

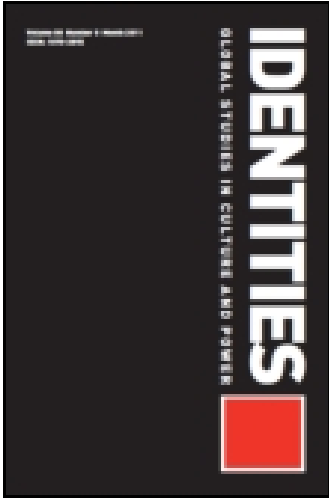
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Cosmopolitanism and integrationism: is British multiculturalism a 'Zombie category'?

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Cosmopolitanism and integrationism: is British multiculturalism a ‘Zombie category’?

Nasar Meer and Tariq Modood

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The alleged death of British multiculturalism has been celebrated in some quarters and regretted in others. Invoking Ulrich Beck’s discussion of zombie categories, we argue that while the appeal of ‘multiculturalism’ as a *term* has clearly declined, the *category* in Britain that it refers to encompasses not a single charter, but a series of political settlements and public policies that remain in place even though they have been joined (and frequently challenged) by others. Distinguishing between the *term* and the *category* is a valuable means of assessing the persistence of multiculturalism as a mode of integration in Britain.

Keywords: Ulrich Beck; citizenship; integration; multiculturalism; Muslims; zombie category

[I]t was in 1910 that fires long smouldering in the English spirit flared up, so that by the end of 1913 Liberal England was reduced to ashes.

(George Dangerfield (1970 [1935]))

Introduction

In his classic (and contested) account of why the Liberal Party, having won three successive general elections and set in motion wide-ranging social reform, would fragment never to lead a subsequent British government, Dangerfield brings together the study of political events and philosophies in his analysis of ‘decline’. In so doing, he offers one salutary example of how our interpretation of political phenomena should not be reduced to material developments alone, but must also be attuned to the role of prevailing ideas. There is an empirical strand of social theory that has long struggled with what came naturally to this historian, namely the calibration of events to ideas in interpreting and explaining the social world. For successful examples one might think of Max Weber (2004 [1919]), and especially his essay on *Politics as a Vocation*, or Robert Merton’s (1957, p. 5) ‘theories of the middle range’.¹ Amongst contemporary social theorists, Ulrich Beck is one of the most prominent exponents of empirically grounded social theory; and of the contributions he may be credited or critiqued for, his incorporation into mainstream scholarly discourse of a term from a genre of science-fiction horror is surely one of the most striking. By this we refer to his discussion

of ‘zombie categories’ which describe those concepts that continue to do intellectual work even though the lived reality to which they refer, allegedly, no longer exist. Or as he puts it, ‘[z]ombie categories are ‘living dead’ categories which govern our thinking but are not really able to capture the contemporary milieu’ (Beck 2001, p. 262).

In Beck’s varied and wide-ranging work, we find many candidates for such a category, especially those he deems to have been forged in earlier ‘horizons of experience’ which have now passed and yet continue to shape our perceptions, blinding us to the real experience and ambiguity of the ‘second modernity’ (Beck 2004, p. 19). What this ‘second modernity’ involves is complex and shifting, but for the purposes of this discussion it may be summed up as a ‘non-nation-state modernity’ (Beck 2001, p. 262) that is alive to ‘the rapidly changing realities inside the nation-state containers, and outside as well’ (Beck 2002, p. 24). The analytical value Beck gleans from such an account includes an understanding not only of interconnections across boundaries but also the processes that ‘transform the quality of the social and the political *inside* nation-state societies. This is what I define as ‘cosmopolitanization’ (Beck 2002, p. 17 original emphasis).

In this article we engage Beck in the following two ways in order to explore the current debates on integration and multiculturalism in Britain (for these debates in the Western context, see also Wiewiorka in this special issue). First, some have claimed that ‘multiculturalism’ is no longer a useful category, either in analytical inquiry or in public policy, to conceptualise and address questions of integration raised by cultural diversity; perhaps because Muslims have presented it with novel (allegedly exceptional) challenges that it was not conceived for. At the same time multiculturalism continues to have traction and purchase in language and politics. To what extent does this make it a zombie category? Second, Beck himself specifically argues that multiculturalism is made redundant by developments in cosmopolitanism theory and practice; a view that is shared by some wider critics of multiculturalism.

