to the study of ghosts - if a ghost appears before you, conceptual or otherwise, it must surely follow that it has come from the past, into your present. Once again, this takes us back to Caruth's suggestion of trauma as unshakeable recurrence and, once again, the presumption of singularity weds analysis to a purely linear conception of time. This breaking apart of linearity in relation to time An apprehension of time as non-linear, non-existent, out of order, is one that will allow for analysis that moves beyond the centrality of 9/11 to Muslim and female subjectivity, and more towards an analysis that examines the facts of subject construction for said subjectivity in light of (and not only beholden to) post-9/11 politics.

Relations between the demarcations of past, present, and future involves, as Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock argues, "examining our ghosts tells us quite a bit about America's hopes and desires, fears and regrets - and the extent to which the past governs our present and opens or forecloses possibilities for the future" (2013, p. 65). Weinstock articulates a merging together of temporal dislocations - as much as the past determines what is possible for the future, considering apparitions allows us to turn to the notion of ghosts as markers of past mistakes and grievances, of failures to conceive of and bring about a particular vision of the future. The work of Morrison, Danticat, and Powell are testament to the balancing of overwhelmingly structural necropolitics which move through singular individuals; it is the presence of ghosts in these narratives which serves as a bridge between the two. Weinstock's identification of ghosts as mediators of expectations through time allows us to see the manner in which ghosts are directly conjured from guilt and a sense of loss. In short, ghosts do not appear if all is well. The presence of a ghost is already a sign that things have gone, perhaps irredeemably, awry.

Weinstock classifies a contemporary turn to hauntology in literary theory as one especially prevalent amongst "ethnic American literature" (2013, p. 63) and that "the spectral turn of American culture should be read as a mark of millennial anxiety...millennial specters ask us

to what extent we can move forward into a new millennium when we are still shackled to a past that haunts us and that we have yet to face and mourn fully" (2013, p. 63). Weinstock builds a timeline of American grievances with the past, and categorises American consciousness as haunted by a past that is difficult to grasp and, in so doing, repeats itself. I would contend, however, that the problem is rather the inability to be haunted. American history is scattered with the subjugation and violent exploitation of Native American, African American, and Latinx people. White supremacy is still, however, rearing its head in contemporary American politics - such a fact demonstrates that America is, at the very least, not straightforwardly haunted by its past. Weinstock suggests that moving forward is difficult because the guilt of a violent and haunted past is a lingering feeling, and whilst this is a compelling analysis, we must also recognise that mourning, as with traditional trauma theory, carries with it the implication of the site of trauma or the origin of trauma as left behind in the past. Freccero's wobbliness of time is useful here in allowing us to see that American history, and with it the history of white supremacy, is one whose tendrils continue to choke us into the new millennium. Mourning is rather difficult to carry out when the horror has not been faced. Racism and white supremacy, and for the purposes of this chapter Islamophobia, have their very existence and perniciousness debated; this fact means that history, the present, and the future are playing out palimpsestically – time cannot occupy a linear setting precisely because of this inability and unwillingness to face racism. As much as ghosts come from the past or serve as a warning, they are also investments in a future, whose existence in the present elides the boundaries between past and future. In other words, this is a kind of trauma unbound by time or space.

Avery Gordon classifies the ghost as a "social figure" (2008, p. 8) who, once it has attention focused upon it, can yield a kind of knowing which allows us "to conclusively describe the logic of Capitalism or State Terror, for example, and the various experiences of this logic, experiences that are more often than not partial, coded, symptomatic, contradictory, ambiguous" (2008, p. 24). Gordon utilises the notion of ghosts as signifiers of social rupture and injustice by examining prominent ghosts in literary fiction, including Morrison's Beloved, and the resulting analysis is thus poised to take in the messy simultaneities and overlaps that are built into the functions of state terror. In other words, ghostliness is an analytical technique for gazing upon the disjunctions of linear time and a check and balance

system which pays attention to slippages that are characteristic of state terror. Further, it allows for an acknowledgement and discussion of those who are lost and purposely erased in discourses of success, freedom, and power characteristic of state terror. Gordon characterises this kind of power as a form of "maleficent magic" which purposely overlooks the slippage between those worthy of an analytical gaze and those who are routinely disappeared, invisibilised, and disposed of – the techniques "that we normally use to sustain an ongoing and more or less dependable existence" (2008, p. 126). The continuation of things as they are, as we have already seen in the discussion on necropolitics, requires a wielding of death and it therefore follows that these deaths must mean something for those that remain. Gordon's characterisation of ghosts as social figures positions spectres as entities from which we can interact with and learn from through knowing them. This, combined with Freccero's unravelling of time through ghostly presences and Weinstock's reading of the futurity of ghosts, leaves us with a picture of ghosts as metaphorical social hauntings that are signifiers of deep ruptures of injustice and a manifestation of the trauma of state terror.

With respect to writing which aims to characterise the slippages of state terror, Mark Fisher's Ghosts of my Life is a series of essays focused upon depression and a kind of haunting which claims that society is in mourning for lost futures. Fisher frames this argument firstly through the claim that his generation (those born in Britain in the 1980s) have existed under neoliberal capitalism where media products are re-hashed and revitalised, without any 'new' content. He contends that whilst each generation thinks itself the most politically beleaguered and revolutionary, his generation saw "a time of massive, traumatic change" (2014, p. 8) with the prime ministership of Margaret Thatcher, and with it a shift into hardline global capitalism. Fisher contends that "while 20th century experimental culture was seized by a recombinatorial delirium, which made it feel as if newness was infinitely available, the 21st century is oppressed by a crushing sense of finitude and exhaustion...or, alternatively, it doesn't feel as if the 21st century has started yet" (2014, pp. 7-8). This backdrop constructed by Fisher is one which, much like Weinstock, frames time as an entity which contains a turbulent past and present, and will likely hail a similarly unsettling future. Whilst Weinstock signals a turbulence surrounding ethnicity, Fisher draws a backdrop which saw Thatcherism embed social inequalities into the fabric of Britain's functioning as a state, and his acknowledgement of the inability to create anything new speaks to a model of trauma which

sees a failure to process manifest as a continual return. Fisher's impetus for entwining a short study of time with ghosts is that of "broken time" and a subsequent ghostly interaction with "the spectre understood not as anything supernatural, but as that which acts without (physically) existing" (2014, p. 18). This frames hauntology as a study focused on absences, but also with tracing the root of those absences as firmly positioned amongst less conceptual beginnings. For Fisher, ghosts are not otherworldly but instead the leftovers of actions which bred social harm for many citizens; ghosts do not need to be real to serve as reminders of time and society that has gone wrong.

However, Fisher's understanding of Thatcherism remains one-dimensional in only taking in the white working class as affected by a period of instability whose effects linger into contemporary times. As we have already seen, the study of ghosts is entwined with death and it follows that this brings along with it themes of mourning, grief, and melancholia. Fisher focuses specifically on hauntological melancholia and claims that "at first sight, it might be possible to see hauntological melancholia: another example of white boy whinging over lost privileges...yet this would be to grasp what has been lost only in the terms of the worst kind of resentment ressentiment….and this is especially sad when the group in question was predominantly working class" (2014, p. 24). Fisher, particularly as a class analyst, should be cognizant of the fact that class discussions routinely disregard racial politics - his failure to specify that he is operating with the presumed whiteness of working class politics reveals his hauntological analysis as one which, whilst aware of racial and ethnic dimensions, is by and for whiteness.

He goes on to claim that "what should haunt us is not the no longer of actually existing social democracy, but the not yet of the futures that popular modernism trained us to expect, but which never materialised. These spectres - the spectres of lost futures - reproach the formal nostalgia of the capitalist realist world" (2014, p. 26). What should, surely, be altogether more haunting are the spectres of the lost presents (and subsequent futures) of those sidelined by various ontologies that repeatedly and incessantly erase racial ethnicities from the past, present, and future.

Relatedly, Fisher also explains that the impetus behind his collection of writings is to grapple with his depression, and his academic work in relation to that. Personally, I find it interesting that he includes no real methodology or justification for such a choice. Throughout my academic career, I have found myself wary of how I come across on the page, particularly as I belong to the various communities I am researching. I have never written anything that hasn't required agonising over the politics of what I am doing, how it will be received, and its academic merit. I found it shocking that Fisher could drop in his personal details very briefly, before moving to the work he was enacting. This shock is indicative of a deep understanding of the standards in which academic work is to be valued and regarded as scholarly. Class, and white working class, admissions are regarded as still scholarly, whilst also insightful. It is Fisher's consistent lack of grappling with an understanding of intersecting oppressions that makes his "whinging" troubling. If anything, his work is strengthened by an admission of a personal drive to his political analysis, and in paying attention to the emotional impacts of Thatcherism, his analysis of ghosts as markers of lost futures is quite useful, if hindered by a lack of context. Personally, a backdrop of Islamophobia means that intersecting concerns are even harder to communicate for me - I seem to spend a lot of my professional time explaining that it is possible to be Muslim and queer, Muslim and non-binary, Muslim and poor, Muslim and trans, Muslim and depressed. I am not interested in Fisher's attempt at self-knowledge; what I am interested in is the valuation of academic work that differs based on identity politics, whilst operating in an academic system which routinely neutralises and presumes equality of experience. What is pertinent here is Fisher's characterisation of a specific period of history as traumatising in terms of personal development, and the understanding of ghosts not only as social figures and reminders of social ills, but also ghosts as a marker of absence: the futures that are lost, the people that exist no longer, and the social opportunities that are absent.

Spectres of the past

I will now turn to Jacques Derrida's seminal hauntological work The Specters of Marx (2006). A central facet of Derrida's work in hauntology primarily uses ghosts as a tool through which to create an understanding of liminality:

This being-with specters would also be, not only but also, a politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations. If I am getting ready to speak at length about ghosts, inheritance and generations, generations of ghosts, which is to say about certain others who are not present, nor presently living, either to us, in us, or outside us, it is in the name of justice (2006, p. xvii).

Absence is, once again, a recurrent theme in hauntology; in terms of ghosts as a social metaphor, this theme conjures up imagery of the disposable citizens whose deaths allow the state to function. In terms of ghosts as a social metaphor for the contemporary position of Muslim citizens, this theme conjures up imagery of citizens who are disappeared by the state, illegally detained and tortured, denied entry at borders, suspiciously stopped, hypervisibilised and invisibilized; citizens who have their citizenship stripped away. Derrida's conceptualisation in this instance is about those whose presence has been removed, those who are not alive in the present but live on in the past and the future "in the name of justice." Ghosts are positioned, then, not only as running through and above time but also as moving through and around us. In order for ghosts to be constituted in this metaphor of social justice, they require "us" to commit to and invest in justice. Derrida's use of "inheritance and generations, generations of ghosts" is a marker of the kind of trauma ghosts can manifest; issues of social justice are often generational and passed from time to time, inherited traumas and ghosts that mark out social injustices.

Here, Derrida builds his own backdrop, as have other theorists, but one that is specifically attuned to politicising generational memory and inheritance of memory in the pursuit of justice:

No justice - let us say no law and once again we are not speaking here of laws - seems possible or thinkable without the principle of some responsibility, beyond all living present, before the ghosts of those who are not yet born or who are already dead, be they victims of wars, political or other kinds of violence, nationalist, racist, colonialist, sexist, or other kinds of exterminations, victims of the oppressions of capitalist imperialism or any of the forms of totalitarianism. (2006, p. xvii).

This outlines a commitment to social responsibility that rests on a particular worldview - an admittance that ghosts come not only from losses in the past, but from the loss of future generations to continue the inherited memories. Derrida argues that justice requires a commitment to responsibility, and a commitment to propagating justice for the future. Not only is time intertwined with ghosts, but evidently so too is justice. Whilst this chapter is interested in haunting as a metaphor in relation to constructions of South Asian Muslims, it is also interested in the schools of thought behind neoliberal capitalism and colonialism beholden to remaining unhaunted by themselves. The thread of the indifference of white supremacy to notions of justice is one which naturally underpins any work on anti-racist activism and scholarship. In order to imagine justice in the future, and to be responsible for it in any kind of meaningful way, liminality (here the use of a ghostliness as an analytical tool) allows for a breeding ground that can allow imagination to flourish even in the face of atrocity and abuse of power. If ghosts are markers of liminality and reminders to look to the future as a potential cost for present injustice, imagination is central to what one can imagine in terms of future freedom.

Whilst building a picture of apparitions, Derrida mentions "this thing that is invisible between its apparitions" (2006, p. 6) and describes gazing upon it as a visor effect - "we do not see who looks at us." When the moment of ghostliness comes to us, it is often described only from us - we look upon the ghost, are moved in some way, and then we react to it. Here, Derrida is suggesting that the gaze of the ghost looking back at us is also a kind of haunting: "the tangible intangibility of a proper body without flesh, but still the body of someone as someone other...this spectral someone other looks at us" (2006, p. 6). This calls to mind Rey Chow's work on the native gazing back at the colonizer, in a move that makes the colonizer aware of himself. The invisibility of a ghost, the possibility of a spectre existing without anyone's knowledge recalls the same process of looking that Chow describes: looking back at the colonizer is a movement wholly unexpected by the colonizer, and an act that reveals much about the colonizer and their own conception of self. The visor effect Derrida describes is one which takes a disembodied being, the ghost, that stares back at a flesh and blood body and in doing so has an impact upon the flesh and blood body.

To unpack this moment further, we can continue with Derrida's understanding of the presence of the ghost carrying with it the implication that someone was once "alive" inside it:

> The crime of the other, a misdeed whose event and reality, whose truth can never present themselves in flesh and blood, but can only allow themselves to be presumed, reconstructed, fantasized. (2006, p. 24)

The flesh and blood of a ghost is constituted of the constructions of others; ghostliness is a certainty insofar as the person who is haunted brings the ghost to life. This is particularly relevant to racial politics where the figure of the racialised other is a spectre that is constituted by the white gaze, and does not independently exist. Social constructions inform the consumption, or manner of haunting, of this figure. "For there is no ghost, there is never any becoming-specter of the spirit without at least an appearance of flesh, in a space of invisible visibility, like the dis-appearing of an apparition" (Derrida 2006, p. 157) – this denotes a racial apparition who has existed at one point from the perspective of the person holding the gaze. The person being othered has to have had an existence at one point, but its current construction has nothing to do with the totality of its existence during life. When applied to the construction of Muslims this explanation veers towards materiality; the markers of being a Muslim are routinely considered to be the presence of some kind of hijab, brown or Black skin, the type of materiality which involves a loss of personhood when the gaze turns to them. It does not matter whether or not the ghost exists because its materiality, its signs of haunting that involve the dread of a presence or the rattling of chains, are enough to incite fear. Correspondingly, it does not matter whether the Muslim as conjured by state terror actually exists, so long as its materiality can be pointed to as reason and justification for fear.

Derrida also confronts Fukayama's notion of the end of history, as well as the pervasive notion that each generation suffers the most in socio-political terms:

> Today, almost half a century later, there are many who, throughout the world, seem just as worried by the specter of communism, just as convinced that what one is dealing with there is only a specter without body, without present reality...what exactly is the

difference from one century to the next? Is it the difference between a past world - for which the specter represented a coming threat - and a present world, today, where the specter would represent a threat that some would like to believe is past and whose return it would be necessary again, once again in the future, to conjure away? (2006, p. 48)

The reference to Fukayama's proclamation of "the end of history" (p. 70) echoes Fisher's assertion around lost futures, but so too does it echo Mirza's earlier description of how experiencing Brexit felt like dying: Fukayama's claim can really only be understood within the context of whose world is ending. Derrida's description of the red scare has much similarity to the race that begins with each generation to ascribe a label to political moments; since 9/11, the conjuring of the terrorist spectre has represented a constitution of a fearsome other who is simultaneously imminently powerful, but ultimately beatable, for the good of civilisation.

The construction of this paradoxical figure turns upon, once again, the person holding the gaze. "The specter appears to present itself during a visitation. One represents it to oneself, but it is not present, itself, in flesh and blood. This non-presence of the specter demands that one take its time and its history into consideration, the singularity of its temporality or of its historicity" (Derrida 2006, p. 126). In order to understand the complex language around what constitutes a terrorist, and the recent history of the past seventeen years, it is necessary to be fully versed in the intricacies of the ideological tools behind the demonisation of Muslims and Islam. And yet, "the subject that haunts is not identifiable, one cannot see, localize, fix any form, one cannot decide between hallucination and perception, there are only displacements; one feels oneself looked at by what one cannot see" (Derrida 2006, p. 170). The feeling of being looked at or gazed upon is the dissonance behind being haunted. For our allegory, the visor allows the holder of the gaze to exercise its whiteness in order to be able to conjure up the ghostly other. It is only then that the ghostly other is fully realised with the weight of historical ideological praxis rooted in recent history, and across a larger span of racialised contexts.

Derrida also touches upon constructions of power when he states that "when the ghostly body of the emperor disappears, it is not the body that disappears, merely its phenomenality, its phantomality. The emperor is more real than ever and one can measure better than ever his actual power" (2006, p. 163). This ties ghostliness with the symbolism that drives Derrida's hauntology; his argument is not that Marxism now manifests as a physical ghost, but rather that the signification of Marxism permeates culture, and in this instance partly through mainstream or traditional iterations of its power. While the emperor may have disappeared, the legend of his power through clothing, real or otherwise, remains a tantalising or gripping draw. Here, I am reminded of Achille Mbembe's work on necropolitics which brilliantly draws together the power of death with the justification for establishment of sovereignty.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Mbembe begins by asking how death and life are inscribed onto the body via power (2003, p. 12). In doing so, he is able to make a connection between the seat of power as one returning to those who control death. This is the centre of Mbembe's argument, and the route he takes to get there demonstrates the limits of biopolitics in apprehending the racially imbricated nature of the conditions of both life and death. When disseminating Nazism's own understanding of the right to life, Mbembe states that:

> having become mechanized, serialized execution was transformed into a purely technical, impersonal, silent, and rapid procedure. This development was aided in part by racist stereotypes and the flourishing of a class-based racism that, in translating the social conflicts of the industrial world in racial terms, ended up comparing the working classes and "stateless people" of the industrial world to the "savages" of the colonial world"(2003, p. 18).

As with the previously mentioned theorists, here Mbembe builds a differing historical background for his dissemination of death and it is one which, through its methodology, yields an analysis better suited to an intersectional outlook capable of accounting for multiple experiences. Such a connection between the functions of Nazism and the functions of colonialism also calls to mind Derrida's notion of writing for the ghosts of those lost to structural violence from the ghosts of the past, present, and future. If I am to undertake an analysis that utilises ghosts as a tool, I must centre it around the moment of death – death

reveals the permanent implications of government campaigns and policies, as well as of social inequalities, injustices, and infractions. Beginning with death is an incisive tool for determining the conjurer of ghosts, as well as the drives of power: "sovereignty means the capacity to define who matters and who does not, who is disposable and who is not" (2003, p. 27). In other words, whoever wields the many kinds of death – be it material and physical death, systemic and structural death, or social death.

In his conclusion, Mbembe once again brings up the example of Palestine and works to "reflect on the twin issues of death and terror on the one hand and terror and freedom on the other":

> In the confrontation between these two logics, terror is not on one side and death on the other. Terror and death are at the heart of each...the survivor is the one who has taken on a whole pack of enemies and managed not only to escape alive, but to kill his or her attackers. This is why, to a large extent, the lowest form of survival is killing...in the logic of survival one's horror at the sight of death turns into satisfaction that it is someone else who is dead. (2003, p. 36)

Whilst Mbembe is discussing the uniquely specific living and dying situations in Palestine, his argument also has particular pertinence to terrorism studies. Terror does not function in the linear dichotomy that George Bush and Tony Blair outlined immediately after 9/11 ("either you're with us, or you're with the terrorists") and to enact policy upon this basis allows death to remain a structural force on the 'sides' of both death and freedom. Mbembe's work on necropolitics demonstrates the conditions for life amongst those that would be considered 'other' and it is from this point that his work looks to the future:

> The body in itself has neither power nor value. The power and value of the body result from a process of abstraction based on the desire for eternity. In that sense, the martyr, [here Mbembe is discussing the phenomenon of suicide bombers] having established a moment of supremacy in which the subject overcomes his own mortality, can be seen as laboring under the sign of the future. In other words, in death the future is collapsed into the present (2003, p. 37).

Here, the suicide bomber, in killing himself, is looking forward despite the cost of death. This erosion of the boundary between death and future is an erosion that speaks to the impermanence of boundaries surrounding death. Historically, ghosts have been the marker, or signification, of an erosion of past and present, but, as I will argue in the rest of the chapter, ghosts represent an erosion and erasure of boundaries between not only past and present, but present and future. Derrida's earlier reference to holding a responsibility towards justice speaks to the references of the coming apart of time made by other hauntologists Freccero, Weinstock, Gordon, Fisher – ghosts are a marker of both social injustice and timelessness, and we require imaginative approaches if we are to be able to look beyond the work of death and imagine freedom.

Until this juncture of the chapter, we have seen a range of theorists explain the utility and draw of ghosts as a model for expressions of trauma towards social injustice, and whilst Mbembe's work brings us closer to the role of death in terror and freedom, the work of Salman Sayyid and David Tyrer make an explicit connection between ghostliness and Islamophobia in their 2012 article:

> Just as ghosts are commonly represented as alternately unreal or terrifyingly hyperreal, Islamophobia represents Muslims as a ghostly presence, as either unreal or as a hyperreal interruption to our consciousness. The remarkable thing about this discourse is that it is expressed by liberal politicians and progressives as well as those on the right (2012, p. 355).

This articulation of existence as both unreal and hyperreal parallels the discussions from chapters 1 and 2 where Nazneen, Yasmin, Mariam, and Layla are conveyed as both invisible and hypervisible. The proliferation of the hijab as a symbol of oppression for Muslim nations and communities is one which has rendered Muslim women as either invisible in their oppression, or as hypervisible markers that stick out – in both instances, symbols rather than full subjects. Tyrer and Sayyid's model positions Muslims as "unreal" which makes a connection between the unreality of being able to imagine Muslims as full subjects or

humans, and the "terrifyingly hyperreal" fear from non-Muslims of the menace of Islamic subjects.

Tyrer and Sayyid also pay further attention to the oft-repeated arguments that Islamophobia cannot be racist, because Muslims do not have one race and Islam is a religion. They point out that the fact that Muslims cannot be pinned into one race contributes to Islamophobia functioning as an even more terrifying beast:

> Islamophobia makes the apparent incorporeality and incomplete raciality of Muslims central to the expression of racialized governmentality. They are thus further racialized as radically different but absent, incorporeal, incomplete subjects who are nevertheless capable of bursting violently through into our world in moments of terrifying hyperreality. This mode of constructing Muslims as alternately invisible and terrifying, unreal and all all too real, guarantees attempts to legislate against their hauntings. (2012, p. 357)

Here, Tyrer and Sayyid use the noteworthy phrasing of " bursting violently through into our world," which suggests, coupled with Derrida's critique, that ghosts are conjured. It follows that if ghosts are to be conjured something or someone must have brought them to the present plane. With this line of thought, Muslims are considered to interrupt Western civilization and the Western status quo through their absent presence; their ghostliness. Tyrer and Sayyid go on to argue that Muslims are dehumanised and not considered fully complete subjects, and this incompleteness constructs Muslims as intangible and unreal menaces. Indeed, Sayyid and Tyrer go on to state that Muslims can be seen "as a floating signifier, [as] extremism has no meaning independent of its relationship to other discursive elements" (2012, p. 362). Muslims are routinely treated as empty vessels into which meaning can be poured, and it is this which categorises Islamophobia as a structural racism. Ghosts and empty vessels are unmanageable beings, and interrupt happy futures and stable presents but, as with understanding the end of history, the question here is the happy futures and stable presents of whom, and at what cost?

In A Fundamental Fear Salman Sayyid identifies the exact fear that ghosts represent for upholders of the status quo:

> Ghosts are terrifying. Their bitterness at their incorporeal state, their resentment of the living and their vindictiveness at some ancient wrong that no one can recall – all fuel their unrelenting hatred of us. Even though ghosts do not really exist, they have their uses...ghosts, despite not existing, are terrifying. Muslims also generate such fear; even though they are often the lowest of the low, the dispossessed, Muslims are still capable of making even sturdy liberal institutions anxious; and, like ghosts, they seem to appear almost everywhere and anywhere. Ghosts can walk through walls. Boundaries cannot contain them...their presence marks out a space which seems irreconcilably different and which seems to resist easy absorption within the western enterprise. The presence of Islam erases time, it marks out an absence from history, but it also seemingly erases the years of western hegemony. (1997, p. 2)

Muslims are terrifying precisely because of the apparent threat we represent being conjured up by an anxious Western hegemony who feels itself threatened by the gaze of the stranger, the other, the native, the colonized, the enemy, looking back. As Sayyid describes, Muslims become ghostly figures who can transcend both boundaries and time; they become a timeless and all-powerful spectre that, under Western and white epistemology, are constructed as powerful figures who turn the status quo upside down and wrench the state and its non-Muslim citizens towards fear and death. Fear and death become synonymous with these ghostly Muslims, and it is precisely this conjuring that I am looking to examine in relation to how it feels to be Muslim. Over the course of this chapter, we have examined the role of trauma in experiencing racism and Islamophobia; then we have examined the use of ghosts as a tool for apprehending social injustice; now I will move to examine the trauma of existing as a ghostly figure capable of inciting terror in rather more real terms.

Methodology

As much as academic discourse constructs Muslim women as empty vessels into whom various signifiers can be poured into, so does media and cultural discourse. In order to pull this apart further, the next section will involve two case studies which examine headlines from two British newspapers following terrorist attacks alongside my own reactions to them in the context of alternative trauma models, and hauntological approaches to understanding trauma. The last chapter briefly focused upon media discourse around Islamophobia, and discussed racism in the press as a marker for the undue attention paid to the potential threat of Muslims citizens. This media discourse analysis provides a reference point for this coming chapter, particularly the work of Elizabeth Poole and Virgil Van Dijk. Poole has several publications on the dissemination of Muslims in the media, including a 2006 study which carries out quantitative content analysis which examines articles from The Guardian and The Express in order to measure the frequency of mentions given to British Muslims in relation to political, cultural and social indicators. Here, Poole's study filters its data through associations of British Muslims with crime, education, terrorism, and immigration and in doing so is able to build connections between xenophobic and racist discourse and the media construction of British Muslims. Poole finds that despite The Guardian being a broadly left-wing publication and The Express right-wing, this gap in the political spectrum is bridged with a pattern in the data that "Muslims are a threat to British 'mainstream' values and thus provoke integrative concerns" (2006, p. 102). Poole's research project uses quantitative content analysis that is able to find a correlation between mentions of Muslims to negative contexts, and in doing so provides a framework which demonstrates that political spectrum positioning is levelled through Islamophobia racism. Indeed, Poole's earlier 2002 study elaborates on the methodological positioning of her work as influenced by Stuart Hall's understanding of preferred meanings communicated by texts and the possibility of negotiated readings of said texts (Poole 2002, p. 188). Whilst Poole utilises quantitative analysis in addition to discourse analysis, the method of including snapshots of articles as published in newspapers is one which allows the researcher to deconstruct the decoding process and provide analysis for how newspaper texts are received and interpreted within a broader pattern of reporting about Muslims.

Similarly, Teun Van Dijk's 1991 study of racism in the press begins with a critical framework of a robust engagement with "ethnic prejudices" (p. 6) as commonplace in various forms of public discourse. Van Dijk contends that "textual analysis pays special attention to how such content are formulated, that is to style, rhetoric, argumentative structures or conversational strategies" (1991, p. 6). Here, textual analysis is a form of content analysis which allows a rhetorical picture to be built of the specificities of how Islamophobia is deployed. This in turn allows me to trace these patterns back to how they enable the maintenance of structures like state terror which rely upon the moral panics generated by expressions of fear and suspicion of ethnic minorities. Van Dijk's study examines news items from a range of British newspapers, including both broadsheets and tabloids. By beginning with the admission that white dominance is sustained through being able to "deny or to play down the prevalence of racism" (1991, p i), the study finds that irrespective of political leanings, in all of the publications in the study "the conservative or right-wing perspective on ethnic relations is usually prominent in Western countries" (1991, p. 247). Both studies find that the relative liberalism or conservatism of traditionally left or right leaning publications has no bearing on these same publications communicating regressive and xenophobic portrayals of Muslims and ethnic minorities. Both studies also use discourse analysis to react to and quantify the construction of British Muslims and ethnic minorities; the following two case studies will focus on content analysis that remains qualitative in order to contribute to an understanding of Islamophobic rhetoric. This sample is meant to be indicative of the discourse that rears its head specifically in the initial 24 hours or so during and after terrorist incidents. This is not about defining what counts as terrorism, or of building a full picture of dissemination post-terror attack. Rather, this is a snapshot of reactions that have become familiar patterns since 9/11 and is an attempt to convey the feeling behind this familiarity.

