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Introduction

Liberal triumphalism now seems a distant memory, from a gilded age, as the seemingly inevitable march of ordained history has shuddered into contact with the stubborn reality of a complex world. While sounding in a different key, the underlying melodies would be as familiar to Kant, Marx, or TH Marshall as they are to an audience from the present day: virulent nationalism, state power, geopolitical posturing, ethnic conflict, ideological exertion, economic division. So too with the accompanying counterpoint: solidarity, human rights, cosmopolitanism, universalism, social consciousness, internationalism. As Europe and North America are wracked with authoritarian statism and nationalist fervour – poised against the equally charged rebuttals of global sentiment and transnational citizenship – we are, at the very least, confronted with the decline of Western liberal teleology to the place that it has always truly inhabited: the mundane, less certain level of messy dialogue, conversation, and factional conflict.

Minority ethnic and religious communities have been central to this ongoing debate, with religious pluralism in particular often a fierce battleground for competing views and ideologies. Inevitably bound up with the project of modernity, minority communities have posed a challenge, politically, to the stability of the hyphenated nation-state and, intellectually, to the still-lingering dominance of methodological nationalism (Beck, 2012). A fundamental Durkheimian dilemma remains largely unchanged: how to understand national solidarities, or social coherence, in an era of pluralism and diversity. Responses to this have ranged from liberal exhortations to recognise, protect, or promote minority communities (Taylor, 1994; Habermas, 1998; Modood, 2013) through to populist and ethnically-conceived forms of right-wing nationalism. Crucially though, religious and ethnic minorities are often understood as a dilemma to be *addressed* by Western political projects, rather than as an active or dynamic voice *within* these debates. The question has therefore been correspondingly framed as, alternately, (1) how Western modernity might be modified to accommodate minorities, (2) how these groups are assimilated, incorporated or hyphenated, (3) or, indeed, how they might be excluded in some fashion. Less evident is an emphasis on the ways in which ethnic and religious minorities can become sited as participants at the vanguard of a wider political and social imaginary.

Religious pluralism is a key feature within these debates and assumptions. It is a common, if often misconceived, claim that minority immigrant communities in Europe and North America – particularly Muslim communities (Kundnani, 2007) – can fail to respect a secular tradition of religious pluralism. Such a view, for example, was articulated by UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, in 2011 with a call for 'muscular

liberalism' – apparently a challenge to, amongst other things, the 'intolerance' and 'religious hatred' expressed by certain sections of society (i.e., Muslims). Other perspectives, such as those discussed by Casanova (2009), focus on the role of the state in managing and promoting religious pluralism, in order to provide for the welfare of immigrant communities. Again, with both of these views, there is an assumption that Western nation states must somehow adapt to or deal with the 'issue' of religious pluralism *amongst* or *for* minority communities. Missing from these debates, most often, is a concern for the way in which these communities might actively shape wider understandings and forms of religious pluralism.

Muslim minority communities in North America and Europe – all of which are themselves internally diverse (e.g., ethnically, linguistically, religiously etc) – are emblematic of this claim. A spectrum of public opinion ranges from those castigating Muslim minorities as incompatible with Western norms and values (illiberal, unpatriotic, patriarchal etc.) through to apologies that instead emphasise these very same features as part of a visible Muslim embeddedness (diverse, integrated, plural etc.). These claims work from a similar premise: a 'matching up' between pre-existing Western political/philosophical paradigms, on the one hand, and Muslim *émigrés*, on the other. Liberal democratic states might be shaped or altered by such contact, but again this is often understood in a reactive way – as a *response* to the presence of Muslim minorities, rather than through Muslim agency *per se*. In this chapter, I put forward a counterview: that Muslim minorities can be unique *interlocutors* within an unfolding debate concerning the nature of liberal democratic nation states in an era marked by the pressures and contours of globalisation.

In order to examine this claim, I focus on the re-emergence in more recent academic literature (for a summary see Rovisco and Nowicka, 2011) of both normative and theoretical cosmopolitanism – that is, of cosmopolitanism as an everyday, lived experience for many, but also as an analytical frame for understanding certain tendencies in the social world. The choice of this political/philosophical tradition is analytically deliberate. Typically located in the genesis of European Enlightenment, cosmopolitanism has always existed as the ambiguous and symbiotic 'other' of statist nationalism – whether as the 'dark imaginary' of a blood and soil *völkisch* (Delanty, 2009) or as the political articulation of a humanitarian alternative – primal urges that no doubt reverberate today. Similarly, the 'cosmopolitan turn' in academic literature (Robbins, 2006) has emphasised the complex and often blurred theoretical links between different forms of nationalism and cosmopolitanism (Cheah and Robbins, 1998). This has included a call by Ulrich Beck for sociologists to equip themselves with a new methodological paradigm for the 'age of cosmopolitanization' (Beck, 2012).

Grounded in this context, then, I am interested here in the ways through which Muslim minority communities in Europe and North America can be *actively* bound together with this reinscription of cosmopolitanism. The aim is *not* simply to analyse Muslim minorities as subject to the forces of an emergent cosmopolitan age (though they are). Nor, as a

corollary, to merely apply a new methodological cosmopolitanism (though we can). Rather, I wish to consider the unique contribution that Muslims are making to an evolving debate concerning the cosmopolitanization of Western liberal democracies. As the tussle between reenergised state nationalism and more cosmopolitan tendencies continues to hold centre stage, it is salient to examine the unique impact that Muslims might have on these wider tectonic movements.