In the next section, we deepen our discussion of Beck before placing his understanding of cosmopolitanism in a European political landscape focused on integration. After this we locate (in the second and third sections) the current obituaries of British multiculturalism in their recent historical contexts in disputes over minority integration, before discussing the components of the category of multiculturalism. Namely, as set out in the fourth section, the integration of minorities through the promotion of racial and ethnic equality, the recognition of this diversity, alongside that of religious pluralism as it is extended to Muslims. Our argument is that if multiculturalism is indeed dead, then a funny thing has happened on the way to the funeral. By this we mean that while the appeal of ‘multiculturalism’ as a term is clearly declining, the category in Britain that multiculturalism denotes has in some respects been made more robust in being deepened and expanded, even though they have been joined and challenged by others.

British integration in a European context

In his essay entitled ‘The Cosmopolitan Society and its Enemies’, Beck (2002) discusses what he understands as processes of ‘cosmopolitanization’, which he conceives as ‘*internal* globalisation, globalisation *from within* national societies’ (Beck 2002, p. 17: original emphasis), before moving to what he considers to be the obstacles to our understanding of these processes. The thrust of his argument is that tendencies of methodological nationalism prevent a ‘dialogic imagination’ and promote instead a ‘monologic imagination’ (Beck 2002, p. 18). The former is preferable because it ‘lacks orientation, perhaps because it is so much bigger and includes so many different kinds of people’ (Beck 2002, p. 20). The full implication of this argument is that forces of globalisation, including increased human movement and capital flows, are together reshaping local contexts by ‘translocal’ processes. These demand more sophisticated frameworks of political relations in a context of cultural diversity than those conceived in a simpler age. A chief illustration of the latter is expressed by the ‘multicultural dilemma’, which he describes thus:

Multiculturalism, for all its assertion of a world of variety and of the principle of plurality, fosters a collective image of humanity in which the individual remains dependent on his cultural sphere. He (or she) is the product of the language, the traditions, the convictions, the customs and landscapes in which he came into the world and in which he grew up, so that this ‘home-land’ is regarded as a closed, self-sufficient and sacrosanct unity, which must be protected against every possible threat. Naturally against imperialism and also against those forces, such as miscegenation, internationalization and cosmopolitanism, undermining the national spirit. In this sense, multiculturalism is at loggerheads with individualization. According to the multicultural premise, the individual does not exist. He is a mere epiphenomenon of his culture. (Beck 2002, pp. 36–37)

Beck’s claim that multiculturalism in theory and practice essentialises different components of culture, and impedes individual autonomy, is repeated by Amartya Sen (2006) and has become part of a prevailing challenge to the argument that multiculturalism is a valuable means of ‘remaking of public identities in order to achieve an equality of citizenship that is neither merely individualistic nor premised on assimilation’ (Modood 2005, p. 5). It is a charge against multiculturalism that may be joined, as we have outlined elsewhere, by a chorus of others which allege that multiculturalism has prevented minority integration by one of several means. Either: (1) multiculturalism has facilitated social fragmentation and entrenched social divisions (Policy Exchange 2007); (2) distracted attention away from socio-economic disparities (Hansen 2006); or (3) encouraged a moral hesitancy amongst ‘native’ populations (Caldwell 2009). Some even blame it for international terrorism (Phillips 2006). What this range of complaints makes clear is that if ‘multiculturalism wears different faces’ (Alexander 2013, p. 2), so do its detractors. While these political positions are the instigators of anxieties over multiculturalism, other beneficiaries have included a number of

competing political orientations concerned with promoting unity, variously conceived, alongside or in a greater degree to recognising diversity. Some observe this focus in the discovery or rediscovery of national identity (Orgad 2009); others point to its evidence in notions of civicness (Mouritsen 2013), or in a resurgent liberalism that allegedly proves, in the final analysis, to be ‘neutral’ (Joppke 2008). To this we could also add social or community cohesion (Dobbernack 2010) and interculturalism (Meer and Modood 2012).