The events I have selected run as follows:
- 2017 Westminster Attack, 22 March - man drives a car into pedestrians, fatally wounds a police officer and is shot on his way into the palace
- 2017 London Bridge Attack, 3 June - men drive van into pedestrians on London Bridge before running to Borough Market and stabbing more people, all shot dead by police

Both events happened in relatively quick succession, and I chose to take screenshots of headlines from both The Guardian and the Daily Mail during the month of each attack. The data sample has been obtained through searching for articles in relation to the two selected attacks and is in no way intended to be representative, but rather indicative. I have chosen to react to headlines because they mimic the shortness of social media posts, without having to contend with the question of popularity and visibility in social media. On Twitter, for example, reactions post-terror attack are often swift and wide-ranging but more popular tweets are more likely to show up on timelines. With articles, however, the presence of editorial standards and editorial positions this means that newspaper publications convey an attitude which represents an institutional standard and a trackable political rhetoric that is more cohesive than a range of tweets.

Unlike Poole and Van Dijk's studies, I will be foregrounding my own reaction to the newspaper headlines. The previous two interludes have discussed the production of knowledge in academia and the media, and I am eager to embark upon a writing exercise which foregrounds my own personal experiences as a South Asian Muslim woman whilst producing valuable and useful knowledge around such identities. I can only speak for my own experiences, but I have found that whenever I receive notifications about terrorist attacks in the West they come with horror that is twofold: firstly, that lives have been lost and secondly, that hate crimes against Muslims or those who 'look' like Muslims will characteristically inflate. Similarly, with terror attacks outside of the West the horror is twofold: firstly, that lives have been lost and secondly, the grief of losing those lives is not nationally or internationally mourned. Horror is often compounded and certain kinds of grief are left to fester. I wish to pay attention to this moment, of a British Muslim picking apart the emotional weight behind processing grief.

For these reasons, I will be exploring my own reactions to the post-terror attack reporting of the following headlines as a technique through which to explore a trauma model based upon the grief, terror, and trauma felt by the process of Muslims being hypervisibilised and invisibilized.

Section Three

Feelings and Ghosts

CASE STUDY 1 - WESTMINSTER

ATTACK,

22 MARCH 2017
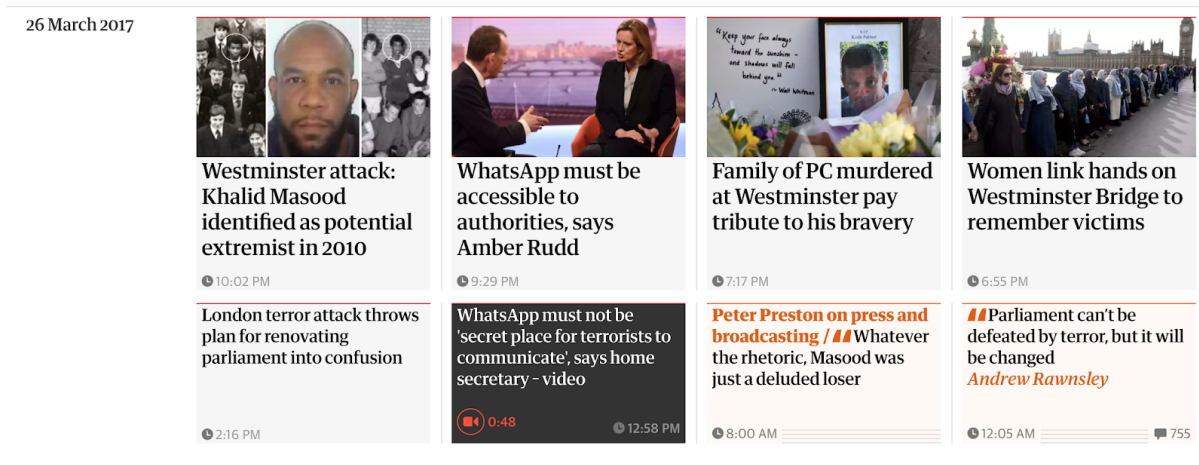
Figure 1, (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

The bulk of the analytical points to be made throughout this section can be framed by the recognition that having data or content to analyse in the first instance demonstrates the centrality of each event to sections of the British public, the British media, and the British government. This is not a given for any particular atrocity and the existence of varied dissemination about any kind of attack or event that causes injury or loss of life is filtered through the white supremacy that permeates British life. One prominent example of this is the numerous refugee crises seen over the years that are not given sustained space as headlines, news "moments" or instances of irreproachable regret intertwined with universal condemnation and support. Terror attacks carried out by Muslims have much more media coverage devoted to them as they are framed as a justification of increased securitisation of all Muslims that receives support from publications across the political spectrum, united under the fear of further hauntings.

As such, Amber Rudd, the 2017 Home Secretary, and her push to encourage WhatsApp to make messages available for monitoring by the British government received significant pushback from the company who, to date, have continued to encrypt messages end-to-end. Rudd's attempt to capitalise on the attack is a cynical move that seeks to place the threat of terror as one firmly rooted in encroaching surveillance of British citizens as the next "reasonable" step in order to prevent further similar attacks.

The story on the top right of Figure 1 depicts a number of hijabi Muslim women holding hands on the bridge - the hijab has been a politicised weapon implicating brown men as oppressors forcing brown women into the practice of veiling. The deployment of this image has become a well-worn tool for western propaganda and has been disseminated at length, notably not by Muslim hijabi women of colour, as a question of liberty and freedom. This also calls to mind the regular, and predictable, calls for Muslim leaders to condemn various attacks, and the unfortunate pattern of Muslims on social media preemptively "apologising" for an attack they were nowhere near.

The notion of terror, a noun and concept, as defeatable is another pervasive concept - here linked to 9/11 - that predominates in cultural and social critiques both academic and non-academic. Terror cannot be defeatable, as that would imply a cohesive and targeted attack on Western civilization, and numerous commentaries have robustly disputed this as both assumption and fallacy (Said 1981; Sayyid 1997; Puar 2007). The notion of such an attack feels like a dangerous idea given that, no matter the protestations of differentiations between so-called Moderate Islam and Extreme Islam, cannot do much but position Muslims (of any kind, or rather, as one homogenous entity) as an enemy that has infiltrated Britain. The ghost has made itself at home, has breached the boundary and made safety an altogether more precarious situation. It doesn't matter for this kind of rhetoric whether or not the ghost exists, rather that the ghost *might* exist and the horror of such a thought is so overwhelming that the government and mainstream media are united in combating it, through whatever means necessary.

27 March 2017

Westminster attacker Khalid Masood had interest in jihad, say police
7:30 PM

Should we blame Islam for terrorism?
David Shariatmadari
4:18 PM

Westminster attack: we found out online our loved ones were victims - video
1:03   2:35 PM

Families of Westminster attack victims found out fate through pictures online
12:55 PM

If we value our national security, we must avoid a hard Brexit
Brian Paddick
10:53 AM

Inside the Guardian / When terror strikes, our reporters need to be quick - but they must also be accurate
10:35 AM

Figure 2. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

The utility of conversations, given the oversaturation of "Islam as terrorism" discussions, is a significant issue. It is difficult to tell if the conversation actually progresses, or is permanently stilted between two dialectically opposed points that are designed never to meet, evolve, or shift. People become separated into sides, and the repetition that Muslims are not terrorists, that Islam is not synonymous with evil, that there is no conspiracy against the West, become white noise that is demanded time and time again, but is never heeded. These conversations continue at an active thrum that intensifies whenever there is a new attack, renewing hate crimes, both reported and unreported, and sharpening the focus of media and public discourses that coalesce to question the rights of Muslims living in Britain, and around the world.

The quicker speed of output of news organisations at the current time means that tragedies are usually followed by close look at victims and their lives. The choice of who is given victim profiles, and which kinds of loss of life yield victim profiles with backstories from grieving families, demonstrates an exceptionalistic attitude towards which bodies are disposable and which are not. Even in death, structures of state power maintenance demonstrate that the process of humanisation is selective and politicised, humanisation is never a given.

Brian Paddick's article on balancing speed against accuracy is a topic which has been given unfortunate added discourse since Donald Trump's election. Much of the discourse around "fake news," an insult Trump has so often lobbed at any criticism of his administration, is a term which functions through the suggestion that there is a "real news" or news that is purely accurate. This is a fundamental misunderstanding of how journalism and news organisations function, to say nothing of moving past objective notions of truth. The term has since become so widespread that the historical misinformation after troubling or scary national tragedies has been incorporated under its umbrella. During the reportage of terrorist attacks, the designation of "terror" is usually decided as the first few details begin to emerge. White skin denotes a troubled loner with mental health issues, whilst black and brown skin denotes a comprehensive and structural attack upon Western civilisation and values. Viewing "fake news" within this context demonstrates the emptiness behind the term; the symbol of the Muslim, ostensibly as a perpetual terrorist, is further fanned by the flames of a Trumpian conspiracy that purports a view of Islam only as a terrorising network. The dichotomy of true/false that "fake news" locks discourse into is one which is reminiscent of the fear of hauntings and ghosts; there may never come to be proof of a haunting or the existence of ghosts but that will not do much to halt conspiracy theorists or believers. Facts and truth are irrelevant for those determined to build a conspiracy around the potential threat and danger of Muslims.

28 March 2017

London terrorist Khalid Masood showed no extremist tendencies, says ex-boss

🕗 8:48 PM

MPs hail Tobias Ellwood as he returns to Commons after Westminster attack

🕗 1:57 PM

Shortcuts / Creator of that viral tube sign: 'I didn't think people would think it was real'

🕗 10:19 AM   💬 207

❝❝ What do many lone attackers have in common? Domestic violence
Hadley Freeman

🕗 3:30 PM

Tobias Ellwood: 'I was one of many that stepped forward' - video

(🔇) 0:35   🕗 1:56 PM

Westminster attack: Khalid Masood's wife 'saddened and shocked'

🕗 8:05 AM

Figure 3. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

Another pattern in the reporting of terrorist attacks is the binary between building a picture of the attacker as 'surprisingly' being involved in extremist or so-called fundamentalist logics; or the attacker as 'inevitably' involved in extremist or fundamentalist logics. It is difficult to parse out whether this pattern is merely a repetition

of the truth of each attacker, or rather a manifestation of a mode of analysis that has become tired and inaccurate. It is difficult to grasp a full picture of the scale of the problem of terrorism, its reach globally, and its impact in relation to other events that cause loss of life of groups of people. The familiar narratives that are unspooled with each instance are virtually the same in their message, in this instance as expressed through claims that Khalid Masood "showed no extremist tendencies." Reactions of shock and horror and mystification and the repetition of this apparent processing of grief has one inevitable endpoint: the choice to mystify the attackers, their choices, and remain with a fantasy of them as boogeymen. In other words, hyperreal attackers who simultaneously cannot be understood but will also be defeated by the strength of Western values and civilisation.

The consistent repetition of the hyperreal/invisible dichotomy is one which presses a great weight upon Muslims in Britain. Islam in this country is discussed as an "Issue" that is often extremely emotional, polarising, and rife with misunderstandings and manipulations. This conversation, particularly when originating from formal news organisations or comment threads that often do not involve Muslims as participants reveal a lot about the hegemonic understanding of Muslims as a group of people. These interactions operate upon the assertion that Muslims are a homogenous group with no real differences across continents, countries, classes, sexualities, genders, or any other differentiation. To think in this manner is thoroughly dehumanising towards Muslims and the work of asserting that the opposite is true is an epistemological double-bind; as soon as humanity needs to be asserted, something has already gone terribly wrong.

The repetition that we can see in reporting styles after terrorist attacks is held together at its centre with the discussion of Islam as one of binaries:

East/West clash of civilisations
The hijab as choice/compulsion
Muslims as terrorists/citizens

This is a sophisticated and compelling system which categorises Muslims as a homogenous and singular entity and the work of pointing out that "Muslims are not like this…." or "Muslims exist in this way too…." only allows for work which seeks to explain away, to account for the presence of Muslims to whiteness. If humanisation needs to be proven, the person that is unconvinced has already done the work of dehumanisation. Once the ghost appears and is seen, those whom it is seen by have already taken in and framed the fantastical being as malevolent and threatening. By then, it is too late. This process of dissemination is self-perpetuating and sustains itself through taking repetition as causation.

29 March 2017

'Love for all, hatred for none': hundreds gather for Westminster vigil
7:32 PM

Police and public remember Westminster attack victims - video
0:54   4:07 PM

Westminster terror attack vigil - in pictures
3:38 PM

Inquest hears details of Westminster attack victims' injuries
2:34 PM

Met chief: tech industry must put house in order after Westminster attack
11:16 AM   205

Westminster attack: MPs and peers to question security procedures
10:04 AM

Romanian tourist still critically ill after Westminster attack
8:29 AM

Figure 4. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

Vigils, inquests, and other public forms of accountability and grieving are vital to a nation's psyche when recovering from the shock, terror, and horror of any group deaths, but particularly when one individual or more turn on unsuspecting people. They are not, however, a steadfast presence in all atrocities. In order for an event to be considered as such, it must be deemed, by a subscribing narrative, to be in the "public interest."

The possibility of having order restored after an attack, of communities coming together to heal and grieve, is significantly dependent upon government support and intervention. The deaths from Grenfell Tower (2017), itself the orchestrated social murder of hundreds of people (Mckee 2017; Macleod 2018; Watt 2017) has left its victims, many months after the tower burned down, homeless and without official support. Whilst vigils were held across the country and it dominated news headlines for some time, it is not an event, from its very beginning, that can be considered to have had comprehensive government support - at the time of writing, 2019, many survivors have still not received the promised government support (Tucker 2017; Walker 2018). It is no accident, given this state of affairs, that the majority of people who resided in the tower were people of colour.

Nobody would begrudge or object to a country grieving openly and working to improve security, but the difference in relation to terrorist attacks comes with the on-going and historical demonisation of communities of people, even during incidents where people of colour lose their lives. Just as ghosts are empty signifiers, so too have Muslims and other minorities become empty vessels into which political bargaining is poured. If a ghost has no space within it for life, if it is to be detached from "regular" people, so too is the figure of the Muslim, besieged by political posturing, social inequalities, racialisation, all of which point to an erosion of grief and work from Muslim communities. Is there space for Muslims to be scared? To grieve? To feel anger? Is this possible at the same events that call for the increased surveillance of Muslims in the name of tightening security procedures that ostensibly seek to protect both the citizen and the state?

The hero of Westminster: Policeman stabbed to death by terrorist is named as death toll rises to FIVE with 40 injured including French students and Korean tourists

- Hyundai 4x4 was driven over Westminster Bridge knocking down pedestrians this afternoon
- Victims were said to have been left scattered in the road, with one woman knocked into the River Thames
- Emergency services treated at least 40 injured people on the bridge, with three people killed
- 'Asian' knifeman got into the grounds of Parliament where he stabbed and killed a police officer
- Met Police named the officer as Keith Palmer, 48, who had served with the force for 15 years
- The 'middle-aged' attacker was then shot by armed officers and died after being taken to hospital
- Prime Minister vowed Britain would not 'surrender to the voices of hate and evil' in wake of attack

By RICHARD SPILLETT and TIM SCULTHORPE and MARTIN ROBINSON and ALEXANDER ROBERTSON and MARK DUELL and JOSEPH CURTIS FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 14:43, 22 March 2017 | UPDATED: 10:21, 23 March 2017

Figure 5. (The Daily Mail 2018), screenshot by author.

"Prime Minister vowed Britain would not 'surrender to the voices of hate and evil' in wake of attack" is a phrase that suggests, once more, a cohesive and singular campaign that has driven this attack, which is itself then located as stemming from within a structured and focused organisation. To separate body from voice, and to further classify the voice as one of hatred and evil encapsulates the impact of the attackers. This is reminiscent of ghostly hauntings, which have popularly involved rattling of chains, shrieking, possession of objects, and other manifestations which demonstrate the presence of the spirit without necessarily invoking the spirit itself. The noise the spirit makes in order to be heard, is not always in order to reveal itself, but also to incite terror. Theresa May's pulling apart of body and voice from the bodies that attack is a pulling apart of signifiers which looks to evoke disembodied corporeal threats rather than a measured assessment of relative threat level. Such an invocation involves the symbol of a Muslim, the sign without signifier. This in turn suggests a conjuring of a spirit which is allegorised into existence. It does not matter if the association of Muslims with evil and hate has any weight in reality or what could be thought of as truthful, the strength of the association lies in its repetition. Hauntings reside in their repetition - it doesn't matter if the ghost really exists, merely that it can be willed into existence. The proof of the existence of the ghost lies in the noises that one has heard.

The 82 seconds of carnage: Police timeline show crazed Islamist killed three pedestrians and a hero PC in less than two minutes of horror as it's revealed he had links to notorious British hate preacher

- **Metropolitan Police released first detailed timings of Wednesday's atrocity**
- **They pieced timeline from witness accounts, CCTV footage and 999 calls**
- **It is believed Masood was using WhatsApp seconds before the attack**
- **Attacker had links to the banned Al-Muhajiroun Islamist group**

By MARTIN BECKFORD and OMAR WAHID FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

PUBLISHED: 23:15, 25 March 2017 | UPDATED: 09:02, 26 March 2017

Figure 6. (The Daily Mail 2018), screenshot by author.

The phrasing of "carnage" "crazed" "hero" "horror" "notorious" "hate preacher" is, once more, language that draws directly from the the now-traditional binary oppositions since Bush's declaration of the "war on terror" in 2001. When something terrifying does happen, we can see that the language employed by the *Daily Mail* maintains the sense of panic, and if anything, fans the flames. There is a straightforward relationship between the publication's perception of the event and the binaristic narratives of extremist Islam/reasonable Western politics.

The term "Islamist" is itself a misnomer - to attach an "ist" to something is often to communicate the descriptor as suggesting a follower of an ideology. To paint Islam as an ideology instead of a religion, a tactic notoriously used by the UK government for a number of pieces of anti-terrorism legislation, is to suggest that followers of Islam (terrorists or otherwise) are both following the rules ordained for them by Islam and are incapable of introducing reason or logic that would divert them from Islam, so committed and "crazed" are they to and by Islam.

There is a sense that this style of headline and choice of narrative is one which exists almost entirely to incite fear and suspicion of Muslims and Islam, instead of the altogether expected horror and fear of the specific event where people lost their lives. To return to the allegory of ghosts, they are more often than not manifestations of fear and terror, whether subconscious or fantastical. Ghosts are rarely a good omen and, if we consider this idea in relation to the previous discussion about ghosts/Muslims as emptied signifiers, we can then turn to the elision that occurs between "moderate" and "extremist" Muslims. Once the vessel has been emptied out, it is replaced with binary oppositions between radicalism and moderateness – this opposition is unconcerned with actuality, and so it simply does not matter if Muslims do not live their lives on this constructed spectrum. This makes individuals into Muslims first, and perhaps full human beings with morality, evenness, and reason second, if at all. In other words, ghosts have come to be known as bad omens; it does not matter if a ghost has evil intentions or not, and there may well be plenty of examples of fiction or film that show a benevolent ghost, or a ghost who needs help before it can be on its way. But this does not impact the accumulation of signifiers that, over a great period of time, have become synonymous, at the very least, with a general sense of unease, mystery, and reasonable fear.

Westminster terrorist Khalid Masood died from a single gunshot wound to the chest after being challenged by armed police outside Parliament

- **British-born Muslim convert drove into pedestrians before stabbed policeman**
- **A short hearing was held today as his inquest was opened by a coroner**
- **The court heard Masood was shot at the scene and later died in hospital**

By NICK FAGGE and RICHARD SPILLETT FOR MAILONLINE

PUBLISHED: 14:25, 30 March 2017 | **UPDATED:** 17:01, 30 March 2017

Figure 7. (The Daily Mail 2018), screenshot by author.

"British-born Muslim convert" is a phrase which speaks to the discussion in Chapter 2 of conditional belonging expressed for those who exist in a hyphen – African American, Latin-American, British Muslim, Black British Muslim.

When this white supremacist tactic is viewed in relation to the machinations of understandings of terrorism in Britain, it brings us to the category of "British Muslim" and its sub-group "British-born Muslim." The latter term can occasionally denote white Britons who convert to Islam, but more often than not it references the children of first-generation immigrants who hail from Muslim families. Given the layered repetitions involved in the maintenance of racist structures, these terms have become dog-whistles for not only separating people of colour from whiteness, but also to indicate the internal enmity of those who are categorised as such. Ghosts, after all, often rise within the homes they previously possessed. The ghost cannot come to fully possess the house it previously occupied, but it cannot be expelled so easily either. The label of "British-born Muslim convert" suggests that a previously assimilable citizen has became a fantastical figure of terror, via the embrace of Islam. Such a reading should be obviously troubling, but given the wide deployment of the categories described above, it is clearly firmly within "reasonable" thinking to employ this discourse maliciously or, otherwise as a basic fact of being Muslim in Britain.

CASE STUDY 2 - LONDON BRIDGE

ATTACK,

3 JUNE 2017
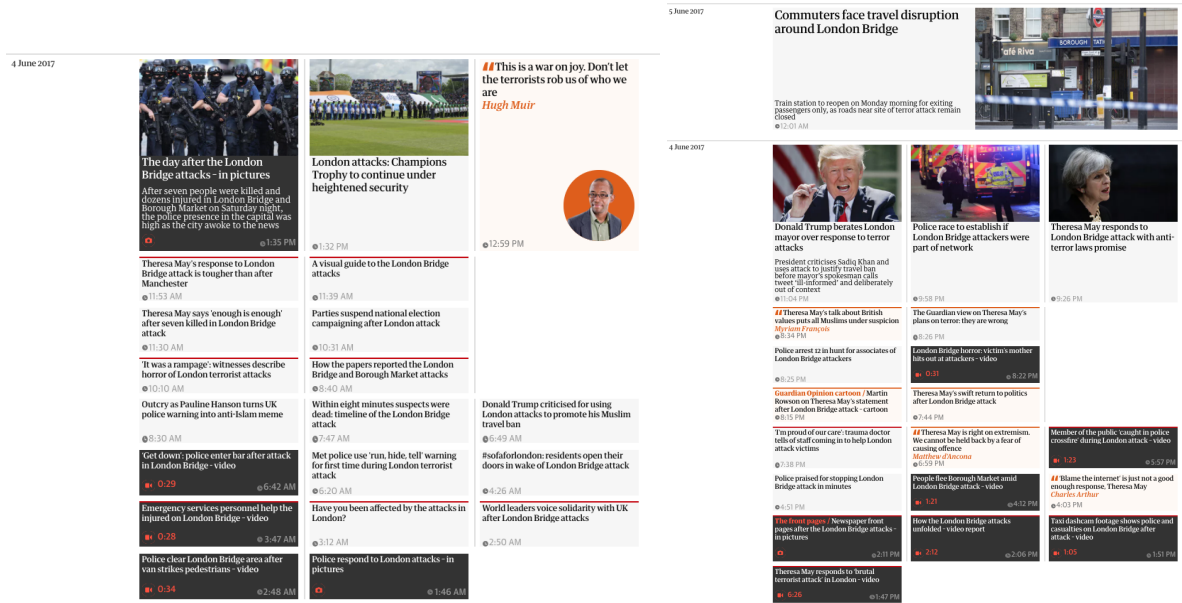
Figure 8. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author

"Theresa May's response to London Bridge attack is tougher than after Manchester" and "Parties suspend national election campaigning after London attack" capture a particular moment that felt like a historic sequence of events while it was happening. Attacks in Westminster, Manchester, and here on London Bridge, in quick succession alongside campaigning for a snap election had left the country reeling. Particularly given the very recent Brexit referendum, it would be an understatement to claim that racial and xenophobic tensions in the country were at a high.

I will turn to the feeling of being in Britain in the moment described above. On the day of the announcement of the results of the election, I attended a Business Visa interview at the US Embassy in London. I was only forced to apply for a Business Visa as I had my ESTA application rejected twice, once whilst attempting to travel to Chicago to deliver a conference paper (a version of this very chapter), and once whilst attempting to travel to Berkeley to work at the 1948 Partition Archive – both times to travel under the banner of my university. During the day of the interview, wherever it may have fallen, I could have done nothing but be acutely aware of my "identities" (not in my relationship to them, but in the relationship of various discourses that look at me) and call to mind the most recent US attempt at legislation, the Muslim travel ban. The interview, and my presence in the embassy and the sight of armed guards in front of American flags, was easily one of the singularly most terrifying experiences of my life. My application was initially rejected, and later accepted. It hardly seems to matter. And yet, no matter how terrifying it may have been, my position was one dripping with privilege - my British citizenship, legal status, full education, access to a passport - all meant that, coupled with the fact that neither my life nor the lives of my loved ones depended on my successfully being granted a visa, that the experience was nowhere near as terrifying as it could have been.

I spent the night before my embassy appointment watching the results of the election roll in with a couple of my friends. I spent my morning on the tube, combing through Twitter for the earliest portions of analysis. When I think of the ghost model I am outlining in the chapter, this experience, and the rapid onslaught of attacks over the summer, the weight of Trump and Brexit, it seems that these events are likely the spark of this chapter. Whilst the political turmoil of the past couple of years has rumbled on, I have felt myself shrink – no small matter having grown up in a country that cannot account for my presence. Whilst before I felt unseen at moments, here was a period of sustained invisibility coupled with sustained hypervisibility. If ghosts are conjured in the moments directly after terrorist attacks, and possibly also during seismic political events that use Islamophobia as the cornerstone of their resonance, then it follows that those who are haunted by them (or have conjured them?) hold certain opinions as to the existence of ghosts and the harm ghosts are capable of. Most hauntological works of theory wryly mention that of course they do not believe ghosts actually exist, but the question is one which alters the point of the theoretical tool. Ghosts must be seen to be believed, or documented in some kind of manner, and when it comes to the discourse that is employed with each terrorist attack located in the West, there is demonstrably a connection between acts of terror and the relative danger they pose to Western citizens at large. As discussed previously, attacks by terrorists that kill other Muslims outside the West, or indeed any deaths outside the West are not treated as equally dangerous in their own right. The level of danger is ascertained only in relation to the threat potentially posed to Westerners. There, then, is the utility of humans believing in, or conjuring up, ghosts and the danger they pose.

Further, Theresa May's admonition that "this is a war on joy. Don't let the terrorists rob us of who we are" naturally recalls the "war on terror." The phrase "war on joy" carries a similar impact, and the question here is – who is attacking all these abstract concepts? Muslims cannot possess joy. Muslims cannot possess terror.
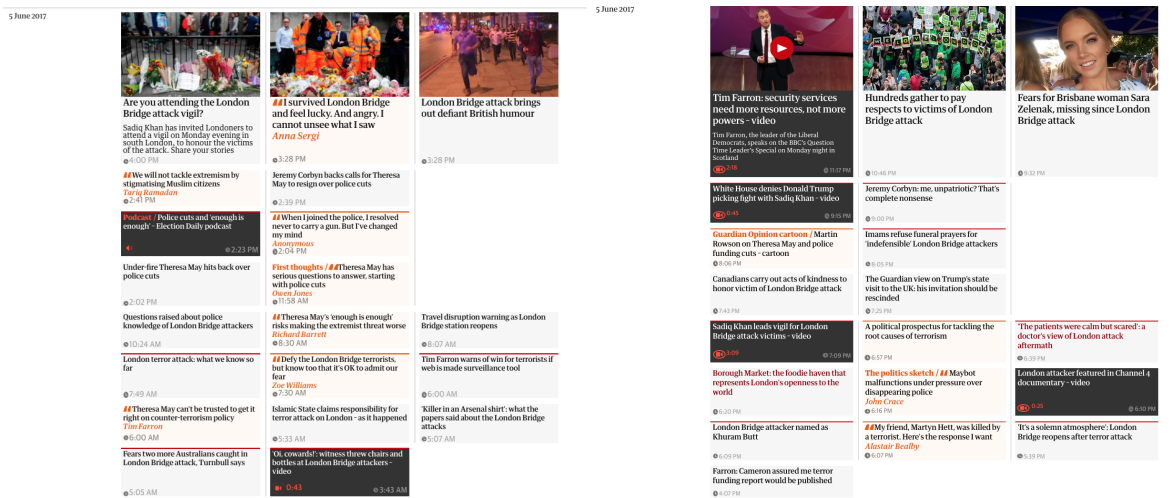
Figure 9. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

"We will not tackle extremism by stigmatising Muslim citizens," "Jeremy Corbyn backs calls for Theresa May to resign over police cuts," and "Tim Farron warns of win for terrorists if web is made surveillance tool" are all headlines which serve as a reminder that this particular attack happened during campaigning for an upcoming snap election where parties suspended

campaigning. However, as with almost anything concerning the place of migrants/Islam/people of colour in Britain, any opinion expressed about the causes of the attack is a political statement that aligns the speaker with a certain kind of politics. Now that Islam has been made into an "Issue," any opinion on it can be categorised into a network of discourses that involves a polarising pull that, for the most part, swiftly and comprehensively pushes aside the realities of being Muslim. We cannot reach a point where the discussion "solves" towards a particular understanding, or "resolves" into an action that removes the problem.

