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British Muslims in the Broadsheet Press: a challenge to cultural hegemony?

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ABSTRACT *This paper examines the representation of British Muslim communities in the British broadsheet press and provides empirical evidence that (i) British Muslim communities are almost wholly absent from the news, excluded from all but predominantly negative contexts; (ii) that when British Muslims do appear, they are included only as participants in news events, not as providers of informed commentary on news events; and therefore (iii) that the issues and concerns of the communities are not being served by the agendas of the broadsheet press.*

The paper presupposes that the power relationships represented in the broadsheet press are both generative and transposable, modifying power relations in other fields (Bourdieu, 1991). I argue that the dominant modes of representing British Muslims are therefore both a product of and a contributing factor to the continued social exclusion of British Muslim communities at all levels of society.

KEY WORDS: *Broadsheet Newspapers, Representation, British Muslims, Nationalist Practices, Britishness*

Introduction

Over the last 20 years but particularly in the last decade, the presence of British Muslims[1] in the "public sphere" has becoming increasingly conspicuous. But what positions are the British Muslim communities represented as occupying within, and upon, this sphere? A reader's letter, published by the British broadsheet newspaper the *Daily Telegraph*, serves as a rather sobering introduction to the analysis of such representations:

> If immigrants will not adapt to our ways in public life—as Christians readily do in Muslim countries—the future looks grim. And if veils become commonplace in Britain, villains could resort to them instead of the less concealing stocking mask. Add a loose robe and you would never know the wearer's sex. (Mona McNee, *Daily Telegraph*, 5 December 1997)

As an example of bigotry masquerading as concern, the letter is remarkable. Unfortunately, it is far from exceptional. The letter was written in response to a news story printed in the *Telegraph* two days previously, on 3 December 1997, describing an event in which a British Muslim woman was asked to remove her *hijab* by the driver of a bus so as to reveal her face in order to establish whether it matched that on her bus pass. When the woman refused, the

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driver stopped her from travelling on the bus, and hence from getting to work.

Contained in the first sentence above alone are examples of five of the most frequently occurring argumentative strategies (van Eemeren and Houtlosser, 1999) applied in representing ethnic minorities in general, and the "Muslim Other" (Karim, 1997) in particular. First, the presupposition that the individuals represented are "immigrants", and thus "foreign" as opposed to "British". Second, that these "immigrants" can be homogenised and referred to as a single group, without recourse to further nominal determiners ("black immigrants"; "Asian_"; "Muslim_"; etc.). Third, that this group have "different ways" to us, that they should have to adapt to "our ways", and, moreover, that they are not doing so. Fourth, the presupposition that Christians "readily adapt" to different ways in Muslim countries, with the attendant implication of "our accommodating nature" regarding difference. This, of course, acts as an implicit denial of the extensive history of British prejudice and repression, in both national and colonial domains. And fifth, that the future, and specifically the effect that these "immigrants" will have upon "us", looks "grim". The "future threat of immigrants" argumentative stratagem has a long and enduring past, and thus, drawing on this discourse of "threat", the Muslim veil is cited in the second sentence and connected explicitly with criminality, albeit in the form of a rather ridiculous "stocking masked criminal". Presumably, in the world that Ms McNee inhabits, the police could always rely on the other two foolproof ways of identifying a criminal—the striped jumper and swagbag—in the event that they dispensed with wearing stockings over their heads.

Background

The social background of the British Muslim communities deserves a brief introduction and contextualisation. There are no accepted statistics on the number of Muslims in Britain due to, among other complications, the lack of a "religious question" in the national census. As such, the figures quoted often "reflect the fears and aspirations of interested parties" more than they do reality, with both "Islamophobes" and "Islamists" often inflating numbers in order to back their respective arguments of a "Muslim threat" or "substantial Muslim electorate" (Rex, 1996, p. 218). Even using the 1991 census data, the accepted number of Muslims in Britain is usually estimated at between one million (Modood, 1990; Rex, 1996) and 1.5 million (Runnymede Trust, 1997) due to the inaccuracy of predicting religion from ethnic/national origin. All estimates show, however, that the majority of Muslims living in Britain are from a South Asian background (65–75 per cent), with the Pakistani communities predominant. It is further estimated that "the sizes of the Muslim communities could be up to 20 per cent larger now than shown in the 1991 consensus" (Runnymede Trust, 1997, p. 65) due to the communities' young age profile and higher birth rates.

Within these British Muslim communities there are significant differences in religious and ideological belief and practice, the detail and sophistication of which are beyond the scope of the present article (see Halliday, 1997; Lewis, 1994, 1997). If we look solely at British Muslims of Pakistani origin, a number of divisions are observable: between denominations, with Sunni (Hanafi) Muslims in the majority and the Shia and Ahmadiyya forming small minorities; within denominations, with

doctrinal divisions existing in the Sunni majority between Sufi Barelvi Muslims and "conservative" Deobandis; and within doctrines, for example between the Sufi (Barelvi) followers of the Qadriya and Naqshbandi orders. Such diversity in religious belief and identification suggests that the future "study of Islamic communities … [must] involve a sociology of how religion interacts with other ethnic, cultural and political forces" (Halliday, 1997, p. 76) in order to give productive insight into the lives of British Muslims.

The socioeconomic status of these British Muslim communities has become "a highly controversial subject of discussion" due to an alleged "victim orientation" of the prevailing "deprivationist perspective" (Lewis, 1994, p. 22). British Muslims are, on the whole, "in a highly disadvantaged position in British society", with their socioeconomic status displaying "a strong 'class' and to a certain extent 'underclass' dimension" (Statham, 1999, p. 622). The main exception to this socioeconomic profile are East African Asians, a particularly successful group who enjoy a "higher educational and social status" (Lewis, 1994, p. 106; also see Alibhai-Brown, 2000).[2] Economic deprivation is particularly prevalent in the majority Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, where unemployment stood at 28.8 per cent at the time of the 1991 census (compared with 8.8 per cent for white communities)—a figure that can be only partly explained by the mass redundancies suffered across the manufacturing sector. An aggregating factor in this economic deprivation is no doubt the educational disadvantage experienced by the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities:

> While a third of all 16–24 year olds in 1988–1990 has GCE A-level or equivalent or higher qualification, only 18 per cent of Pakistanis and 5 per cent of Bangladeshis did. Moreover these two minorities were the only ones to be significantly out of line with the findings that overall 20 per cent of this age group had no qualification whatever. The proportions of Pakistani and Bangladeshi 16–24 year olds with no qualifications was 48 and 54 per cent respectively. (Modood, 1994, pp. 2–3, cited in Lewis, 1994, p. 23)

To date the British Muslim reaction to this deprivation has not "taken the form of demanding a clear and total stand on the whole of the existing order" (Rex, 1996, p. 228), but, rather, has produced specific and often localised disputes and campaigns, with "change" requested in order that "Muslim" opinions and values be recognised.