In this chapter I sketch out a theory of *Islamic cosmopolitanism*. The term has several component parts and I apply these as a framework of analysis to Muslim minority communities in Europe and North America. I have no wish to overgeneralise – it is important to recognise the varied nature of Muslim minorities, as well as the range of state responses to this diversity (e.g., French republicanism is hardly comparable to the United States on matters of religion). I instead highlight certain voices that more often than not belong to a younger and increasingly professionalised Muslim elite in the West. There are of course countervailing, anti-plural voices among Muslim minority communities, but my focus is on an emergent generation of Muslims, such as those identified by polling company Ipsos MORI (2018), who, while equally if not more religious than the preceding generation, are nonetheless more liberal, more educated and more confident in their national and religious identities.

On a simple level, the term, Islamic cosmopolitanism, captures the cosmopolitan nature and tendencies of these younger Muslims, located as they often are at the interstices of Western, non-Western, and Islamic civilizational amity. They possess the post-colonial, post-national liminality often associated with settled, yet transnational, ‘migrant’ communities. Yet more specifically, there is a ‘rooted’ characteristic to this form of cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 1998; 2007; Cohen, 1992), whereby the sentiments and values of belonging radiate out *from within* group membership, *as Muslim minorities*, to inform a broader ethical horizon. As I will argue in this chapter, the post-national (i.e., global/universal) *and* rooted (i.e., national/local) nature of Islamic cosmopolitanism generates a hermeneutic transformation that is underpinned by cosmopolitan virtues of irony, reflexivity, scepticism, care for others, and hybridization (Turner, 2002).

In the second part of the chapter I use two case studies to explore this claim: (i) public religion and television advertising in Britain, and (ii) the ‘Muslim ban’ and American exceptionalism in the United States. These examples recognise that Islamic cosmopolitanism is not simply an intellectual project amongst elites, but is instead a form of living, breathing religion (Desing *et al*, 2016). Ultimately, my argument hinges on the way in which Muslim minorities, as national citizens, are engaged in wider public debates that will inform the nature of religious pluralism within Western liberal democratic societies. Islamic cosmopolitanism is one impulse within a diverse array of perspectives among Muslims. However, I argue that it is a growing sentiment among Muslim elites, and that it will have profound implications as Muslims continue to become both demographically and socially more significant (Pew Research Center, 2018). As I

argue in the concluding section, Islamic cosmopolitanism is in many respects a form of religious pluralism. Using Diana Eck's typology of religious pluralism (Eck, 2006), I claim that the cosmopolitan turn amongst young Muslims contains the hallmarks of a commitment to religious pluralism. Islamic cosmopolitanism is not simply a passive tolerance of a multi-faith reality, nor just an active defence of religious and cultural diversity in Europe and North America, but it draws from an Islamic/Muslim perspective to argue for a deeper engagement with other faiths, cultures and life worlds. Given the nativism and widespread turn against religious diversity in some sections of European and American society (Kisi, 2017) – with all the implications that this carries for wider democratic, political and liberal norms – it is significant that Muslims are in many respects at the forefront of these debates. Given the rise in prominence of a new generation of educated and creative young Muslims (Hamid, 2016) the impact of these tendencies on religious pluralism in the United States and Europe will perhaps only continue to grow in significance.

Islamic cosmopolitanism: post-national, rooted, and hermeneutic

Cosmopolitanism is not reducible to either globalisation or pluralism. As a concept, theory or disposition – whether moral, political, or cultural – it possesses unique features that endow it with analytical distinctiveness beyond the brute reality of global connectedness. A normative reading of political philosophy might identify cosmopolitan ideas that range from an expanding Greek polis in the ancient world, or the diversity of medieval Islamic caliphates, through to Kantian world peace republicanism and more contemporary advocates of transnational governance or a global commonwealth (e.g., Archibugi, 1995; Held, 1995). In contrast, my arguments are based less on the notion of cosmopolitanism as a political ideal, but rather, following Delanty's notion of 'critical cosmopolitanism', as a 'cosmopolitan imagination' and social process that 'occurs when and wherever new relations between Self, Other, and World develop in moments of openness' (Delanty, 2009: 52-53). Globalisation has thus created the conditions required to enable the flourishing of cosmopolitanism – to encourage these new relations – but the cosmopolitan should not be reduced to a vagrant form of global citizenship, decoupled from local or communal belonging. Rather, I understand cosmopolitanism as a *radial outlook*, with expanding and overlapping moral responsibilities (Nussbaum, 1996) that enable critical exchange and self-transformation through dialogic deliberation (Habermas, 1996; 1998). Cosmopolitanism, as a disposition and set of relations, is therefore always sited and contextual. While it might gaze outward, it is constructed from whatever social and cultural resources lie at hand (Appiah, 1998).

Through Islamic cosmopolitanism, then, I take this theoretical premise and examine the various cosmopolitan outlooks contained within the sited and contextual nature of Muslim belonging in Europe and North America. Islamic cosmopolitanism points to the ambiguity of Muslim minority experience, whereby an Islamic ethical worldview is articulated through 'democratic iterations' (Benhabib, 2008) that dialogically synthesise

simultaneous membership within and between liberal democracies, national imaginaries, and a global Muslim community. There are three features to Islamic cosmopolitanism that I now highlight in turn: post-national, rooted, and hermeneutic.