There are at least two striking features of this discussion. One concerns how un-reconstructed ideas of ‘integration’ have gained traction; especially that integration should proceed on the grounds of established configurations which diverse cultural, religious and ethnic minorities should seek to emulate if not assimilate into. That is to say that where minorities ‘insist on retaining their separate cultures, they should not complain if they are viewed as outsiders and subjected to discriminatory treatment’ (Parekh 2000, p. 197). A more nuanced and elaborate version of this position limits the comprehensiveness of assimilation to the public sphere, into which minorities should assimilate in order to participate in the political cultures of a society, but not be prevented from retaining their diversity at the level of the family, and some parts of civil society. The insistence here is upon a prescribed ‘political culture, which includes its [society’s] public or political values, ideals, practices, institutions, modes of political discourse, and self-understanding’ (Parekh 2000, p. 200). Some perceive this mode of integration – comprising at least partial assimilation – as presently ascendant, perhaps buoyed as a short-term panacea (and longer term prophylactic) to the sorts of societal disunity allegedly associated with ethnic minority separatism in general, and Muslim alienation, estrangement (and ultimately violent radicalism) in particular.

Such normative prescriptions for integration as comprising full or partial assimilation have not gone unchallenged, however, and indeed until relatively recently were *in some instances* (and certainly not uniformly in Europe) viewed as less favourable than other modes of integration (Triandifillidou *et al.* 2011). This would include approaches deemed as *multicultural* which recognise that social life consists of individuals and groups, and that both need to be provided for in the formal and informal distribution of powers; not just in law, but in representation in the offices of the state, public committees, consultative exercises and access to public fora (CMEB 2000). This means that while individuals have rights, mediating institutions such as trade unions, churches, neighbourhoods, immigrant associations and so on may also be encouraged to be active public players and fora for political discussion (and may even have a formal representative or administrative role to play in the state) (see Modood and Meer 2013).

The second striking feature is that the fate of Beckian-like cosmopolitanism has become tied to, or at least limited by, the very critique of multiculturalism it has advanced. For example, many of the central promises contained within ideas of post-national citizenship and post-war cosmopolitanism more broadly have not come to fruition, or at least are not obviously visible across a variety of

citizenship regimes. This is particularly true of those accounts which saw as the future of citizenship in Europe a retention and administration of citizenship rights in cross-national human rights covenants, which would be materially supported by international law (Soysal 1994).² Others, simultaneously, anticipated a diminution in the 'particularistic' content of political communities, such that the boundaries between nations, states, cultures or indeed societies, might become empirically porous and even morally irrelevant (Archibugi *et al.* 2005).

Each of these positions has had to grapple with something of a trend in the valorisation of national identities in nation-state citizenship across Western Europe, something that may be characterised as a re-nationalisation of various citizenship regimes (see also Barou, Borevi, Entzinger and Loch in this issue). An analysis of this cannot be dismissed as the tendency to subsume the *study of state* level discourse and policy into a monolithic category of methodological nationalism. For example, how should we read the Danes' requirement of Danish language competencies at 'level 3' which prevents most non-Europeans from acquiring citizenship, and is coupled with a citizenship test focusing on a 'canon' of historical-national Danish culture? These developments arise in a wider political context in which the very content of Danish public discourse, particularly around cultural diversity and Islam, has taken a pronounced nationalistic tone. This is especially true of the ways in which conceptions of commendable political subjectivity and forms of civic association have become national identity related (Meer and Mouristen 2009).

True, similar developments are evident in the debate over a German *Leitkultur*, which seeks the promotion of a German 'leading culture' in a more explicit way than in its traditional conception of ethnic citizenship (see also Loch in this issue). This is despite, or perhaps because of, significant movement away from the latter, at least in law. Following decades of pursuing an ethno-national citizenship, Germany has since the late 1990s undergone significant changes in its management of immigration, integration and its conception of citizenship. After federal policies had previously focused almost entirely on the control and return of migrants, in 1998 the Red-Green government characterised Germany as an 'immigration country' and amended the Citizenship Law (2000) to introduce the principle of *ius soli*. These developments have been accompanied by others such as the introduction of the Immigration Law (2005), which encourages the cultivation of 'integration strategies', and which in turn was followed by the invitation to migrants and civil society actors to take part in a National Integration Summit (2006). Yet the content of this 'integration' has also included a nationalist imperative, such that newcomers are expected to undertake up to six hundred hours of German language classes and lessons on German society and history (Jacobs and Rea 2007).