The ghosts cannot be exorcised, not because the ghosts are undefeatable or all-powerful, but because the ghosts are not real. At the very least, the ghosts are not the fearsome spectacle conjured up by the network of discourses.

"Borough Market: the foodie haven that represents London's openness to the world" speaks to the fact that food has never had a problem crossing borders, particularly under global capitalism. Both liberalism and right wing politics are proponents of that. When it comes to seeing Muslims, and to not conjuring ghosts, the political spectrum has no real differences amongst its positions. As much as food is so often a marker of successful multiculturalism because white Britons are happy to consume the labour of immigrants, so too are newspaper publications ready to consume the markers of Black and brown bodies as potential threats.

Figure 10. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

Here, we can see a range of headlines that present a range of ideas on how to combat terrorism, particularly in relation to where the fault lies, and how the problem is best approached.

Theoretical work engaged with hauntology often rests on nothing – ghosts have not been documented, and so the rules of ghosts are literary, and thus multifaceted, layered, complex, and pure imagination. The fact there are bodies of work which grow a cultural backdrop of how to understand ghosts has parallels with the cultural knowledge that works to frame terrorism and how to understand an issue that has centuries of history, but an unknown future. The "reality" of terrorism lies in the acts of murder that kill or otherwise harm people, but beyond this it is almost impossible to set definitions of the shape, motives, and potential harm of terrorism - or even the scale of actual harm.

The connection between fighting extremism and inequality is one which rests on an understanding of terrorism as embedded in social failings, rather than in a framework that holds Islam as an expansionist and barbaric ideology. One's literary, cultural, and social epistemology irrevocably shapes the understanding of the causes and fears of terrorism. As terrible as the deaths caused by terrorism are, any understanding of why these deaths occurred and how future deaths can be prevented, even which deaths are given value, has become a political position (has always been a political position).

7 June 2017

'I felt like a target': first paramedic on scene talks about London Bridge attack
11:24 PM

London Bridge attack: CCTV shows fatal clash with police
11:11 PM

CCTV shows police opening fire on London Bridge attackers - video
0:37   11:11 PM

Anti-Muslim hate crimes increase fivefold since London Bridge attacks
9:03 PM

London Bridge attackers were regulars at Sunday afternoon pool sessions
8:22 PM

Families of London Bridge attackers speak of shock and condemn their actions
8:18 PM

Police put emphasis on accuracy amid pressure to identify attack victims
7:32 PM

PM's attack on human rights laws aims to take attention off police cuts, says Labour
7:27 PM

I have prosecuted terrorists - and know human rights laws make us safer
Keir Starmer
6:48 PM

Figure 11. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

"London Bridge attackers were regulars at Sunday afternoon pool sessions" is an especially curious headline.

It is difficult to imagine ghosts at a card table, gathered around having dinner, or – playing pool. It is only notably children's literature which employs ghosts as figures of comedy, such as Casper the Friendly Ghost, with far more texts utilising ghosts as figures of abjection, terror, or the uncanny. I find it difficult to plot the train of thought that necessitates a headline such as the one

above. The sensationalism involved in profiling the actions of murderers transcends race here - it should patently not be of concern to anyone whether those who kill attended pool sessions, but in this context, the headline lets us know that we (and this "we" is carefully exclusionary) are mildly surprised that Muslim terrorists are capable of such "ordinary" actions that many other Britons would engage in. This tactic employs the moral panic strategies of "internal enemies" - aliens capable of infiltrating our societies go to such lengths to look like "us" and yet, are still capable of horrific murder.

This, in fact, does a disservice to the abhorrence of the attackers' actions. It is not necessary to provide foils for actions that kill others. Rothe and Muzatti's work (2004), coming only a couple of years after 9/11, is still relevant to the moral panics generated by media content today. Context is necessary, as is a developed understanding of the historical and social events leading up to the attack, but this headline can be nothing but scaremongering under the guise of acceptance and analysis.

Figure 12. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

"Why it's becoming impossible to stop the terrorists. The definition of extremism is so fluid that the security services are drowning in cases. Even known suspects can't be thwarted without the right evidence" brings up many questions that can reveal to us much about how we understand what "terrorism" is. Are the terrorists comprised of a singular group? Is there only one definition of terrorism? To believe so is extremely short sighted - terrorism studies has become its own discipline in relation to post-9/11 terror, as discussed in the Introduction, and news organisations have had to become conversant with the network of discourses mentioned previously. What are the implications of the "right" evidence? Evidence that allows suspected terrorists to be quickly detained? What would their rights be in such a case? Is "right" evidence merely evidence that allows people to be picked up by the police, or the evidence that presents itself?

If extremism was thought of as fluid, there would, arguably, be a multiplicity of nuanced understandings of how, if at all, radicalisation happens and we would all be engaging in a lexis that complicates the demonisation and creation of the singular haunting Muslim figure. This figure significantly damages the potency of anti-terrorism efforts as it inordinately punishes ghost-like figures, without affecting genuine terrorists. Aiming to eradicate all ghosts, ghostly figures, or those approaching ghostliness demonstrates a rigid definition controlled by ideological understandings of what "ghost" is and the threat posed. A fluid, or permeable, definition of extremism would be able to see social inequalities impacting rates of radicalisation, of communities left isolated by white flight, of suspicion and deeply racist structures turned upon minority communities, of bombing and imperial campaigns "abroad," of Western and white supremacy functioning to feed and allow inequalities and subjugations to flower.

Figure 13. (The Guardian 2018), screenshot by author.

"Anti-Muslim hate crime surges after Manchester and London Bridge attacks" – the fact that these crimes always spike after terrorist incidents, and have become commonplace in this country, says plenty to Muslim communities across Britain. My application of ghosts as a metaphor has been, thus far, a tool to break into difficult conversations about the functions of post-terror attack reporting and a way to shed fresh light on a discussion that has long been difficult to view with anything approaching newness or innovation.

I have found the notion of ghosts, and the various rules for the conjuring and exorcism of ghosts, to be a useful metaphor for beginning to think through the ways in which British Muslim people move around this country post-terror attack. As racially ambiguous as Islam is, for many in Britain they have classified brown people (whether Indian, Pakistani, South Asian in general) as brown and therefore obviously or noticeably Muslim. This classification ignores the possibility of practising or non-practising Muslims, of the different sects of Muslims, and of course of the millions around the world who have brown skin but are not Muslim, to say nothing of Black Muslim communities whose Muslim identities are regularly erased in a conceit of hierarchical identity politics.

This example is prime evidence for the invisibility/hypervisibility line that we began this discussion with. It is a unique manifestation of centuries-old Islamophobia, Orientalism, and other forms of uniquely British racisms that have brought us to the point where in modern day Britain Muslims (of numerous and varied communities with complex individual relationships to Islam) have become symbols of terror or potential terror. They can be incorporated up to a point, perhaps, if they toe the lines of being exceptional good immigrants, but by and large, Muslims are simultaneously terrifying and eminently exorciseable.

London Bridge terror attack: Police confirm three terrorists shot dead after they killed six people and injured at least 48

- A white van mounted the pavement on London Bridge shortly after 10pm
- Multiple people were hit and several men exited the van wielding 12 inch knives
- Three attackers have been killed and six revellers are feared dead so far
- Armed police responded and shot the attackers within 8 minutes of first call
- Were you there? Get in touch rod.ardehali@mailonline.co.uk

By ROD ARDEHALI FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 01:43, 4 June 2017 | UPDATED: 19:36, 4 June 2017

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Police searching for EIGHTH victim of London Bridge attack find 45-year-old Frenchman's body in Thames where he was thrown by terrorists' van - as the seven other victims are confirmed (but not by the police)

- Xavier Thomas, 45, from France, was thrown into River Thames by terrorists' van
- His body was found four days after Saturday night's attack, four miles downriver
- Spaniard Ignacio Echeverria, 39, was knifed after hitting jihadi with a skateboard
- Australian, French and Spanish foreign ministries have raised concerns over lack of information police have given families
- Sara Zelenak, 21, from Australia, was stabbed after losing friends during chaos
- Sebastien Belanger, 36, was killed by terrorists after watching football in a pub
- Kirsty Boden, 28, from South Australia, killed while trying to help injured victim
- James McMullan, 32, from Hackney, died outside pub while waiting for friends
- Alexandre Pigeard, 27, from France, was knifed in the neck inside his restaurant
- Christine Archibald, 30, from British Columbia, died after being hit by the van

By ANTHONY JOSEPH FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 09:46, 7 June 2017 | UPDATED: 14:11, 20 June 2017

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Jihadi was 'euphoric' hours before attack as he asked a neighbour about hiring a van: Arsenal-supporting father of two, who had worked for London Transport, also tried to 'radicalise children' in local park

- Police shot dead the terrorists - one of whom was wearing an Arsenal shirt - within eight minutes of initial call
- Mail knows identity of man in North London club's shirt, but is not revealing his identity at request of police
- He used to work for fast food chain KFC and for Transport for London which is responsible for Tube and buses
- Terrorists duped neighbours in Barking into thinking he was a 'nice guy' so they would trust him with their kids
- It emerged Sunday afternoon a man was shot in the head after being caught in police crossfire Saturday night
- On Tuesday a minute's silence will be held in Britain to remember those killed in Saturday night's terror attack
- Do you know last night's attackers? If you do, email gareth.davies@mailonline.co.uk or call (020) 3615 0685

By KATIE FRENCH and SIMON HOLMES and CHARLIE MOORE and SCOTT CAMPBELL and STEPHANIE LINNING and GARETH DAVIES and EKIN KARASIN and ANTHONY JOSEPH and JOE SHEPPARD and ROD ARDEHALI FOR MAILONLINE and INDERDEEP BAINS and STEPHEN WRIGHT and CHRISTIAN GYSIN FOR DAILY MAIL and RACHAEL BURFORD FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 15:42, 4 June 2017 | UPDATED: 05:31, 29 June 2017

Killer who was filmed in Regent's Park with an ISIS flag and tried to radicalise children with sweets was shopped to police TWICE as it emerges one of his fellow terrorists lived in DUBLIN

- Muslim extremist Khuram Butt, 27, appeared in a TV documentary last year about British jihadis on Channel 4
- He was caught on camera alongside two notorious preachers who were well known to police and intelligence
- Police were warned about 27-year-old radicalising children in a local park two years ago by offering sweets
- He and two other jihadis left at least seven dead and 48 injured before police marksmen halted stabbing spree
- One of his neighbours told MailOnline he was a 'cheeky chappie' growing up and his older brother was in TA
- The terrorist ringleader held a farewell barbecue at his flat in Barking, where guests were handed cupcakes
- Police arrest 12 people in connection with the atrocities including 7 women in raids across east London
- Second attacker has been named as a Moroccan-Libyan called Rachid Redouane thought to be a pastry chef
- Do you know Saturday's attackers? If you do, email martin.robinson@mailonline.co.uk or call 0203 6151866

By STEPHEN WRIGHT and CHRIS GREENWOOD and INDERDEEP BAINS and EMILY KENT SMITH and SAM GREENHILL FOR THE DAILY MAIL and GARETH DAVIES and MARTIN ROBINSON, UK CHIEF REPORTER FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 00:48, 5 June 2017 | UPDATED: 00:18, 6 June 2017

Figure 14. (The Daily Mail 2018), screenshot by author.

A significant talking point after the attack in this case study was a focus on cuts to police services and security forces – "He was caught on camera alongside two notorious preachers who were well known to police and intelligence" – "Police were warned about 27 year old radicalising children in a local park two years ago by offering sweets." Prime Minister Theresa May was roundly criticised after the London Bridge attack for cuts to police forces, and this was taken as a significant reason as to why the attackers were known to the police, but were not apprehended before they killed. The above headlines express shock that the terrorists resided in major UK and Irish cities, and even appeared in a terrorism documentary on Channel 4.

Given the *Daily Mail's* characteristic xenophobia and fluid relationship with accuracy, it is difficult to take their shock as in any way sincere. With the growing attention paid to terrorist attacks, and terrorist attacks themselves evolving beyond the difficulty of obtaining guns or larger weapons in the UK, news organisations and services play a pivotal role in mediating the type of grief filtered through to the nation at large. Whilst many now get their news from social media sites, all content from headlines, tweets, facebook posts have streamlined discussion and burst open the sheer amount of opinion and information available from multiple sources.

Of course, such an attack is shocking and would likely affect many people not in the area who went about their day, perhaps waiting for information on loved ones, or taking in the news and fear that comes with attacks that are decidedly out of the ordinary for British civilians. Considering the amount of media analysis available, it is wilful misunderstanding to presume any of these organisations as unbiased, neutral, or official - as much as any social media sources would be considered so. This becomes organised wilful misunderstanding when institutions like the BBC proclaim their neutrality. No organisation can "achieve" neutrality, and nor should they be expected to, but in the example above we can see the *Daily Mail's* purposeful reticence to engage with their own politics (beyond a right wing label) nor to assess their role in stoking racial tensions and attempting to incite moral panics amongst its readers.

Ghosts are scary. They have been known in many tales to have caused great fear and pain to others. Building up an artificially inflated sense of how terrifying they can be, and contributing to a network of discourses that distinguish between friendly ghosts and harmful ghosts would not help to apprehend said ghosts, nor "understand" them.

Figure 15. (The Daily Mail 2018), screenshot by author.

"ISIS celebrates deaths of seven killed in London Bridge attack with sick posts vowing more terror...ISIS had called for knife and vehicle attacks, but has now claimed responsibility"

These headlines call to mind a moment in Derrida's construction of a spectre of Marx, wherein he firmly positions himself, or the speaker of the work, to be conjuring up Marx. There is an alluring thought here: if ghosts represent a hidden desire, an unfinished business with the world, or are merely manifestations that signal something rotten, it could follow that something, most likely the one who holds the gaze, brought the ghost into being in order to confront their own repressions.

It is not lost on me that the USA and UK's direct role in the historical and continuing backdrop of violent colonial and imperial subjugation have conjured up said groups. These groups are dangerous, and have taken countless lives both in and outside of the West with their own independent machinations – but they are not autonomous, they are not singular, and they did not spring up out of nowhere.

Sister confirms British business owner, 32, died in London Bridge terror attack as family of Canadian national reveal she died in her fiance's arms

- James McMullan, 32, named as the second victim of London Bridge attack
- His sister Melissa fought back tears as she confirmed death to reporters
- Victim Christine Archibald moved to Europe from Canada to live with her fiance
- It is believed she was hit by terrorists' van on bridge and died in fiance's arms
- Australian Candice Hedge's throat was slashed after finishing in a restaurant
- New Zealander Oliver Dowling, 32, is in a coma after being stabbed in the face
- Seven people confirmed dead and a further 48 were injured in the attack

By RICHARD SPILLETT and PADDY DINHAM and JOSEPH CURTIS FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 13:52, 4 June 2017 | UPDATED: 15:57, 6 June 2017

Desperate families beg for information on 'missing' loved ones after the London Bridge terror attack as victims reveal their horror

- Images of 16-year-old Asya Mustafa were being desperately circulated online
- She lost her phone after being caught up in the chaos but has now been found
- New Zealander Oliver Dowling, 32, is in a coma after being stabbed in the face
- He's expected to recover but girlfriend Marie Bondeville's condition is unknown
- Australian Candice Hedge's throat was slashed after finishing in a restaurant
- 4 French people and one Spaniard are injured, the countries' foreign offices said
- 7 people have been confirmed dead and a further 48 were injured in the attack

By PADDY DINHAM FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 09:20, 4 June 2017 | UPDATED: 19:49, 4 June 2017

Figure 16. (The Daily Mail 2018), screenshot by author.

The existence of headlines such as these is notable in itself. Not every atrocity or loss of life can be given devoted 24/7 coverage that rumbles on for weeks, or even months. Nevertheless, as discussed before, it is a political choice which lives are valued and grieved over, which lives are statistics, and which lives are not even that.

This is particularly applicable to incidents where numerous lives are lost and it becomes headline news. To include information profiling those who have lost their lives, and those left behind, namely their families, contributes to the social grieving process that begins after such attacks. What I am getting at here is how to explain an absence. I do not know what it is like to have Black and brown lives, of different classes, sexualities, and genders, be mourned after national atrocities, to be profiled, to assume grief and terror and fear and rage on the basis of those lives. (Grenfell - who is doing the remembrance? Is it truly national? How did the event happen? Is there only grief, or rather pity, based on naturally occurring hazards? See Flint, Michigan, Hurricane Katrina, Grenfell Tower, Topshop and Zara factories in Bangladesh as well as deaths due to terrorism across the Middle East and South Asia (Syria, Yemen, Pakistan). In short, what is missing is a communal kind of grieving and mourning which affirms both the humanity and deaths of those killed.

Whilst discussing the images of torture and abuse revealed at Abu Ghraib in 2004, Gargi Bhattacharyya outlines how a central response to this atrocity has been "a vociferous assertion that these constitute the most disgusting and unimaginable of revelations" (2008, p. 63). These reactions coalesce around the notion that such horrors are outside of the realms of imagination for well-meaning and right-thinking citizens, and in turn, such expressions of horror are assertions which:

serve to reaffirm that 'we' do not do such things, otherwise it would not be so shocking, and that we have not done such things in the past (although there is ample evidence that we have). Theatricalised disgust also confirms that this is depravity, not security strategy, and that these images reveal a horror beyond imagination, certainly far beyond the respectable conduct of this justifiable and humanitarian war (Bhattacharyya 2008, p. 63).

Here, a "we" is constructed which implies that it is constituted of citizens who wholly reject the torture carried out at Abu Ghraib. Bhattacharyya's argument identifies how expressions of revulsion and disidentification with these same security strategies speak to the theories of exceptionalism outlined in the first part of this thesis. Evidently, not only does exceptionalism apply to state machinations but also to individual and community reactions to incidents of great trauma. The phrase "theatricalised disgust" encapsulates Bhattacharyya's argument as one that has a sharp understanding of the hollowness of such expressions of disgust given that torture and rendition at Abu Ghraib *was* a security strategy carried out by the United States. Further, Bhattacharyya identifies that the tortured and dead people depicted in these now infamous images were not a part of this grief process, as well as the purposeful ignorance of their provenance as stemming from US foreign policy. The broader issue, then, is that not only is grief policed along the categorisation of certain lives a valuable, even in death, but also that theatricalised grief for those harmed by Western state policies is often tempered by assertions that "we" would not behave in such a manner, that "we" cannot imagine such atrocities – atrocities carried out in "our" names, ostensibly for "our" protection.

Armed police arrest 12 - including four women - at East London tower block in connection with terror attack as officers swoop on a flat above a Paddy Power shop less than a mile away

- Twelve people were arrested at a block of flats in Barking, east London, in connection with last night's attack
- Women wearing burkas were among those taken into police custody in the dramatic morning raid today
- One of the three terrorists responsible for last night's attack is believed to have lived in a ground-floor flat
- Armed police were then involved in a second raid in East Ham, with witnesses saying three arrests were made
- Do you know last night's attackers? If you do, email gareth.davies@mailonline.co.uk or call (020) 3615 0685

By CHRIS PLEASANCE and STEPHANIE LINNING and JAKE WALLIS SIMONS, ASSOCIATE GLOBAL EDITOR FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 11:46, 4 June 2017 | UPDATED: 00:51, 5 June 2017

Terrifying moment three Jihadis were shot dead after killing seven and hurting 48: Gang yell 'This is for Allah' after mowing down crowd on London Bridge then going on stabbing frenzy

- Seven people were killed and at least 48 others injured in an on London Bridge and Borough Market last night
- Three men drove a white van in an 'S shape' across the bridge at 50mph, mowing down up to 20 pedestrians
- They left the vehicle and began 'randomly stabbing' victims with 12-inch knives in busy bars in the market
- Witnesses described seeing victims with their throats cut while others fought off attackers with pint glasses
- Police shot dead the terrorists - one of whom was wearing an Arsenal shirt - within eight minutes of initial call
- Today armed police raided a block of flats in Barking, east London, as a major investigation was underway
- Terror attack comes just 12 days after the Manchester attack and 10 weeks after the Westminster atrocity
- Did you see what happened? Please email darren.boyle@mailonline.co.uk or call 0203 615 387

By EKIN KARASIN and CHARLIE MOORE and SCOTT CAMPBELL and RACHAEL BURFORD and ROD ARDEHALI and JOE SHEPPARD and SIMON HOLMES and ANTHONY JOSEPH and STEPHANIE LINNING FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 22:32, 3 June 2017 | UPDATED: 12:18, 5 June 2017

Figure 17. (The Daily Mail 2018), screenshot by author.

"Gang yell 'This is for Allah' after mowing down crowd on London Bridge then going on stabbing frenzy."

Imagine if the angle for this headline understood this invocation of God as coming from an individual evidently looking for excuses and motives for the murder of innocent people. Imagine if this headline did not purposely incite a network of discourses built to haunt worldwide communities of people who suddenly find ourselves having to work to prove that we are not all fantastical beings of terror, driving to let evil take over the world. As stated earlier, imagination is the bridge between hauntings located in the present and their warnings for the future. To be able to imagine beyond present discourse through the use of contextualised and broader understandings of historical precedent is to allow one to gaze upon a future that does not see certain bodies as disposable in both life and death.

Section Four

Finishing Thoughts

1 – Reflection on Section 2

The previous section cried out to be written in a noticeably different style than the pieces of writing that precede and succeed it, largely because it is excruciatingly difficult to write academically about something that has come to be the very essence of my life, of those I love, and of the communities I belong to. It is not a research interest, or a current hobby, but a fact – to me. This context changes the discourse analysis that I would be able to carry out, and centring a researcher's own experiences in the writing style is a way of ensuring that knowledge production is balanced alongside the value of life experience.

Stylistically, the pages are designed to look like a UK government policy document, with the grey boxes hailing Sara Ahmed's style of literary analysis in Strange Encounters (2000). Ahmed's analysis involves short paragraphs grouped into grey boxes, whilst the policy documents use grey boxes of writing to state "facts" ranging from definitions of Islam to statements about modern Britain. Ahmed's stylistic choice allowed her literary analysis to sit apart from but together with her theoretical analysis, as well as foregrounding an affective reading practice attuned to the conditions of encounter. The policy document, however, creates a space where text in grey boxes was positioned to provide fact checks on extremely complex topics, ranging from the difference in Islamic schools of thought to underlining parts of the text proper. The grey boxes in this scenario were there to reinforce the strength of the knowledge production put forward by the government, an institutional stamp of fact. I had these two pieces of work in mind when putting this chapter together, and I hope that I have been able to use the very different approaches to the kinds of analytical thought that are valued: Ahmed's text is emotional, rigorously academic, profound, and careful. UK government policy can structurally only be built upon manipulations of global and social politics, whatever the political spectrum of the sitting government. One text makes space for intellectual and emotional growth, and specifically for widening understandings of the various shades of being of colour. The other shrinks

the space available to exist in a country based upon campaigns of intolerance under the guise of anti-extremism.

During the course of this PhD, I have had to shrink myself in order to force my way into spaces in which I do not belong, be they the departmental office, academic conferences, or union strikes. The continuous work of pushing at the edges in order to sneak in, to have to work harder to look to belong, is work that requires creative articulation. Creativity is central to expressing ideas that may well have lingered in my mind for some time, but will be new to whiteness. Creativity is necessary to present age-old analysis as new, or to bring forward the explicit connections that are required with the rapid pace of racial politics.

The previous section has involved an exercise in writing, whereupon I note down my immediate reactions to a random selection of headlines. The references that I do make have been added after the first couple of drafts in order to preserve the stream of consciousness style. The nature of writing about Islamophobia involves loose ends, incomplete or missing connections, and an unknowability combined with a predictability of patterns. I wish instead to foreground the role that identity and lived experiences play in colouring the reading process and altering the understandings of fact, analysis, and interpretation. This conversation about what Islamic fundamentalism is, if it exists, how it is caused, what we can do to stop it manifesting, who is to blame, is a conversation that almost every single person in the world has an opinion on, with radically different investments in those said opinions. The conversation has, naturally, become ever polarising and a tool for political bargaining with lives, land, and minds. The metaphor of ghosts has been a temporary tool to demonstrate the dearth of careful and emotionally astute writing in relation to Islamic extremism discourse, and to provide a contribution to the work of making space for a range of writing standpoints, styles, and conclusions.

2 – Ghostliness as a metaphor

A common theme of hauntological dissemination is to engage with time and its place amongst understanding ghostly apparitions. Freccero particularly characterises ghosts as a physical, or indeed metaphysical, reminder that ghosts "are neither discrete nor sequential" (2013, p. 337). In the context of the previous section, this can allow us to view Muslims-as-ghosts as existing outside of time. Once 9/11 has happened, so profound has been its impact on the modern world, that it is difficult to imagine an alternate reality in which 9/11 may have not happened. For many people, 9/11 has become resolutely central epistemologically and, from our present stance, feels as though it was always going to happen. As there is such a complex pattern of narratives attached to "terror" and "Muslim," these events can never be consumed in any kind of isolation; they consistently recall the weight of time that impresses upon us the connections that are to be made. Each event, however shocking and devastating, is difficult to incorporate into what we understand – and yet, it falls into a familiar pattern of understanding that allows us to build upon a template of time first envisioned with George W. Bush's response to 9/11. Ghosts/Muslims thus manifest as an old spectre, long haunting those who attempt to understand them. Ghosts/Muslims are an inevitable catastrophe, eminently beatable, yet nevertheless terrifying. Each terror attack is devastating, but only certain terror attacks take valued human life with them.

The narrative of rising tensions between East/West, Muslim/non-Muslim are tensions that have rumbled on for centuries in various guises. Our modern moment of this particular version of neoliberal and imperial capitalism constructs narratives of the "war on terror" as profitable socially, culturally, and perhaps most importantly, economically. It is paramount that any narrative which grips the most powerful entities within nations be economically viable and profitable – war has been sustainable in the modern era because not only is it profitable in terms of human life as commodity, but

also for governments, private security firms, and private citizens. Here, we can recall Mbembe's ideas on the ways in which value in death is inscribed onto bodies via power (2003, p. 12). Mbembe claims that the future collapses into the present, via death. The death caused by suicide bombers ends the futures of the bomber and their victims. It is a familiar feeling to wonder, at the death of a loved one, why the world continues and time marches on. Ghosts/Muslims represent a conjuring of the spectre of death and a warning of how collapsible time can become. Of course, the figure of the Muslim that I am describing here is a Muslim constructed entirely in the eye of Western cultural politics: the empty vessel that has the complex web of narratives poured into it is the vessel which can never attain humanity and which possesses the power to halt time. A vessel, in other words, which exists in suspended trauma.

Derrida lingers upon the notion of invisibility in ghostliness, and centres this around the visor effect, where "we do not see who looks at us" (2006, p. 6). Ghosts, through folklore or literature, have said to be able to manifest either in a form visible to humans or through possession of objects and it is this latter form that is evidently present when there are fears of terror strikes. A rucksack on a brown man with a beard becomes an object capable of inflicting harm – both the rucksack and the man. Invisibility is central to understanding how British Muslims must move through space and outside of time. There comes to be a dissonance between a person's "true self" or, rather, the person they are when alone or with family and friends, and the person they are represented as from a range of sources that repeat a pattern of blinkered gazes. When travelling on the tube, for example, hypervisibility of Muslim stereotypes creates fear, or at the very least, tensions and nervousness that have their roots in understanding Muslims as invisible until the moment where they are conjured as ghost, that is, as harmful.

The previous section collected headlines from The Guardian and The Daily Mail, two widely-read British newspapers aligned with the left wing and the right wing. Of course, there has been resistance to the familiar patterns of narratives that are

deployed after terror attacks, and many writers and social media users have robustly challenged such critiques. The otherness of Muslims, however, is an otherness that spans across class, gender, sexuality, and disability lines – many communities have Muslim individuals and yet the portrayal of Muslims in Britain remains cis, straight, abled, and largely South Asian or Middle Eastern. This backdrop engages with Derrida's notions of the spectral other that looks back at the one who is haunted. Here, I do not mean the attackers I have outlined above, but those who are not attackers and who are Muslim, of whatever community. Ghostliness, whilst largely presuming that the figure of the ghost exists to impart some kind of moral lesson or is a creature to be beaten before order can be restored, always carries a tinge of fear that "evil" may triumph. The extension of the ghostliness metaphor in this manner really gains its strength when considered in relation to those Muslims who are not terrorists. What happens when Muslims/ghosts look back? How can Muslims/ghosts be exorcised when the spectre of Muslims remains tightly bound to how the West understands itself in its most modern forms? There are certainly challenges to Western and white supremacy, when calls are made to complicate our understanding of refugees, of terror attacks in Nigeria and Syria, of the meaning of "terror" when the attacker is white – these challenges critique the structures of understanding that have built Muslims into spectres, but they cannot do away with the spectre altogether. Just as Derrida argues that "when the ghostly body of the emperor disappears, it is not the body that disappears, merely its phenomenality, its phantomality. The emperor is more real than ever" (163), then so too do I argue that when the ghostly body of the Muslim disappears, it is not the body that disappears/is defeated, merely its phenomenality, its phantomality. The figure of the Muslim is more real than ever.