Islamic cosmopolitanism as post-national

The London-based Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC), founded in 1997 following the Bosnian War, is an international advocacy organisation that campaigns on issues relating to war crimes, political persecution, and discrimination against Muslims. It is in one sense a typical Muslim advocacy group. It provides Quranic justification as part of its mission statement (Quran, 4:75)¹ and is centrally concerned with abuses of state power against Muslims. Typical campaigns include advocacy for Muslims in conflict zones, and against Islamophobia and authoritarian state security policies in North America and Europe. Yet the principle ethical framework of IHRC is one that is structured through universal human rights. This includes public language drawn from the UN – campaigning for justice for all regardless of race, nationality, politics or religion – and a desire to work collaboratively with Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This ethical framework, while emanating from a Muslim positionality, has seen the IHRC adopt strong critical positions against Muslim-majority states, from Saudi Arabia to Egypt, as well as speaking on wider issues, such as against healthcare privatisation in the UK, or discrimination against other religious minorities in Germany. Critically, the work of IHRC can only successfully advocate for the protection of Muslims from state power by appealing to – and therefore strengthening – universal human rights that continue to help carve out a post-national arena of ethical claims.

A defining feature of cosmopolitanism has always been the way in which it can problematise the nation – or at the very least the territorial state – and with this a cognate set of implications for global citizenship or extra-territorial community. This can be manifested in different ways, from forms of flexible transnational citizenship (Ong, 1999), to broader post-national forms of membership (Smith, 2007), or new regional and supra-national polities (Stevenson, 2006). There are, then, stronger and weaker conceptions of the post-national. While it is unlikely that the analytic and political force of the nation state will falter for quite some time – and it certainly appears to have been reenergised in recent years – there is an urgency in the need to more properly think through forms of membership and social activity that sit beyond the confines of the nation. Yet such phenomena are only cosmopolitan – rather than simply global or transnational – to the extent that they generate new imaginaries based on openness and critical dialogue. In relation to Islamic cosmopolitanism, this happens most visibly through the notion of ummatic consciousness.

¹ “And what reason have you that you should not fight in the way of Allah and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, (of) those who say: Our Lord! cause us to go forth from this town, whose people are oppressors, and give us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper.” [Qur’an 4:75]. Citation taken from www.ihrc.org.uk [accessed 12.01.18]

Ummatic consciousness has developed from earlier historical conceptions, including as a community of believers and as a political grouping, through to a more diffuse global Muslim solidarity. Of course, this can be expressed in a number of very different ways – the *umma* of violent fundamentalists is hardly comparable to the ummatic fraternity of Sufi *tariqats* (school or order) – so the concept does not necessarily contain cosmopolitan (or even post-national) characteristics. Yet, when looking at softer and more open manifestations, ‘this consciousness first and foremost creates an imagination of an Islamic community transcending specific boundaries and borders’ (Bowen, 2004: 882). As a post-national tendency, then, the notion of a universal Islamic community can generate *idealised* bonds of loyalty and responsibility to all Muslims, everywhere, regardless of national culture or state citizenship (such idealism can of course still sit alongside sectarian tensions, not least the Sunni/Shia divide) This sentiment, which is a familiar and highly visible part of the arguments deployed by Muslims in relation to a broader geopolitical context, is in part responsible for propelling Muslims in North America and Europe into a critical engagement with the struggles of Muslims elsewhere, such as the Palestinians or the Rohingya.

By itself, ummatic consciousness is not necessarily a type of cosmopolitanism – it is a globally-conceived form of communal membership, with deep roots that stretch back to the early Muslim community. Yet post-national cosmopolitan dimensions are evident in the way in which Muslims can articulate this responsibility through Islamic values and tenants of civility (Salvatore, 2016), which are then developed into a broader language of universal human rights. This ethical framework is inevitably extended by some Muslims to encompass the broader expanse of (non-Muslim) human suffering, from natural disasters and ecological devastation, through to violent conflict or political persecution. In this sense, Muslims gather the resources at hand – an Islamic ethic and a global doctrine of human rights – to develop a cosmopolitan impulse that radiates outward from a sense of ummatic fraternity to the whole of humanity.

This sentiment has particular force when developed through transnational Muslim institutions working at the leading edge of public religion in North America and Europe. Flourishing from the increased social and cultural capital of Muslim minority communities – driven by the impetus of a professional Muslim elite – these institutions have developed and grown in influence since the late 1990s. They include charities, educational and research institutes, political pressure groups and humanitarian organisations – institutions that have become a dynamic and sophisticated part of civil society in Western liberal democracies. Of particular note here is the political and ethical grounding which informs these institutions, for they creatively combine dispositions that radiate out from an ummatic consciousness: Muslim positionality and advocacy, on the one hand, structured by an Islamic ethical framework and language of global human rights, on the other.

Islamic cosmopolitanism as rooted

British Muslim TV (BMTV) was launched in 2014 with the aim of providing news, entertainment and lifestyle culture for a British Muslim audience. Funded by Adeem Younis – the founder of the successful and lucrative Muslim marriage service, SingleMuslim.com – and linked to the increasingly dominant Muslim charity, Penny Appeal (another venture by multi-millionaire Younis), BMTV self-consciously explores the diversity of Muslim experience across the world through the lens of an English-speaking, British Muslim perspective. Documentaries, chat shows, and reality television about Muslim life in Britain are interwoven with programmes concerning a global arc of Muslim diversity, ranging from music and halal cooking to international political issues, religious pedagogy and Islamic storytelling. BMTV holds in creative tension a local and patriotic form of Muslimness, through a constant reaffirmation of Muslim belonging and loyalty in Britain alongside a wider attachment to a Muslim fraternity that stretches from Indonesia through to the United States. Through this positionality, then, a *rooted* sense of Britishness is celebrated as a unique facet of wider Muslim – and indeed human – global culture. As I explain, it is precisely through unique national experiences and attachments, such as this, that a more far reaching liberal defence of difference can be developed.