It should be recognised that the social world is not "a fixed and stable entity or set of relations, but one in a constant process of becoming" (Ferguson, 1998, p. 14), in which "[t]he new social order of the multicultural society is an emergent one which will result from the dialogue and conflict between cultures" (Rex, 1996, p. 29). Djait suggests that the role of Muslims in this dialogue should be to "expose the whole range of European experience, in depth, to other norms, other values, and perhaps other categories. This is the way to hammer out a universal that will not be utopian nor destructive but the outcome of creative synthesis" (Djait, 1985, p. 6, cited in Sardar, 1999, p. 65). In this way, the future "multiculture", as perhaps with all cultures, will be "made through change; … not defined by an essence which exists apart from change" (Modood, 1998, p. 382). To press for or to argue against change is always ideological, since it necessarily refutes, moderates, modifies or supports

> a society's implicit theory of what types of objects exist in their world (categorisation); of the way the world works (causation); and of the values to be assigned to objects and processes (general propositions or paradigms). These implicit beliefs constitute "common sense" which provides a normative base to discourse. (Fowler, 1996, pp. 10–11)

Any attempt to define, contain, or conversely to contest, social formations such as an identity, an ethnicity, a nation or nationality, etc. must therefore expose the ideological stake in change. The response of elite broadsheet newspapers to social challenges of this type forms a subject at least as important as the character of challenge itself, since such journalistic output is "simultaneously constitutive of [the] social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief" (Wodak, 1995, p. 208) of the educated, empowered and economically successful sections of society. Broadsheet newspapers, as examples of elite discourse (see Fradgley and Niebauer, 1995; Jucker, 1992; Sparks, 1999) therefore represent important sites for the (re)production and/or resistance of discourse on and around notions of "We-dom" and "They-dom" (Hartley, 1992). While overt racism, a regular feature of (particularly tabloid) newspaper reporting in the 1970s and 1980s, is seen far less regularly in the contemporary press (Allan, 1999; Searle, 1989; van Dijk, 1991), "the force of representations which draw upon concepts of 'normality' in order to give strength to negative representations", so prevalent in upmarket reporting, remain unscathed (Ferguson, 1998, p. 130). Hammond and Stirner (1997) argue that it is through such notions of "normality" and "cultural difference" that prejudicial (or racist) discourses are given a more acceptable gloss. Racism occurring in this way—as "inferential racism"—is "in many ways more insidious [than overt racism] because it is largely invisible even to those who formulate the world in its terms" (Hall, 1990, p. 13). Cottle (1998, 1999) suggests that such prejudicial and misrepresentative reporting of ethnic others may occur as the "natural" product of current social formations, and specifically the position of the press: "News output is generally produced collectively in accordance with a news policy and a shared journalistic understanding of the particular news form produced, its established political orientation, audience appeals and story selections and styles of presentation" (Cottle, 1999, p. 195). Accordingly, within a predominantly white society, served by predominantly white journalists (Ainley, 1998) working in the predominantly "white" profession of journalism (see Cottle, 1998), "such an approach [to the manufacture of news] will anticipate that the middle ground of white opinion and interests will be catered for while marginalising minority interests, voices and opinions" (Cottle, 1999, p. 196).

This research arises out of a desire to study empirically both the form and frequency of the marginalisation of British Muslim communities in broadsheet newspapers, and more specifically to analyse journalistic discourse that moves from marginalisation to more explicit exclusion strategies. Surprisingly little empirical research has been completed on newspaper representation of Muslims, still fewer of British Muslims, with the majority of work so far completed using selective, non-systematic anecdotal evidence to "illustrate" biases in media coverage (for critique of such approaches, see Halliday, 1999; and Poole, 1999, 2000). This article is informed by a discourse analytic methodology which views journalistic discourse as social practice, and discourse analysis as the

analysis of what people do with text and talk. To this end, the article aims at "analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control … [and] aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signally, constituted, legitimised, etc. by language use (or in discourse)" (Wodak, 1995, p. 204).

Theoretical Framework

The work of Luisa Martin-Rojo (1995) has been particularly useful in developing a framework for the analysis of negative representations. Drawing on the methods of critical linguistics and the discursive theory of Foucault, Martin-Rojo suggests that textual "exclusion is articulated on two axes: DIVIDING, that is, establishing the categories that will be opposed in the conflict—us, with several referents, vs. them … and REJECTING, that is, segregating, marginalising, creating a negative image" (1995, p. 50). This process can manifest itself in a number of ways, of course, with the definition of who constitutes "us" and who constitutes "them" being highly fluid, and with the relative value placed on the "two" positions being context dependent.

Taking "division" first then, recent work on the growth of "ethnic assertiveness" (Modood, 1990, 1997), multiculturalism (Alibhai-Brown, 1998, 2000; Bonnett, 1993; Hage, 1998; Werbner, 2000) and cultural hybridity (Werbner and Modood, 1997) has exposed the problematic nature of "naming" others. By whose terminology and by what criteria are others—and "selfs" (*sic*)—to be described? By race? Ethnicity? Nationality? Religion? Culture? Or some hybridised combination of all or some of them? A wealth of evidence collected from Muslim subjects of heterodox ethnicity and tradition and British upbringing has illustrated that "Islam" and "being Muslim" have central importance in their identity and in the way in which they identify themselves (Modood, 1990, 1997, 1998; Saeed et al., 1999; Statham, 1999; Vertovec, 1996; Zokaei, n.d.). The exact manner of that identification is neither universal nor static, however, as Saeed et al. (1999) have shown in their study of "post-British" identities in Scottish Pakistani-Muslim teenagers. Here, identities are shown to have an element of context dependency, that identity shifts according to personal and collective histories, but also that for 97 per cent of the sample group such shifts occur at a level above a core Muslim identification (ibid.). This emphasis on a core religious identity is problematic for both the rejectionist and the anti-racist, representing not only a "challenge to the anti-racist notion of a homogeneous Black voice" but also "a much broader challenge to British society" (Bonnett, 1993, p. 54). Centred as it initially was around the "Rushdie affair", the ethnic assertiveness of the British Muslim communities was "unsettling both [for] liberal complacencies and radical orthodoxies alike" (Cottle, 1991, p. 46), with mainstream (white) reactions characterised by a "sense of outrage at the idea that those Muslims who lived in Britain but whose national credentials were still in doubt were making demands on indigenous white society" (Gabriel, 1994, p. 26). Equally, for some perennialists the (re)assertion of Muslim identities conjured recalcitrant memories of "Moors at the doors", a proposed ahistorical enmity between "Islam" and "the West" and revamped "defence of the free world" style Cold War ideologies (for critique of these theories see Halliday, 1996, 1999). Little wonder then that the elevation of the previously marginalised Muslim and/or British Muslim identities have not gained much sup-

port from either the traditionally conservative or the liberal newspapers. The identification and representation of social actors is therefore significant to the current article.