4 – Where this leaves us

As stated earlier, I am reluctant to offer decisive conclusions for this chapter. It is important that the reader know it was an ordeal to write – I have too much skin in the game to pretend that this was a dispassionate or "academic" exercise only. It is almost impossible to finish in a traditional manner with a summary and a couple of paragraphs of findings with which we can move forward. There are, however, a few points that will round off the chapter somewhat.

Firstly, it is absolutely imperative to recognise that I am not arguing that ghosts are Muslim, or that Muslims are ghosts. Hauntology has been a tool through which I intended to shed a light on an often dark and repetitive discourse. It is a tool that must be put down, and is certainly not intended as a framework or suggestion for structural analysis. Instead, it should serve as a reminder (in practice and in theory) that ever-more creative tools and solutions are necessary for race-based analysis in general, but also for analysis alive to Islamophobic structures beyond a praxis that merely replicates or furthers racist agendas.

Secondly, the figure of the Muslim that I have cast as a ghost throughout this chapter is a figure which has been constructed by that same Islamophobic structure – by Western non-Muslims who have deployed the aged roots of Islamophobia in order to renew them with an ongoing commitment to the death, torture, detainment, and structural harm Muslims from numerous communities face. This figure has nothing to do with reality and is not based upon any understanding or experience I have with Muslims. It is a figure consumed and disseminated from the standpoint that "Muslim" is an empty signifier to be allowed to roam free and float its way through structurally Islamophobic institutions and societies. It is primarily the status of ghosts as, perhaps paradoxically, empty floating signifiers that has made them a useful tool for gazing upon the machinations of emotions in terror attacks.

Thirdly, the connection between Islamophobia and the emotional reactions of myself, as a single British Muslim woman, to a small and randomly selected portion of headlines is crucial to how my work has come to be written. It has been traumatising to experience, but also to write. The designation of Islamophobia, and racism in general, as a traumatising experience is one which has been left relatively untouched by mainstream academia. This itself is a function of racism, and the work in this chapter aims to contribute towards focusing on the specifics of racist structures as a methodology which seeks to pay attention to the multiplicities of race often left neglected by whiteness.

Finally, time. This chapter comes in the middle of this research project and during the course of writing it, the EU Referendum in Britain and the election of Donald Trump in the USA have unfolded. These moments have for me, as a researcher, sparked a change wherein I have had my knowledge and suspicions of whiteness in the West confirmed. It has often felt as though time has ceased to have any meaning and I have found this reflected in my thinking and writing throughout this chapter. Whiteness has worked throughout modern history to preserve itself no matter the cost, and it has been well-documented that conceptions of time often become hazy, unreal, or unnecessary during moments of great trauma or stress. Ghosts represent a melding, overlap, and multiplicity which makes them not only a useful tool but also a symbol of time that is broken. Ghosts hail a possible absence of the future, a reminder that the present rapidly becomes the past, and a warning of the impact of present actions. Ghosts are a floating signifier just like time – both concepts are tools through which to mark out **time** that is out of place and space.

Chapter 4

Section 1
Political Blackness and the Limits of Solidarity

The trauma connection

The previous chapter outlined experiences of Islamophobia as traumatic, and considered the symbolic figure of "the Muslim" as one which has been palimpsestically projected by non-Muslims and Western states as threats or potential threats. This figure of the Muslim as a signifier of danger is one which bears little relation to the everyday realities of how Muslims conceive of themselves, but is in itself a traumatising reality of being Muslim: one may not live thinking of oneself as a threat, but being received as such is a deeply painful and recurrent experience. The conclusions of this previous chapter involved a focus upon the entwinement of time, particularly in relation to imaginations and hopes of the future, as a concept laden with grief amongst non-linear and fraught understandings of time as experienced under Islamophobia. Thus far, the thesis as a whole has focused largely on the experiences of South Asian Muslim women residing in the West, but to consider the trauma of Islamophobia in relation to this group as non-linear, messy, and multi-directional requires us to also consider the figure of the Muslim and what this encompasses in real, rather than only emotional and conceptual, terms. In other words, who does the term "Muslim" denote? Who looks Muslim, and how is this category demarcated? As racially diverse a religion as Islam is, who is called to mind in the West when "Muslim" is mentioned?

David Tyrer's work on mis/recognition is pertinent here, where The Politics of Islamophobia discusses the coding process of racial categorisation in relation to Muslims:

> The thing about colour coding the world is that it grossly simplifies things to such an extent one can easily forget that each time we racially recognise other subjects, we are not simply reading racial meanings off their skin, but we are inscribing them onto their very bodies. This is quite a violent way of describing a violent practice that doesn't always seem so because after a couple of hundred years of practice, it has become routinised, normalised, and even commoditised (2013, p. 16).

Racial coding or categorisation are far too euphemistic terms for the process of, as Tyrer argues, inscribing and writing on to bodies how they fit into society. It is not only a process of reading but a history-laden inscription with inevitable corresponding entanglements in the racial and economic logics of the day. Tyrer's analysis of this practice comes during a discussion of an encounter with racial coding that involves Muslims – Tyrer labels this mis/recognition and uses the example of Sikhs being attacked post-9/11 whilst being mistaken for Muslims (Sian 2013). With those particular encounters, brown skin and turbans are enough to encode Sikhs as Muslims, and therefore as threats to white assailants and their sense of protecting their civilisation. Indeed, this encounter is imbued with the Orientalist logic discussed in previous chapters and Tyrer's analysis points out the violence written into such encounters. He goes on to outline that:

> If we take the argument seriously that Muslims lack raciality, then it must follow logically that when we look at a Muslim, we do not see a Muslim, but rather we see an ontic fullness that betrays the Muslim lack: we see a properly racial subject – a Bangladeshi, a Somali, an Arab … But a Muslim? As a being that, within the terms of dominant framings of the racial imaginary, exists only through choice, faith and imagining to interrupt the ideal of ascribed racial subjectivisation, Muslims must therefore only constitute a political illusion; beings who cannot be seen as such (2013, p. 42).

When considering who looks Muslim, and the pairing of racial identity and religious identity, Tyrer points out the tendency of detractors of the very existence of Islamophobia often contend that Islam has no race and therefore Islamophobia cannot be racist. Here, Tyrer's argument instead posits that in refusing to see race when looking at Muslims, what is seen is instead a lack, a refusal to see the being gazed upon. Once again, much of the discussion of this thesis has focused upon the centrality of gaze and positionality in determining not only how subjects are seen, but also the very essence and existence of what is seen. To refuse to see the raciality of Muslims, is to actively refuse to see Muslims. With these two strands of argument in mind, that racial categorisation is a violent inscription upon bodies and that to refuse to see raciality in Muslims is a refusal to gaze realistically and with social responsibility, we can turn to the content of this chapter. If it follows that trauma is a messy and multi-directional entity, then it follows that the same trauma described as stemming from

Islamophobia also contains within it varying types of trauma within Muslim communities wherein Muslims feel themselves as simultaneous victims and perpetrators of injustices that can be understood within the framework of trauma outlined in the previous chapter. Chapter 3 concerned itself with a range of ways in which to see other Muslims and the trauma of Muslims from the perspective of South Asians, and this expansive gaze must extend itself to consider the dominant perceptions of who looks Muslim in the West. This chapter will thus be concerned with a discussion about Black Muslims against the dominance of Arab and South Asian Muslims in popular and/or mainstream discourse in order to examine the position of Black Muslims in Western Muslim communities, and to examine the deployment of Blackness in Britain in terms of understanding solidarity and anti-racist movements amongst shared communities. In other words, this chapter is concerned with the role South Asian Muslims, as a group, play in limiting solidarity and community feeling for fellow Muslims who are also Black.

Tracking this erasure of Black Muslims in Western discourse can partly be found in The Casey Review's utilisation of data wherein, as discussed in Chapter Two, the document focuses on the issue of integration in British society and devotes most of its time to Muslim Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities as outstanding examples of self-segregation and a lack of integration. The document states that "the two largest ethnic groups within the overall Muslim population in England and Wales are of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins, accounting for around 38% and 15% of Muslims in England and Wales respectively" (2016, p. 27-28). The largest populations of Muslims in the country are used throughout as dog-whistle examples as proof of a lack of assimilation and belonging to Britain. In choosing to ignore Muslims of other ethnicities the, already shaky, conclusions of the review and its approach to Muslims in Britain, are further compromised. Black Muslims are not mentioned a single time in the 200 page document, and Black people as a social group are mentioned sparsely, largely in relation to statistics on deprivation in education, employment, and housing, alongside Pakistani and Bangladeshi counterparts.

What this chapter is interested in with respect to Black Muslims is expanding the trauma model outlined in Chapter 3 to discuss the traumatic impact of erasure from within one's own community. Dhamoon and Hankivsky explain the hierarchization of trauma through their

article on the Canadian Museum of Human Rights decision to place the Holocaust in a separate area in order to demonstrate its "centrality" to "the overall human rights story" (2013, p. 900). Their argument in processing this runs as follows:

> The Oppression Olympics is an evocative term used by feminist intersectionality scholars to describe intergroup competition and victimhood (Hancock, 2011). It echoes Novick's (2000) concept of "victimization Olympics" whereby groups are pitted in a morbid competition of historical oppressions (2013, p. 900).

The use of "oppression Olympics" denotes the continued hierarchization of trauma, and indeed, oppression in a manner that speaks to the centrality of visibility and optics in how we understand the value of human life. As argued earlier by Mbembe, this valuation of human life is the work of death and, in the modern world, contingent upon the logics of racial capitalism and neoliberal machines of death. The concept of oppression Olympics and the hierarchization of trauma in turn speaks to the hierarchization of belonging within racial categories – who looks most Muslim upon a first quick glance, who can be said to belong to the community, who is inscribed as having value within a community. Dhamoon and Hankivsky's work is an appropriate precursor to the coming themes of this chapter in that they capture the process of valuation of human life (and death), and tell us something about belonging. Their work calls attention to unfolding processes of grief and trauma wherein community grieving is ascribed alongside valuations of life. Thus, hierarchization functions not only through trauma, but also through intersecting oppressions – this chapter is concerned with how far it is useful and accurate to consider notions of Muslim solidarity and community (and within this anti-racist solidarity and community) whilst paying attention to who does not immediately appear to belong as a Muslim and is recognised as such.

This chapter will be written from the perspective of my position as a researcher who is South Asian and Muslim; whilst the chapter is concerned with the themes of trauma, erasure, and community solidarity, I cannot speak to the realities of life experiences for Black Muslims, and nor would I want to. Similarly, I cannot speak for South Asian Muslim communities as whole. What will happen, however, is that I will examine the cultural representational aspects of Black Muslims in South Asian media as an avenue into outlining anti-Blackness in media

products, before moving onto a discussion about interpretative methods, and concluding in an examination of social justice activism pertaining to "the" Muslim community. Before discussing the interplay between South Asian and Black Muslims, however, the foundation for this exploration will be established through a discussion of identity and race category formation in relation to political Blackness through the following series of considerations: a continuation of the mis/recognition conversation introduced by Tyrer; the aims and utilities of solidarity in social justice activism; the role of diaspora and coloniality in identity and race formation. In short, a discussion that centres upon the process of racial categorisation, and the role of such a process on solidarity and community amongst people who share commonalities across religion and race. Solidarity and community, their possible limits and their possible utilisations, are the centre of this chapter alongside the core theme of South Asian Muslims engaging with Black Muslims along various points.

Identity and race category formation

I will begin by using two well-known markers of racial patterning in the UK and the US; the UK has a history of political Blackness which has evolved since the 1980s, whilst the US has the model minority myth as applied to Indian Americans, but Asian Americans more broadly. The former term has continued to be used to debate which ethnicities and racial identities are Black, and we have seen the use of terms like "people of colour" and "black, minority, or ethnic" in a range of contexts. Political Blackness, in particular, draws questions on who identifies as Black and whether political Blackness remains a useful a marker for racial demarcation. The model minority myth, whilst less of a racial marker, represents one of the prevailing patterns of racial identity in the US which positions Asian Americans as aspiring towards whiteness through class mobility, and in doing so leaving behind notions of themselves as "other." Both these terms constitute centres of debate and both interact with what Blackness is and who it is for as a racial identity. Political Blackness, I will argue, revolves around whiteness in a similar, if more indirect, manner and tracking its use in Britain in academic circles will reveal much about how the term is currently positioned and its relation to social justice activism across communities of colour.

In the introduction to Questions of Cultural Identity, Stuart Hall argues that identity is a recognition of shared or group characteristics but emphasises that identity is a "process" (1996, p. 2) which is continually under construction. Hall is careful to outline that identity is not, or should not, be essentialist, but instead positional; identity is "subject to radical historicization" (1996, p. 4) and so should be viewed through a lens cognizant of historical interpretations, reformations, and positional differences in dissemination. Hall's conceptualisation of how identity works is an important baseline to begin with – as discussed previously in this thesis, identity is not a static entity which can continually be returned to for verification or affirmation. It is an ever-shifting set of shared characteristics that is influenced by global political, economic, and, social changes. The discussion of Blackness that is to follow, then, is one which takes in Black British writing on this topic and brings together literature from Black British people and South Asians discussing both Blackness and political Blackness.

I will not be tracking the origins or early uses of political Blackness, but I will instead begin with a seminal writer on race and Blackness in Britain, Paul Gilroy. It is telling for those still identifying with political Blackness, that Gilroy was expressing his discontent with the term in both There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack (1987) and Small Acts (1993). In the former publication, Gilroy asserts a similar argument as Hall's in delineating the importance of critical race studies in Britain, arguing that "'race' must be retained as an analytic category not because it corresponds to any biological or epistemological absolutes, but because it refers investigation to the power that collective identities acquire by means of their roots in tradition. These identities, in the forms of white racism and black resistance, are the most volatile political forces in Britain today" (1987, p. 339). Both Hall and Gilroy acknowledge the biological trappings of race studies and whilst asserting that there is nothing innate about racial categorisation, counter that historical, cultural, and social traditions are instead what forms racial categories as capable of beginning to capture identity categories. This neatly outlines the stakes involved in discussions of not only identity politics, but of which kinds of people are able to identify as which race – deeply rooted historical traditions that form the worldview of an individual are what is under discussion. As such, Tyrer's claim that inscribing race onto bodies by individuals outside of this body as an act of violence is given further credence with Hall and Gilroy's outline of identity formation: it is an act of violence

precisely because flattening historical traditions and eliminating the being's interaction with the outside world is a prerequisite of such an inscription.

Gilroy, throughout There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack, provides an exploration of Blackness in Britain, as well as the symbols, race riots, and genealogies that have become commonplace in discussions of Britain and formations of race. Gilroy reflects that "the delicate and special dynamics of what used to be called 'Afro-Asian unity' no longer colour either strategic alliances or analyses in the same manner...the racial idea 'Asian' has, for example, been broken down and enumerated into a multiplicity of regional, religious and other cultural fractions (2007, p. xiv). Cultural and racial specificity has been integral in moving away from catch-all terms like 'politically Black,' and this, along with questions of inter-racial solidarity are the two most compelling elements for moving away from political Blackness. As a range of anti-racist social justice movements interact with modern forms of oppression, it is becoming altogether more apparent that Gilroy's understanding of difference in unity speaks to a contemporary engagement with the position of race in Britain.

Movements in the 80s and 90s may well have been able to practice Gilroy's description of Afro-Asian unity, but even the latter half of the 1990s saw, along with the advent of online social organising, a kind of democratic platform availability which allowed individuals to intervene directly into the process of identity and race subject formation. The most pertinent strategies for organisation, then, have been the inclusion of platforms which allow for greater interaction with the social world on every level which have also allowed for individuals to inscribe their own bodies with their own racial subjectivities; this inscription no longer relies upon unity or solidarity built upon homogenous unity.

Mis/recognition and political Blackness

The room for difference in social justice movements across communities of colour speaks to an evolving version of identity and race formation and central to this is activism which occurs without being beholden to or enamoured with whiteness. Political Blackness is a term which categorises all people of colour as "Black" and is often used as a catch-all for anyone that

isn't white. Even this rudimentary definition of political Blackness demonstrates that whiteness is at the heart of the term. This may be an overly harsh conclusion, but it is certainly the optics of the term and the impact of how it is used, regardless of intention. The centring of whiteness, whilst a draw among communities looking to understand and process race formation, is a centring which is, at best, a shaky foundation for anti-racist work. Salman Sayyid quotes Barnor Hesse in arguing that race can

> be understood as having been historically and geographically constructed by European colonial derived regimes as a governing practice to distinguish between 'whiteness/Europeaness' and 'non-Europeaness/non-whiteness' in terms of regulations, affinities, spaces and discourses in modernity's colonies. In this racially constitutive and governmental sense populations colonized outside Europe were recruited, interpellated and allocated to these assemblages of territory, corporeality, culture, politics, religion, and obliged under law and practice to comport themselves within the social contours of their designated assemblage of race" (2012, p. 11).

The logic of modern race formation and understandings that Hesse describes encompasses a function of white European identity as inhabiting space, time, and place. Whiteness moves through and dictates how time and space are even conceived of; for political Blackness to position a point of identity as a catch-all term centred on "not white" is initially understandable as a reaction to the weight of whiteness and its permeation of every facet of existence in time and space. However, even the barest of scrutiny means that this dichotomy of white/Other quickly falls flat, and brings with it questions of the place of what "Black" means once we move past "Black" as equal to "Other.". Deliovsky and Kitossa push against the Black/white paradigm, and critique the epistemologically faulty praxis which seeks to locate Black people as "impediments to multiracial coalition building" (2013, p. 158) and instead argue that "the difference is that whiteness is a positive, chameleon-like, marked and unmarked racialization and a privileged location that eludes the markings of a racial position and, as such, is constructed as a "natural" rather than a raced category" (2013, p. 164). They call for closer attention to be paid to anti-Blackness as giving shape to analysis of other marginalised groups, particularly as Blackness is so often called upon to stand against whiteness, with the former as an ostensibly neutral starting point. This is not intended to

place anti-Black racism as a "superior form of oppression" (Deliovsky & Kitossa 2013, p. 173) but rather to demonstrate the political structure of racism at large. The presumed neutrality of whiteness dominates, in one way or another, both the start and end points for critical considerations of race; to do so is to place whiteness as central to determining and apprehending, in this example, Blackness. In turn, this positions Blackness as the natural and only unified opposition to whiteness. As Deliovsky and Kitossa outline, this is not only epistemologically faulty, but ethically unsound.

Claire Alexander also writes on the dissolution and fragmentation of political Blackness and considers the implications of this for study and activism. Alexander focuses on the tension between "the recognition of difference and the possibilities of solidarity - we might think of this as the tension between identity politics and the politics of difference" (2018, p. 1035). This neatly summarises what is at stake in a discussion around racial categories in Britain; how differences can be acknowledged, retained, and respected whilst maintaining solidarity for anti-racism. I will return to the question of solidarity later in the chapter, but Alexander collates the accounts of a number of academics of colour in Britain and records their thoughts as to how they identify racially. "What was striking was that it was most often South Asian women who were worried about being included. However, this was less a reflection of [Tariq] Modood's assertion that Asians did not identify with "black" as a category (1992), but more a concern around being seen as culturally or politically appropriating a perceived black marginality" (Alexander 20118, p. 1037). Whilst it is important that Alexander can identify the reluctance of South Asian academics to be thought of as Black, the conclusions reached about the importance of empathy and solidarity, are conclusions that are methodologically flawed. Firstly, Alexander conceives of solidarity as one single thing which is either given or not given; this disregards the possibility of solidarity as based on single issues, rather than a blanket connection. Indeed, such a model of solidarity speaks to the globalised and rapid arena for discourse now available to academics of colour. In terms of solidarity for anti-racist work, there is no particular reason as to why anti-racism requires blanket solidarity. Secondly, it is vital for academics of colour to express discomfort with identity categories that they do not identify with – being beholden to political Blackness for no other reason than it having been historically useful (as enacted by Heidi Mirza (2009; 2014) has come to be bad academic praxis. The encounters Alexander mentions that cite discomfort and speak of the

politics of difference are encounters which communicate the changing nature of racial categories and, more precisely, racial descriptors. As Alexander argues, this is an ethical and political issue and, significantly, requires a re-thinking of anti-racist praxis and activism. Speaking to specifics of difference in experience does not necessarily equate to a fracturing of solidarity, or if it does, it is a solidarity that requires re-forming and revisioning. Tyrer's earlier explanation of mis/recognition as imbued into the identification of who does, and does not look Muslim also speaks to the fracturing of solidarity being described here. The recognition of people being mistaken for Muslims and of Muslims not being recognised as such signals a much larger problem that involves the misrecognition of Muslims as threats based upon the status of Black and brown bodies as threats. Similarly, the problem with individuals refusing to move away from political Blackness is that it is a failure to recognise the development of racial identification and signifiers that incorporate multiplicities into versions of solidarity.

Coloniality and diaspora

Gilroy further discusses the problems with political Blackness when he states:

> The symbolic and linguistic system in which political blackness made sense was a phenomenon of assertive decolonisation and is now in retreat. Its defeat is also connected to wider cultural shifts like the rise of identity politics, corporate multi-culture and an imploded, narcissistic obsession with the minutiae of ethnicity. The historic turn away from the simpler efficacy of blackness – a bridging term that had promoted vernacular cosmopolitan conversation and synchronised action among the victimised – cannot be separated from the pursuit of more complex and highly differentiated ways of fixing and instrumentalising culture and difference. These developments have made anti-racism less politically focused and certainly more difficult if not impossible to organise. They are not only more likely to be in tune with an understanding of 'race' that derives from diversified market relations, but have also helped to re-specify ethnicity exclusively in the contentious cultural terms of life-style and consumer preference. (2007, p. xiv)

Gilroy's assertion of delineating the minutiae of ethnicity as one of narcissistic obsession is typical of an older generation's dismissal of the specificity characteristic of identity politics which has become more popular amongst contemporary generations. That said, his description of a move away from the generality of specific Blackness towards the detail oriented race categorisation of more recent years characterises a shift in both the optics and thought processes of how we understand race, and what is considered forward momentum, especially in light of decolonial student activist campaigns such as #RhodesMustFall and #whyismycurriculumwhite. Indeed, Gilroy's assertion that the "simple efficacy of blackness" has been lost speaks to the discussion about solidarity and unity above; simplicity can, in this case, disguise a flattening of historical and cultural specificity and whilst Gilroy's apprehension of racial capitalism as guiding the ebb and flow of racial discourse is an important witnessing, it also remains to be seen as to how far a more detail oriented and culturally and historically specific anti-racist praxis is harmful for organising.

This will be further discussed in the final third of this chapter with specific examples, but for now it is important to note that in terms of British history, during the post-WWII period, itself due to Britain's decline as a colonising and imperial power, the country saw an environment where "white" and "coloured" were predominantly the only two racial categories, and it is therefore easy to see why the eventual use of 'political blackness' was ostensibly a reaction to an environment which equated otherness with sameness; it is also little wonder that communities eventually began to use terms that reflected variances across regions and, indeed, historical and cultural traditions (Alexander 2018, p. 1038-1039). It is somewhat less convincing that identity politics is a "narcissistic obsession with the minutiae of ethnicity," but rather an attention to lived experiences which does not presume whiteness as a site of neutral beginnings through which 'otherness' is compared.

Alexander extends this line of thinking by concluding a brief history of the definition of Black in Britain by arguing that whilst political Blackness was already on its way out as a viable descriptor, largely through the rise of diaspora studies, that "the rise of Islamophobia and the manifold global and domestic targets of the War on Terror" (Alexander 2018, p. 1042) caused a split between academic work in critical race studies not only through using diaspora as a tool to focus on specific cultural heritages and thus identities, but through

intersectionality as a tool to map difference which became instrumental in categorising Muslims along with racial identity. This in turn led to a renewed focus on immigration and refugees, but with Islamophobia as the driving force, rather than the Black/white binary seen with the rush for independence after the end of WWII. Of course, 9/11 has become a significant cultural marker for irrevocably altering understandings of race in general, but its impact on terms used to describe race in Britain, who "looks" Black and who "looks" Muslim cannot be overstated. Immediately after, and until the present day, the racial makeup of someone who can be considered Muslim, and by white supremacy standards, a terrorist Muslim, has been equated with brownness. As mentioned earlier, this has led to Sikhs and Hindus being mistaken, and subsequently attacked, for being Muslim. To be brown, then, is to be Muslim – but such an association places Islam only across the Middle East and in South Asia, a specific subversion and manipulation of the development of racial politics in the West (see Chande 2008; Jackson 2005). This is of particular concern when it comes to discussion about solidarity amongst people of colour, as when race and religion are considered together to the point where they coalesce and brownness is associated with Islam, and Islam only with brownness, this constitutes an erasure and flattening of brown people, of Muslims more broadly, but especially of Black Muslims whose Blackness and status as Muslims erases cultural heritages, diasporic movements, to say nothing of the removal of colonial and decolonial history that precipitated diasporic movements around the globe. Such an erasure calls to mind Barnor Hesse's earlier explanation of European and white control of racial categorisation involving a control of the landscapes of vast compartments of everyday public and private life (Sayyid 2012, p. 11). It also calls to mind, however, the use of Edward Said in the first part of this thesis and specifically Said's repeated eloquent assertions of the Western non-Muslim world's unwillingness and incapability of grasping the innumerable diversities of what it means to be Muslim. Understanding the point of both academics relies upon an understanding of coloniality as the structuring principle behind modern manifestations of racial coercion and control.

Unity in solidarity

As stated earlier, I am still unsure as to how far it is still, or was ever, the case that an attention to differences amongst solidarity for social justice have made anti-racism less politically focused; whilst the development of terms for categorising non-white people in the country have fluctuated along with changing identities, it is a central element of organising to be able to focus on who is included in the conversation and who is not. For example, whilst there have been ongoing discussions around descriptors for race (BME, BAME, POC). Kehinde Andrews points out that "there is no evidence that political blackness has ever been adopted by the range of people it is meant to represent" (2016, p. 2067). Whilst these terms are also certainly subject to 'diversity' initiatives and the commodification of people of colour, it is 'politically Black' which purports to a particular sameness which overrides Blackness as a discrete identity ostensibly in favour of social justice. Indeed, Andrews continues and argues that "it is even more problematic on the global level to expect that the interests of the majority of the world will be aligned simply on the basis of people not being white" (2016, p. 2072). This is the crux of arguments against the continued use of political Blackness and arguments which contend that solidarity and community are undermined by recognition of difference: whiteness can be no bedrock of anti-racist praxis which seeks to effect change built upon solidarity, community spirit, and love.

Relatedly, in the later Small Acts, Gilroy again touches upon the argument that "the idea of political unity between 'Asian' and 'Afro-Caribbean' Britons has become more and more unfashionable. It is seen to be illegitimate because it supposedly threatens the integrity of each group" (1993, p. 61). This speaks to evidently long-held concerns about racial solidarity; the presumption of solidarity amongst racial groups is reminiscent of binary racial categorisations that place groups as 'white' or 'non-white.' Indeed, Gilroy's argument outlines that culture is not "syncretic" but is actually "a radically unfinished social process of self-definition and transformation" (1993, p. 61). Thus, particularly when considering the functions of solidarity, unity or cohesion are often couched in static terms focused more on whiteness as a qualifier, rather than the cultural and social traditions that form the identities of any one group or sub-groups (see Andrews 2016, p. 2067). To presume solidarity amongst groups, whilst having been politically expedient particularly with an influx of immigration into Britain after the end of the war, has clearly come to demonstrate the conclusions of a

thought process that has not taken in developments in cultural and social shifts, in addition to changing categorisations in understanding race.

Nydia Swaby argues for political Blackness as a "politics of solidarity" (2014, p. 11) and seeks to position solidarity as based on the "political" element of "political blackness." In other words, Swaby sets out an organisation of anti-racist praxis as based on a model of political allegiances, and categorises "resistance" to non-Black women identifying as Black as "divisive practices, which are indeed rooted in the divide and conquer tactics of our colonial oppressors," and these tactics are said to "have invaded our own thinking" (2014, p. 13). It is important to clarify exactly who "our" is here – Swaby is using "our" to indicate non-Black women, and in doing so so, thereby puts aside the experiences of Black women when determining the veracity of political Blackness which is, at best, epistemologically immoral. As argued above, Swaby's model rests on the foundation of Blackness versus whiteness, and to do so not only stamps out differences within the group of "our" women of colour that are referred to, but also flattens the experiences of Black women in pursuit of solidarity. Swaby's argument is one which attempts to account for diasporic movements and communities, and to build links for solidarity from there, but the claim that "gendered political blackness is a mobilising strategy" (2014, p. 24) reveals a lot about the impact Swaby's work has on understandings of Blackness – Blackness is not a strategy. It has historically been, as outlined by Hall and Gilroy, a communication of commonality that captures the life experiences of African-descended experience, and work has been put in to use Blackness for Black people.