While our everyday understanding of cosmopolitanism originated in a grander vision of Kantian universalism – of universal human rights and post-national world governance – it is in the gritty reality of a post-Soviet resurgent nationalism that Cohen opened up the discursive space of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Cohen, 1992). As geopolitical blocs began to visibly fragment during the early 1990s – with national differences surging beneath the liberalising blanket of global marketisation – Cohen challenged the assumption (on both sides of the divide) that cosmopolitanism and nationalism were somehow incompatible. Rather, national citizens, as both cultural and legal actors, are capable of transcending *nationalism as a form of parochialism*. With examples that include Kurdish and Jewish nation state claims, Cohen argues that nationalism can be a conduit to the thrashing out of universal ethical claims concerning self-determination and cultural expression. Significantly, this anticipated a challenge to a reductive cosmopolitanism as globalisation (e.g., Castells, 1996) and began exploring the rooted positionality of varied cosmopolitan impulses.

Appiah developed this theme of rooted transcendence one step further, with the notion of ‘cosmopolitan patriots’:

‘...the cosmopolitan patriot can entertain the possibility of a world in which *everyone* is a rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of his or her own, with its own cultural particularities, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different, places that are home to other, different, people... the circulation of people among different localities will involve not only cultural tourism (which the cosmopolitan admits to enjoying) but migration, nomadism, diaspora.’ (Appiah, 1998: 91-92).

Rather than the dry stoking of abstract universality, then, cosmopolitanism is the experience of difference through the lens of cultural specificity. Yet the resonance of 'home' – of individual choice and cultural vocabulary – is itself necessary as a shared human constant. This is more than the simple celebration of difference and cultural variety: it can put flesh on the bones of political and social ideals. Evoking memories of his father as a Ghanaian cosmopolitan patriot, Appiah suggests that it was precisely his father's deep connection to an Asante homeland that generated an abiding commitment to universal human rights. Shaped by struggles against an illiberal government, under Kwame Nkrumah, and by Asante notions of *aninuonyam* (dignity), his father naturally developed this rooted commitment into a more expansive ethical framework that extended far beyond the Asante.

Islamic cosmopolitanism is similarly rooted – local and national experiences and identities shape the articulation of a more encompassing solidarity and framework of human rights. Muslim minorities, in particular, are uniquely placed because of their position at the crux of public debate concerning the boundaries and norms of Western liberal democracies. Subject to the enormous social and political pressure of securitization paradigms, in both Europe and North America (Kundani, 2014), Muslim minorities are routinely expected to defend their national loyalty, on the one hand, whilst also working to push back against the shrinking borders of liberal inclusion, on the other. Central to these substantive debates are important rights around education, association, harassment and freedom of expression – rights that are routinely threatened through both state and social targeting of Muslim minorities. Yet more widely at stake are the very foundations and frontiers of liberal democracy, for the universal claim of these rights extend far beyond embattled Muslim minorities. By engaging in this realm of contestation, a new generation of Muslim voices are developing broader moral claims shaped by a conception of their own liberal citizenship, patriotism and an Islamic ethic. As I argued in the introduction, we cannot overgeneralise – Muslims minority communities in Europe and North America are diverse – but even otherwise socially conservative Muslims rely on the assumptions of liberal tolerance and freedom of speech in order to make their claims outside the parameters of mainstream debate.

While sharing a familial resemblance, each national context is often unique. For example, as I demonstrate in the final section of this chapter, Muslim Americans routinely emphasise the foundational myth of the American dream as a land of opportunity similar to the early Muslim community – an American Medina (Grewal, 2014) – whereby the 'melting pot' moral landscape of America encourages economic success built upon a racial and religious freedom (paralleling Islamic universality). Patriotism and Muslimness – in response to Islamophobic exclusion – are therefore both funnelled through a framework of constitutional protection nationally (that extends to all threatened groups, for example Jews and undocumented migrants) and American exceptionalism internationally (*viz* the inclusion of a wider immigrant and Muslim

imaginary). The critical point is that the application and consistency of these foundational American principles are up for continual debate – particularly with the more recent rise of nativist nationalism – so it is significant that Muslim Americans are bringing a Muslim imaginary to bear as a means to shape the boundaries of inclusion surrounding American citizenship.

Islamic cosmopolitanism as hermeneutic

Zaytuna College, based in Berkley, California, is an Islamic seminary that was founded as an institute in 1996 to address a perceived failure in Muslim American learning. In 2009 it became accredited as a Muslim liberal arts college. Founded by the charismatic and globally-influential Islamic scholar, Hamza Yusuf, Zaytuna College is part of the Sufi ‘Traditional Islam’ network (Hamid, 2016) that challenges the supposed division between Islamic and Western thought. With somewhat limited appeal outside of Europe and North America, Hamza Yusuf’s brand of Sufism has nonetheless become hugely popular for university educated young Muslims. Crafting a form of Muslim intellectualism, Zaytuna College and its associated scholars draw on a wider array of human knowledge and learning. With a publishing arm, Sandala (translation – sandal, signifying both itinerancy and tradition), linked directly to the considerable output of Hamza Yusuf, the intellectual activity surrounding Zaytuna is responsible for the celebration and rediscovery of an Islamic corpus as part of a broader tapestry of human knowledge. The aims of the college are carefully formulated: a ‘holistic curriculum’ that explores ‘the Western and Islamic traditions’ whilst recognising the ‘interdependence of disciplines’ – an implied rebuttal to the influential ‘clash of civilisations’ thesis (Huntington, 1996). This reflective arc informs the level of public debate that arises from Zaytuna scholars – dissolving a simplistic ‘us’ and ‘them’ – with a ranging critique of both American foreign policy and Muslim extremism.