In Britain, the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act (2002) explicitly introduced a test (implemented in 2005) for those seeking British citizenship. Thus applicants should show 'a sufficient knowledge of English, Welsh or Scottish Gaelic' and 'a sufficient knowledge about life in the United Kingdom'

(Home Office 2004, p. 11). Those immigrants seeking to settle in the UK (applying for ‘indefinite leave to remain’) equally have to pass the test (effective since April 2007). If applicants do not have sufficient knowledge of English, they are encouraged to attend *English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)* and citizenship classes. Despite important variations therefore it is evidently the case that in North Western Europe there is presently a renewed emphasis and explicitness on national identities amongst countries that have not always prioritised this e.g. Britain, Denmark, and increasingly Germany. This phenomenon is not simply a methodological artefact whose true meaning is obscured by ‘methodological nationalism’.

In some cases the turn to national identities by governments appears to involve a means of encouraging forms of social and political unity, while in other cases it would be hard not to view the turn to national identities as little more than a means of pursuing an assimilationist project. For example, the place of national identity in the ‘drastic break with multiculturalism’ (Entzinger 2007, p. 201) made in the Netherlands has been widely recorded; it has seen the Dutch discontinue some emblematic multiculturalist policies while introducing others specifically tailored to ignore ethnic minority differences. Multiculturalism in the Netherlands may therefore be a ‘zombie category’, though we will leave that discussion to others (see Entzinger in this issue) and focus on the British case.³

Framing integration as *anti*-multiculturalism

Evidently, the United Kingdom has not been immune to a prevailing backlash against multiculturalism which places the latter and the priorities of integration in mutually exclusive terms (cf. also the analysis of the relations between integration and multiculturalism by Wieviorka in this issue). Indeed, Prime Minister Cameron in particular has, since his time in opposition, characterised British multiculturalism as a ‘barrier’ dividing British society (30 January 2007). Subsequently, in office, he has argued that ‘the doctrine of ‘state multiculturalism’ has encouraged culturally different people to live apart from one another and apart from the mainstream’ (5 February 2011). Perhaps seeking to stake out a British *Leitkultur*, Cameron has also complained that multiculturalism has led to the minimisation of Christianity as a guiding public ethos, and has ‘allowed segregated communities to behave in ways that run completely counter to our values and has not contained that extremism but allowed it to grow and prosper’ (quoted in Butt, 16 December, 2011). It thus came as no surprise to learn that the only integration document from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG 2012) made no direct mention of multiculturalism (though it did register the positive role of ethnic and religious diversity).

There is, however, a sense of *déjà vu* here; something which points to a limitation in the linear logic of a zombie category, such that some historical note of past cycles of anti-multicultural sentiment would help put this current phase in context. For although it is presently alleged to be facing a crisis precipitated by

the exceptionality of ‘culturally unreasonable or theologically alien demands’ (Modood 2006, p. 37) associated with Muslims, and particular ‘national security’ inflections, we should not assume that British multiculturalism has been anything other than contested or ‘unsettled’ (Hesse 2000).

It could be argued that Muslims are only the latest, though perhaps the most dramatic, means through which this cumulatively progressive tradition has been critiqued. This can be illustrated if we return to the arena of education which has frequently proved to be a site of contestation between advocates and detractors of multiculturalism from all sides. What is of import here are not the internal disputes between anti-racists and multiculturalists, but how an anti-multiculturalism Conservative government had previously sounded its death knell in the early 1990s. For example, following the Education Reform Act (1988) and the introduction of the National Curriculum, and in a climate in which New Right lobbyists were influential, the *Times Educational Supplement* (1990) concluded that ‘there appears to be a definite though unformulated strategy to starve multicultural education of resources and let it wither on the vine’ (quoted in Jackson 2007, p. 205). This was supported by the then prime minister, John Major, to the 1992 Conservative Party conference that ‘teachers should learn how to teach their children to read and not waste their time on the politics of race’ (ibid.). It thus came as no surprise to learn that the Chief Executive of the National Curriculum had specifically been instructed to remove all mention of multicultural education from the National Curriculum (Graham 1993). Indeed, part of the rationale for the introduction of the national curriculum was to undermine the traction that multiculturalism was achieving in some local education authorities; something symbolised by the clause in the 1988 Education Reform Act stipulating ‘broadly Christian’ acts of worship.