Similarly, Gilroy's understanding of solidarity is underpinned by his definition of diaspora:

> The value of the term 'diaspora' increases as its essentially symbolic character is understood. It points emphatically to the fact that there can be no pure, uncontaminated or essential blackness anchored in an unsullied originary moment. It suggests that a myth of shared origins is neither a talisman which can suspend political antagonisms nor a deity invoked to cement a pastoral view of black life that can answer the multiple pathologies of contemporary racism (1993, p. 99).

The myth of shared origins, then, is one which uses whiteness to hearken back to a mythical place where 'non-white' people originate from. Diaspora is evidently a tool which reminds us of the movements that happened in order to contribute to changes in racial recognition and identification. Whilst fantastical visions of the Orient and a homogenisation of what is to be considered "foreign" have prevailed to this day, there is no such place where 'non-white' people can originate from in order to centre whiteness in any kind of credible manner. Instead, the racial makeup of Britain post-1945 cannot be understood without an understanding of diaspora and coloniality. Tellingly, Gilroy uses the example of Enoch Powell's attempt to bolster "the English New Right" (1993, p. 25) who employed the well-worn dog whistle of proclaiming that his aims were rooted in nationalism, and not in racism. This is, of course, all too reminiscent of Donald Trump's Make America Great Again campaign, but Gilroy references this hearkening back to a previous time of greatness in his 1993 publication Small Acts – Make Britain Great Again. It is unavoidable that moving backwards in time in order to distinguish what exactly was so great about British and American statehood we can return only to one thing: colonialism. Britain's status as the foremost modern imperial power remains unrivalled, and the creation of America itself was done so on the backs of Native Americans; these two nations are no strangers to 'greatness,' if greatness is the subjugation and violent removal of indigenous peoples. The movements created by these histories are instrumental in understanding race, and specifically Blackness and South Asianness, in modern Britain. Understanding coloniality and diasporic movements and communities is also a contingent for understanding that it is a concerted, active choice to see certain people as included in "our" and certain people as excluded; in other words, it is a political choice to subsume the particular experiences of Black women, as Swaby does, under an umbrella of unity in solidarity as much as it is an active choice to acknowledge specificities in difference in a drive to build a flexible and maneuverable form of solidarity.

Colourism and anti-Blackness

Contemporary understandings of British and American South Asian socio-cultural traditions both alongside and with Black British and Black American communities are defined by diasporic histories, and movements that came to bring people around the world to settle in the

West. Any understandings of what it is to identify with either or both of these identities for British and American citizens also needs to apprehend the specifics of where these diasporic communities came from or were taken from. For South Asians particularly, as Sureshi M. Jayawardene argues with their definition of racialized casteism, an understanding of caste, ethnicity, and colourism in South Asia, can aid with understanding racial dimensions in the West. Jayawardene explains that "colourism, or the process of discrimination that privileges light-skinned people over their dark-skinned counterparts, occupies a complex position within South Asian Caste systems. The relationship between caste and colourism is also linked to the Aryans whose "...system for ranking castes according to degrees of inherited 'purity' or 'pollution' [was] based on light and dark skin tones" (2016, p. 336). The privileging of light skinned people over darker skinned people can be reliably be tracked in Britain and America, and underpins both modern formations of caste and ethnicity.

In order to do so, Jayawardene focuses on two minority populations in South Asia: Siddis who are a population of about 40,000 and are settled across India, and Jayawardene explains that "public conceptualizations of Siddis are defined by stereotypes and assumptions which are fueled by a caste ideology as well as anti-Black racist sentiment. Some Indians consider Siddis inferior and classify them among the untouchables and other lower caste groups" (2016, p. 327). Kaffir populations have been harder to determine, but many people reside along the coasts of Sri Lanka, and here Jayawardene explains that "since Kaffirs are neither indigenous to Sri Lanka nor considered a special population, there are no government sponsored programs that facilitate equitable opportunities" (2016, p. 327). The argument here is formed through a multi-lens approach and it is central that both Siddis and Kaffirs are multiply marginalised by not only their status as Africana South Asians, but as darker skinned Africana South Asians. Jayawardene notes that both populations were formed from the historical forced movement of Africans across the Indian Ocean, first initiated by Muslim Arabs from the sixth century, but continued into the twentieth century (2016, p. 328). European involvement in this slave trade occurred from the fifteenth century onwards (2016, p. 329) and Jayawardene clarifies that:

The Indian Ocean Slave Trade (IOST) is undoubtedly a historically complex, protracted, and heterogeneous event in the traumatic and forced movement of Africans. However,

European involvement in the IOST is especially prominent. Europe's initiation of the rise of colonialism, and the dissemination of "race" as a global ideology and toll for governance, imperialism, and capitalism form the basis on which postcolonial South Asian societies have been designed...although they are minorities, Siddis and Kaffirs are victim to the very particular effects of Western-derived anti-Black racism that fiercely contributes to their already marginalized positions in these societies" (2016, p. 329)...[T]he influence of European colonial thought, and how it conceived of the very people under its control, irrevocably formed "discourses of race [that] were hegemonic in their universal application (2016, p. 332).

I will explore more expansively the contemporary anti-Black racism against Black Muslims later in the chapter but here, as Jayawardene's argument shows, the relations between these communities are complex and historical processes amongst them are not widely known. The example of Siddis and Kaffirs makes a connection between the Indian Ocean Slave Trade and the modern day governmental suppression and societal oppression experienced by Siddi and Kaffir populations. This example is one which takes stock of how these populations came to be in South Asia, and understands their position as one which requires balancing race against ethnicity and their position in the caste system. Particularly for Siddis who are considered untouchables, and both groups being dark skinned Africana South Asians who were forced into the IOST – this is a path to understanding implications of race and ethnicity through colourism and nationalism, and how these coalesce with European involvement that propagates anti-Black racism through imperialist, capitalist, patriarchy. Jayawardene's conclusions brings together a multiple-axis analysis focused upon casteism, colorism, and anti-Blackness and in doing so serve as a compelling example of modern iterations of colourism and anti-Blackness that permeate many communities of colour. Solidarity in this instance, then, would be required to pay attention to this multiple-axis analysis in a manner that does not flatten the experiences and intersecting subjugations of the Siddis and Kaffirs. Conversely, based upon the discussions of solidarity and unity thus far, we can conclude that using political Blackness as a catch-all term in this instance would flatten both the specific experiences of the Siddis and Kaffirs and do away with the connections Jayawardene makes between their historical and cultural specificities and a similar pattern across other communities of erasing and structurally subjugating darker skinned people.

Jayawardene continues:

Although ideals of "whiteness" embedded in South Asian societies predate colonial contact, the West's increasing global penetration has resulted in the institutionalization of Western models of beauty and values of worthiness in Indian and Sri Lankan societies. This in turn has produced a permeating color consciousness in contemporary South Asia. (2016, p. 337)

It is no coincidence that colourism and anti-Blackness flourish in South Asian communities across the United States and Britain. If anything, it is the mark of colonialism and Western imperialism working as it is supposed to; Western supremacy, and with it white supremacy, are not confined only to geographic locations, as discussed earlier, and it is a vital part of diaspora studies to acknowledge these kind of movements in significantly shaping our understanding of colourism, and in turn anti-Blackness. At this juncture it is useful to turn to Salman Sayyid's work on empire and Islam – during a discussion on the possibility of Islam as a totalitarian ideology, Sayyid argues that:

> The 'bad empire' of Islam (in its various incarnations) sits alongside attempts to emphasise the moral superiority of the 'good empire' of Britain...in its attempt to privilege the British empire and, by extension, to justify American global hegemony, neo-conservative discourse displaces the postcolonial critique of imperialism onto imperial islam, either explicitly or more implicitly (e.g. by arguing that the imperial sins of Islam are far greater than those of western empires, or that Atlantic slavery was a lesser evil than Saharan slavery, or that "Muslim racism' is more racist than western racism) (2012, p. 5-6).

Sayyid's work provides important relief to Jayawardene's discussion – the existence of the Indian Ocean Slave Trade and various other Arab systems of slavery are themselves taken as proof of the barbarism and totalising ideologies of Islam, and are positioned against Western-derived forms of slavery as proof that we're all barbaric here. Instead, as Sayyid argues, the slavery of Western colonialism was predicated on a particular racial logic:

The Islamicate empires, with due caveats for the cruelty and venality that can be found in all human endeavours, were not structured around a logic of racialisation. This does not mean these empires lacked a privileged elite, nor does it mean that there was no humiliation or violation of the subject populations, but it does mean that reading all imperial iterations through the prism of the European colonial enterprise is not particularly helpful. This is not to say that European colonialism was more vicious or exploitative than other imperial structures...simply that empires founded in the wake of Europe's appropriation of the Americas were organised by different logics than previous empires. One of these logics was a deployment of race as the primary ontology of the social (2012, p. 12).

The specificity of Western racial logics, as timeless as they may appear, is often lost in these discussions and Sayyid's work is a reminder that contemporary racial logics are inextricable from Western colonialism, being that they are the same beast. The connections, then, between Jayawardene's work on Arab slavery over time and modern iterations of colourism and anti-Blackness is tempered with Sayyid's work not to denigrate the viciousness and brutality of the IOST, but rather to serve as a placeholder that views the movement from the IOST to modern racial logics as one that is tempered by the impetus of Western colonial and racial logics. Casteism, colourism, and anti-Blackness intertwine in a number of ways, and manifest across diasporic communities of colour around the globe; they are central to understanding both anti-Blackness in modern times, and also in comprehending the weakness of arguments that attempt to flatten difference in favour of unity in solidarity.

Indeed, Swaby sees the term "political Blackness" as a "mobilising strategy" and "a positively articulated diaspora consciousness" (2014, p. 14) and this argument stands starkly against Jayawardene's outlining of Arab and European colonial slavery. Earlier, Swaby decried the use of division as a tactic of colonial oppressors, and this euphemism for colonial invasion is presented as an argument against using terms for racial categorisation specific to communities, instead of those that are all-encompassing. As Jayawardene demonstrates with the example of Siddis and Kaffirs, colonialism has countless facets of history which are not

studied at length[11], if at all, and Jayawardene's work is a robust argument for attention to cultural and historical specificities, which in turn form identity categories. Swaby's model of advocating for political Blackness allows only for monolithic attempts at unity rather than paying any real attention to the links between populations of colour; evidence of historically rooted oppression and subjugation cannot be ignored for a facade of unity or solidarity. Indeed, paying attention to such histories represents a more viable manner of unity or solidarity that is alive to historical realities as a foundation, rather than as criticism or disunity.

Finally, Moon Kie-Jung argues, when discussing the problems amongst communities of colour in relation to racial cohesion, that "violence, above all, is what maintains the breach. Anti-Black racism does not exhaust but, without equivalent or analog, is singularly fundamental to white supremacy" (2015, p. 195). Such an argument brings forward the truly global impact of white supremacy as propagated by European colonialism, as Kie-Jung further argues, considering what we know about global colourism (particularly, the lighter the better), that anti-Blackness is practiced regardless of "qualitatively different logics" (2015, p. 195) irrespective of culture or community (see also Hussein 2010, p. 405). This is precisely the argument that Hall and Gilroy lay the foundation for, especially in terms of how we understand the process of racial categorisation, and it is also the process through which Jayawardene's explanation of the coming together of Arab and European involvement in the Indian Ocean Slave Trade has come to be an expression, for Black Muslims, of anti-Blackness coalescing from the perspectives of colourism and white supremacy, and weaponised in its expression from fellow Muslims. To continue to use political Blackness as an organising principle, and to call for unity and sameness in solidarity, is to continue to violently inscribe subjects with racial categorisation that flattens cultural and historical specificities. Dotson and Ruíz, in their work on the politics of coalition, whilst discussing the failures of white feminism point out that "What is key is an awareness that coalition...is not a homogenous hermeneutic space that provides an equal sense of home for all involved" (2017, p. 12). This remains central to understanding the urgency of the limits of solidarity in

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[11] For further, see Shaista Patel, "Complicating the Tale of "Two Indians": Mapping 'South Asian' Complicity in White Settler Colonialism Along the Axis of Caste and Anti-Blackness" (2016) for an examination of South Asian diasporic cultural production and critiques conceptions of justice in relation to non-Indigenous non-Black People of Colour interacting with Indigenous Americans.

anti-racist praxis, as well as providing the emotional impetus for comprehending that any discussion of racial categorisation processes is a discussion of the rights of people to exist and be valued in communities that could be called home; the previous discussions in this thesis about otherness, home, citizenship, necropolitics, and trauma are all too relevant here.

Keeping in mind these interconnections of identity formation, difference or unity in solidarity, and moving towards apprehending the trauma of erasure for Black Muslims, I'm now going to provide some textual examples that will help tease out how these discussions of anti-Blackness operate through the prism of South Asian Muslims attempting to discuss and engage with Black identity. When discussing light entertainment in the context of British television, Sarita Malik (who outlines the choice of using "Black and Asian" as opposed to "Black" as a catch-all term) argues that "popular culture implies cohesion. This makes approaches to reading race (within a supposedly 'non-racial' field) complicated; as though we are attempting to extract something 'heavy' from something supposedly 'light' and scrutinize with rigour cultural representations which are probably instinctive" (Malik 2002, para. 1, chapter 7). Malik's concern communicates the anxiety of writing seriously about race in 'light' entertainment; then again, popular culture only implies cohesion if whiteness is the start and end point for entertainment. Race in pop culture may well appear disparate to white viewers and academics, but Malik's reflections are a nod towards the view of pop culture analysis as frivolous or unnecessary, particularly in relation to race-based analysis. This is also certainly the case for non-traditional media and an important context to bear in mind as we move forward.

Methodology and Research Questions

Each of the earlier chapters have focused on media content which features South Asian and Muslim women. For this chapter, as discussed briefly earlier, the focus will be on Muslim women of colour, and specifically on Black Muslim women and South Asian Muslim women. There may be divergences from this due to the globalised functioning of Islam, but broadly speaking, these are the groups I will focus on.

This will primarily be in order to examine interactions and manifestations of anti-Blackness deployed on the part of South Asian women. It's difficult to categorise and analyse something which has, for me as a researcher, been something that has been part of my life; anti-Blackness manifests in South Asian spaces (Eid festivals, mosque gatherings, community events, interaction with family and friends), and it is difficult to convey this within the space of this writing. In order to address this I will use a number of web series from YouTube in order to capture the everyday nature of anti-Blackness amongst Muslims, and to use these web series as a way to explore the functions and motivations of anti-Blackness.

These web series are not intended as an indicative sample, or to make an argument about South Asian web series per se. Rather, this discussion looks to make a connection between the literature review above that outlines how anti-Blackness has manifested in academic communities and how Blackness has been defined in Britain, and with how this manifests in conversation amongst South Asians. I have selected three case studies (Geeta's Guide to Moving On (Puja Mohindra, 2018), The FOB and I (Meenakshi Ramamurthy, 2017), and Unfair and Ugly (Stranger Magic, 2018). These 3 webisodes all have women of colour as creators, and the former two write, produce, and act in the episodes, whilst the latter has creators who write and direct their content. This is an important factor which speaks to the increased levels of control exerted by creators on their content; much has been written on women of colour particularly (Sobande 2019) turning to online content so as to avoid being beholden to not only advertising concerns, but also to larger teams of producers and writers, and outside control from hosting channels.

In order to find these examples I used the search terms "South Asian webisodes," and the majority of the search results were made by content creators who are Indian American, and depict Indian Americans. This means my sample is skewed towards this identity category, but from the list available to me, these three web series were the ones which featured Black characters or discussed Blackness in some manner, or featured Muslims of any ethnicity. These three intersections are rare examples of content in their field, but more importantly, are central to answering questions about manifestations of anti-Blackness and engagements with

Black communities from the perspective of South Asian content creators, and South Asian characters.

Case Study 1

Geeta's Guide to Moving On (Puja Mohindra 2018a) is a web series focused on a young Indian American being dumped by her fiancé, who is taken to a support group for divorcees by her family who are concerned with her wellbeing. Often, South Asian web series feature Indians prominently and, more often than not, the protagonists are light skinned, thin, girls. This is the case for Geeta, with her parents darker skinned than her, and a Black best friend who is recast a couple of times. Absence is just as telling as presence; diasporic Indians tend to dominate cultural media products (relative to other South Asians), and light skinned people occupy more prominent positions in media. There aren't any Muslims in the cast but, the plot of GGMO, in addition to Geeta's break-up,revolves around her dance studio and her desire to create a fusion of hip hop and desi music; it is here where issues of colourism are compounded.

Episode 2 (Puja Mohindra 2018b) features Geeta interacting with a range of white and Black co-workers, including the white members of the divorce support group, and an encounter with a white lady waiting to use the dance studio who comments, "are you done with the slumdog millionaire shit?" The show works to have a mix of Black, white, and brown extras in the background, and race is confronted later on in the season in episode 8, where Geeta tries to get her desi hip hop fusion dance class started, with the episode entitled "The Anti-Jai Ho Show," where she introduces her best friend Akua as "bringing the hip hop" to her Indian dance, only for Akua to insist that she doesn't "do" hip hop or even dance. Geeta's objection here is to whisper "but you're African American," and Akua tells her, "just say Black." Akua then steps down as 'hip hop director' and rattles through stereotypes of Black people, pre-empting questions from the children and Geeta – "I will be unable to teach hip hop, or make urban musical suggestions. Just in case there is any confusion, no I can't dance, no I can't rap, yes I love collard greens…" Akua anticipates the coming microaggressions and brings them up first; Geeta makes no real comment on this, and it is indicative of the show acknowledging and raising Black stereotypes – all interspersed with Geeta's brother DJ-ing in

the background complete with a snapback and chains around his neck. However, given that Geeta is the protagonist and the one who brings up the stereotypes first, this is a limited response. Akua repeatedly expresses that the dance fusion doesn't particularly make sense, and instead of confronting why Geeta is pushing this fusion, or why she pushes stereotypes onto her best friend, the moment instead becomes a teachable pre-empting of anti-Black racism, with the instigator of said racism cleanly not involved in this process, or even addressed.

Everybody is then introduced to white Glenn, and encouraged to practice pronouncing his name. Glenn is wearing a salwar kameez and says hello by saying "Jai Ho everybody" and claims to connect "on a spiritual level" with the project, and throws in a casual "Namaste." The show is clearly mocking white people who regularly appropriate Indian culture, but once again, this is limited in response. Glenn doesn't particularly add much to the episode, and it is instead more of a shout-out to cultural appropriation that has limited impact.

As Geeta tries to iron out the concept of "Anti-Jai Ho" she asks what it means to the group, to which Akua answers that it is the opposite of Jai Ho and a "rejection of a past colonial history that echoes into the present" and "resistance to oppression." A young brown girl says that to her, it means a rejection of the stereotype of poverty-stricken India filled with slums, and a reminder that India has "gold, the Taj Mahal, and toilets." Geeta's response to these comments is to widen her eyes, agree, but ignore Akua's response. It is clearly not the motivation for her dance routine, and she does respond to the mention of the toilet, and encourages everyone to come up with a dance move centered around toilets. Whilst this partly speaks to the comedy of the show, it highlights the shows inability and unwillingness, to engage meaningfully with the themes of the episode and the show (encompassing colorism and anti-Blackness), and instead focus on ploughing on with the dance element. Geeta's status as the protagonist, and thus primary filter of the show's moral compass, it often wide-eyed, but silent, agreement with the dissenting opinions expressed by Akua and her students. As a whole, the show displays an easy engagement with anti-Black racism which is clearly referenced throughout and questioned, but the overall tone of the show as ultimately more concerned with Geeta's desire for love strikes a dissonant chord of competing desires.

Case Study 2

The FOB and I (Ramamurthy 2017) bills itself as "a webseries about 2 Indians that are different," and features Sita, an Indian American and her cousin Jisha, who is visiting from India. The first episode (The Fob and I 2017a) sets up a meeting of Bollywood in Hollywood, filtered through conversations with their mothers preparing them for their meeting. This episode sets up the parameters of being Indian and being Indian American; Sita expects a backwards "FOB" (fresh off the boat), who is unaccustomed to Americanisms, perhaps from a rural background, whilst Jisha expects a 'modern' American, at home with suburbia and coolness. Their journey to one another shows Sita's unfamiliarity with her mother's experiences of being Indian (how to wrap a sari, where to get pictures of Gods from, the names of Indian sweets), whilst Jisha slots neatly into the country (haggling with the Uber driver, directing him home, wearing 'Western' clothes). Their encounter brings forward stereotypes about the differences between diasporic Indians and Indians from India – both are light skinned and slim, and their encounter is more 'about' the expectations of the other. Before they actually even meet, the expectation is that Jisha will be a backward and sheltered girl fresh off the boat, and Sita is set up as more worldly but having to convince her cousin of her Indian identity.

Immediately, and with the next episode (The Fob and I 2017b), Jisha continues to confound Sita's expectations of her behaviour and values. Sita's friend Darren is about to leave their apartment, when Jisha mistakes him for a burglar. They briefly chat about the Fair and Lovely cream on her face and about how Darren is a Muslim, before sleeping together. This particular encounter is, again, about knowing nods. Fair and Lovely is a prominent brand of skin lightening cream that is highly popular in South Asia. Her own desire for lightness does not conflict with her desire for Darren, and instead it is Sita who objects, stating "He's Black. And Muslim. That's against the rule. You broke all of the rules." Jisha responds with "This is America. Enjoy it."

Once again, their interactions with one another are informed by the difference between diasporic and non-diasporic Indians, and it is Jisha who has no problem sleeping with a Black

Muslim man, and Sita who sees him as a friend but "off limits." The FOB and I frames its confrontation of both anti-Blackness and colourism through stereotypes of liberalism across diaspora inhabitants and native inhabitants. America is knowingly placed as an arena where anyone can fuck anyone else, and it is Jisha's nonchalance that turns this on its head. It is also Jisha in a later episode who is horrified at the terrible chai in local cafes, and sceptical of the racist white ladies who serve it; as is often the case with testing how far immigrant communities, or communities of colour in general, approach mixing between ethnicities, sex is the ultimate litmus test. Sita will be friends with a Black man, but Jisha will fuck him, and this contrasts with expectations of the two based upon stereotypes of their upbringing in regards to liberalism. Of course, it is a benign and toothless liberalism that positions who you are willing to fuck as in any way indicative of your political beliefs and actions, and the show is more invested in a commentary that confounds the expectations of native and Indian identity. The implication is that Sita's American upbringing has taught her anti-Blackness, whilst Jisha's valorisation of America from India has taught her the globalised marketing version of American values.

The Season 2 opener (The Fob and I 2017c) brings this to a head when, post-Trump election, Jisha has to explain to an unenlightened Sita the importance of protesting and voting, and of opposing anti-immigrant rhetoric. Jisha also has to point out to Sita that watching diverse representation cannot be the end of Sita's 'activism,' and it is only once the pair witness a racist attack on the hijabi proprietor of the restaurant that the point is driven home for Sita. Here, it is the uninformed American who does not engage with racial politics beyond her own immediate concerns. Sita is initially more interested in eating Indian food with her Indian boyfriend, and is hesitant to intervene when a Muslim woman is racially abused. It requires Jisha's understanding of activism and intervention to convince Sita to pay attention to her surroundings.

Case Study 3

Unfair and Ugly (Chowdhry & Khan, 2018) is much longer than the previous two series, and is clearly made with a bigger budget that yields better production values. It focuses on Sana and Haaris, a pairing of Pakistani Muslim brother and sister living with their parents. Once

again, the protagonist family is light skinned and slim. The series begins (Stranger Magic 2018a) with a focus on Sana's depression and dissatisfaction with her life; she is engaged to another Pakistani Muslim, and studying for her medical degree, but is unsure about wanting either. Haaris, meanwhile, works in a coffee shop with an art-selling business on the side, and is in a steady relationship with Rukayah. Both these character arcs are typical of contemporary millennial issues, and the series tackles them head-on.

As Haaris bats away his mother's requests to marry a nice Pakistani girl, he reveals that he already has a girlfriend, and his mother begins cycling through the possible options – "is she Pakistani? She's not a Gori is she...Mexican!?" Haaris outright calls this racism and when explaining who Rukayah is he cycles through the following descriptors, "smart," "funny," "ambitious," "a lawyer," "Muslim," "a super amazing family," before settling on "Black." The interplay between the two communicates the anxiety felt from Haaris' mother about her children marrying a non-Pakistani or non-Muslim, but this is actually revealed as a thinly veiled attempt at specific anti-Blackness. Her concern about keeping her children within the Pakistani community (as though it is a monolithic and static entity comprised of only what can be considered fully Pakistani) speaks to the concerns many immigrant parents have about their children marrying outside of their ethnicity. As much as this can be seen as an attempt to preserve culture amongst safe spaces that are important for functioning, there is the very real fact that the person marrying into a family or community is a person; Rukayah is not a theoretical entity who exists to test the limits of Haaris' family's perceived liberalism.

Indeed, Rukayah anticipates such a reaction, and is unsurprised when Haaris tells her that his mother did not take their relationship "well." This is further explored in episode 2 (Stranger Magic 2018b), where we meet Rukayah's family, and the couple's friendship group. Rukayah cooks dinner with her sisters and parents, and the show lingers on painting a vivid picture of their home life. When discussing Haaris, her sister argues that "You're wasting your time, I told you, he's not going to marry you...I know how this goes...he's gonna leave you and marry some princess his parents picked out for him." This, combined with having an episode largely centred upon Rukayah's family, engages with and extends the theme of anti-Blackness amongst Pakistani Muslims. Rukayah's sister expresses concern that she is being strung along, and that Haaris will be swayed by parental pressure to marry a Pakistani woman. To do

so captures yet another prevailing occurrence amongst discussions about inter-ethnic marriage, where ethnic origin comes before religion.

This continues to be further extended when Haaris' father attempts to talk his son out of marrying Rukayah – "you think you are in love, but in reality you're not." His father's insistence that he is too young to know what love is, that there are other fish in the sea, is all driving towards re-stating that Haaris should not marry Rukayah because she is Black. This is plainly stated, and Haaris and Sana disagree with their parents and confront them, with Haaris stating, "I can't believe that you call yourself Muslim, how can someone be so racist and dare to call themselves Muslim?" Once again, this is a familiar argument on behalf of non-Black Muslim families; Haaris points out the conflict between being a Muslim and being racist, but his father is deeply offended and becomes defensive, claiming that Haaris is disrespecting him. This is where the episode ends, and it is an important snapshot that plays out a pattern familiar to many Muslims; inter-ethnic relationships are only acceptable as friends, if that, and decisions about marriage are positioned at the crux of colourism, with Islam as belonging to non-Black populations or, in this case, Pakistani Muslims. After all, it doesn't matter to their parents that Rukayah is Muslim, and emotional blackmail is readily deployed to 'convince' their son that he doesn't love his partner. Unfair and Ugly aligns issues of colourism, partly through its title, partly through Sana's criticism of Indian songs valorising whiteness (Stranger Magic 2018b), and partly through Rukayah's character construction as that of a professional woman highly attuned to the anti-Blackness in her boyfriend's family and their shared local mosque (Stranger Magic 2018c). The show presents an altogether more robust and sustained engagement with anti-Blackness than the previous two shows, and its focus on inter-generational differences is at the heart of its effectiveness in bringing forward attitudes of immigrants and their children.

These three web series, whilst varying in production values, theme, and scope, all represent a range of themes that coalesce around anti-Blackness perpetuated by South Asian Muslims: casteism intertwined with colourism, stereotypes about diasporic brown people as opposed to native brown people, and an ethnically insular outlook that uses religion as a prop for racism. All three position Blackness as having its limits for enmeshment in brown cultures, and

engage with this and whiteness in different manners. In general, these are the themes of their engagement with anti-Blackness, and this speaks to how this operates for real communities.

I have chosen to use these web series to communicate moments that I have witnessed myself, and this choice was undertaken in light of the structure of chapter 3. In my previous chapter, I engaged in a creative exercise where I made clear my own positionality and orientation before reacting to newspaper headlines concerning terrorist attacks, and used my own experiences of traumatic reactions to headlines in order to demonstrate the veracity of expanding notions of trauma to include experiences of Islamophobia. Here, however, I cannot use my own experiences to speak about life experiences of Black Muslims and Black identity in general. Hence the inclusion of web series created by South Asian producers as this chapter is about South Asians perpetrating anti-Blackness and that is an experience, as both researcher and person, I can speak to.