This is a form of cosmopolitanism that includes the capacity for self-problematisation and self-transformation. The idea that successful public spheres – whether global, transnational or regional – must transcend parochial contexts and spark dialogic openness is a central plank of Habermasian cosmopolitanism (Habermas, 2005). As Kögler argues, this does not necessarily imply a nomadic interplay of ideas:

‘[for while] cultural backgrounds remain indispensable resources of understanding as well as concrete contexts of application and realization, they similarly become repositioned and reconfigured in light of a context-transcending perspective.’ (Kögler, 2011: 226)

Through this reading, then, while *actual* cosmopolitan activities (in contrast to more utopian or idealised forms of cosmopolitanism) use personal context and group heritage as a reference point, they involve a form of critical reflexivity whereby this backstory can be ‘repositioned’ and ‘reconfigured’. For some Muslims, such as those associated with Zaytuna College, this is not about jettisoning Islamic knowledge, culture and tradition, but about critically reappraising and relocating it within a broader spectrum of human

experience and religious pluralism. It is not a relativistic denial of personal truth, but a hermeneutic process whereby exposure to difference can lead to a deeper or more nuanced understanding of the Self.

This hermeneutic approach requires a particular set of competencies that emanate from the cosmopolitan virtues described by Turner: irony, reflexivity, scepticism, care for others and hybridisation (Turner, 2002). These virtues require the ability to engage in dialogue with the Other, and in so doing critically reflect on the Self. It is this aptitude that various forms of Islamic fundamentalism – and, by perceived association, Muslims more widely – are so often accused of lacking. This of course can often be the case and there are many examples of Islamic pedagogic traditions that are absolutist, rigid and opposed to intellectual and religious pluralism. Islamic cosmopolitanism, in contrast, is a tendency that places emphasis on the historical and continuing dialogue between Islamic scholarship and Muslims, on the one hand, and secular or non-Muslim discourses, on the other. While there is of course a central and guiding role played by revealed scripture, this does not automatically translate into an unshakeable confidence that Muslims can fully understand revealed knowledge. Nor does it preclude broader intellectual engagement outside the ambit of core Islamic learning – especially when seeking to understand the lived world within a framework of belief. Rather, Islamic cosmopolitanism welcomes the critical testing of knowledge and belief, the intellectual vigour that arises from contact and exchange, but also the mutual imbrication of learning and knowledge. This Gadamerian ‘fusion of horizons’ recognises the unique value and contribution of Muslim intellectualism, but understands that it is richer, and correspondingly enriching, when enacted through a hermeneutics embedded in a wider array of human knowledge and creativity. It is through this process that Turner’s cosmopolitan virtues are most evident – a critical distancing from and relativisation of the Self that enables irony, reflexivity, scepticism, hybridity, and the value of others to emerge.

This hermeneutics is most apparent in the new wave of Islamic scholars and Muslim intellectuals across Europe and North America, whereby a celebrated lineage of Muslim history and Islamic religious thought is rearticulated, reassessed, and developed alongside a critical engagement with learning in the social sciences and humanities. This includes Islamic pedagogical institutions – such as the Cambridge Muslim College and the Zaytuna College – that have in part aligned their curriculums and accredited structures with comparable secular institutions. Yet it also encompasses the rising tide of Muslim cultural producers – comedians, film makers, writers and musicians – who innovatively combine new cultural forms to ironically or thoughtfully reflect on the experiences of Muslims in the world today. Rather than just a patchwork of individuals, this cultural example, the global streaming service, Alchemiya, with films and documentaries that explore the complex interplay of Muslim and non-Muslim histories,

cultures and identities (from the story of Noor Inyat Khan in Nazi-occupied Paris, to the 1977 visit of Muhammad Ali to South Shields²).

This hermeneutics is not a crude bringing together of the Muslim and the non-Muslim. Nor is it a form of 'Islamic modernism' or an historical phase of 'Muslim reformation' (such claims are dangerous and suggest the need for Muslims to 'catch up' with Western modernity). Rather, it organically dispels the dichotomous myth of Islam and the West, while never entirely erasing these subject positions. It is a critical celebration and reaffirmation of Islamic knowledge and Muslim experience, but in a way that highlights the dialogical place of Islam and Muslims in the unfolding narrative of human endeavour.

Islamic cosmopolitanism: British civility and American exceptionalism

Cosmopolitanism is often subject to a critique that it dwells too much in the upper stratosphere of theory and idealism – that as an explanatory framework for *actual* behaviour it can be elusive and non-specific. In the previous section, I attempted to support my theoretical claims with a fleshing out of the political, social, and cultural realities of Islamic cosmopolitanism (e.g., through Muslim institutions, religious discourses, and social activism), but also with a brief mention of specific examples (IHRC, Zaytuna College and BMTV). In this next section, I attempt to build on this by exploring in detail two specific case studies. The first concerns the debate surrounding the public visibility of Muslims in British Christmas television advertising. The second focuses on the contentious issue of the 'Muslim ban' in the United States. These two examples highlight a wider shrinking of liberal democratic citizenship – whereby both hard and hazy boundaries are erected to exclude Muslims – but, in turn, they also demonstrate the way in which Muslims develop a more expansive cosmopolitan outlook as a means to challenge this exclusion. Through these examples, I argue that not only are Muslims at the frontier of wider debates concerning citizenship and nation-state belonging, but that this occurs through the interweaving of Islamic values, Muslim subjectivities, and a wider cosmopolitan ethic.