This, of course, was *before* the later view that multicultural integration would prove problematic for – and with – Muslims, even though this too has existed for longer than some recent accounts might suggest. Hence, according to Favell (1998, p. 38), ever since the onset of *The Satanic Verses* affair ‘one of the hottest issues thrown up by multiculturalism in Britain has been the growing significance of political and social issues involving Muslims.’ To be sure, the publication of a novel by Sir Salman Rushdie which disparaged both the genesis of Islam and the biography of the Prophet Mohammed gave rise to a great deal of anger expressed by British Muslims who felt that, ‘as citizens they [were no less] entitled to equality of treatment and respect for their customs and religion’ (Anwar 1992, p. 9) than either the Christian majority denominations or other religious minorities. The episode highlighted the marginality of Muslim actors as political participants – certainly as subjects rather than objects of political discourse. As Modood (1993, p. 146, reproduced in Modood 2005, pp. 121–122) asked:

Is not the reaction to *The Satanic Verses* an indication that the honour of the Prophet or the *imani ghairat* [attachment to and love of the faith] is as central to the Muslim psyche as the Holocaust and racial slavery to others? [...] Muslims will argue that,

historically, vilification of the Prophet and of their faith is central to how the West has expressed hatred for them and has led to violence and expulsion on a large scale.

An unambiguous ‘no’ is the answer he may have received from none other than Roy Jenkins, who ruminated how ‘in retrospect we might have been more cautious about allowing the creation in the 1950s [sic] of substantial Muslim communities here’ (Jenkins quoted in Lewis 1994, p. 4). The important development relates both to the significance that ‘Muslim’ categories begin to achieve, as well as how Muslim subjectivities are expressed in the public sphere by Muslim actors themselves (Meer 2012). These have in turn been met with anxious responses in more recent anti-multicultural discourse epitomised by the Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali’s (2006) insistence that ‘the multiculturalism beloved of our political and civic bureaucracies has not only failed to deliver peace, but is the partial cause of the present alienation of so many Muslim young people’.⁴ This was a latecomer to the argument by David Goodhart (2004) in his widely disseminated essay ‘Too Diverse?’. Invoking a monocultural-nationalism, Goodhart stated that ‘we feel more comfortable with, and are readier to share with and sacrifice for, those with whom we have shared histories and similar values. To put it bluntly – most of us prefer our own kind.’

‘Too diverse’ to ‘integrate’?

While Britain is certainly diverse, ethnic minority communities are not equally distributed but concentrated in England e.g. in 2001, 45% of ethnic minorities resided in Greater London (19% of all residents) and another 8% in region South East of London. 13% live in the West Midlands (conurbation of Birmingham), 8% in the North West (Liverpool, Lancashire), 7% in Yorkshire and Humberside (Newcastle) and 6.3% in the East Midlands, mainly Leicester, where they represent a third of the population (ONS 2003). While, at the time of writing, final, thematically organised, data from the 2011 census is yet to become available, we know that this will add to the picture of diversity detailed by the 2001 Census. For example, the 2011 census showed that the ethnic minorities in Britain grew from 6.6 million in 2001 to 9.1 million when the census was taken, nearly one in six, and that there are now a million ‘mixed-race’ people, and that almost 5% of the population in England and Wales self-define as Muslim (second after Christianity) (Jivraj 2013).

A governmental articulation of the view that Muslims are harder to ‘integrate’ can be found in the ‘parallel lives’ thesis (Cantle 2001), which followed the inquiry into civil unrest that took place in some northern towns, home to both small and large numbers of Muslims. These reports *informed* a view that minorities were self-segregating and adopting isolationist practices (cf. with the ‘parallel society’ thesis for the very different context of Germany discussed by Loch in this issue). The Ouseley report (2001) in particular pioneered an

approach found in other post-riot accounts (cf. Cattle 2001, Ritchie 2001).⁵ This included its initial likening of Muslim settlement patterns to those of ‘colonists’ (Wainwright 2001), and especially the elevation of ‘community cohesion’ approaches to engender social unity, each of which provided many influential commentators with the license, not always supported by the specific substance of each report, to critique Muslim distinctiveness in particular and multiculturalism in general.