The histories of Blackness in Britain, as outlined at the beginning of this chapter, have been informed by personal and academic understandings of Blackness, but the previous chapter is worthless in its apprehension of trauma, if a study of trauma is not also present in this chapter. It is traumatic for Black Muslims to experience institutional, structural, social, and cultural erasure, and particularly so when the anti-Black racism that is traumatising is enacted by fellow Muslims.

The rest of this chapter will be split into two sections; the first will deal with the spiritual and metaphysical concerns of Islam that dictate how race is understood in Islam, and how communities are conceived of. The second will deal with the material conditions of anti-Black injustice and focus more concretely upon this link I have mentioned between Black Muslims being traumatised by anti-Black racism.

Section 2

Dimensions of the Unseen: Interpretative Strategies as Anti-Racist Praxis

Situated Positionality

Each chapter thus far has utilised a metaphorical monster in order to facilitate discussion on each theme – Chapter 1 explored the position of Muslim women as internal enemies in literary texts and policy documents; Chapter 2 examined the figure of Muslim women as aliens and strangers in British film as sites of uncanny dehumanisation; Chapter 3 used hauntology and ghostly apparitions to discuss the feeling of being Muslim during reporting of terrorist attacks. This is an unplanned pattern of writing, and one which I can retrospectively categorise as a method for working through the trauma and difficulty of writing about topics which speak to my own experiences as a member of communities I write about. It was necessary for the writing process to formulate frameworks that would allow me to put whatever distance possible in order to confront the emotional turmoil of the topics at hand, and produce academic work that balanced output with emotional truths.

In other words, more a coping strategy as a researcher rather than a recommendation for writing about Muslims. To be clear, the frameworks of metaphorical distancing used throughout this work are not intended to serve as a model of how to write about Islamophobia, but rather as an example of the creativity necessary to research yourself, and to research topics which are intertwined with your sense of self, and whose real life impacts are never flattened into academic praxis. It would be wholly inappropriate, at best, to apply the same method to a chapter that discusses topics that I have no life experience of, and so, the writing method will differ slightly in this chapter in order to demonstrate the distance I have in terms of identity categories from Blackness, and also to underline that a useful framework does not always equate to a usable model.

Chapters 1, 2, and 3 outline the functions and motivations behind white supremacist institutions working to not be able to see South Asian Muslim women in institutional, representational, and societal terms, and, concurrently, the deeply traumatising and dehumanising impact of not being seen. Chapter 4 is concerned with when this positional

gaze is situated from the work of South Asian Muslim people to not see Black Muslims, and primarily, Black Muslim women. This process of unseeing is what this middle section of the chapter will focus on, bearing in mind the context of British definitions of Blackness over time, and the intersections of diasporic forms of casteism and colourism.

The Arabic word for "unseen," is غيب (ghaib) and will be the focal point for this chapter. The concept has a fundamental theological basis in the Qur'an, and often crops up in cultural texts from around the world. As with other collections of data in this project, I will outline this term based upon my encounters with it, and form a version of its definition as it pertains to the process of unseeing Black Muslims from the perspective of diasporic South Asian Muslims. Conceptually, the unseen is central to Islamic faith and this coming section intends to begin by examining the layers of meaning built up in the Qur'an to demonstrate the breadth of interpretations and understandings available with regard to the place of the unseen in Islam. Then, I will move on to examine the unseen as used by writers in a range of mediums in order to examine the link between the unseen and social justice in relation to Muslim cultures and social spaces.

It is this link which is particularly compelling for this thesis; thus far the notion of gaze, how we see, and what we see has permeated many of the arguments made thus far. The unseen, however, calls to mind a process of unlearning which works to acknowledge encounters with racism and, in this case, working to see what has been hidden: pervasive anti-Blackness across communities of colour which exist under the logics of white supremacy. This argument, then, rests upon not only the fact that, as discussed earlier, anti-Blackness has its roots in colourism and white supremacy, but also on the fact that belonging to one particular oppressed community does not preclude individuals from participating in maintaining the status quo of structural discrimination against others. Much anti-racist scholarship has worked on the process of unlearning as one that is useful for burgeoning feminist and anti-racist thinkers, and as a process attuned to recognising our encounters with unliberatory spaces and revisioning our thinking within the framework of some kind of liberation politics. Earlier, extended metaphors were used to push our analysis to look again at what we encounter and examine these moments in order to discern their connections to white supremacist logics. Here, the unseen will fulfil a similar purpose and its use is largely with an

interpretative thrust; the unseen has a storied historical and cultural past and future, and the small examples to follow here are intended to demonstrate the capacity of the unseen to communicate the simultaneous changeability and solidity of interpretation; a personal and collective process that is centred upon looking again, about surrounding your(self) in what you do not know, and what you cannot know, as a starting point for thinking about and understanding encounters outside of your experiences. Each of the coming selected texts are interpreted within the concept of Muslim culture as a community and in relation to the earlier discussion of collectivity and solidarity.

Dimensions of the unseen: the Qur'an

I will begin this section with excerpts from the Qur'an that mention and explain the dimensions of the unseen directly in relation to faith in Islam. As stated previously, this is not intended as an exhaustive and full literature review of the etymology of the unseen, but is instead an exploration of my experiences with the word; this is necessary to this particular chapter as I am not writing to explore, explain, or account for Blackness, but instead to demonstrate my thinking process for the conclusions I have reached about anti-Blackness.

There are over 30 direct mentions of the "unseen" in most English translations of the Qur'an, and the few I have selected here each contribute to how I have understood the term growing up in a Muslim household. I would discuss the Qur'an regularly with my family at home, and attend local classes at the mosque where we would read through the Qur'an, discuss passages, and learn Arabic. Its use here is exceptionally rudimentary, given the larger field of Islamic scholarly study, but our focus is leaning more towards examining the layers of interpretive depth afforded to the term.

We begin with Surah Al Baqarah, where a passage reads as follows[12]:

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[12] In order to utilise a search function, an online version of the Qur'an has been used, sourced from the Tanzil Project, with the English translation provided by Abdullah Yusuf Ali

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ الم

[1] A.L.M.

ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيهِ ۛ هُدًى لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

[2] This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah;

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

[3] Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them;

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

[4] And who believe in the Revelation sent to thee, and sent before thy time, and (in their hearts) have the assurance of the Hereafter.

أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

[5] They are on (true) guidance, from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper.

Figure 1 (Ali 2010)

This passage demonstrates the centrality of the unseen to the Qur'an, to Islamic teachings, and to Islamic faith. Belief is predicated upon those who fear Allah and those who "believe in the Unseen." Islam is thus inextricable from the unseen, and to believe in Allah is to believe in the unseen – that which we cannot know. Faith is predicated upon knowledge that one cannot know or "possess", and rests upon the belief that you may never know, possess, or consumer this knowledge fully. Fullness is, then, not the goal, as much as continued existence alongside and within unknowability.

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاحْذَرُوا ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا عَلَىٰ رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ

[92] Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and beware (of evil): if ye do turn back, know ye that it is Our Messenger's duty to proclaim (the message) in the clearest manner.

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوا وَآمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوا وَآمَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوا وَأَحْسَنُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

[93] On those who believe and do deeds of righteousness there is no blame for what they ate (in the past), when they guard themselves from evil, and believe, and do deeds of righteousness,- (or) again, guard themselves from evil and believe,- (or) again, guard themselves from evil and do good. For Allah loveth those who do good.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَيَبْلُوَنَّكُمُ اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الصَّيْدِ تَنَالُهُ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَرِمَاحُكُمْ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَخَافُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

[94] O ye who believe! Allah doth but make a trial of you in a little matter of game well within reach of game well within reach of your hands and your lances, that He may test who feareth him unseen: any who transgress thereafter, will have a grievous penalty.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَأَنتُمْ حُرُمٌ ۚ وَمَن قَتَلَهُ مِنكُم مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاءٌ مِثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنكُمْ هَدْيًا بَالِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ أَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسَاكِينَ أَوْ عَدْلُ ذَٰلِكَ صِيَامًا لِيَذُوقَ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِ ۗ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ ۚ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ

[95] O ye who believe! Kill not game while in the sacred precincts or in pilgrim garb. If any of you doth so intentionally, the compensation is an offering, brought to the Kaba, of a domestic animal equivalent to the one he killed, as adjudged by two just men among you; or by way of atonement, the feeding of the indigent; or its equivalent in fasts: that he may taste of the penalty of his deed. Allah forgives what is past: for repetition Allah will exact from him the penalty. For Allah is Exalted, and Lord of Retribution.

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ ۖ وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

[96] Lawful to you is the pursuit of water-game and its use for food,- for the benefit of yourselves and those who travel; but forbidden is the pursuit of land-game;- as long as ye are in the sacred precincts or in pilgrim garb. And fear Allah, to Whom ye shall be gathered back.

Figure 2 (Ali 2010)

In this longer passage, the emphasis is upon the unseen as a test of faith – "...that He may test who feareth him unseen." Fear of Allah can be interpreted as a fear of the omniscience and ultimate power of Allah, and the unseen can be seen as a manifestation of this. The unseen is then also a test of your belief in not only Allah, but in Allah's power.

Figure 3 (Ali 2010)

This reference to "the keys of the unseen" positions the unseen as a body of knowledge, manifesting in ways we cannot imagine. This creates an implied separation between the unseen and the seen; we can conceive of the concept of leaves and grains, but we cannot conceive of every leaf on Earth, or of grains in the dark, and it is this which separates mortals from Allah. The unseen is then simultaneously a portion of knowledge we cannot conceive of; a marker that signals the omniscience of Allah; only Allah can access the unseen and conceive of its enormity; the unseen is a question of reading. The possibility of recording all the grains or leaves on Earth does not represent what the unseen is but is instead an indication of the kind of infinite knowledge it could encompass. The phrase "to those who can read" is a further separation of those capable of conceiving of the unseen as being a question of the type of entity; who you are determines if you can know. Reading can be understood as not only a physical and mental act, but one which is a description for encounter of a text, itself a signifier of both subjectivity and objectivity.

قُلْ أَنَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ كَالَّذِي اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي الْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَى الْهُدَى ائْتِنَا ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ ۖ وَأُمِرْنَا لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

[71] Say: "Shall we indeed call on others besides Allah,- things that can do us neither good nor harm,- and turn on our heels after receiving guidance from Allah? - like one whom the evil ones have made into a fool, wandering bewildered through the earth, his friends calling, come to us', (vainly) guiding him to the path." Say: "Allah's guidance is the (only) guidance, and we have been directed to submit ourselves to the Lord of the worlds;-

وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّقُوهُ ۚ وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

[72] "To establish regular prayers and to fear Allah: for it is to Him that we shall be gathered together."

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ۖ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ۚ قَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ ۚ وَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ ۚ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ

[73] It is He who created the heavens and the earth in true (proportions): the day He saith, "Be," behold! it is. His word is the truth. His will be the dominion the day the trumpet will be blown. He knoweth the unseen as well as that which is open. For He is the Wise, well acquainted (with all things).

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ آزَرَ أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا آلِهَةً ۖ إِنِّي أَرَاكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

[74] Lo! Abraham said to his father Azar: "Takest thou idols for gods? For I see thee and thy people in manifest error."

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ

[75] So also did We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude.

Figure 4 (Ali 2010)

Here, the unseen is compared to "that which is open," indicating that it can also be understand as what is hidden, or closed. Once again, its relation is to Allah's power, knowledge, and general omniscience. "Open" carries with it the implication of "closed," and takes us to think of what is beyond us, hidden to us. Once again, knowledge which is beyond our understanding, beyond our(selves).

Surah: 9 - سورة التوبة - At-Taubah (Repentance)

فَلَمَّا آتَاهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَتَوَلَّوا وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ

[76] But when He did bestow of His bounty, they became covetous, and turned back (from their covenant), averse (from its fulfilment).

فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِمَا أَخْلَفُوا اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ

[77] So He hath put as a consequence hypocrisy into their hearts, (to last) till the Day, whereon they shall meet Him: because they broke their covenant with Allah, and because they lied (again and again).

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ

[78] Know they not that Allah doth know their secret (thoughts) and their secret counsels, and that Allah knoweth well all things unseen?

الَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ الْمُطَّوِّعِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ إِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ فَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنْهُمْ سَخِرَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

[79] Those who slander such of the believers as give themselves freely to (deeds of) charity, as well as such as can find nothing to give except the fruits of their labour,- and throw ridicule on them,- Allah will throw back their ridicule on them: and they shall have a grievous penalty.

اسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ إِن تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَن يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

[80] Whether thou ask for their forgiveness, or not, (their sin is unforgivable): if thou ask seventy times for their forgiveness, Allah will not forgive them: because they have rejected Allah and His Messenger: and Allah guideth not those who are perversely rebellious.

Figure 5 (Ali 2010)

Here, the unseen is said to contain the thoughts one would hide or not reveal to others, as well as a sense of self that remains unknown to the self. This indicates the parameters of the unseen not only as knowledge beyond our understanding, but also as eclipsing notions of understanding the self and how the self relates to others – beyond the self.

Surah: 11 - سورة هود - Hud (Hud)

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۖ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُن مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

[47] Noah said: "O my Lord! I do seek refuge with Thee, lest I ask Thee for that of which I have no knowledge. And unless thou forgive me and have Mercy on me, I should indeed be lost!"

قِيلَ يَا نُوحُ اهْبِطْ بِسَلَامٍ مِّنَّا وَبَرَكَاتٍ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّمَّن مَّعَكَ ۚ وَأُمَمٌ سَنُمَتِّعُهُمْ ثُمَّ يَمَسُّهُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

[48] The word came: "O Noah! Come down (from the Ark) with peace from Us, and blessing on thee and on some of the peoples (who will spring) from those with thee: but (there will be other) peoples to whom We shall grant their pleasures (for a time), but in the end will a grievous penalty reach them from Us."

تِلْكَ مِنْ أَنبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهَا إِلَيْكَ ۖ مَا كُنتَ تَعْلَمُهَا أَنتَ وَلَا قَوْمُكَ مِن قَبْلِ هَٰذَا ۖ فَاصْبِرْ ۖ إِنَّ الْعَاقِبَةَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

[49] Such are some of the stories of the unseen, which We have revealed unto thee: before this, neither thou nor thy people knew them. So persevere patiently: for the End is for those who are righteous.

وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا ۚ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا مُفْتَرُونَ

[50] To the 'Ad People (We sent) Hud, one of their own brethren. He said: "O my people! worship Allah! ye have no other god but Him. (Your other gods) ye do nothing but invent!

يَا قَوْمِ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

[51] "O my people! I ask of you no reward for this (Message). My reward is from none but Him who created me: Will ye not then understand?

Figure 6 (Ali 2010)

This particular relation of the unseen combines with an understanding of time; the unveiling or revealing of the unseen, the proof of Allah's power, is a question of perseverance and faith. This kind of faith requires time, that belief will be rewarded.

Surah: 27 - سورة النمل - An-Naml (THE ANT)

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ

[73] But verily thy Lord is full of grace to mankind: Yet most of them are ungrateful.

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ

[74] And verily thy Lord knoweth all that their hearts do hide. As well as all that they reveal.

وَمَا مِنْ غَائِبَةٍ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

[75] Nor is there aught of the unseen, in heaven or earth, but is (recorded) in a clear record.

إِنَّ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَقُصُّ عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَكْثَرَ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ

[76] Verily this Quran doth explain to the Children of Israel most of the matters in which they disagree.

وَإِنَّهُ لَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

[77] And it certainly is a Guide and a Mercy to those who believe.

Figure 7 (Ali 2010)

"That which they reveal" contrasts with the mention of the unseen to create, once again, an interplay between the seen and the unseen. Theologically, the Qur'an is taken as a sign of the glory and power of Allah, and is one of the religious texts of Islam that, along with the Hadith

and the examples of the Prophets, are understood as miraculous manifestations of the unseen, and a guide for Muslim life. Knowledge of these manifestations is, for Muslims, evidence and proof of the unseen and in turn Allah's omniscience.

The unseen can be understood, in Islamic terms, as the core of the Qur'an and the linchpin of faith and belief in the power of Allah. Its various mentions in the holy text itself see it mentioned as proof, as keys, as a boundary, as a marker, as knowledge of the self, as a test over time, and as a relation to the seen. With this understanding, the unseen encompasses both knowledge and understanding we do not yet have about the universe, as well as types of knowledge that are beyond our conception of knowledge itself.

Whilst this will be explored in relation to specific instances of anti-Blackness in the next section, in terms of general anti-Blackness perpetuated by South Asians against Black Muslims, the unseen is indicative of interpretations of faith. There can be no unbiased and objective understanding of the Qur'an because no interpretation of any text can be objective. As such, religious practices are marked by their difference: there are myriad different ways to be Muslim and to live a Muslim life, and healthy debate around scholarship and interpretation is a bedrock of any faith.

Concepts of ummah and community as espoused by many Muslim communities are similar to the calls for solidarity and unity amongst communities of colour; however well-meaning, this kind of solidarity often stamps out difference, and is damaging and violent to those marginalised and forgotten by it. As mentioned in the previous section, the web series Unfair and Ugly depicts a Black Muslim woman being asked if she recently converted into the religion; the assumption is predicated upon the notion that Islam is the domain of Arabs and South Asians, an ignorance that must be challenged if concepts of community and ummah are to flower. Such an ignorance is testament not to something innate that can be found within Islam or religious texts, but rather to historical, social, and cultural interpretations of Islam that have pressed their weight upon socio-political realities for Muslims in the modern world. This example also speaks to how we can understand Muslim community or ummah – as much as community is a fluctuating entity that must be worked upon, it is defined by who is valued as part of community and who is outside the community; who has the right to belong

to a community. In Unfair and Ugly, Rukayah's character repeatedly has encounters with South Asian Muslims who presume her otherness to Islam based upon her Blackness – having to assert your belonging and assimilation into a community is no kind of belonging, given that it positions Rukayah as an outside entity who requires assimilation.

Just as we work to understand the importance of the unseen to faith in Allah, it is a kind of work to perpetuate anti-Blackness towards Black Muslims. The unseen is often used in the Qur'an as a concept that is tied to being dependant on who is looking; as with Sara Ahmed's work on orientations and phenomenology, what is seen depends on who is looking. Refusing to see Black Muslims on the part of South Asian Muslims is a continual kind of work that conceives of Blackness as at a remove from both being South Asian and being Muslim. Given the intricate ties of casteism, colorism, and their spread through diaspora and the Indian Ocean Slave Trade, the perpetuation of anti-Blackness by South Asian Muslims is one that is embroiled in issues of racial purity harkening back to colonial-era notions of whiteness.

Dimensions of the unseen: poetry and song

Faiz Ahmed Faiz; Hum Dekhenge

Faiz Ahmed Faiz' Hum Dekhenge is a renowned revolutionary poem that has recently been updated in various guises for a range of political motivations. It was originally written as a pointed attack upon President Zia-ul-Haq, and this, in combination with Faiz' reputation as a communist writer, has contributed to its reputation as an anti establishment work which looks to the future and calls for the unseating of those in power (Baruah 2018). Recently, and perhaps rather incongruously, is has been used by Imran Khan at political rallies in the form of a cover by Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, and was also transformed for Coke Studio Pakistan's eleventh season (Coke Studio 2018).

The poem I am concerned with, 'Hum Dekhenge' is a call for hope, with the title translating to 'we will see' in English. This sets apart a certain 'we,' and looks to the possibility of overturning current rulers for a brighter and more fulfilled future. A particular passage reads:

Bas naam rahay ga Allah ka
Then only God's name will remain
Jo ghaib bhi hai hazir bhi
Who is invisible and visible too
Jo nazir bhi hai manzar bhi
Who is the seer and is seen
(Coke Studio, 2018)

The poem explicitly sets out the name of Allah, or the significations of Allah, as the last remaining barrier; any unseating will be carried out in Allah's name, and it is this spiritual belief and faith that provides the source of hope for the future. The line "jo ghaib bhi hai hazir bhi" describes Allah as both "ghaib/invisible" and "hazir/visible." This introduces the concept, for us, that something, or someone, that can be described as 'ghaib' is

simultaneously capable of visibility and invisibility. Of course, this is in the context of an all-powerful and omniscient entity such as Allah, but the use of ghaib as a metaphor is extended in the next line – "jo nazir bhi hai manzar bhi" – to indicate a coming together of the one who is "seer" but also "seen." The Coke Studio performance of this poem translates this particular line as "who is the spectacle and the beholder" and this neatly brings together the optics of gaze and orientation. Naturally, this calls to mind Derrida's, but more importantly, Rey Chow's work on the native looking back. If unlearning, or unseeing, is to be a useful check and balance system for examining who encounters allow and who they push out, then we must evidently expand our understanding of directional gazes. Lingering upon the connection between spectacle and beholder allows us to look again, and to look more carefully.

Several chapters have engaged with phenomenologies of seeing, be it through gaze theory, positionality, or standpoint theory. It is demonstrably a useful strategy to examine functions of seeing in order to deconstruct Islamophobic structures within texts: Chapters 1 and 2 featured Maryam, Layla, Yasmin, and Nazneen being seen as symbols of Muslim women, and examined how and why they were seen as such. Chapter 3 extended this metaphor to look at the figure of "British South Asian Muslim woman" in order to form the shape of what is missed when only this is seen, or, how the view is obscured. Here, Faiz' poetry is useful in reminding us that to be seen does not mean you have ceased to possess the capacity to see.

Understanding anti-Blackness as perpetrated by South Asian Muslim communities, and more generally other racial groups, is dependent upon conceiving of South Asian Muslims as capable of holding a gaze, and holding a situated position. This cannot be taken as a given, as white supremacy does not proffer it as a given. Here, I am using the concept of ghaib, as articulated by Faiz, as a look towards the future that remains a reminder and a vehicle for continually assessing the dynamics of movement in whatever is before us. The unseen can refer to Allah, but Faiz' conceptualisation of it is also useful in delineating how we understand interactions and engagements across communities of colour; white supremacy historically positions only whiteness as worthy of holding a gaze, but in order for this chapter to function, the humanity of communities of colour must be held without whiteness at its centre. Many of the discussions in this thesis require the casting aside of whiteness, in itself a

kind of solidarity, but a solidarity that encourages multi-directional gazes – looking around, instead of only ahead.

Abida Parveen and Ali Sethi; Aaqa

Abida Parveen, a major figure of Sufi music, and Ali Sethi's rendition of Aaqa (Coke Studio 2016) is a performance which exults in an unfolding of devotion for Allah, and builds a multi-layered understanding of Allah's power; just as the concept of the unseen is central to Islam, it is concurrently also central to understanding Allah's power. The song references the 99 names of Allah and revels in Allah's knowledge of what is best for one, and of Allah's mastery over the Earth, the heavens, and beyond. In other words, the song is an articulation of how the unseen functions as both the core of the Qur'an and, in some significant ways, the centre of Islamic faith. Belief in Allah, articulates the song, necessitates a belief in Allah's knowledge of the seen and the unseen:

Jahaan bhi dekho tera nishaan hai
Wherever we turn, your signs are present

Tu hi hai makhfi, tu ji jali hai
You are secret, and You are also Evident

(Coke Studio, 2016)

Simultaneity is a prevailing theme in these songs, many of which are researched and placed together by producers into one performance, and it is no surprise that many of the songs selected for this passage are from the deeply spiritual tradition of Sufism which prizes a meaningful connection and relationship with Allah. The seen, in this case knowledge which Allah has revealed to Muslims, comes in the form of His teachings in the Qur'an, Hadith, and through prophets, and the unseen remains that what we cannot know or comprehend; the sum of faith.

Placing the unseen and critical race studies together allows connections to be made between a core element of Islamic faith and the practical work of forming the shape of what you cannot know, and what you should work to see in connections amongst communities of colour. As with The FOB and I, these reminders to see better come in the form of counterparts encouraging us to stand up for more than ourselves; faith in more than ourselves, of whatever kind, looks to the future as an act of hope and wonder.

Ali Sethi, Ali Hamza, and Waqar Ehsin; Tinak Dhin

This concept is mentioned in this production of Tinak Dhin (Coke Studio 2017b), which contains a mix of various well-known and well-loved South Asian songs, including an excerpt from Allama Iqbal, and allows us to explore further:

Tasawwur bhi soche yih kaisa safar hai
Even the imagination struggles to capture this amazing journey
Sitaaron se aage jahaan aur bhi hain
Beyond the stars, there lie many more worlds
Abhi ishq ke imtihaan aur bhi hain
The path of love yet holds many more tests
Jo kho jaaye raahi, tujhe aazmaane
If you get lost, O traveler
Uthen ge tsawwur ke phir silsile
Imagination will test you in many new ways

(Coke Studio 2017b)

This is a more direct expression of grappling with what we cannot know and is a meaningful insight into how failures in imagination can form the edges of what we cannot know. As discussed earlier, a fundamental aspect of the unseen in Islamic theology is to use the term to describe not only the power of Allah, but also the vastness of knowledge humans cannot

comprehend, be that understanding time that has come before us, space, futures. This engagement with the unseen as a tool for reminding, or revisiting, time outside of ourselves is particularly important to understanding the functions of anti-Blackness. The previous section of this chapter outlined, extremely briefly, a limited number of encounters South Asian and African descended people have had with one another in the UK and US, as well as the histories of the Indian Ocean slave trade, with the latter informing the cultural and psychosocial impact of subsequent modern encounters. The dominance of white supremacist understandings of Blackness in Britain and the West in general is a manifestation of the edges, or margins, of mainstream knowledge.

Whilst Western white scholarship is traditionally and regularly concerned with what it can conquer through knowing, it must be an important part of relations across communities of colour that we can not only see one another, but also work to acknowledge what we cannot see. The unseen can thus function as a reminder of the limits of what we do not know; however, given that it is a central element of Islamic faith, its existence is a reminder that the facts of 'not knowing' do not predicate being unseeing, that is, being purposely ignorant. Tyrer's mis/recognition theory is a compelling example here, particularly as it encompasses encounters which require a sustained lack of engagement with what Islam is and who belongs to it; an active and repeated ignorance.

Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, Ali Noor, and Salman Ahmed; Sayonee

Another facet of the unseen is expressed in Coke Studio's performance of Sayonee (2017a), itself already a cover of Junoon's wildly popular song of the same name from 1997.

Zaahir har ik manzar mein
Tu har pas-manzar mein tu
You are manifest in all seen and unseen things

Masjid mein tu

Mandir mein tu

Jeewan saagar mein tu

In the mosque

In the temple

In the ocean of existence

(Coke Studio 2017a)

This particular excerpt brings in space that conceptualises the unseen. Once again in the Sufi tradition of working on a relationship with Allah, the song constitutes a confusion and later celebration of Allah, and this particular passage comes during this final acceptance. Claiming Allah is manifest in "all seen and unseen things" across mosques, temples, and "the ocean of existence" conceptualises Allah as not 'belonging' to any one singular place, and instead through what we know, and what we cannot know – the seen and the unseen.

For our discussion, diaspora is defined by movement and being British has come to be defined by skin colour or questions of 'how did you come to be here?' A devotional Sufi epic such as Sayonee brings together questions of ownership, belonging, and movements in faith that adds another dimension to our understanding of unseen as one where Allah is not confined by places of worship, and the unseen is something which requires imagination to move into, beyond, and across time and space.

Reflection

Each of these performances explore devotion to Allah and mention the unseen as proof of Allah's existence, whilst also expressing a cultural articulation of how the meaning of the unseen has developed in Pakistani communities. As much as the unseen has its theological underpinnings, all theological texts are articulated and interpreted socially, and I have selected these songs to provide background contexts for how the unseen works in practice.

The last section explored the global functions of anti-Blackness, and the erasure particularly of Black Muslims from South Asian Muslim communities. These performances express the unseen as carrying the capacity for the following motivations:

1. Using the unseen to look in different directions
2. Using the unseen to comprehend what you cannot see
3. Using the unseen to remind ourselves of being in/out of time
4. Using the unseen to remind ourselves of space and spatial encounters

Faith in Allah is clearly represented as something that requires an expansion of thinking, of imagination, of how you conceive of the future. Futurity, however, is where anti-Blackness still functions; understandings of the marginalisation and erasure of Black Muslims in histories and social witnessing amongst non-Black Muslims and in white supremacist structures impact what continues to be unseen, and therefore possible, for the future. The unseen is intertwined with Islam, and in its application here, the failure to engage with the unseen, to work to see Black Muslims in contemporary global political contexts, is a failure on the part of non-Black Muslim communities to work to see fellow marginalised communities, to expand knowledge of what we know and have failed to know across time and space.

Dimensions of the unseen: metaphor

G. Willow Wilson, Alif the Unseen (2012)

This novel stands out from other texts in this PhD, given that it focuses on a fictionalised Arab country and features a male protagonist, but its engagement with Islamic mythology and its exploration of the unseen makes it a rich example of texts that engage creatively and purposely with Islam. The plot revolves around the protagonist, Alif, who is a hacker whose unexpected possession of the Alf Yeom, a book said to contain the secrets of the unseen, sparks a chase across both the human and djinn worlds. Along with Dina, his neighbour, and Vikram the Vampire, an occasionally friendly being, the group deal with The Hand's attempts

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to steal the book, hide from unknown and possibly unfriendly djinn elements, and the novel concludes with Alif's hacking skills and the advent of the Arab Spring.