Public religion, British civility, and Christmas television advertising in Britain

Religion has surged to the forefront of national concern in Britain over the last two decades, and with this a more acute role to be played by public religion (Dinham et al, 2009). Challenging long-standing assumptions about the secularisation and privatisation of faith in Britain (Bruce, 2002), religion has instead become an increasingly dynamic component of public debate (Casanova, 1994). Religious actors now more readily bring

² Noor Inyat Khan (born Nora Baker) was a British Muslim convert of Indian and American descent who was sent into occupied France during the Second World War to aid the French resistance. She was awarded the George Cross for her bravery and service. Muhammad Ali, the world-famous boxer and Muslim convert, visited South Shields in 1977 for four days to raise money for a local boxing club. During this time he visited the local Al-Ahzar mosque, an important site for the old Yemeni community, where he had his wedding blessed by the local imam. Both of these historical events have been revisited through film by Muslims who are keen to emphasise and explore the rich history of Muslims in Britain, Europe and the West more widely.

their faith and assumptions to bear on wider social and political conversations, while, conversely, we also witness the shaping of religious identities, practices, and beliefs through the heat and pressure of public debate. To understand contemporary religion, then, we need to consider the dynamics of public religion. There are furthermore inevitable boundaries of inclusion within the public sphere that determine the extent to which religion is 'allowed' to be made public. Muslims in Britain often reside at this frontier of contestation. There is a struggle to shape public understandings of Islam (Poole and Richardson, 2006), but also an inevitable process whereby this public activity functions to crystallise or redefine Muslim self-understanding and practice.

The annual public tussle over Christmas celebrations in Britain are an example of the multi-layered debate surrounding public religion. Sparked by a concern over multiculturalism and social change in Britain, there has long been a bubbling clamour of complaint that Christmas – as a Christian public holiday – is being watered down because of a sensitivity towards religious minorities (Muir, Petley and Smith, 2011). This attack on 'political correctness' is usually spearheaded by tabloid media on the political right, although it does channel a broader underlying level of anxiety concerning the need to erect certain boundaries around public religion – specifically, that Christianity and Islam need to inhabit different parts of the social and cultural landscape in Britain. Of course, motives for this belief no doubt vary – ranging from masked Islamophobia and racism to a more benign concern with the loss of cultural heritage – but, as an issue, it does highlight some of the contours surrounding Muslims and public religion in Britain.

This anxiety reached new levels with the recent incorporation of Muslims into the marketing efforts of prominent retailers over the Christmas period. In 2016, the commercial giant, Amazon, launched a Christmas advert (in Britain, the United States, and Germany) that showed an imam and a priest exchanging gifts. The advert was made through consultation with the Church of England and the Muslim Council of Britain in order to be 'culturally sensitive'. Similarly, Tesco, the largest retailer in Britain, released a series of five television adverts in 2017 to show the diverse ways in which different people celebrate Christmas. One of these adverts prominently featured a visibly Muslim family. Equally controversial television adverts, with visible Muslim participants, were also released in early 2018 by L'Oreal and the British Army. Of course, this sudden marketing interest in Muslims, with other prominent examples that include the sportswear multinational, Nike, perhaps reflects the increased purchasing power of a growing Muslim middle class, but the implications for public religion are also profound.

The reaction from some quarters was predictable: these adverts were 'anti-Christian' and were encouraging 'the Islamisation of Britain'. Such views were echoed in newspapers, by some British politicians and across the increasingly ferocious realm of social media. The central claim was clear: that Muslims have no business anywhere near Christmas – it is a Christian holiday that only people of a particular ethno-religious heritage are permitted to celebrate. While there was a response from various Muslim organisations – as there is every year to related 'Muslims against Christmas' claims – it

was notable that the most cutting public response came from the Muslim comedian, Tez Ilyas. Writing in the Guardian newspaper (Ilyas, 2017), Ilyas deployed an ironic and reflexive wit that moved beyond a satirical defence of Muslim cultural ease with Christmas – eating Turkey, playing board games, and plotting the imposition of sharia law in Britain – to a more wide-ranging critique of the closing down of free speech by anti-liberal and authoritarian trends. Ilyas defended the right of Muslims, as British citizens, to enjoy the holiday period, but further connected this to wider issues of free speech surrounding ‘Brexit’ and a developing ‘culture war’ in Britain. Through this reading, the struggle for Muslim belonging – to defend and secure the place of Muslims within a British political and cultural community – is part of a wider battle to challenge parochial and nativist British trends. Muslims are firmly located by Ilyas on the liberal and more open side of this culture war. What begins as a satirical and ironic reflection of Muslim cultural and social exclusion, gradually becomes part of a broader political project concerning humanitarian ethics and transnational citizenship.

Alongside this furore, over the 2017 Christmas period, however, was something more remarkable. Debuting on Christmas Eve, the Islamic charity, Penny Appeal, released its own television advert to be aired by two mainstream broadcasters (ITV and Channel 5). The advert – *As British as a Cup of Tea* (Penny Appeal, 2017) – draws on a nostalgic sense of British civility and heritage. We witness the whistling of a kettle and the slow pouring of tea, overlaid by the sound of a brass band and a narrator reminding us about the qualities of ‘the humble cup of tea’ and ‘the good manners of making it just the way that someone likes’. The advert shows an elderly lady standing forlorn at the window of her living room, evoking current social concerns in the UK around loneliness among elderly people. She is then greeted by a young woman wearing a hijab, with a freshly made cup of tea, and they sit down to happily chat and laugh together. The final narration is hardly subtle:

‘There is nothing more British than a good cuppa, and yet tea comes from the East. Penny Appeal is a British Muslim charity, our faith is from the East, but we are proudly British. So, for every project we do abroad, we do a sister project right here at home in the UK. Donate now and help the elderly this winter’ (Penny Appeal, 2017).