Moving on to rejection, the second stage identified by Martin-Rojo (1995), bigoted representations of racial minorities, racial and cultural rejectionism, or what has recently been labelled "negative othering" (Riggins, 1997) has a long and well developed lineage in Britain. Bonnett (1993), for example, discussing the prejudice of white youths' representations of the 1958 London "race riots", notes that they "structured their rejectionist ideas around two moral dualisms which they used to divide 'us' from 'them': morality/immorality and order/disruption" (Bonnett, 1993, p. 19). Islam has not fared particularly well in this allocation of stereotypical characteristics. *The Economist* has stated for example that "Islam is per se fundamentalist" (*The Economist*, 4 April 1992, p. 63, cited in Leug, 1995, p. 12); the *Frankfurter Rundschau* reported a French survey that found that three out of four people questioned thought that the word "fanatical" best applied to Islam (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 7 December 1992, cited in Leug, 1995, p. 16); and Kamalipour (1998), also using word association tests, found that American students often "admitted that they could not really think of anything positive" to say about Muslims (Kamalipour, 1998, p. 2).

In addition to this allocation of timeless eternal attributes, "an assimilationist myth is proposed … that judges minorities' 'acceptability' in terms of their compatibility with a supposedly hard-working, law-abiding, family-loving white society" (Bonnett, 1993, p. 26). Hence, the supposedly "essential" characteristics of minorities act to automatically include or, more frequently, exclude them from "full integration". Following Hage (1998), I argue that these acts and others like them are best conceived "as nationalist practices: practices which assume, first, an image of a national space; secondly, an image of the nationalist himself or herself as master of this national space and, thirdly, an image of the 'ethnic/racial other' as a mere object within this space" (Hage, 1998, p. 28). In essence, they are based on a "white fantasy" regarding the rights and abilities of mainstream "white" society to regulate the parameters of British society, to include or exclude, and are as noticeable in "liberal" as they are in "conservative" newspapers (ibid.).

By this strategy new "tests" are devised which act to exclude Muslims both from the position "British", and also from the debate on what it is to be "culturally British". Two rejectionist strategies are used interchangeably in order that this exclusion be successful: first, Muslims are excluded from the position "British" by virtue of the "Britishness" they are perceived to lack; and second, Muslims are excluded from the position "British" by virtue of the "Islamicness" that they are perceived to have. This second rejectionist strategy obviously has feedback loops into the first, since simple identification with a religion should pose no prima-facie exclusion from being "British". Therefore, in order to function coherently as an exclusion strategy, Islam must be presupposed to be fundamentally non-British.

As suggested above, the process by which division and rejection occurs is complex and complementary, often appearing as a single act of representation as opposed to a dual process. After all, words are not benign but have a history and a politics (Cameron, 1996), particularly when applied to and upon the social world. This capacity to divide and reject merely through reference is clearly noticeable in the popular

perceptions of Islam cited above, where being "Muslim" has come to evoke not only notions of "Otherness" or of difference, but specifically the stereotypically negative notions of "Otherness" which place "Muslims" and therefore "Islam" both in opposition to and frequently as inferior to "Us British". Vertovec argues that this negative "Othering" of Muslims, has developed because "[t]he establishment of the Muslim population in the 'public sphere' has co-evolved with ideologies of multiculturalism and 'the politics of difference"'—ideologies that "implicitly tend to fix and 'essentialise' or stereotype cultural and communal identities" (Vertovec, 1996, p. 172). Essentialised notions of culture, combined with a preoccupation with what could at best be described as the massively underdefined spectre of "Islamic fundamentalism", "promulgate[s] an understanding by which there is such a thing as 'the Muslim community' which, further, must in essence be of the same nature as 'those fundamentalists' seen in North Africa and the Middle East" (Vertovec, 1996, pp. 172–73).

Journalism is at least as responsible for this reification and "fundamentalisation" of "Islam" as any other discourse. Social theories are (re)produced in the social world by the journalist, influencing audience attitudes, values and beliefs, principally through their reinforcement (Daniels, 1997; Deacon et al., 1999; Philo, 1999; Wilson and Gutierrez, 1995). It is towards the British broadsheet newspaper representation of British Muslims that we now turn.

Sample Newspapers

The sample under analysis is taken from a larger corpus of data, collected as part of a research project analysing the representation of Islam and Muslims in British broadsheet newspapers. The sample period covers four months (October 1997 to January 1998) and included all five British broadsheet daily newspapers (*Financial Times*, *The Independent*, *The Guardian*, *Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*) and two British broadsheet Sunday newspapers (*Sunday Independent*, *Sunday Times*) Over the four-month period, 2540 articles were collected which featured Islam or Muslim actors in prominent positions.[3]

A code book recording 108 variables was applied to these articles, coding among other things, the reports' physical characteristics (newspaper, size, format, pictures, etc.); topics (primary, secondary, tertiary, quaternary); citation and/or quotation of actors; the tone of article; and the presence of certain words and phrases. The variable "setting" coded whether the article was a "domestic" or "international" report, which in turn allowed for the separation of a subsample of "domestic" articles from the remaining "international" texts.[4] This enabled a much more focused analysis of the articles—from here on labelled the "domestic sample"—in which British Islam and/or British Muslims were reported.[5] It is towards an analysis of the domestic sample—first quantitative then qualitative—that we now turn.

Quantitative Results and Discussion

Absence from Articles

First, the portion of the whole data set which the domestic sample represents is surprisingly small, with the vast majority of sampled news articles being "international news": a remarkable 89.1 per cent ($n = 2264$) of recorded cases were international news, leaving the remaining 10.9 per cent ($n = 276$) to the domestic sample. In the light of other

Table 1. British Muslim actors in the domestic sample

Actor	Muslim : non-Muslim %(n)	British Muslim : non-British Muslim %(n)	British Muslim : non Muslim Briton %(n)
1	40(106) : 50.9(135)	50(53) : 50(53)	28.2(53) : 66.5(125)
2	37.3(94) : 56.7(143)	51.1(48) : 48.9(46)	26.2(48) : 70.5(129)
3	21.6(45) : 71.6(149)	53.3(24) : 46.7(21)	14.2(24) : 81.7(138)
4	18.9(24) : 74.0(94)	70.8(17) : 29.1(7)	16.3(17) : 80.8(84)

research on the representation of Muslims, this finding is not exceptional. Elizabeth Poole (1999, 2000), in a study that chose to analyse solely the representation of British Muslims in British newspapers, found that over the period 1993–97, of the 8075 "Muslim articles" published in *The Guardian* and *The Times*, only 1224 were about British Muslims (Poole, 2000, p. 4). This figure constituted only 15 per cent of the total. The domestic to international ratio during the time period of this study therefore represents a further drop on these previous findings, resulting in the images of Muslims in the sampled newspapers being predominantly "foreign".