The novel makes liberal and evocative use of Islamic mythology and theology, and brings together modern themes of border control, illegal detainment, and Western supremacy along with Islamic texts and teachings. I do not have the space to fully explore the issues and important moments of the text, but it is worth mentioning that a prominent character, who is only ever referred to as "the convert," is used as a mouthpiece for discussing the place of white foreigners in both Arab and Muslim communities. Notably, Wilson herself is a white Muslim convert, and it is no intellectual reach to argue that the convert is an authorial self-insert where whiteness is weaponised through conceiving of conversion to Islam as a marginalisation. There are several conversations about the convert's decision to move towards Islam as one spurred by Islam's background of social justice (2012, p. 130); where the convert complains about always being seen as foreign (2012, p. 153); where the convert places "Eastern" intellectualism as existing in a void (2012, p. 151). Each of these conversations revolve around the convert's feelings, and other characters are often shown to be mollified or recalcitrant once their initial distrust is articulated. This too-brief analysis of the convert's role is as a reminder that the novel is to be taken with a pinch of salt – there is a long history of orientalism in fiction, as discussed in Chapter One, with white and Western authors turning to "the East" for creative endeavours, and the inclusion of the convert, potentially as an exploration of just such a theme, is a signal and a reminder of the centring of whiteness behind the writing.

Further, Dina, whilst in some ways an interesting, independent, and intense character, is also, in other ways, a narrative device who exists to further Alif's narrative growth. Indeed, at the conclusion of the novel, Alif's apprehension of the unseen is indelibly associated with Dina's image behind her veil as the "unseen," (2012, p. 402) and his perception of her as a "door of understanding" (2012, p. 425) ties Alif's love for Dina with his understanding of the unseen. This in turn tritely ties up their romantic plot line with the narrative conclusion of the unseen, and mixes metaphors of veiling and the unknown/unseen, a writing choice that is testament to the altogether mixed nature of the text. Given the false dichotomy of the choice/force discourse which has permeated discourse on the hijab as a litmus test for the civilisational

level of Muslim women, and thus Muslim communities, this mixing of metaphors calls to mind a discomfiting context.

That said, the novel wields Islamic mythology well, and its exploration of the unseen holds great relevance for our discussion here. The theme of boundaries runs throughout the novel, not only Western and Eastern, but of movements between humans (or banu Adam in the text – children of Adam) and djinn and other spirits. The description of Alif and Dina's city reads as follows – "she sits at a crossroads between the earthly world and the Empty Quarter, the domain of ghouls and effrit who can take the shapes of beasts" (2012, p. 2). The Empty Quarter is empty to humans, and upon their first known encounter with a djinn, Alif and Dina are overcome with dizziness and struggle to focus on seeing what is before them, itself, according to Vikram, a marker of their ties to human structures of knowledge. Already, the novel makes a distinction between seen and unseen through both scholarship in the West and the East, but also amongst humans and spirits; the fantasy element of the novel rests upon moving across the boundary between what is known and what is unknown. Crossing such a boundary results in a physical reminder of their mental voyage, and as Alif and Dina repeatedly encounter what is unknown to them, the more comfortable and better able to see they become.

The narrative is bookended with Dina and Alif's understanding of metaphor, and their apprehension of the power of the Alf Yeom, or as it is otherwise referred to, The Thousand and One Nights. Vikram tries to explain this to Alif and says, "What a rare idiot it [Alif] is. The Thousand and One Days is not just a bunch of old tales, little pimple. That title is no accident–this is the inverse, the overturning of The Nights. In it is contained all the parallel knowledge of my people, preserved for the benefit of future generations. This is not the work of human beings. This book was narrated by the djinns" (2012, p. 96). Vikram asserts that the children of Adam are "seen" and the djinn are "hidden" (2012, p. 101), and this interplay between the aforementioned boundaries is best encapsulated in the Alf Yeom itself. Alif's possession of it is a clash, so to speak, of the seen and the hidden. What is unseen in this instance, is both the djinn, and their knowledge of parallel universes. As with the Sufi music discussed earlier, knowledge and what is unknown is the metaphor used to communicate a sense of the unseen. The mirroring of the Alf Yeom and its compatriot, the Alf Layla, is a

marker of the connection between the described worlds of seen and unseen; Alif and Dina have it demonstrated to them that linearity of either time or space is a construct of their limited knowledge.

Indeed, Intisar, Alif's ex-girlfriend, writes her thesis on the Alf Yeom, where she argues that:

> The Quran speaks of the hidden people in the most candid way, yet more and more the educated faithful will not admit to believing in them, however readily they might accept even the harshest and most obscure points of Islamic law (2012, p. 104).

Intisar's apprehension of the "hidden people" conveys that beings that are thought by some as fantastical or merely religious metaphor, can be considered 'real.' The Quran, even outside the world of Alif the Unseen, speaks freely about djinns, angels, and beings who exist in the heavens and Earth. The Quran uses them as evidence of the omniscience of Allah, which once again positions the unseen as connected to forms of knowledge.

For Alif, this form of knowledge is best transposed in his life through coding. He realises that the Alf Yeom provides knowledge dependent on the reader's desire: "I think it changes, I mean the book itself, depending on who reads it" (2012, p. 225). Here, the unseen becomes whatever the beholder requires of it. It becomes a given that every entity has knowledge that it beyond it(self) and throughout the course of the novel, it is Alif that becomes Unseen. Firstly, this happens through a keylogging programme of his own devising that hides his online presence from his ex-girlfriend. Alif's mind works as a coder's, and Dina warns at the beginning of the novel that "metaphors are dangerous. Calling something by a false name changes it, and metaphor is just a fancy way of calling something by a false name" (2012, p. 4). Alif only takes her meaning once he realises that the Alf Yeom contains situated knowledge for the individual in possession of it; in other words, what one sees when looking at the Alf Yeom depends upon who one is, and how one is positioned intellectually and within a sense of self.

Once Alif's growth throughout the narrative is complete, he is able to muse – "Metaphors: knowledge existing in several states simultaneously and without contradiction (2012, p.

224)." This is about codification, and objectification: where you stand from, and who you are. The unseen, and what is in the Alf Yeom, depends on what you choose to see, and how much you want to sit in the dizzying feeling of looking at what you have chosen to ignore previously, to engage with metaphor: simultaneity and contradiction When Alif tries to code the Alf Yeom and it doesn't work, he doesn't see the cause of this as due to computer error, but as due to "failures of the imagination" (2012, p. 235) and is told that he came so close that "all things seen and unseen would have been laid bare in front of you" (2012, p. 249). Alif understands that the Alf Yeom contains layers of meaning he has not uncovered, and this is the crux of the novel's understanding of the unseen as limited only by imagination and intellectual openness.

Alif the Unseen contributes a multi-faceted understanding of the unseen as rooted in Islamic theology and mythology, and engages with the unseen as a creatively fruitful task that broadens the limits of one's imagination; coding is the metaphor used to encounter what is unknown, and to translate the unknown into a personal language that can be wielded dependant on who is encountering, in this instance, Alif. For the purposes of this chapter, the novel helps unravel more of the cultural and social usages of the unseen, as with the section on music and poetry, and demonstrates the unseen's status as an Islamic understanding of eternally changing knowledges with simultaneities and parallelisms limited by human understanding, a robust challenge to Western approaches of objectivity and consumption of universalising knowledges. With this context in mind, I would argue that the unseen serves as a reminder of the failures of Western epistemology and is a robust challenge to consider that anti-Blackness as enacted by non-Black Muslims is a failure of imagination to consider Islam as the domain of geographic locales and cultures, and a disengagement with the simultaneities inherent in a global understanding of racial and religious dynamics; a failure to believe in the unseen.

Section 3

Case Studies

Trauma and the Unseen

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the question under consideration is of developing and pushing our thinking about trauma from South Asian Muslims as victims of violent and traumatising Islamophobic and racist structures, but also as people complicit in maintaining the status quo of traumatising experiences that erase, denigrate, and are structurally violent towards Black people, and particularly Black Muslims. There is nothing specifically Muslim or innately South Asian about such an articulation of multiple axes of oppression, but rather an acknowledgement of the purposeful limiting of imagination which restricts who is seen as a valued member of a community, who can be seen to belong.

The structure of chapter 3 involved working through traditional trauma theory, reforming it where possible, and utilising modern trauma theory to conceive of a model of trauma that works to see the psychological and deeply influential impacts of experiencing Islamophobia. It is testament to the all-encompassing nature of white and Western supremacy that any kind of exploration of the short and long-term impacts of experiencing a kind of racism will speak to the subjugations of other communities impacted by racism and other structural oppressions. Chapter 3 involved beginning with hauntology as the metaphorical vehicle that enables discussion around an emotionally destructive subject, and the chapter articulated moments where Muslims and Muslim women became symbols stripped of humanity and agency; ghostliness represents the manner in which South Asian Muslims are consumed as haunting spectres that, irrespective of actual wrongdoing, are conduits of terror for white people and non-Muslims. Critical race scholars often explore dehumanisation, but it is a concept that is felt not only structurally, but also personally. Dehumanisation is a process, certainly, and requires robust theoretical engagement, but its psychological effects on a person cannot be explored enough. It is with this thought in mind that the core of chapter 3 focuses on my reactions, be they frustrations and other complex emotions, as well as intellectual reactions, to headlines following terror attacks. Writing from my perspective with an explicit focus on feeling that put aside the requirement to mould or translate such emotions for academia, was an exercise that aimed to foreground the personal touches of dehumanisation.

This revisiting of chapter 3 is here to demonstrate that the personal touches in chapter 4 cannot be written from my experience. It is important that chapter 3 is centred upon personal affective responses, and therefore maintained a focus upon South Asian Muslim identity. Its relatability, however, to Black Muslims is one which requires a pulling apart of multiple directions of trauma. In this chapter, my personal experiences revolve around of instances of anti-Blackness from South Asian and Muslim friends and family, and from South Asian and Muslim communities in general. The conclusions of chapter 3 revolve around furthering an understanding of Islamophobia as a deeply traumatising and dehumanising experience, and the conclusions of chapter 4 rely on a different kind of personal experience. As such, this chapter has thus far explained the theoretical and conceptual backdrop to this discussion. My argument here contends that the limits of solidarity amongst communities of colour are sharply manifested through anti-Blackness, and in particular through political Blackness. The following case studies are included to encourage us (non-Black Muslims) to work to look better; not necessarily to spell out the death knell of concepts of solidarity, unity, or community.

The previous two sections of this chapter have demonstrated how, firstly, attempts to build unity and solidarity in Britain often flatten out the experiences of Black Britons, and secondly, that a similar espousal of the ummah and community amongst Muslims flattens out the experiences of Black Muslims. Both these phenomena are well-intentioned in their drives for community and solidarity, but their impact is to perpetuate the lived realities of global anti-Blackness and colourism. For this chapter, the creative vehicle for discussion of a large and complex subject has been exploring the term 'unseen'; its uses span across Islamic theology and mythology, Islamically influenced art forms and creative texts, and has formed a cultural understanding that is multi-faceted and rich. For our discussion, the unseen also represents a re-visiting of the gaze theory, standpoint theory, phenomenological analysis that I have so often turned to throughout this thesis. The unseen is compelling for this discussion precisely because understanding it requires understanding the limits of knowledge and imagination, and apprehending the difference between what is seen and what is unseen or unknowable.

The ghost model was a reminder to examine what is constructed across politically fertile spaces; the model of the unseen is a reminder to examine constructions of race, from already racialised groups, that are outside of 'us.' Of course there are Black South Asians, but the parameters of this chapter are focused largely on American and British conceptions of "South Asian" and "Black." The unseen is a strategy used in this work to make connections between large histories of what it means to be Black and to be Muslim along with the everyday experiences of this, from the perspective of South Asians as perpetrating the kinds of trauma laid out in chapter 3. As this thesis has so often discussed, the implementation of racism requires power, and whilst South Asians do not possess the structural power necessary to implement racist structures, the difference is that whiteness does: it is in being beholden to fantasies of whiteness that anti-Black expressions from South Asians denote the persistence of violent traumas which are expressed through erasure, denigration, and anti-Black racism.

In order to take this discussion from a point of generalisation to specific examples, I will now present a number of case studies that are the foundation for discussions about how South Asian Muslims can be seen to police and wield space against Black Muslims. As this thesis has often stated, statements such as the previous one are speaking to analyses focused upon structural understandings of race and racism – I cannot speak for either of these communities, but I can speak to broad understandings of the machinations of race, religion, and ethnicity through the relevant intersections. I will thus explore themes of solidarity, unity, and the ummah, and examine their necessity and the harms they can perpetuate through these case studies. It is inevitable that during writing on such a large topic that I cannot write or have full knowledge of all the facets in which anti-Blackness manifests. I used the same coding requirements as in other chapters; post-9/11 content; an awareness of academic writing on this topic balanced alongside an investment in other forms of knowledge production; a methodology focused upon indicative rather than representative samples. Each of these case studies are intended to explore their links to how our positionality changes how we see, and what we see. Case Study 1 looks at the 2015 Chapel Hill Shooting, and specifically debates after the fact about the growing use of Muslim Lives Matter; Case Study 2 looks at Donald Trump's 2017 Muslim ban, and discourse since its attempted implementation that is concerned with the representation of global populations of Muslims; Case Study 3 looks at recent #BlackOutEid events which cater specifically to Black Muslims, and the questions of

ummah solidarity brought up by South Asians, along with a discussion of Black Muslim-produced content on being Muslim in Britain.

Case Study 1

During early 2015, three Muslims were shot dead in their home in North Carolina. Deah Shaddy Barakat, Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha, and Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha were all under the age of 23, and initial reports claimed that they were killed over a parking dispute, but from the outset, the father of the two young women maintained that this was a hate crime (Withnall 2015). Confusion as to motivation is commonplace after attacks such as these, particularly given the fast-paced nature of 24 hour news coverage, but it is also a pattern of reporting and disseminating hate crimes to shroud motivation in confusion that clouds the certainty of a possible hate crime as owing to something rather more benign.

In this particular case, whilst the killer has been apprehended and is facing the death penalty, official police investigations maintained that the motivation was due to a parking dispute, the families of the victims repeatedly reiterated that their relatives were killed due to Islamophobia, with Deah Barakat's sister Dr Suzanne Barakat stating:

> had roles been reversed and the man was Muslim, of Arab descent, of South Asian descent, this would have immediately been labeled an act of terror. I haven't heard anyone use the term terrorist here [...] why the double standard? He has terrorized our families, he has terrorized our lives, he has terrorized our community locally, nationally, and internationally and it's time that people call it for what it is (CNN 2015).

It is uniquely heart shattering to consider that these families have been forced to contend with not only the brutal murders of their relatives, but also been compelled to structural issues of Islamophobia that pertain to the labelling of what constitutes terror and what constitutes a hate crime.

Shortly after their murders, Al Jazeera published an opinion piece by Nadia El-Zein Tonova and Khaled A Beydoun which argued that Muslim lives do not matter in modern America. They argue that the reticence of mainstream American outlets to even report the deaths sat starkly against the media circuses that ensue when the victims are white and the 'villains' are Muslim, and go on to make a connection between institutional Islamophobia and social and cultural manifestations of Islamophobia:

> In addition to media devaluation of Muslim lives, state-sponsored government policies targeting Muslim Americans affirm the conflation of Muslim identity with a terrorist threat. Institutional policy, in the form of state surveillance, profiling and counter-radicalisations programming, tie Muslim identity to suspicion and subversion, which emboldens the hate-fuelled violence inflicted by private citizens, like Hicks (Tonova & Beydoun 2015, para. 4).

Tonova and Beydoun's response came in the wake of the hashtag #MuslimLivesMatter after the Chapel Hill shooting, and the immediate response on social media, amongst grief and horror, was to reaffirm the values of Muslim lives and to decry the lack of the same from news outlets. The Chapel Hill Shooting has become a significant point of mobilisation for #MuslimLivesMatter and it is transparently clear that the hashtag and discourse take heavily from the #BlackLivesMatter campaign

When discussing the "execution-style shooting" of three Black Muslims in Indiana, Mohamedtaha Omar, Adam Kamel Mekki, and Muhannad Adam Tairab, Eman Bare says:

> Muslims, let's talk about our racism. Let's talk about how we are only an Ummah when it applies to non-black bodies. How we only ever rally for Arab countries, protest for every uprising in Palestine and injustice in the Middle East, but are met with silence when it is black Muslim bodies that are facing persecution (Bare 2017, para. 8).

Bare specifically alludes to the Chapel Hill Shooting, and whilst acknowledging that the families of the victims were responsible for campaigning around recognising their relatives as victims of a hate crime, Bare contends that the deaths of these Black Muslims have not seen

the same mobilisation, and this argument is a robust and compelling argument against the utilisation of #MuslimLivesMatter. If certain Muslim lives do not matter, if certain Muslim lives do not prompt the same mobilisation and collective mourning and recognition of trauma, then all Muslim lives do not matter. If only certain Muslims, Arabs and South Asians, spur the ummah into collectivity, but not for Black Muslims, then all Muslims lives do not matter. This argument is one which draws heavily from discourse around #BlackLivesMatter and the racist attempt at utilising #AllLivesMatter; in order for all lives to matter, Black lives must matter also.

This argument is further extended by Anas White in AltMuslim, where White begins the article by offering a prayer for the victims of the Chapel Hill shooting, and expressing grief over the hate crime. White clarifies that #BlackLivesMatter is not related to one single event, nor is it only a hashtag, but a reminder for Black people and others alike that Black lives do matter in a world where anti-Black violence is enacted in complex structures of terror. Similar to Bare's argument, White outlines that there is not the same kind of solidarity or community for anti-Black injustices as exists for injustices for Muslims of Arab and South Asian descent:

> My respect to every single one of you who ever attended a protest, and to every Imam that ever gave mention, but I ask you all to consider this at a deeper level. Where was the Muslim community in response to these egregious civil rights issues? Where is the Muslim community in solidarity with a movement against these civil and even human rights issues?

> I can almost guarantee that the Chapel Hill shootings will be mentioned in every khutbah (sermon) across America. This is not to be misunderstood — it definitely should be mentioned. My point, however, is that Deah, his wife Yusor, and her younger sister Razan, obviously and visibly matter (White 2015, para. 10).

As discussed in chapter 3, trauma models in relation to Islamophobia hinge upon the assertion, firstly, that validation and respect for trauma change the experience of processing for the traumatised victim and, secondly, that trauma deriving from structural harms manifests in particular ways for individuals. Here, Bare and White's analysis involves

critique that is attuned to a sense of justice that recognises that differences in intersecting identities change how bodies are treated after death. Both articles recognise that the process of community grieving, community outrage, and collective community validation of trauma are missing for Black Muslims, whilst offered in abundance for South Asian Muslims and Arab Muslims. White goes on to note that, whilst it was exactly what should have happened, the Chapel Hill killer came in front of a grand jury and was indicted, a fact that is rarely the case for Black victims.

Trauma as related to experiences of racist structures is trauma that requires an overwhelmingly developed processing system for taking in events that impact your communities, your family, those you love, yourself, and situating that grief, pain, and loss amongst a broader understanding of the structures that shape your existence. If Arab and South Asian Muslims are to understand our trauma at incidents like the Chapel Hill shooting, then we also need to understand and feel for the trauma of violence like the three brothers killed in Indiana, and do without co-opting hashtags or movements that cater for Black people (for further thoughts on this see Walker 2015; Sabah 2015; Lord 2017; Chowdhury 2017; Ochieng 2017).

As White outlines, there are intersections at play where the victims of the Chapel Hill shooting become visible and are seen in a manner that is at odds with Bare's example; to be able to recognise trauma involves seeing the humanity of those who have violence committed against them. The carefully composed boundaries of solidarity and unity reveal much about the communities who claim them – the first section of this chapter looked at the harms of solidarity in relation to political Blackness, and that discussion provides a backdrop for this particular case study. Solidarity encompasses, on some levels, a universalising logic where communities are held together by shared values, experiences, and goals. Universalising logics, however, are rarely truly capable of capturing all the values, experiences, and goals of shared groups of people. Whilst there is certainly a moral and emotional impulse to work to dismantle Islamophobic structures that provide a foundation for the symbolic and structural violence against Muslims, this case study demonstrates the importance of wariness or scepticism amongst universalising logics. I would argue that not all Muslim lives do matter in the same way, and in order for all Muslim lives to matter, we must be able to take account of

how Black Muslims are so often structurally erased from the sense of a Muslim community by non-Black Muslims. This erasure is itself predicated upon a process of unseeing which refuses to acknowledge the limitations of race and religion intersecting variably across communities; visibility that refuses to expand its field of vision and selective solidarity are manifestations of ontological limiting that constrict shared values within communities.

Case Study 2

This case study turns to America for a discussion on the manner in which Blackness and Islamic identity intersect for British Muslims. The choice to look to America for this example is testament to the United States' current position as an extremely influential and truly global neoliberal state whose reach and impact for other countries is massive. This reach comes, most devastatingly, through the sheer might of their foreign policy implements that have, historically, affected the continuation of Black and Brown lives directly. America is a neoliberal state not only in terms of the hegemonic nature of its media, its espousal of a particular brand of whiteness but also in its approach to foreign policy as an opportunity to ravage and bomb other nations in the name of its own protected interests and freedom.
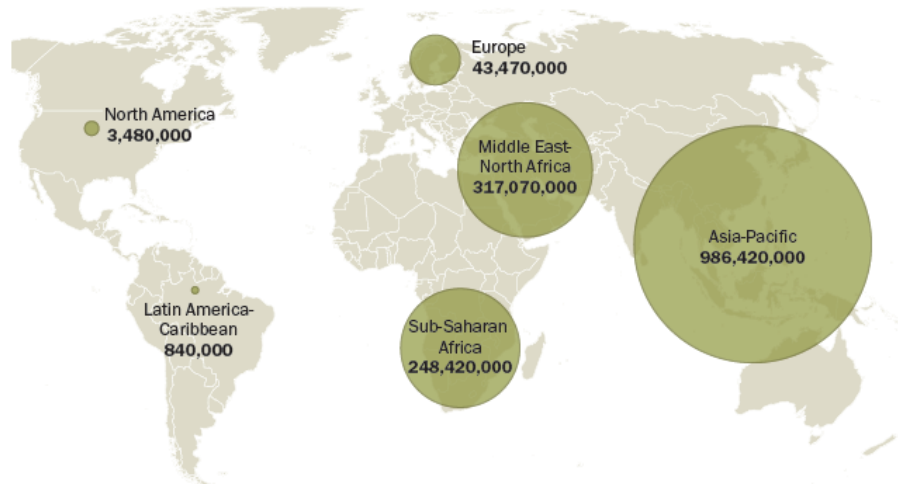
Early 2017 saw Donald Trump sign Executive Order 13769 (Siddiqui 2018) otherwise known as the Muslim Ban, and begin a protracted and often terror-inducing policy that, for this discussion, serves as an example of manifestations of racism extending their reach from within nation states to influencing categories of identity amongst foreign powers. Initially, the ban restricted entry and limited immigration from seven countries: North Korea, Syria, Iran, Yemen, Libya, Somalia and Venezuela. The order saw a raft of legal challenges and protests, with North Korea and Venezuela not amongst the countries protested. Syria, Iran, Yemen, Libya, and Somalia however, all saw protests and activist campaigns centred around the fact that all five nations are predominantly Muslim and the ban sought to restrict entry into the US for 90 days, as well as indefinitely halting entry for Syrian refugees. To date, the ACLU reports that Trump's "Muslim Ban 3.0" has been upheld by the Supreme Court, even after previous versions were challenged and blocked (ACLU 2018).

Importantly, the United States' Visa Waiver Program, first instituted under Ronald Reagan, waives the requirement of a visa for travel to the US for citizens from 38 chosen countries. Under Barack Obama, applications for the Visa Waiver Program blocked access for those who held dual citizenship or had visited Iran, Iraq, Syria or Sudan, with Libya, Somalia, and Yemen added to the list in 2016 with the Consolidated Appropriations Act (2018). Trump's Muslim Ban, whilst at times not an indefinite ban, built upon the platform of restricting travel and heightening security for individuals who carried any level of interaction with certain countries; the explicit rhetoric around their separate restrictions differ, certainly, but there is a clear link here in terms of suspicion and increased securitisation for Muslim countries and affiliated individuals.

The identification of who "looks" and can therefore be seen as Muslim, is a process entangled in complex racial politics, and as with the example of attacks on Sikh individuals mistaken for Muslims, the predominant racialisation process for who looks "Muslim" is to look for those who have Arab or South Asian features (Singh 2003; Grewal 2003; Singh 2013). The Pew Research Center, in a 2017 report, provides the following graphic for global Muslim populations as of 2010:

Regional distribution of Muslims

Population by region as of 2010

North America
3,480,000

Europe
43,470,000

Middle East-
North Africa
317,070,000

Asia-Pacific
986,420,000

Latin America-
Caribbean
840,000

Sub-Saharan
Africa
248,420,000

Percentage of world Muslim population in each region as of 2010

15.5%	19.8	61.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	Middle East-North Africa	Asia-Pacific

2.7 Europe
0.2 North America
<0.1 Latin America-Caribbean
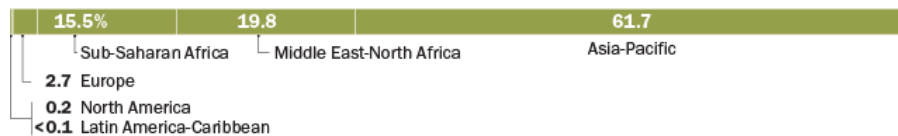
Note: Population estimates are rounded to the ten thousands. Percentages are calculated from unrounded numbers. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 8 (Desilver & Masci 2017)

They note that whilst most Muslims live across India and Pakistan, "the Middle East-North Africa region has the highest concentration of Muslims of any region of the world: 93% of its approximately 341 million inhabitants are Muslim, compared with 30% in sub-Saharan Africa and 24% in the Asia-Pacific region" (Desilver & Masci 2017). Trump's Muslim ban and Obama's restrictions extend the suspicion targeted at not only Muslim-majority countries, conveniently never countries that the US trades with, like Saudi Arabia, (Poole 2018) but pushes further the United States' suspicion of its own Black citizens, to Somalia and Sudan. Miski Noor, the Communications Strategist for the Black Lives Matter Global Network, wrote shortly after the announcement of the Muslim ban that:

In preparing to write this piece, I thought about my Black Muslim experiences. I dug deep into my memory, trying to think of a time when my Blackness and my Muslim identity, on full display, intersected and meant something...I got stuck because in most situations

where my multiple identities are relevant (or not), my Blackness trumps all other identities. So no, I don't have the perfect anecdote, because my whole life is emblematic of what Black Muslims face in America on a daily basis: erasure…[t]he latest and most terrifying executive order is an attempt to pass off an anti-Black, racist policy as an act in the interest of the safety of Americans. But in claiming to be an attack on "radical Islamic sentiment" against the U.S., the Administration has actually targeted some of the most war-torn and the poorest countries in Africa. Nearly half of the countries named in Trump's executive order fact sheet are Muslim-majority African countries, from which none of the 9/11 attackers hailed (Noor 2017, para. 8).

The Black Lives Matter Global Network itself released a statement after the executive order which set in motion the Muslim Ban, "we know that an attack on any of us is an attack on all of us" (Morrison 2017). Noor's piece highlights that intersections of identity do not remain separate, but are instead coalescing moving parts that are experienced in coherence. It is a political choice to characterise, firstly, the Muslim ban as just that and not a "travel ban," and it is also a political choice to focus upon how Black and Muslim identities come together for Americans, and for those targeted by the Muslim ban. Noor brings forward the fallacious foundation of the ban itself, and Noor's difficulty at being seen as both Muslim and Black is labelled as erasure, precisely the painful and never-ending process described in chapter 3 of how it feels to not be seen.

This is further explored in a piece from Jeff Karoub, Sophia Tareen, and Noreen Nasir where they source responses from Black Muslims to the Muslim ban:

Abdul Rahim Habib, an American-born college student, said even his close friends assumed he converted to Islam because they didn't associate being black with being Muslim. That's even though the 21-year-old's Nigerian father and grandparents are Muslim. While growing up in Chicago, he could remember moments when Arab Muslims refused to greet him with "As-Salaam-Alaikum," a wish of peace customary among all Muslims.

"A lot of our Arab brothers and sisters didn't really care about being brothers and sisters

until this point when they started having problems," he said (Karoub & Tareen & Noreen 2017, para. 23).