Some multiculturalists have interpreted the ascent of these views as evidence of the prevailing retreat of multiculturalism. The question that has been less frequently explored is to what extent these local developments, when calibrated to national developments, offer a persuasive account about the fate of British multiculturalism at a deeper level: as a *category*. Here, Shukra *et al.* (2004, pp. 188–189) offer the following assessment:

[W]hat had previously been termed *integration* was now called *cohesion*. [...] The question was whether such cohesion was to be achieved through communities themselves arriving at compromises through the everyday hurly burly of formal and informal contact or through New Labour institutions defining the citizenship and Britishness that people would have to sign up to. Put crudely, could social cohesion be used for progressive ends or was it inherently assimilationist?

We certainly agree that the fate of multiculturalism, properly understood as more than a politically damaged term, was left undecided by these cohesion arguments, and would like to reconcile an account of local developments with an understanding of national level progress, including the ways in which Muslim minorities and British citizenship have been cast in potentially dynamic and mutually constitutive terms, both within and beyond local encounters and politics. This has not been unproblematic, but it has implications for a reading of multiculturalism that alternates between local and the national platforms. As the Archbishop of Canterbury observed, the centrality of British Muslims to these debates has meant that discussion of multiculturalism in Britain has a tendency to reflect ‘a coded way of talking about one kind of perception of Islamic groups in Britain’ (Williams 2007). While the sorts of multicultural accommodations afforded to Muslims are important, especially in betraying a symbolic meaning, they remain comparatively modest relative to the race-equality or multi-faith components of British multiculturalism that have accommodated other minorities, and it is to these that we now turn (for the differences with France in the relationship between Islam and integration/cultural recognition cf. Barou in this issue).

The counter experience: integration as intrinsic to British multiculturalism⁶

Multiculturalism in Britain has come to comprise an approach through which post-war migrants who arrived as Citizens of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth, and subsequent British-born generations, have been recognised

as ethnic and racial minorities requiring state support and differential treatment to overcome distinctive barriers in their exercise of citizenship. It includes how, under the remit of several Race Relations Acts (RRAs), the state has sought to integrate minorities into the labour market and other key arenas of British society through a cumulative approach that promotes equal access as an example of equality of opportunity. It is nearly 40 years since the introduction of a third RRA (1976) cemented a state sponsorship of race equality by consolidating earlier, weaker legislative instruments (RRA 1965, 1968). Alongside its broad remit spanning public and private institutions, recognition of *indirect* discrimination and the imposition of a statutory public duty to promote good ‘race relations’, it created the Commission for Racial Equality (later amalgamated into the Equality & Human Rights Commission) to assist individual complainants and monitor the implementation of the Act. Does this amount to multiculturalism?

We have argued that it amounts to a *British* multiculturalism which, although lacking an official ‘Multicultural Act’ or ‘Charter’ in the way of Australia or Canada, rejected the idea of integration being based upon a drive for unity through an uncompromising cultural ‘assimilation’ over 40 years ago. It did so when the Labour home secretary Roy Jenkins (1966) defined integration as ‘not a flattening process of assimilation but equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance’. Alongside this state-centred and national focus, there is also the role of urban protest and a tradition of what we might characterise as ‘municipal drift’ where ‘multiculturalism as a public policy in Britain has been heavily localised often made voluntary, and linked essentially to issues of managing diversity in areas of immigrant settlement’ (Singh 2005, p. 170; see also Entzinger for the Netherlands in this issue).

Indeed, it was through debates at the local level that one of the leading public policy documents on multiculturalism came from an inquiry into multicultural education. Entitled *Education for All*, the Swann Report (Swann 1985, p. 36) characterised multiculturalism in Britain as enabling ‘all ethnic groups, both minority and majority, to participate fully in shaping society...within a framework of commonly accepted values’. Yet, several readings of these processes are at odds with actual developments. To pick just one, Fleras (2009, p. 175) views what we have described as ‘a multiculturalism that equates multicultural governance with diversity funding, segregated communities, and parallel institutions; people are channelled into compartments that are separated from each other and society at large, in effect encouraging the perpetuation of ethnic enclaves that can imprison or isolate in the name of culture’.