Turning specifically to the presence of British Muslim sources, Table 1 presents some characteristics of cited "actors"[6] in order to illustrate the degree of British Muslim exclusion from the domestic sample. Each cell in Table 1 shows the percentage and frequency of: Muslim to non-Muslim actors; British Muslim to non-British Muslim actors; and British Muslim to non-Muslim British actors—across the first four actors cited in the news reports. Three features regarding the exclusion of British Muslims in the text of the domestic sample are observable from Table 1. Looking first at the "Muslim to non-Muslim" column, very few Muslim actors are included in news reporting about "Islam" or "Muslims", despite the recording criteria that had to be satisfied in order that an article be coded (see above). The backgrounding of Muslim actors increases further the later in the text the source is cited: Table 1 shows progressively less Muslims cited as primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary actors both numerically and proportionately.

Second, the domestic setting of the article provides no guarantee that the (few) Muslim actors who are cited will also be British. Table 1 indicates that if the first actor cited in a domestic news article is a Muslim, it is as likely that they will be non-British as it is that they will be British. Although the proportion of Muslims who are also British increases the lower down the article you go, such British Muslims also become less frequent and also, by virtue of the lower textual position, more backgrounded as they gain in the ratio with non-British Muslims.

Third, actors who are identified as being British are predominantly non-Muslim (66.5 per cent; $n = 125$), further compounding this backgrounding of British Muslim sources. The proportion of non-Muslim Britons increases still in secondary (70.5 per cent; $n = 129$) and tertiary sources (81.7 per cent; $n = 138$), and decreases slightly in the quaternary sources (80.8 per cent; $n = 84$). These three observations show the extent to which Muslims, and specifically British Muslims, are quantitatively excluded from the domestic reporting of Islam.

High Presence in Negative Contexts

An important and interesting aspect of “negativisation” is the use of words and phrases in co-location with the semantic domain of “Islam” and/or “Muslims”. During the coding process, the existence and textual location of 27 words and their synonyms were recorded.[7] The frequency with which these words occur in the domestic sample is interesting in itself, but when this is cross-tabulated with the variable “Is Islam presented as an influential factor?”, the results expose how applicable the word or phrase is deemed to be in articles in which Islam or being a Muslim is presented by the journalist as being “important”.[8]

As Table 2 indicates, negativity dominates the reporting of British Muslims. In 38.4 per cent ($n = 106$) of domestic articles, “violence or acts of violence” are referred to, increasing to a particularly disturbing 50.6 per cent ($n = 80$) of articles in which Islam is cited as being influential. This compares with a mere 9.4 per cent ($n = 26$) of domestic articles in which “peace or acts of peace” are mentioned, which increases only marginally to 12.0 per cent ($n = 19$) of articles in which Islam is cited as influential. “Fundamentalist/ism” and “Terrorist/ism” are predictably well represented, appearing in, respectively, 27.2 per cent ($n = 43$) and 23.4 per cent ($n = 37$) of articles in which Islam was cited as being influential, whilst being practically non-existent in articles in which it was not. “Heroism” (possible synonyms also recorded were “virtue”, “integrity”, “just”) has an inverse relationship with “Islamicness”, appearing in more articles—both numerically and proportionately—that did not cite Islam (15.3 per cent, $n = 18$) than in articles that did (10.8 per cent, $n = 17$). “Villainy” on the other hand was particularly well represented, appearing in 51.3 per cent ($n = 81$) of articles that cited Islam as being influential, compared with 32.2 per cent ($n = 38$) of articles that did not. The symbolic violence of this predominantly negative representation of British Islam is astounding, and works to further marginalise British Muslims from the predominantly white, non-Muslim communities.

Participants in News, Not Commentators on News

Quotation of British Muslim sources is another index of inclusion in journalistic discourse and also an indication of wider societal inclusion. “Actors” quoted in newspaper reports should be considered to be spokespeople, chosen by a speech community—journalist, newspaper, audience, society—for inclusion. As such, the “lack of media access by minorities is one of the most conspicuous properties of the symbolic dominance of white elites” (van Dijk, 1996, p. 92).

Tables 3 and 4 illustrate that British Muslims are systematically underrepresented as quoted sources in the sampled domestic articles. Table 3 shows that 31.1 per cent ($n = 37$) of the domestic articles’ quoted primary actors were Muslim, compared with 58.8 per cent ($n = 70$) who were non-Muslim. Further, Table 3 shows that if the primary actor was Muslim, they were less likely to be quoted than if they were non-Muslim: 34.9 per cent of Muslim primary actors were quoted ($n = 37$), compared with 51.9 per cent ($n = 70$) of non-Muslim primary actors. This shows that in news reporting that focuses on Islam and the actions of Muslims, Muslim actors—even those so central to the reported event that they are the first individual referred to—are considered to be less informed, authoritative and credible sources than non-Muslims. These findings are continued with the texts’ secondary actors.

Table 2. The negative context of reporting "Islam"

		Is Islam cited as a factor?					
		Yes		No		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Violence included?	Yes	80	50.6	26	22.0	106	38.4
	No	78	49.4	92	78.0	170	61.6
Total		158	100.0	118	100.0	276	100.0
Peace included?	Yes	19	12.0	7	5.9	26	9.4
	No	139	88.0	111	94.1	250	90.6
Total		158	100.0	118	100.0	276	100.0
Villainy included?	Yes	81	51.3	37	31.4	118	42.8
	No	77	48.7	81	68.6	158	57.2
Total		158	100.0	118	100.0	276	100.0
Heroism included?	Yes	17	10.8	18	15.3	35	12.7
	No	141	89.2	100	84.7	241	87.3
Total		158	100.0	118	100.0	276	100.0
Fundamentalist/ism	Yes	43	27.2	1	0.8	44	15.9
included?	No	115	72.8	117	99.2	232	84.1
Total		158	100.0	118	100.0	276	100.0
Terrorist/ism	Yes	37	23.4	4	3.4	41	14.9
included?	No	121	76.6	114	96.6	235	85.1
Total		158	100.0	118	100.0	276	100.0

Table 4 shows that only 22.2 per cent of quoted secondary actors are Muslim ($n = 18$), whilst 71.6 per cent are non-Muslim ($n = 58$). Moreover, Table 4 shows that non-Muslim secondary actors were twice as likely to be quoted as Muslim secondary actors: 40.6 per cent ($n = 58$) of non-Muslim secondary actors were quoted, compared with only 19.1 per cent ($n = 18$) of Muslim secondary actors. These patterns continue through the tertiary and quaternary sources.

The chi-square test, the standard statistical test for independence, was performed on the cross-tabulations above, and the relationship between the two variables in both Table 3 and Table 4 was found to be statistically highly significant: $p \leq 0.028$ for actor 1, decreasing further to $p \leq 0.003$ for actor 2. What this illustrates is that being Muslim decreases your chance of being quoted in Britain's broadsheet newspapers. If this were not enough, the already slim chance of a Muslim actor being quoted decreases still further the lower down in the article the Muslim actor is cited, where the correlation between being Muslim and being excluded is even more clear cut.