This is the first time that a Muslim organisation in Britain has purchased advertising time on mainstream broadcast television. It is a bold statement about British Muslim identity, aimed at a non-Muslim audience, but it also reveals something about the interplay of national and transnational ethical responsibilities. The advert develops subject positions and traditions – East/West, national/global, British/Muslim – but folds them in together as part of a national narrative about hospitality and compassion. Overlapping Islamic and British values become actualised through radial ethical commitments, at home and abroad, to ‘our’ communities (religious and national), but also to other groups beyond ‘our’ locality. This was a profound intervention, at a time in Britain when public opinion was torn between those advocating a reenergised nativist sentiment, on the one hand,

and those motivated by a form of liberal globalisation, on the other. It attempted to dispel this myth by drawing on a national sentiment of British civility – of charity and good manners – to make a claim of ethical responsibility towards others that, despite a nationalist tenor, is reliant not on ethnic or nativist loyalties but on the claim that British values can be extended in a compassionate and inclusive way that matches up with the ethical humanitarianism of foundational Islamic values.

American exceptionalism, the ‘Muslim ban’ and patriotic citizenship

In popular mythology, American exceptionalism has long raised the status of the United States from just another powerful nation state to – in words borrowed from the early Puritans by John F Kennedy – ‘as a city upon a hill’ – that is, a symbol to the world of democratic inclusion, unity, and diversity (Hodgson, 2009). Of course, interpretations of this can vary, from a belief in the superiority of American values (whatever they might be) to a belief that the United States embodies universal human rights (Ignatieff, 2009). There is, then, a long tradition of different groups drawing on this mythology to advance particular political and social claims, including, for example, African American, Chicano, and Native American involvement in the Civil Rights movement (Madsen, 1998). This exceptionalism is almost literally rooted in the founding desire for religious pluralism in place of state religion. Although, of course, constitutional and local disagreements about what exactly constitutes state neutrality toward religion can nonetheless permit discrimination against religious minorities (Fowler *et al*, 2014).

Rising nationalist, anti-Muslim, and anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States – higher in 2017 than even during the post 9/11 period (Kisi, 2017) – has once again brought the notion of American exceptionalism into sharp political focus. Central to this have been responses to the so-called ‘Muslim ban’ and proposals to develop a Muslim database. On 27th January 2017, a newly-inaugurated President, Donald Trump, issued Executive Order 13769 to suspend the US Refugee Admissions Programme, to indefinitely halt the entry of Syrian refugees, and to suspend the entry of all refugees (barring some exceptions) from countries that do not meet United States adjudication standards (these countries were largely Muslim majority). This executive decision was immediately labelled a ‘Muslim ban’, partly because it seemingly targeted Muslim refugees but also because it followed months of political rhetoric about a ‘Muslim database’ (seen as analogous by some to the wartime internment of Japanese Americans – a comparison that can cut both ways, depending on your political outlook). The executive order faced a series of immediate legal challenges from various regional circuit courts, as well as widespread protests, public demonstrations and opposition from prominent organisations, groups, and individuals from across a range of religious, political, academic, diplomatic and activist positions. The controversial executive order brought forward legal challenges, mostly from US state courts, but also in the form of a review by the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in June 2018 to uphold the executive

order on the grounds that it was a national security decision and that the order did not specifically mention religion.

Of interest here is the particular way in which Muslim Americans and others responded to the 'Muslim ban' furor. This response is characterised by the entwining of two positions: (i) the affirming of specific constitutional protection against religious discrimination, and (ii) a broader articulation of American exceptionalism as guaranteed pluralism. These positions fundamentally defend racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural difference beneath shared notions of American citizenship and patriotism. While often framed in legalistic terms, they are nonetheless foundational debates about American society and the role of the state. Muslim Americans have been at the forefront of these in a number of ways, not just as the target of an exclusionary politics but, as I now show, as activists and agents of change.

The first is through a direct effort to legally challenge or otherwise obstruct the 'Muslim ban' executive order. Contained within an array of legal challenges following the order were a selection of Muslim American legal actions. These have been from Muslim individuals represented by law firms (e.g., *Mohammed vs United States* and *Aziz vs Trump*), but also from organised Muslim advocacy groups, such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations and the Arab American Association of New York. Indeed, most leading Muslim American organisations model themselves on a culture of civil rights legal activism and operate in this realm of 'jurisgenerative politics' (Benhabib, 2008) – that is, they channel broader ethical and political claims through the unique legal culture and constitutional sacrality of the United States. While working from a Muslim subject position – with an obvious direct investment in the implications of any 'Muslim ban' – these legal claims formulate themselves in more universalistic terms. Specifically, they target the inconsistency of state measures to curb immigration and the admittance of refugees. These legal challenges argue that particular *types* of migrants and refugees are the *actual* subject of state restrictions i.e., Latinos and Muslims.

The logic of operating in this particular civil rights arena, then, inevitably brings Muslim American activists beyond a simple challenge to state Islamophobia into a more expansive debate concerning the nature of citizenship and constitutional claims concerning human equality and freedom. American exceptionalism is articulated through this movement as an ongoing political project to provide a new home for exiles, refugees and those fleeing persecution. It is a claim that wields the gleaming sentiment of new world values ('Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free') against not just anti-Muslim discrimination, but also in opposition to more pervasive nativist sentiments in the United States. It is a sentiment that re-appropriates the notion of patriotism, turning it away from an ugly form of brute nationalism to a more foundational conception of civic republicanism.

While taking a legalistic form, then, there is also a second and more culturally significant way in which Muslim Americans engage with a broader activist politics. Driven by the commonalities of a shared struggle, Muslim Americans have forged alliances with

other ethnic, religious, and liberal political groups in the United States. This has involved both drawing on the support and solidarity of these groups, but also linking specific concerns with anti-Muslim discrimination directly to other forms of prejudice or state targeting. Two examples of these alliances are particularly enlightening.