Alongside such distortions, it is curious, given the longevity of its *ethnic* and *racial* focus, that the fate of multiculturalism in Britain should have come to be so intertwined with the political identities of Muslims. We have elsewhere argued that there are at least two reasons. The first is that Muslim claims-making has been characterised as specifically ambitious and difficult to accommodate, not least that secularism is made permeable by concessions implied in multiculturalist approaches. The second derives from global events, and not simply from the acts

of terrorism undertaken by protagonists proclaiming a Muslim agenda, but from the subsequent conflation of a criminal minority with an assumed tendency inherent to the many (see Meer *et al.* 2010, p. 86). The net outcome of these two issues is a coupling of diversity and anti-terrorism agendas that has implicated contemporary British multiculturalism as the culprit of Britain's security woes. In this case, Muslims as a whole are blamed for terrorism, for not standing up to extremism and for not integrating, which not only appears unfair 'but also divisive and so not likely to achieve the much-sought for integration' (Modood 2008, p. 17).

Integrating or governing Muslims?

One paradox is that where established multiculturalist approaches are refined to integrate Muslims, these are sometimes characterised as the expansion of governance regimes that further regulate the lives of individuals through the 'control' of communities. This is partly consistent with the view that where multiculturalism 'thrived momentarily' it 'had to do with the disinterest of government; that, I believe, was fundamental' (Gilroy 2006, p. 27). This goes beyond the multicultural/multiculturalism debate (cf. Meer and Modood 2009). Lentin and Titley (2011), for example, argue that 'multiculturalism was a means of redirecting action against racism away from analysis of structures of domination and exclusion grounded in capitalism and imperialism. Nevertheless, the term itself, for all its interderminacy and co-option, cannot fully be stripped of political significance, or put slightly differently, constrained to the dimensions of the political that cultural approaches reproduce'. This ambiguous defence is illustrative of a tendency in which an important contribution to what might be described as a the sociology of anti-multiculturalism, proceeds with an idea of multiculturalism that is defined by its critics but not taken on its own terms with reference to multiculturalism scholarship or policy.

While it is not immediately apparent in the above quotation, the incorporation of faith-based groups from within the non-governmental third sector is potentially party to novel approaches to engaging with religious minorities through practices and models of representation, stakeholders and advocacy in the consultative arena (O'Toole *et al.* 2013), and reflects the beginning of a process of equalising upwards in terms of political representation. For example, a national body was created to represent mainstream Muslim opinion, with some encouragement from both the main national political parties, it led to a body to lobby on behalf of Muslims in the corridors of power. This new body, the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) was accepted as a consultee by the New Labour government of 1997 till about the middle of the next decade following the invasion of Iraq. The MCB was very successful in achieving its aim of having Muslim issues and Muslims as a group recognised in addition to issues of race and ethnicity; and of being itself accepted by government, media and civil society as the spokesperson for Muslims. Another two achieved aims were the state funding of Muslim schools on the same basis as Christian and Jewish schools (Meer 2009); and in getting

certain educational and employment policies targeted on the severe disadvantage of the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (who are nearly all Muslims) as opposed to on minority ethnicity generally. Additionally, it played a decisive role in persuading Tony Blair to go against ministerial and civil service advice and insert a religion question into the 2001 Census (Sherif 2011). This meant that the ground was laid for the possible later introduction of policies targeting Muslims to match those targeting groups defined by race or ethnicity – or gender. Even as the MCB fell out of favour, local and national consultations with Muslim groups have continued to grow rapidly and now probably exceed consultations with any single Christian body, and certainly any other minority group.