Qualitative Results and Discussion

Moving to the qualitative analysis of the domestic articles, it should be remembered that the voice of the Muslim Other "is made passive not only by those who want to eradicate it, but also by those who are happy to welcome it under some conditions they feel entitled to set" (Hage, 1998, p. 17). With this in mind, Table 5 aims at illustrating how "Islam" was represented across the five daily broadsheet newspapers in the domestic sample.

Table 5 illustrates that the sampled

Table 3. Is source 1 quoted? by variable Is source 1 Muslim?

			Is the actor Muslim?			
			Yes	No	Unknown	Total
Is the source quoted?	Yes	Count	37	70	12	119
		% within "Is the source quoted?"	31.1	58.8	10.1	100.0
		% within "Is the actor Muslim?"	34.9	51.9	50.0	44.9
	No	Count	69	65	12	146
		% within "Is the source quoted?"	47.3	44.5	8.2	100.0
		% within "Is the actor Muslim?"	65.1	48.1	50.0	55.1
Total		Count	106	135	24	265
		% within "Is the source quoted?"	40.0	50.9	9.1	100.0
		% within "Is the actor Muslim?"	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

newspapers predominantly represented Islam as being "separate" (66.2 per cent; $n = 88$), "inferior" (56.0 per cent; $n = 84$), and an "enemy" (58.3 per cent; $n = 49$), and presented "Islam vs. the West" as a "natural" state of affairs (69.4 per cent; $n = 84$).

There were differences between the newspapers, of course, particularly across the "enemy/partner" and "inferior/equal" binaries, with *The Independent* adopting the most open representation of Islam. In the majority of the articles, however, a split between "Islam" and "the West", "Muslim" and "Westerner" is presented to the reader, contrasting actors, characteristics, philosophies and political and/or religious views thought to represent these two camps. This is illustrated by the fact that all five of the newspapers predominantly presented Islam and/or Muslims as being "separate"—even *The Independent* chooses this representation in 52.3 per cent ($n = 23$) of articles that expressed a preference. Moreover this "separateness" is set, not in contrast to, but in direct opposition to "the West", as illustrated by the "naturalised" representation of the erroneous enmity between "Islam and the West". Again, *The Independent* adopts the most open representation, portraying "Islam vs. the West" to be a natural state of affairs in "only" 50.0 per cent ($n = 23$) of articles that expressed a preference.

This predominantly closed representation not only acts as an obvious exclusion strategy on the opinions of the British Muslims involved, but also serves to distance "Us" British, "Our" opinions, "Our" public domain from "Them" and "Theirs". The ways in which this is managed in the news reports will now be analysed.

Articles Based on a Proxy Split between British and Other

Within the broad approach of "division", there are articles where the split between "Muslim" and "Westerner" is made by proxy. The schema adopted is basic but global, and is based on a split between "British" and "non-British", the exact boundaries of which are never particularly well drawn—that would, of course, open them up to critique. The British Muslim communities are included within the "non-British" grouping through either wilful manipulation of evidence, generalisation or ignorance: the impossibility of either "white Muslim" or "non-white Englander" form central presuppositions of these texts.

A classic example of British Muslims being associated with an ill-defined category of "foreigner-other" is the article

Table 4. Is source 2 quoted? by variable Is source 2 Muslim?

			Is the actor Muslim?			
			Yes	No	Unknown	Total
Is the source quoted?	Yes	Count	18	58	5	81
		% within "Is the source quoted?"	22.2	71.6	6.2	100.0
		% within "Is the actor Muslim?"	19.1	40.6	33.3	32.1
	No	Count	76	85	10	171
		% within "Is the source quoted?"	44.4	49.7	5.8	100.0
		% within "Is the actor Muslim?"	80.9	59.4	66.7	67.9
Total		Count	94	143	15	252
		% within "Is the source quoted?"	37.3	56.7	6.0	100.0
		% within "Is the actor Muslim?"	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

"You've made us feel so welcome: in praise of Britain", written by Graham Turner (*Saturday Telegraph*, 17 January 1998). This news feature was based on a presupposed superiority of Britain, demarcating actors into "Us" and "Them" categories from the offset. The overheadline for example, states,

> Pride, gratitude and a sense of belonging typify the thousands of foreigners who have adopted Britain as their home. Their only complaint, amid all the compliments, is that the British themselves tend to run down their own country.

The prima-facie division of "Us" and "Them" is clearly evident in this short statement, with the first sentence identifying the actors in the article as "foreigners". This distinction is extended in the second sentence through the co-location of the noun phrase "the British" and the possessive pronoun "Their", which refers back to the "foreigners". This structuring of expression acts to exclude "Them" from the in-group "the British", since "They" are reported as referring to "Us" in the third person: "Their complaint about us …" This presupposed division is continued throughout the text, as illustrated in this short list of examples:

> We often take Britain for granted. They do not.

> I am from India, and between England and India there is no comparison. If you said the whole world could come to Britain, half of India would immediately climb on a train and come. This is the best country in the world.

> "You have to be born here to feel English, but I do feel British", [said] Saphie Ashtiany.

> I still see myself as slightly foreign, but whereas Germans are totally unteasable … I do now enjoy both teasing and being teased, just like the English. So maybe I've made it?

All of the actors referred to and/or quoted in the text were first-generation immigrants. In order of appearance, the "foreigners" in the article are referred to as coming from India, Egypt, Germany, Iran, Germany (again), USA, Egypt (again), Jamaica, India (again), Ireland, and Kenya, the only "English" voice being that of the journalist. It could therefore be said that the division between "Britain" and "foreigner" is simply a result of the fact that all the actors introduced are first-generation immigrants, all of whom talk about themselves in such a way. But the text is not that benign: it was written, and hence

Table 5. Broadsheet newspaper representation of Islam[9]

	Newspaper										Total	
	Financial Times		*The Guardian*		*The Independent*		*Daily Telegraph*		*The Times*			
	Count	Col %	Count	Col%	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col%	Count	Col %
Represented as												
Separate	3	75.0	27	69.2	23	52.3	17	70.8	18	81.8	88	66.2
Interacting	1	25.0	12	30.8	21	47.7	7	29.2	4	18.2	45	33.8
Total	4	100.0	39	100.0	44	100.0	24	100.0	22	100.0	133	100.0
Inferior			22	55.0	19	38.8	26	76.5	17	73.9	84	56.0
Equal	3	75.0	18	45.0	30	61.2	8	23.5	6	26.1	65	43.3
Superior	1	25.0									1	0.7
Total	4	100.0	40	100.0	49	100.0	34	100.0	23	100.0	150	100.0
Enemy			11	55.0	14	43.8	11	78.6	13	81.3	49	58.3
Partner	2	100.0	9	45.0	18	56.3	3	21.4	3	18.8	35	41.7
Total	2	100.0	20	100.0	32	100.0	14	100.0	16	100.0	84	100.0
“Islam vs. the west seems natural	2	66.7	25	71.4	23	50.0	22	91.7	12	92.3	84	69.4
“Islam vs. the west seems problematic	1	33.3	10	28.6	23	50.0	2	8.3	1	7.7	37	30.6
Total	3	100.0	35	100.0	46	100.0	24	100.0	13	100.0	121	100.0

its function lies, "in praise of Britain", and in order to achieve this Turner adopts a familiar strategic ritual of journalism, locating or concealing his truth claims in the words of the report's sources (see Tuchman, 1972). Although the newspaper is not directly "responsible" for the divisions presupposed by the report's sources, their inclusion in the article to the absence of any contesting claims signals their assumed pertinence to the "debate", and reveals the ideological commitment of the journalist. This ideological commitment is observable throughout the article. Take the last sentence of the article, for example:

> So, we have our faults, which are obvious, and we have made our mistakes, some of them terrible. We also, it seems, have our virtues, though our own dismal jimmies prefer not to recognise them. Is it very un-British to celebrate them occasionally?