Once again, we see the same themes as experienced by Black Muslim characters in the earlier discussion of Unfair and Ugly, where Black Muslims have their religious identities questioned and policed due to their racial identities. Habib also directly refers to the limits of solidarity and unity as being his Blackness; not only are Black Muslims erased but are also subjected to a process of unseeing on the part of South Asian and Arab Muslims. Here, unseeing is used in the sense to refer not only to the physical sensation of seeing what is in front of you, but also of the structural and symbolic sensations that interplay with how erasure functions. Habib's experiences of suspicion from inside ostensibly his own community, only to see the Muslim ban implemented outside both the Middle East and South Asia, suddenly a shared problem that requires unity and solidarity, is an example of the unseen as a process: it takes time and commitment to refuse to acknowledge the historical erasure of Black Muslims, to refuse to see what is in front of you, and to refuse an encounter.

To draw this particular case study to a close, I will now turn to Nessa writing for The Establishment in covering surveillance in the digital age. This piece is written in the context of the FBI's covert, and often illegal, Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) targeting Black Americans at disproportionate levels in comparison to other demographics. Nessa traces the history of surveillance of Muslims as rooted in the surveillance and policing of Black movements in America, and the restriction of non-Christian religions on slave plantations. The argument proceeds as follows:

> Perhaps one of the biggest concerns facing Black Muslims is the ways in which current discourse erases the anti-Black roots of America's Islamophobia. By ignoring how surveillance draws from policing enslaved African Muslims, Black Muslims are left ignored. Black and Muslim are viewed as two identities, instead of one whole that has always been cast as a threat to the American public...Black Muslims do not simply face the consequences of anti-Blackness and Islamophobia, but they deal with a particular manifestation of the two that works as a single unit. Understanding anti-Black Islamophobia as its own form of violence allows for discourse to broaden itself, without

falling into traps such as those painting Muslims as recently racialized victims of surveillance, when the beginnings of surveillance existed with the racialization of enslaved African Muslims (Nessa 2018, para. 19).

This thesis has often reiterated that Islamophobia is no recent phenomenon triggered by 9/11, but actually has further historical and cultural reaches; it follows that anti-Blackness in relation to Black Muslims, particularly in Muslim communities, but also in society more broadly, is a coming together of anti-Blackness and Islamophobia that function together uniquely, rather than additively. Nessa's article is one which provides a narrative of the history of surveillance that speaks directly to the Trump administration's policing and justification for surveillance and suspicion. Both the institutional manifestations and cultural and social manifestations that this case study has brought forward demonstrate the incisive and violent impacts of a process of unseeing, that are undeniably embedded in traumatising systems of racial violence.

Case Study 3

Now, I will focus specifically on Black British Muslims; the predominance of American culture in various types of discourse, whilst necessary and important, often precludes discussions around communities of colour in Britain. A number of hashtags, events, and collectives led by Black Muslims have served to highlight the necessity of different kinds of safer spaces. One such example is Aamina Mohamed's creation of #BlackOutEid (Issa-Salwe 2015), begun four years ago and used at each Eid festival to allow Black Muslims around the world to post pictures of their Eid celebrations. The Fader interviewed five Black Muslim women who explained its importance to them (Taylor 2017), and Aamina Mohamed herself stated that:

Many Somalis still wear abaya and khamiis to Eid prayer. In recent years, you've definitely seen a movement for reclamation of culture. I think that might be from the impact of the internet and seeing others asking similar questions. Also, from finding other

Black Muslims who are proud of their cultures and of each other's more so than our non-black counterparts (Taylor 2017, para. 17).

The popularity of the hashtag, and Mohamed's own comments demonstrate how the opportunity to share diasporic Black Muslims reclaiming their own cultures, and learning about Eid around the world, is a kind of solidarity that began out of requirement: isolation and disbelief from South Asian and Arab Muslims (as with the earlier description of Black Muslims being questioned about when they converted, and how much they knew about a religion they were born into) has made it necessary for Black Muslims to respond in kind and pointedly entwine their Blackness with their Muslim identity.

Similarly, Ejatu Shaw's recent photo series covers different "sides of her identity and the consequences of rejecting religion" (Kasambala 2017) and Dazed Digital featured the images of Shaw's construction of Islamic imagery alongside depictions of Black Muslims. Shaw was commissioned by Reform the Funk to depict Black, female, and Muslim identity and Dazed Digital writes that:

it was only while attempting to understand exactly what that label even meant that Shaw became aware of just how disconnected she felt from the term.

Despite the relaxed nature of her own family, Shaw's journey with religion inevitably had its peaks and troughs. In her teenage years, she chose to wear a hijab in a bid to connect more with her spirituality, without any external encouragement. However, the habit never felt truly comfortable for her and she soon stopped covering her hair.

While researching the foundations of her born-religion for the project, Shaw found her personal beliefs flying into direct conflict with those of the community around her. The further she dug into Islam, the further she felt from that aspect of herself. And the more distant she grew from her religion, the more she wondered who she was outside of that: "I felt like there was nothing left to me once I took away all the parts I disagreed with (Kasambala 2017, para. 3).

Shaw's work engages with the notion of Blackness in relation to Islam with a personal working through of a complicated relationship with Islam; this example sits neatly with that of #BlackOutEid, particularly given that discussions around Black British Muslims tend to begin, and end, with questioning the existence of Black Muslims without moving on to question the socio-political realities of Black Muslims. The necessity of these kinds of spaces speaks to the different kinds of erasure involved, as well as the examples of social media connections detailed in chapter 3; as much as those examples spoke from a place of loss and grief, and the desire to make connections, so too does Shaw's work.

This kind of exploration is tackled by a YouTube web series, currently in its second season, entitled Black and Muslim in Britain (2017). The cast cover familiar arguments as to why Muslims can't be racist, most popularly a contention batted away by non-Black Muslims with the example of Bilal (RA) as a Black Muslim living at the time of Prophet Muhammed (saw) as able to absolve contemporary anti-Blackness. The web series covers questions of love, role models, Black Lives Matter, and discourse on Blackness itself; once again, this is another example of Black British Muslims marking out a space that caters specifically to Black British Muslims. Indeed, each of these three examples serve, for this discussion, as testament to the requirement of safer spaces being created away from the racist suspicion of non-Black Muslims.

Momtaza Mehri, in an article for Media Diversified, uses data from the 2011 census to state that:

> The last UK census undertaken in 2011 showed that Black Muslims made up 10.1% of the British Muslim population, not counting Muslims of mixed Black heritage...The study went on to compare Muslims with Blacks of Caribbean origins, who were 54% less likely to find employment than their white counterparts. Moreover, there was no distinctive target class of Black Muslims. No statistics were given to illuminate on the social implications of being Black and Muslim. Nuance was clearly on its day off at the barber's when all this was being composed.

In this regard, this study unintentionally highlighted Black Muslim erasure. It points

towards a general attitude within British society generally and within Muslim communities of predominantly South Asian heritage; one is either Black, or Muslim. Never the twain shall meet. There is little to no representation, despite our numbers. Growing up, I have found myself often looking to America to see myself in its mosaic. Which would be paradoxically hilarious, if it wasn't so sad (2015 Para. 5).

Each of these case studies have turned to statistical analysis that points to the portions of society that are composed of Black Muslims, and Mehri's argument is one which serves to highlight the deep and violent erasure carried out not only socio-culturally, but also institutionally. If states cannot even recognise the existence of intersecting groups in society there is little to no chance that they can work to address social injustices amongst those groups, to say nothing of bringing forward terms that describe those social injustices and allow for public critique on a broad scale.

Throughout this PhD, I have used policy documents to make connections between institutional deployments of Islamophobia, and their social, cultural, and emotional impacts on Muslims in Britain; it cannot be overstated for this chapter that making even those connections cannot happen when Black Muslims are not treated as a discrete category by institutions. Institutional recognition is no precursor to better treatment, but it is often a signal of an understanding about how society is formed of groups, and the kinds of identities that inform the shapes of those groups. Examples like #BlackOutEid, Black and Muslim in Britain, and Ejatu Shaw's work are examples of content led by Black Muslims who have been pushed to do so by anti-Black racism from non-Black Muslims, and systematic erasure through a process of active unseeing.

Indeed, Mehri goes on to consider who profits from the homogenisation of British Muslim identity, and states that "we live in a world where binaries are instrumental in global brutalisation, and this is just one of many" – racial binaries serve to dominate intellectual and emotional spaces of discourse, and are vital tools in a process of unseeing that better serves the status quo by envisioning all discussions on racial difference as beholden to whiteness only.

Forward

In general terms, this chapter has considered the articulations of Blackness in Britain, how this coalesces with Muslim identity and manifests from the perspective of South-Asian communities; the use of the unseen as a term which describes a process of deliberate erasure in the context of Islamic mythology and practices; and, finally, brought forward the examples of a number of case studies that demonstrate contemporary engagements with anti-Blackness as perpetrated by institutional structures and non-Black Muslims.

As with chapter 3, there can be no real conclusion here as this topic is complex and wide-ranging, with real-life implications for those we discuss. Whilst this chapter has been written in relation to the question of how understandings of trauma change for South Asians as we simultaneously occupy the positions of victim and perpetrator, in my own position as a British South Asian, I cannot speak to or for the trauma of Black Muslims when the kinds of violent erasure I describe throughout the chapter are enacted. With that limitation in mind, I hope that this chapter has allowed for an exploration of decolonial narratives of history that inform modern iterations of race; for an engagement with Islamic mythology that speaks to recent academic work which seeks to complicate understandings of objectivity and knowledge production; to provide wide-ranging examples of anti-Blackness that treat "Black Muslim" as a particular identity with particular experiences; and, to consider the extensions and modifications of trauma theory in understanding the emotional and psychosocial long-term impact of structural violence. The discussion throughout this chapter of failures of solidarity and community, of outdated terms that have come to perpetuate harm, of strategies of interpretation lingered upon in order to gaze more responsibly and ethically are just that – attempts to re-vision solidarity with an intent to engender more effective activism which values difference in community. Difference is by no means the death knell for solidarity, but a failure to look better and more expansively certainly is.

Conclusion – Forward

"The past and the future merge to meet us here"

– Beyoncé

Time/Timelessness

This thesis began by examining the connections between institutional forms of Islamophobia and their inter-connected manifestation in social and cultural terms. What has unfolded is a thesis on trauma informed by anti-racist praxis that, in accounting for the past and present systems of deathly subjugation, looks to the future and future conceptions of freedom. This finishing note will focus upon what it means to be looking forwards to the future whilst mired in unremitting trauma, to bring the past and the future to sit with us as we exist in the present, to consider the feeling of being both inside and outside of time. This discussion will be organised through a consideration of the two central frameworks, outcomes, and themes of the thesis – that of time, and gaze. I will reflect upon each of the chapters in order to pick up the threads of these two themes, before considering how the future is imagined, and indeed who populates such a future. A final discussion will follow on how these futures are seen.

Chapter 1 began with a consideration of machinations of state power in relation to Muslim people simultaneously occupying the position of both enemies and citizens. This consideration used anti-terror legislation from the British government alongside Khaled Hosseini's novel A Thousand Splendid Suns (2007), the 15 year gap in publication between the two itself a commentary upon the timelessness of Orientalist, Islamophobic, racism. Both texts, in their own ways, communicate an understanding of Muslim citizenship as demarcated by 'good' citizens who unquestioningly support the state's attempts to further establish its power (however regressive or aimed at other Muslims) and 'bad' citizens or enemies of the state who are marked out as suspicious based upon their skin colour and religion, and confirmed as enemies based upon perceived ideological distance from Western values. This demarcation is one which has endured through many years of white supremacist logics that have persisted through various iterations of racism and the feeling of its timelessness is located precisely within a mischaracterisation of the past and the subsequent delimitation of what is possible for the future. This attempt to paint the past in a particular light creates a reckoning with the future that has no currency in the present. The placement of any mentions of Muslim women in the policy document and the characters of Mariam and Laila in ATSS are rooted firmly in a clash of civilisations, binary, "us v them" rhetoric that will be painfully

familiar to Muslim women which reveals, not that there is any such accounting of life experiences for Muslim women, but rather an attempt by white supremacy to close down and control the past and future of Muslim women.

Chapter 2 continued the discussion of state power and citizenship through the framework of necropolitics. Once again a policy document was examined which focused on assimilation in British society alongside two films, Yasmin (2004) and Brick Lane (2007). Mbembe's necropolitics lays the groundwork for understanding that state sovereignty is exercised along the valuation of who deserves to live and who deserves to die, a process imbricated within structures of oppression which encompass, amongst others, race, gender, disability, sexuality, and class. For those in the present, the repetition and continued assertion of state sovereignty over time is what makes it seem as though these states always have been, and therefore always will be, sovereign. Along with this, the repetition of which people and communities are dangers and deserve to be stripped of citizenship in light of their enmity to the state, is a pointed lie which also appears immutable given it is caught within the same timely logics of white supremacy that bind state sovereignty. Chapter 2 ties some of these concepts first introduced in Chapter 1 together, and uses all three texts, the policy document and the two films, to paint a fuller picture of state power and citizenship in relation to Muslims. The chapter also considers the centrality of 9/11 amongst narratives of nation, gender, and class. As much as assimilation turns upon the binary notions of "us v them" and the determination of whiteness as neutrality, all three texts use 9/11 and the subsequent war on terror as a fixed point in time that is so pre-eminent in the psyche of Western consciousness and central to Western values that it becomes hyperreal in its justification of crimes and atrocities in both the past and the future. As with the discussion of Mariam's death in Chapter 1, Yasmin and Nazneen similarly grapple with the hold of fate upon their futures – indeed, Nazneen's mother kills herself at the beginning of the film as an acknowledgement and learning opportunity for Nazneen that she can make her own fate. All three women have clash of civilisations-style assimilationist narratives written onto their narrative trajectories, leaving us with the implication that any successes or survivals on the part of Muslim women are through upheavals of their fate as abused, tortured, and dead. Once again, Islamophobic structures shape what can even be imagined possible for Muslim women.

Whilst Chapters 1 and 2 deal with the timelessness of established structures of state power and citizen belonging, Chapter 3 considers how such timelessness translates into the emotional psyche of the people depicted as such enemies. The ensuing discussion of the gaps in traditional trauma theory and the moves made by contemporary trauma theory form the basis of a discussion which centres upon the notion of Muslims as ghosts capable of hauntings. Such a technique is necessary in order to find an avenue into the difficult task of considering the traumatic and emotionally painful impact upon Muslims of being thought of as enemies, strangers, and others. What emerges from Chapter 3 is an understanding of how Islamophobic structures shape notions of catastrophe, grief, and harm within a framework of collectivity that sets an emotional moral imperative upon those whose deaths are mourned and those which are not. Whilst trauma theory itself has had little purchase with time, instead moving around, through, and away from it, a disregard for the linearity of time is also found in hauntology; ghosts are by definition a crashing elision of the past and present, and a threat for the stability of the future. Ghosts were found to be an apt metaphor for manifesting the very idea of a threat, of terror personified, and Chapter 3's textual focus upon newspaper headlines is one which moves us from women like Mariam, Yasmin, and Nazneen, and towards the communities of Muslim women who are traumatised by their lived experiences and understandings of Islamophobia. Ghosts also represent the precarity of time in anti-racist scholarship; the continuous white supremacist denial of racism and racist logics is a denial that also looks to envision a particular future for particular types of communities. Looking beyond the necropolitical work of death within state sovereignty and citizenship formation, we are required to think of the future as another dimension of time which is as central as our understanding of the past in considering whose lives are valued, as well as whose deaths are valued.

Chapter 4 takes these discussions of the various power structures imbricated within the experiences of South Asian Muslim women and applies their anti-racist praxis towards inter-community solidarity and unity, specifically that of Black Muslims. The ensuing discussion of the limits of solidarity uses political Blackness as an example of previously useful anti-racist praxis that has come to be harmful to certain communities. This chapter is concerned with examining trauma as a multi-directional theory, specifically the question of anti-Blackness in South Asian Muslim communities and how this reckons amongst the

collective experiences of racism and Islamophobia mixed with the singular experiences of anti-Blackness and Islamophobia.

These questions are asked in order to examine time as multi-directional. If Chapter 3 has shown us that linear time has no real traction in discussions of trauma and grief, then it follows that Chapter 4 presents to us an example of revisioning anti-racist praxis which is invested in acknowledging that each of us has a particular understanding of the social histories of the number of communities we belong to, but also that these histories will rub against one another during attempts to imagine collective futures. In other words, the collectivity of Muslim communities is not a cohesive and singular imagination of the future, but instead a reckoning with the developing understandings of the self, community, and resistance amongst variations in community experience that must necessarily be pluralistic. Just as ghosts are used in Chapter 3, so too is the unseen used in Chapter 4 as a vehicle for discussing interpretive strategies in anti-racist praxis which go on to engender pluralistic visions of the future. This desire or impetus to keep revisioning understandings of solidarity and unity in anti-racist praxis is one which hopes for a better future where we can better conceive of how to see one another more fully.

Sara Ahmed's paper "Affective Economies" begins with a consideration of the role of love and fear in the surfacing of emotions with respect to the functions of white supremacy, and contains a useful discussion on the futurity of fear. Ahmed begins with a passage from the Aryan Nations website which describes the emotions of imagined white citizens under an imagined attack, encompassing fear and loathing; repulsion and anger; rage (2004, p. 118). Ahmed describes the everyday nature of such emotions in the white subject as a principle of hating together, and therefore residing as a community together. Whilst Ahmed clarifies that "hate does not reside in a given subject or object. Hate is economic; it circulates between signifiers in relationships of difference and displacement" (2004, p. 119), she goes on to argue that the affective economies of emotion are accumulative and built up through understandings of the social and the historical. The example of the asylum seeker as a boogeyman is used as a figure that gives shape to white nightmares about "an anticipated future of injury" (2004, p. 123) that could come in the form of the taking of jobs, community resources, and a general stubborn presence in brown skin. Ahmed further categorises this fear

as follows:

> Fear responds to that which is approaching rather than already here. It is the futurity of fear, which makes it possible that the object of fear, rather than arriving, might pass us by. But the passing by of the object of fear does not mean the overcoming of fear: rather, the possibility of the loss of the object that approaches makes what is fearsome all the more fearsome. If fear has an object, then fear can be contained by the object. When the object of fear threatens to pass by, then fear can no longer be contained by an object (2004, p. 125).

This fear does not come from the white body as the origin of the fear, but rather from "past histories that stick to the present" (2004, p. 126) and are manifested in objects imagined to contain fear. If fear cannot be contained and directed towards an object, then the possibility of a generalised fear that runs loose is altogether more terrifying for the white body. The possibility of being in a state of fear in the future, formless, risks a lack of community – if you cannot fear together, then how united is your community? It is all too obvious here to call to mind the oft-referenced work on white supremacy from Ahmed herself, and the focus on fear as a driving factor for communities of various whites, white nationalists, white supremacists, "accidental" white communities that fail by their own standards of diversity, tells us much about the balm of strength in white and insular communities in the face of fear. The futurity of fear for Ahmed's described white body sustains itself, in other words, by circulating fear from object to object and, as this thesis has shown, into whichever empty signifier is brought along next, be it the all-powerful yet beatable brown terrorist, the hijabi woman who needs saving from her own people, or the figure of the ghostly strange enemy. Of course, this futurity depends entirely upon where you stand, and I turn now to the second central vein of this thesis, the gaze.

Gazing/Looking

Time and again, the conclusions and interpretative threads in this thesis have also returned to considering who is holding the gaze, and how this changes what is seen. As much as time and

looking towards the future is central to anti-racist scholarship, so too is considering the individual looking towards the future, their intellectual influences and identity formations that impact the limits of their imagination with regards to liberation and freedom, and how their past and present crafts the futures available to them. Looking to the future is an exercise concerned with what you hold, to be true, to possess, to comfort, in community, and what you can give, of yourself, generously, destructively, out of necessity, to hold the gaze whilst the centre cannot.

I will turn now to a brief consideration of various standpoints throughout the thesis to stand in conjunction with the time conclusions outlined above. In many ways, a thesis about South Asian Muslim women living in the West could only begin by looking East. The discussion in Chapter 1 revolves around Edward Said's seminal Orientalism, and by the end of the chapter evolves into an exploration of texts as creating reality. In other words, texts providing the weight of socio-historical contexts and emotions which, over time and repetitions, form a kind of reality. The interlude that succeeds this chapter is a reflection on my avenues into the texts under discussion, and my unwillingness and inability to divorce my understanding of myself from my reading of the texts. This is not to suggest that this is in any way some kind of unique or new manner of looking, but rather that constructions of reality develop over time, and examining the person doing the looking is a valid avenue into determining how we see as informing what we see.

As Chapter 2 is concerned with citizenship and statehood under Western eyes, it also continues the theme of looking East, but with a more explicit deconstruction of the process of seeing. Through Ahmed's work on apprehension and reachability, and Chow's breakdown of the Other which looks back at the colonizer, we can see a shifting of linearity wherein the process of seeing is not one single gaze directed at an object, but a palimpsestic coming-together of multiply layered standpoints and visions. Concurrently, the women in the chapter, Yasmin and Nazneen both have pivotal scenes in their respective films – Yasmin's reflection is broken up in a vanity mirror as she is left to quietly gather herself after 9/11, and Nazneen's body is reflected in a nearby mirror as her husband has sex with her. In these scenes, both women are supposed to be coming apart whilst we stare at them, in pivotal moments that are there to remind the audience that we, as those who hold the gaze, see them

as snapshots which represent something. Watching 9/11 through their eyes, usually on multiple screens in conveniently placed television shops, is a process which is layered to signal a shift in everything, in characters, politics, motivations, values.

The chapter is concerned with the consequences of giving credence to such a shift, and the corresponding questions of who belongs in the West as a citizen who can be said to be at home. The outcomes of this chapter cohere around understanding assimilation as a praxis which requires whiteness at its heart; to conceive of immigrants being told to go home, being instructed to play their role as good immigrants who contribute to society, to assimilate, can be better understood through a recognition of whiteness fixating on brown skin as located perpetually elsewhere. Whilst reckoning with one's own standpoint, as demonstrated in Chapter 1, is central to looking better, Chapter 2 shows us that reckoning with the gaze of others can also reveal much about the operation of structures which seek to determine citizenship and belonging.

Chapter 3 is a conceptual departure from the first part of the thesis, in that it moves from exploring processes of humanisation within the nation state, and instead upon the impact of dehumanisation upon enemies of the state. The chapter is about who can be seen to be traumatised and continues the necropolitical theme of how certain lives are seen as valuable, and others are disposable, inconsequential, and tied up in a fate that leads to pain and death. Derrida's visor effect stands out in this chapter as a crucial commentary upon Chow's dis/location of gaze theory, given that it too revolves around a ghost unexpectedly looking towards the haunted subject. What ensues is a discussion that centres around Muslims as hypervisibilised and invisibilized – we've all heard of ghosts, but how many of us can say we know them through encounters over time? It is difficult to pull out a couple of moments from the chapter that use gaze or standpoint as anchors, but this is because the chapter and its outcomes are wholly concentrated upon exploring movements of gaze. To begin with trauma theory that asks who is left out of trauma theory is to begin with the bodies, experiences, and humans that are routinely and actively missed out of the process of encounter. Evidently, whiteness does not require the materiality of flesh and blood in Muslim bodies, as much as it needs an object suitable for pouring in fearful significations; materiality is rather beside the point.

Similarly, Chapter 4 does not have one or two moments of considering gaze, as the entire chapter is, once again, an exploration of what happens when we consider multi-directional gazes taken by those who might otherwise be cast as enemy, stranger, Other. Here, the unseen was used to understand that seeing is tied to learning and, more precisely, to unlearning. Conceiving of knowledge production, gaze theory, time, all the threads running throughout this thesis, in a drive for anti-racist praxis, is made altogether more fruitful by considering how comprehending limitations in knowledge is a useful tool, particularly when looking outside of one's own communities. This chapter thus attempts to consider the notion of solidarity amongst communities of colour, particularly communities of colour who share other affiliations, in order to examine the limits of solidarity and the process of envisioning freedom or liberation in the future for those same communities of colour. Anti-racist praxis requires collectivity which, in order to imagine futures with freedom and liberation, requires a grappling with identity categories, belonging, and recognition; seeing one another.

bell hooks similarly argues that anti-racist struggle must linger upon "the importance of acknowledging the way positive recognition and acceptance of difference is a necessary starting point as we work to eradicate white supremacy" (2015, p. 13), and outlines the importance of gaze as a site of resistance (2015, p. 116) in how we see ourselves, our kin, and those around us:

> When thinking about black female spectators, I remember being punished as a child for staring, for those hard intense direct looks children would give grown-ups, looks that were seen as confrontational, as gestures of resistance, challenges to authority. The "gaze"has always been political in my life. Imagine the terror felt by the child who has come to understand through repeated punishments that one's gaze can be dangerous. The child who has learned so well to look the other way when necessary. Yet, when punished, the child is told by parents, "Look at me when I talk to you." Only, the child is afraid to look. Afraid to look, but fascinated by the gaze. There is power in looking (2015, p. 115).

hooks speaks in the context of Black feminism, and describes the mediating gaze of Black female spectators whose gaze is politicized, terrorized, and restricted. This passage neatly

frames how gaze is mediated by structures of supremacy that are embedded into every aspect of life, from childhood, the personal, the professional, the political, and speaks to the punishment and control that goes into regulating gaze. hooks is clear that this act of looking is a process of developing an oppositional gaze, a callback to Stuart Hall's work (2015, p. 122), is a tool through which to reckon with the present and "invent the future" (2015, p. 131). It logically and emotionally follows that anti-racist praxis requires an invention of the future and each of the chapters in this thesis aims to contribute to this envisioning. Whilst hooks writes for Black women and speaks to the experiences of Black women and girls, the relevance to the discussion here is evident.

The Future Body

What we are left with at this late stage, then, is a conclusion geared towards understanding that the limits of the imagination are themselves shaped by what one sees, and where one sees it from – space, place, and time. Visions of the future determine who we imagine as capable of surviving and thriving in the future, and are thus deeply rooted in the present and the type of lives, communities, and ideals that are valued. All of this discussion of time and gaze is not here to lose the materiality and reality of the kinds of lives and situations this thesis has discussed. Throughout we have seen the real effects of emotional turmoil, debilitating pain, torture, rendition, displacement, death, and murder that are underwritten into the functions of white supremacy, racism, Islamophobia, and misogyny. The themes mentioned in this conclusion of time and gaze are recurring markers of the necessity of creativity in anti-racist praxis that requires us to look again, to think again, and to imagine again. Cultural products are rife with imaginations of the future, particularly in sci-fi and fantasy, genres which routinely use jumps into the future or alternative realities as allegories for imaginings of future liberalism without the messiness of including Black and brown faces. These imaginings, the most prominent examples being Star Trek, Star Wars, Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, Black Mirror, in their imaginings of the future reveal not the imagining of a liberatory future period as discussed throughout this thesis, but the kinds of people their creators imagine as worthy of existing in the future, but also in the present and the past.

Amongst all this talk of futurity and imagination, I am wary of such examples in their ability to whitewash and allegorise liberation and freedom for communities of colour, of any intersection of identity. I am also thinking here of the tradition of Afro-Pessimism, and the work of Achille Mbembe, Saidiya Hartman, Hortense Spillers, and Frantz Fanon, and this wariness appears all the more well-placed, measured, and reasonable. The ever-encroaching impacts of white supremacy, colonialism, and the continuing subjugation and perpetuation of "Others" is no new thing, and neither is the impulse to imagine creatively and outside of the restrictive binds of these structures. No less familiar are feelings of hopelessness, defeat, anger, resentment, or weariness. Many anti-racist scholars, intellectuals, thinkers, and poets have written upon this subject, often in rallying cries and calls to come together, and if this thesis tells us anything about multiplicities and simultaneities, it tells us that it is entirely possible to hold both a reasoned reaction of disbelief and utter hopelessness alongside a determination to work for our communities and kinfolk.

We Will See – ہم دیکھیں گے

The work of connecting mediums, theories, and standpoints in anti-racist praxis has, hopefully, been displayed in this thesis, and I will finish with a brief thought and reminder to consider who this "our" is, who the "we" is that is mentioned throughout this thesis. Determining who "we" refers to in any given situation reveals much about who the discussion of freedom and liberation is for, and it remains to be said that Faiz' famous line speaks to the necessity of multiple collaborations and motivations necessary in anti-racist work. ہم دیکھیں گے has run from the beginning to the end of this thesis and speaks to my preoccupation with positionality and time. I find it a hopelessly comforting phrase, the determination of "will" promising a witnessing that will be done by a community. I do not personally believe it to be a promise that "we" will all survive and be here to witness what is to come, but the promise remains that someone will be here to take in what has come, be aware of what is, and will be. This someone is who we look to, the possibility that we will still be here to continue to gaze across time, at, and for one another.

"If our temporalities can expand in such a way that allow us to recognise the not yet imaginable then we become more convinced that the work we are doing in this moment will help to shake that future that we cannot yet imagine."

– Angela Davis in Conversation with Jackie Kay

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