In addition to the progress in Muslim political representation, there are even successful accommodations of religious pluralism, including aspects of Shar'ia, even while Shar'ia councils themselves continue to be the subject of intense controversy (Modood 2008). The latter was typified by the hysteria surrounding the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, whose public lecture on what degree of accommodation the law of the land can and should give to minority communities with their own strongly entrenched legal and moral codes was met with a media frenzy. The lecture included a developed and highly sensitive reflection on the reality and potential of 'plural jurisdiction', particularly in relation to the experience of and discussions about Shar'ia courts, their capacity to rule on such matters as family disputes and claims, and their relationship to the 'statutory law of the United Kingdom'.⁷ What the media reaction to his lecture ignored was how since the 1970s some marital and inheritance disputes have been judged in Muslim arbitration boards if both parties have freely consented to such adjudication, and this has taken place under the broader remit of English civil law.

The ambiguities of this scenario are perhaps most graphically illustrated in the work of the Islamic Shar'ia Council and Muslim Arbitration Tribunal are prominent examples of the ways in which British Muslims are using the framework of the Shar'ia to resolve disputes while remaining within the bounds of British laws. This council was founded in 1982 and emerged from attempts by a group of London imams to resolve issues of conflict between British and Shar'ia law (Bell 2007). It consists of a bench of jurists who provide a conciliation service for disputing couples and authoritative religious legal opinions on a host of social and economic matters raised by individuals and organisations. As Soper and Fetzer (2010, p. 13) maintain, these kinds of developments illustrate the ways in which 'it is theologically naïve and historically misguided to assume Islam is any more inherently incapable of making peace with liberal democratic values than are Christian and Jewish traditions'.

Revisiting the 'un-dead' – a zombie term for living category

This article has sought to examine the extent to which British multiculturalism warrants the treatment it is conferred in Beck's analysis. By this we refer to his discussion of multiculturalism as a concept that retains traction in popular and

analytical discourse (whether positively or negatively), even though the lived reality to which it refers, allegedly, no longer exists. What we have tried to show, and using the example of the minority allegedly making the most exceptional claims-making, is that the argument is unsuccessful in reconciling prevailing ideas, especially an anti-multiculturalism discourse, to prevailing events that have seen the deepening and expansion of multicultural settlements (arguments and public policies) even though they have clearly been joined and challenged by others. While for a while scholars took the rhetorical failure demise of multiculturalism at face value, this is now being empirically rebutted (Meer and Modood 2009, Heath and Demireva 2013; Modood, 2013; Taylor-Gooby and Waite 2013, Uberoi and Modood 2013). That is to say that while multiculturalism may be a zombie *term*, it is far from a zombie *category*. In this context, the cosmopolitan alternative envisaged by Beck faces its own political shortcomings and either way is analytically problematic. This discussion is not however restricted to Beck. While some political (anti-multiculturalism) obituaries are blind to the ongoing development of and adaptations to multiculturalism as political phenomena, we have sought to show how some contemporary defences of diversity-related politics appear to work with an understanding of multiculturalism that is defined by its critics and not sufficiently taken on its own terms with reference to multicultural scholarship or policy, and so do not, therefore, sufficiently register the resilience of multiculturalism.

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Notes

1. 'Logically interconnected conceptions which are limited and modest in scope, rather than all-embracing and grandiose...theories intermediate to the minor working hypotheses evolved in abundance during the day-by-day routine of research, and the all-inclusive speculations comprising a master conceptual scheme...' (Merton 1957, p. 5).
2. While developments in Human Rights Conventions are pan-European, the substantive influence of these varies radically according to how well a human rights culture is entrenched in respective civil societies.
3. Both the multiculturalism policy index (MPI) and the migrant integration policy index show that between the years 2000 and 2010 the Netherlands has fallen back dramatically on its recognition and support of cultural minorities (from a score of 5.5 to 2.5 on the MPI measure), while for the same period on the same measure Britain has scored the same (5.5). As a wider comparison, for the same periods on the same measure, France and Canada stayed the same scoring 2 and 7.5, respectively.
4. Something which clearly sits uneasily with his earlier view that British citizenship should ensure that 'the legitimate rights of communities, of their culture and of their religion, are recognised' (Nazir-Ali 1997, p. 35).

5. At the same time, and once it was established in the public mind that young Muslims and communities were the protagonists being discussed, the official documents themselves did not always *explicitly* state this and so therefore used more universalistic language. We are grateful to Varun Uberoi (Brunel University London, UK) for this point.
6. This section draws on Meer and Modood (2009).
7. See <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1575> [Accessed 1 September 2008].

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