Occurring after such extended self-congratulation, the idea that it is somehow "un-British" to recognise "our virtues" and "celebrate them occasionally" appears rather ridiculous. Further, the claim that "Our" British history is not celebrated does not stand up to even a cursory examination. In a final irony, this statement acts as the last (proxy) evidence of the "un-Britishness" of the actors presented, since "recognising and occasionally celebrating the virtues of Britain" is all that Graham Turner has allowed "Them" to do throughout the text.

The article also develops contrasts between Britain and "Islamic countries", with the latter of the two presented as inferior. This judgement of the lower status of "Islamic countries" is subservient to the primary function of the text—"In praise of Britain"—as opposed to the explicit condemnation of "Islamic countries". Accordingly the evidence supporting this judgement presents positive elements of "Our" national character—in short, "Britishness"—as opposed to foregrounding negative characteristics that "They" are supposed to possess. The "Iranian immigrant", Saphie Ashtiany, is included referring to the "superior British character" as an even more primordial "nature":

> I discovered that unspoken warmth and kindness is part of the British nature. There's also a strong anti-hysteric element in the national character. ... Living here has actually changed my character. I'd have been far more excitable if I had stayed in Iran.

Zaki Badawi is also quoted "in praise of Britain", but not before he is introduced in an uncharacteristically complementary way as "Dr Zaki Badawi, chairman of the Council of Imams and Mosques and perhaps Britain's most distinguished Muslim", adding credibility and authority to his words. His most prominent quote is cited below, numbered for ease of reference:

> [1] As a young man in Egypt, [2]I never thought that I'd end my life in Britain. I wanted with all my heart to get the British out. I thought "then we will have freedom". [3] Well, of course the British *are* out, but freedom did not arrive. [4] Sadly, the Muslim world has not yet learnt the tolerance which you have in abundance here. [5] Islam advocates it, but our people do not live up to that standard. (original emphasis)

In clause [1], Dr Badawi identifies himself as an Egyptian, who in clause [2] is shown to have had a dislike for Britain. This dislike is a result of the British "being in" Egypt and the lack of freedom associated with their presence. The details of this "presence" remain conspicuously absent from discussion.

This dislike for the British is shown to have been misguided, however, since, as clause [3] suggests, the freedom thought to have been prevented by the British presence in Egypt was still found to be lacking after "We" had left. This is explained by clause [4], where it is claimed that "the Muslim world" is a place lacking in "British tolerance", a deficit that is identified, in clause [5], as being a fault of "our" (Egyptian) Muslim people, contrary to the tolerance advocated by Islam.

To reiterate: the inclusion of sources in this article is illustrative of the newspaper's commitment to a certain interpretation of "Britain", "Britishness" and the comparative position of "Islam" and "Muslims". Quoting Zaki Badawi after introducing him as informed ("Dr"), authoritative ("chairman of the Council of Imams and Mosques") and "Britain's most distinguished Muslim" illustrates the "communion" between Badawi's criticisms and the pragmatic goal of both the text and newspaper. The vagueness of his criticisms adds to the general textual claim of British superiority. What is meant by "the Muslim world"? Is this geographically located, or does such a "world" extend, à la Orientalist methodology, to include all Muslims? Is the whole of the "Muslim world" meant to be intolerant, or just those who have the power to impose their will upon it? The ambiguity of Dr Badawi's statement and the criticism that it contains adds breadth to whom it refers, expanding concentrically to include "the Muslim world" and "our [Muslim] people", all the while conforming with the text's pragmatic goal: "praising Britain".

Articles Based on an Explicit Islam/West Bifurcation

Although the vast majority of articles in the sample are based on an implicit assumption of difference—either as above, by contrasting "British" and "non-British" actors and/or characteristics, or through an implicit contrast between "Islam" and "the West"—occasionally such a bifurcation is suggested explicitly in the text. This section aims at presenting the principle manifestations of this second schematic approach to domestic stories reporting Islam, and its implications for the representation of British Muslim communities.

Let us first consider an article from the liberal newspaper *The Independent*, entitled "May your God go with you" (*Saturday Independent Magazine*, 20 December 1997), which reported a high-level meeting between influential members and representatives of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The journalist, Paul Vallely, helpfully states that "many of the views which *we in the West* hold about *Islam* are mythical, outdated or simply ignorant" (my emphasis), but seems to be unaware that such a statement contiguously propagates of one of the central "myths" held about Islam: the assumption that the West is populated by "Us" non-Muslims and, by default, the East by "Them" Muslims.

Building on this false start, Vallely then presents the same stereotypical ideological conflict. On one side, "we in the West" are grounded in "[t]he offspring of the Enlightenment—science, capitalism, individualism and democracy". These constructs, he claims, are "a framework within which values can flourish, but … do not create those values." Opposing this framework, Vallely suggests, are

> contemporary Muslim fundamentalists, [who] react against the modernism of Western culture. … Muslims throughout the world feel humiliated by Western culture and, in particular, the economic, military power of the US, which is widely

> regarded throughout the Arab world as "the Great Satan".

The actors are thus identified, and the conflict itself presented as a battle for, or perhaps over, modernity: "the West" supporting "science, capitalism, individualism and democracy"; and the "Muslims throughout the world feel[ing] humiliated" by this "modernism".

That such a statement is a gross generalisation may have dawned on Vallely at this point, but, rather than retracting the statement, he appears to have felt it necessary to apply the argument to "the UK, [where] the revival of Islam has similar roots". In the UK, Vallely suggests, this "revival of Islam" is characterised by "young British Asians … reading the Koran not just with fresh eyes but against a background of comparative deprivation, exclusion, unemployment, low earnings and poor housing". Ignoring the fact that the growth of Islam is by no means isolated to young British Asians, this is as close as Vallely gets to a criticism of either "the West" or of a modernity built on the "valueless" frameworks of capitalism and individualism. Indeed, he describes the communities' reaction to such "alienation and racism" as a "widespread feeling of paranoia". This acts to background, or denies, the well-founded claims to disadvantage and ill treatment referred to only three sentences before, with "paranoia" conjuring associations of delusional mental illness.