The first is the way in which Muslim organisations have requested support to resist the idea of a 'Muslim database'. In order to undermine any database requiring the legal registration of Muslims in the United States, a grassroots campaign has emerged ready to sign-up a broad swathe of American non-Muslim citizens. This would effectively undermine the targeted nature of any database. Muslim American organisations and activists have been at the forefront of this movement. The Muslim American Society, for example, has worked closely with non-Muslim public figures to reinforce their case. Many of these public figures are from Jewish and Catholic backgrounds – religious traditions in which the idea of religious persecution in the United States is still raw and resonant. The language used by Muslim organisations and activists is based on a shared heritage of constitutional pluralism. The proposed database is, according to Muslim organisations and activists, reminiscent of the 19th century linking of Irish Catholics to the Vatican, and the early 20th century connection of Jews to international Jewry. By drawing on this history – and by working with non-Muslim religious groups and individuals – Muslim Americans ensure they are working at the frontiers of a more expansive and foundational social debate concerning religion and citizenship.

A second example concerns the linking of Muslim American campaigning to the struggles of other immigrant groups in the United States. Within days of Executive Order 13769, Imraan Siddiqi, a Muslim civil rights lawyer from Arizona, started a national campaign entitled #NoBanNoWall. Surging to the forefront of American public consciousness, this campaign directly linked the 'Muslim ban' with ongoing proposals from the White House to build a wall along the United States border with Mexico, and to repatriate large numbers of undocumented Latino migrants. Siddiqi, the director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations in Arizona, argued that both these forms of state action – against Muslims and Latinos – were motivated by a racial and religious animus that cuts against the grain of American exceptionalism.

This campaign helped spur into action a series of ongoing demonstrations and public protests that have brought, amongst others, Muslims and Latinos together in direct political action. This has taken many forms, including collaborative protests by Muslim, Latino, and Jewish activists to demand protection for young immigrant 'dreamers' (the US-born children of undocumented migrants). Sharing not just a concern with their own threatened rights and citizenship status, Muslims and Latinos push for an interpretation of American exceptionalism that admits non-Americans and non-citizens – Muslim refugees and undocumented Latino migrants – within the scope of political and ethical claims. According to these claims, the 'Muslim ban', border wall and other punitive proposals fail the litmus test of American exceptionalism because they turn away from international human rights obligations to a more hardened, nativist national imaginary.

Muslim minorities, Islamic cosmopolitanism and the future of religious pluralism

In a 2018 report, based on extensive polling in Britain, a newly-launched think tank, Global Future, argued that a new dividing line in Western politics is between ‘open’ and ‘closed’ perspectives (Global Future, 2018). The report claimed that there is a stark generational divide, with those under the age of 45 displaying more positive views on multiculturalism, diversity, immigration, internationalism, and globalisation. By contrast, those over the age of 45 are more likely to be nationalist, sceptical of social liberalism and critical of international institutions. This claim follows David Goodhart’s widely reported distinction between ‘anywheres’ and ‘somewheres’ (Goodhart, 2017). In this chapter, I have gone some way to both recognising the features of this landscape, but also problematising any simple or reductive analysis. Liberalism vs nativism – or cosmopolitanism vs nationalism – are not zero-sum positions, but are instead interwoven streams of thought and action. The saliency of this unfolding state of affairs is likely to dominate political and academic discussion for some time, so it is significant to have considered the role of Muslim minorities within this milieu of social, political, and cultural change. Religious pluralism is one of the key areas where this impact will be felt most keenly.

Diana Eck suggests there are four features to religious pluralism. These are (i) an ‘energetic engagement with diversity’, (ii) ‘the active seeking of understanding across lines of difference’, (iii) ‘the encounter of commitments’ (i.e., not just relativism) and (iv) an activity ‘based on dialogue’ (Eck, 2006). Islamic cosmopolitanism essentially incorporates all of these features, emphasising the way in which Muslims can and should reach out beyond an exclusive Islamic tradition to engage with wider debates and knotty political issues in North America and Europe. As I have suggested, this is partly based on an interpretation of Islamic ethical values and a Muslim intellectual tradition, but also just as importantly on the need for Muslims to defend themselves against discrimination by generating dialogue and firm ethical commitments across ‘lines of difference’. Given the way in which the norms of pluralism and diversity have increasingly been under threat across the West, this is a critical development that suggests Muslim minorities may well play a key role in shaping Western norms around religious pluralism.

As I have argued, it is a new Muslim elite – for the most part young, educated and self-confident – that is engaged in directly helping to shape this emergent landscape through tendencies of Islamic cosmopolitanism. This represents, firstly, an important way in which Muslim minorities are unique interlocutors. Rather than a passive or problematic group for liberal democratic societies, Muslims are instead an increasingly assertive voice within wider debates concerning the future of citizenship, the state and cultural norms. Secondly, the sentiments underpinning this engagement are shaped by a strong sense of rooted identity – both Muslim and national – but also by a more expansive concern with universal human rights, internationalism and global citizenship. They are certainly, to borrow Goodhart’s

language, 'citizens of somewhere', but it is this very sense of attachment that provides a foundation for culturally-inflected values to radiate outward as a cosmopolitan commitment. This form of cosmopolitanism takes shape through rooted national imaginaries – whether notions of American exceptionalism or British civility – but it is similarly defined by post-national imaginaries, institutions and global citizenships. As a self-aware process – generated by a creative tension between self/other, national/global and Muslim/non-Muslim – it encourages a hermeneutics that will continue to mould Muslim minority perspectives. It is a transition from ethnic and religious communalism to an ironic, hybrid and reflexive form of plural, national, religious and global citizenship.

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