The division between "moderate" and "extremist" Muslim is a recurrent theme in the sample, not only displayed in representations of "Islam" or "Muslims", but also present in representations of symbols, artefacts and characteristics considered particularly or thoroughly "Islamic". The manner in which the broadsheet press approached the *hijab*, or veil, in the sampled coverage leads me to believe that it is thought of in such a manner: as Islam. The veil was mentioned in 7.7 per cent ($n=$ 12) of domestic articles, occurring across the sample in *The Guardian* ($n=$ 3), *The Independent* ($n=$ 4) and the *Daily Telegraph* ($n=$ 5). In each of these 12 articles, "Islam" was cited as an influential factor, a finding that was perhaps to have been expected: the veil is an enduring image of the "Islamicness" of Muslim women and therefore "Islam"—as religion, culture, tradition, or explanation—is necessarily connoted by the *hijab*. The fact that the *hijab* was mentioned in only 7.7 per cent ($n=12$) of all the domestic stories that mentioned Islam as a factor does not negate the intimate connection drawn between the veil and Islam in the news, but rather highlights its rhetorical use in the argumentation of the texts in which it is included.

Hage (1998) suggests that both the political right and left see the *hijab*—as both cultural item and a symbol of Islamic culture and religion—as "a harmful presence that affects their own well-being" (Hage, 1998, p. 37). The exact manifestation of this "harmful presence" differs according to the politics of the individual and in this case the newspaper. Thus in order to clarify these differences, I feel it necessary to quote Hage (1998) at length:

> scarves [can be] considered an unacceptable form of subjugating women or, as interviewee B put it: "It pains me to live in a society where such backward forms of subjugation are exhibited." In a more complex manner, to European women, scarves can represent an intolerable, because too visible, mode of subjugation that only serves to render their own subjugation more visible. Because nationalists follow a "one nation one patriarchy" motto, the veil can also mean the subjugation of women to a non-na-

> tional patriarchy. The desire to remove it is the desire to ensure that all women within the nation are subjugated to the dominant national patriarchal order. Finally, some non-Muslim migrant women, especially those who have a consciousness of themselves as Third World-looking, express a hatred of the scarf by fear of association. Here it is perceived as a migrant marker that some migrant women see as negatively affecting all migrant women by labelling them as backward. (Hage, 1998, p. 251)

With a dichotomy established between the veil and modernity, it becomes possible for any political ideologue to imbue the veil with whatever characteristics are felt necessary to differentiate "Them" from "Us", and then—through the adoption of the Orientalist methodology of gross generalisation—to "Islam" as a whole. The coverage of the *hijab* in the domestic sample falls well within these conceptions, each story in which the veil is mentioned adopting one or more of these schema.[10]

Sometimes division is as far as the text goes—a simple "Muslim" and "British" split—leaving the possibility of rejection strategies based on this bifurcated allegiance solely with the audience. On other occasions, the bifurcation is followed by either clearer implication or else explicit identification of the "characteristics" that members of the two "civilisations" are supposed to hold. If we look first at the headlines and leaders of the 12 domestic articles that mention the veil, its synonyms, or cultural variations on the *hijab*, the centralised status of Islam is clearly noticeable in six of them overheadlines and/or leaders are marked in italics throughout):

> Straw rejects call for law to protect British Muslims. (*The Independent*, 23 October 1997)
> Taking the veil (twice) (*Daily Telegraph*, 5 December 1997)
> Veil and Sails: Navy sets out to recruit Muslim women. (*The Independent*, 6 January 1998)
> Muslim schools get grants. (*The Guardian*, 10 January 1998)
> Job victory for Mecca pilgrim (*The Independent*, 15 January 1998)

Three others emphasise problematic relations between "Muslim" and "non-Muslim" Britain, at the same time as using Islam as a signifier of differentiation:

> Pronouncing a fatwa on extremes (*The Guardian*, 20 November 1997)
> Veil protest (The Guardian, 3 December 1997)
> Bus driver turns away veiled Muslim. (*Daily Telegraph*, 3 December 1997)

Two others choose a reading of relations between "Muslim" and "non-Muslim" Britain which moves beyond either differentiation or problematic (inter)relations, to emphasise a supposed exclusivity or opposition between the communities:

> Islamic vs. Secular (The Independent, 25 October 1997)
> [overhead] *The doctrine of multiculturalism has gained a firm hold in the educational establishment. Graham Turner hears from its champions and from those observers who feel it is a worrying threat to the country's mainstream culture*. How will they know who they are? (*Daily Telegraph*, 12 December 1997)

Whilst in only one article was the exact nature of the subject matter unclear from reading the headline alone:

> It's fashion, but who are the victims? (*Daily Telegraph*, 2 October 1997)

The Islamicness of the actors in the news articles is clear from the way the hijab is used in the body of news text:

> an Irish-born teacher … was dressed in full Pakistani Muslim gear—shalwar kameez plus green dupatta, or headscarf (*Daily Telegraph*, 12 December 1997)

> In the Turkish navy, female ratings do not wear a veil. Their uniforms are similar to those of Western servicewomen. (*The Independent*, 6 January 1998)

> The school, which has 180 pupils, operates a strict Islamic code … Girls wear the Islamic headscarf, the hijab, and school stops for midday and afternoon prayers. (*The Guardian*, 10 January 1998)

In the *Guardian* article "Muslim schools get grants" (10 January 1998) quoted above, for example, the "strict Islamic code" alleged to be in place in the school is distilled and represented by the newspaper in the form of two simple images: the *hijab* and prayer. The use of the adjective "strict" in connection with the *hijab* as a manifestation of "Islamic code" ties its representation with enforcement and the subjugation of women. This approach also informs the representation of the *hijab* in *The Independent*, where three very young Muslim girls pictured wearing headscarves are described as "Girls in a British Islamic school, learning 'solid morals with discipline and respect'" ("Islamic vs. Secular", *The Independent*, 25 October 1997).

Finally, a stylistic register of repression and constraint is also drawn upon by the *Telegraph* in "It's fashion, but who are the victims?" The report, describing a catwalk show by fashion designer Hussein Chalayan, focuses upon the "bondage frocks" worn by the models, which were in fact stylised and in some cases surreal interpretations of female Muslim dress. The article adopts a more ridiculing or sneering tone than in the two liberal newspapers, describing the women as "stalking down the catwalk with bags on their heads", and dressed in "what looked like *chadors*, the black cloaks in which some of the Islamic faith protect the modesty of their women". Here, in a complex combination of image and inference, the journalist makes rhetorical use of the Muslim veil, comparing the fashion on display to the *chador* in order to criticise the designer's work: 'Bags, how ghastly!' This in effect transforms the alleged "Islamicness" of the clothing into a form of derogation.

From this, I suggest that the *hijab*, in image and concept, is used by journalists as an indication of the Islamicness of the actors in a news article. Wherever the *hijab* is mentioned in these texts, the author is specifically attempting to draw the readers' attention to "Islam", using the religion as a explanatory factor in the agency or motivation of the actors in the article. This "Islamic agency" is then presented in contrast, or sometimes opposition, to the supposed normative "Western/ised agency". This does not equate to homogeneity in representing "Islam" across the newspapers, however, since as Hage (1998) suggests above, the *hijab* and therefore the connoted "Islam" are differentially perceived by the newspapers. Rather, the *hijab* is used by the newspaper to symbolise their particular "Islam":

> For the right, Islam represents barbarism; for the left, medieval theocracy; for the centre, a kind of distasteful exoticism. In all camps, however, there is agreement that even though little enough is known about the Islamic world, there is not much to be approved of there. (Said, 1997, p. lv)

Conclusions

From the evidence presented, it appears that the ideal "multicultural" phase of news reporting, suggested by Wilson and Gutierrez (1995), is some way off in the reporting British Muslim communities. A fully inclusive multiculturalism is more than the "saris, samosas and steel bands" (Massey, 1991, p. 13) tokenism illustrated in the pages of the press. It is more than attending an annual *Mela*, buying the latest CD by Nitin Sawhney or Talvin Singh or praising the exciting expansion of literature (Alibhai-Brown, 1998).

What full or "critical multiculturalism" (Werbner, 2000, p. 154) concerns is the introduction, debate and in some cases the contestation of the values of the "public sphere" (Alibhai-Brown, 1998, p. 122). Critical multiculturalism is "a mode of dissent adopted by excluded or marginalised minorities to attack old paradigms and desanctify tabooed discourses" (Werbner, 2000, p. 154), and, as stated in the introduction, such debates around continuity and change are always ideological. Britons *qua* Britons, regardless of background, denomination and identity, have a right to be included and heard in this debate as opposed to merely being "tolerated". To judge British broadsheet newspapers simply by their output, their reporting of the British Muslim communities is not written with such an inclusive goal in mind.

I have attempted to show that British Muslims are predominantly excluded from British broadsheet coverage; when they are included, it is in predominantly negative contexts. Further, British Muslim opinions are either not quoted, or else are quoted in such a way as to contrast with, or exclude them from, the position "British". The coverage of British Muslims is written from a perspective in which the fantasy of "white" superiority is presupposed—a supposition that excludes "Others" from a position in the debate.

Once this is acknowledged, the possibility of branding these claims as racial or more specifically racist representations of British Muslims, and of sociologically dismissing them as essentialisation, simplification, false or ideological (Hage, 1998, p. 31), becomes particularly tempting. This I regard as inadequate, since it elides the very practical functions of such rejectionist discourse, regardless of its truth status. Exclusionary and rejectionist strategies such as those analysed in this paper "have to be understood in the same way as any other practical categories of thought, as "classification(s) subordinate to a practical function"' (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 220). By this framework, the rejectionist discourse in the broadsheet press should be viewed as part of a "management paradigm" (Blommaert and Verschueren, 1998), or as "practices of managing space" (Hage, 1998, p. 38)—the "space" in question being the "national" space, and the managers being the "white" majority, as represented by the elite discourse of broadsheet newspapers. What the increasingly conspicuous presence of the British Muslim communities therefore represents within this "discourse of spatial management" is a disruption of the "imagined privileged relation between the 'race', 'ethnicity' or 'culture' [of the "white" majority] and the national space conceived as its own" (ibid.).

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Notes

1 The term “British Muslim” is the preferred nominal identification throughout the article. While I acknowledge the term is not ideal—and may even misrepresent the self-ascribed identification of some Muslims living in Britain—it is employed as an indication of “a form of complex Britishness” emphasised in Britain by Muslims who “are not so much seeking civil rights against a hegemonic nationality as attempting to politically negotiate a place in an all-inclusive nationality” (Modood, 1998, p. 389). It is intended to denote “a movement of inclusion (at least from the side of those excluded)” (ibid.) which recognises individual, collective and national identification along associational and acculturative—as opposed to dissociative or assimilative—lines (see Statham, 1999).

2 As an interesting aside, Modood (1998) has shown that for East African Asians, “their job [is] as important an item of self description as any other” (p. 384), illustrating a site of diversity which is even more class dependent than other differences in British Muslim identity.

3 For the purposes of the study, a “prominent position” was taken to mean that the article featured Islam or Muslim actors in the headline or either of the first two paragraphs of the text or else had a whole paragraph dedicated to them lower in the article. This method was intended to exclude passing references.

4 This separation was performed using the data set in the statistics programme SPSS. During coding, the variable “setting” recorded whether the coded article was located in a “domestic” or “international” setting. Using the “select cases£ function in SPSS, it was possible to isolate the articles that were coded as “domestic”.

5 By choosing the “setting” variable to isolate the domestic sample, the articles in which British Muslims were quoted in relation to international events were necessarily excluded from analysis. But, since the frequency of these articles was so small, constituting only 0.39 per cent ($n = 10$) of the whole sample ($n = 2540$), the effect of this exclusion was considered negligible.

6 “Actor” is used here to denote all individuals and groups referenced and/or quoted in the sampled articles. The relationship of the individual/group to the reported event was also coded—as “actor”; “minor actor”; “commentator”; “victim”; etc.—but such findings are irrelevant to the current discussion, which focuses purely on the differential “inclusion” of Muslim and non-Muslim actors. Table 1 gives the results for actors 1–4, who were quite simply the first four individuals/groups cited in the text.

7 These included words such as: “violence” (and/or “acts of violence”), “terrorist/ism”, “fundamentalist/ism,” “villainy”, and their possible antonyms (in order: “peace”, “ambassador/emissary”, “liberal/moderate”, “heroism/virtue”); Arabic words such as *jihad*, *fatwa*, *Sharia* and *hijab*; and less incendiary terms such as “human rights”, “Westernised”, and “Islamophobia”.

8 As the tables indicate, Islam is cited as being a factor in 57.2 per cent of cases ($n = 158$), and is therefore not considered influential in the remaining 42.8 per cent of cases ($n = 118$). If the existence of the Recorded Words and their Synonyms (RWSs) were independent of whether Islam were cited as a factor, then the row percentages recording the presence of an RWS and the row percentages recording its absence would be identical to the overall percentages given above.

9 The *Financial Times* article representing Islam as “superior” reported the 1997 Conservative Party conference, at which the Saudi approach to capital punishment was praised. Phillip Davies, the Conservative representative for the Colne Valley, was quoted as saying that “the crime rate in Saudi Arabia is a fraction of ours here” (“Cook attacked on Saudi crime move”, 9 October 1997).

10 This view of the veil as a harmful presence is not only observable in “Western” journalists. During an interview, for example, a female Turkish-Muslim journalist appeared to associate Islam and “backwardness”, repeatedly presenting a dichotomy between the veil, as representation of Islam, and modernity: I mean, we are all very modern, we are quite educated, … we are, you know, mostly very educated people, especially young generation, we are quite modern as well, but our religion is Islam.

I am educated in this country, I am quite modern but I am quite religious as well.

I am quite modern, I don’t cover my head.

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