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## The predicament of diaspora and millennial Islam

*Reflections on September 11, 2001*<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT** This article considers the production of an Islamic utopian or millennial discourse by British South Asian Muslims in the diasporic public sphere and its possible impact on the younger generation of Muslims growing up in the UK. Associated with such a discourse, the article considers the vulnerability of diasporas – the process whereby global events can precipitate radical diasporic estrangement, leading to self-estrangement. Such estrangement is fed by moral panics, expressed in the speeches of politicians, in newspaper columns and global news reports. This exposes the fragility of multicultural discourses in the public sphere in the UK.

**KEYWORDS** British Pakistanis ● Islamic radicalism ● millennialism ● Muslims ● political Islam ● Utopia

### INTRODUCTION

However settled modern diasporas are, they must nevertheless navigate complex loyalties in times of international crisis. September 11 highlighted the way that utopian discourses may assume, in rare instances, a violent form among certain millenarian groups, and the tragic dilemmas and predicaments such violence creates for diasporas settled beyond their countries of origin. I consider, first, the production of an Islamic utopian or millennial discourse as a transnational imaginary pervading contemporary Muslim society worldwide. Second, I argue that millennial discourses may prevail without mobilization for action, a feature highlighted by speeches made in the diasporic public sphere by first-generation Pakistani settlers in the UK. The danger is, however, that for a younger generation of

Pakistanis growing up in the UK, such discourses may be interpreted as a call for violent action. The article thus highlights the vulnerability of contemporary Muslim diaspora communities and the process whereby global events have precipitated among them a sense of radical diasporic estrangement. Such estrangement, I show, is fed by public moral panics surrounding the danger of Islamic ‘terror’ or ‘disloyalty’, expressed in the speeches of politicians, newspaper columns, and global news reports. Hence, Pakistanis in the UK have had to contend since 1988 with a series of global crises, from the Rushdie affair and September 11 to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and these, I argue, have set them apart from the wider South Asian diaspora in the UK, despite a shared history of migration.

## MILLENNIALISM, UTOPIANISM AND ISLAM

On the whole, discussions of Islamic ideological revivalist or ‘fundamentalist’ movements have not been cast within a comparative framework of millennial or utopian studies. Conceptually, such discussions have remained highly empirical and context-specific, locked in ‘Middle East Studies’ and lacking a comparative sociological dimension. Early historical accounts of religious utopianism or millenarianism tended to focus almost exclusively on Jewish and Christian millenarian movements and their expression in apocalyptic texts such as the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelations. Of these scholarly works, Norman Cohn’s *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (1957) remains a classic. In his analysis, Cohn recognizes a key feature of European Christian millenarian movements – their association with a far more widely pervasive discourse of anti-Semitism, which extended well beyond any particular movement. Nevertheless, Cohn’s analysis, as with most analyses of millenarianism, is on specific movements, religious organizations and utopian communities. In contrast, I suggest how millennial discourses may also exist and be widely pervasive without formal organization or effective mobilization.

The gap between discourse and organization is not unusual. Reflecting on cargo cults in New Guinea, Peter Worsley cites Firth (1955) to argue that,

... a ‘climate’ of Cargo ideas may exist without producing any actual Cargo organisation. On Tikopia there were ideas of the bringing of the Cargo in the name of a deceased Tikopia . . . yet these elements did not fuse into a Cargo cult. I myself found a similar situation among an Australian aboriginal tribe: the belief that the Whites could summon unlimited quantities of goods from the cities of Australia and Europe; the rumour that a new Bible had arrived foretelling the imminent end of the world, the destruction of the Whites and the

salvation of the Blacks . . . Yet again, these elements did not combine to form a coherent Cargo doctrine, let alone a cult organisation. (Worsley, 1957: 252)

Hence, Worsley argues, in the absence of a 'flashpoint' or 'suitable leadership', 'activist millenarian ideas are unlikely to arise, or if they do arise will be confined to a clique' (Worsley, 1957: 252).

The millennial vision in contemporary Islam, as articulated by a wide range of movements, is of 'return' to the pristine Islam of the time of the Prophet. This period is conceived of as a golden age of unity (*tawhid*), harmony, lawfulness, economic prosperity, and peace (Roy, 1994: 60–4; see also Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996: 34–5), a 'Time of Bliss' (Navaro-Yashin, 2002: 106). In this latter sense, even though in reality most Islamist or *salafiyya* movements are nationalist in their orientations, it is also often imagined as the moment when Islam will fulfil its promise to become the only and final universal religion, and will prevail globally as a total way of life. The vision is of the ideal city or the perfect moral commonwealth (Davis, 1981: 26–31; see also Levitas, 1990: 161–4; Kumar, 1991: 11 *passim*),<sup>2</sup> so that the 'sacred community grouped around the God-given text voiced by a charismatic emissary who is simultaneously a man like any other stands at the origin of Islamic political memory and at the end point of Muslim political aspirations' (Lindholm, 1996: 270).

Taking Davis's (1981) definition, the vision of a new Islamic golden age combines features of millennialism and utopianism, seen both in terms of process and final vision. In terms of process, the arrival of the millennium usually involves some form of divine intervention along with a fantasy of salvation (p. 32). In terms of vision, Davis argues that the millenarians 'pay little attention to what will emerge after the cataclysm' (p. 31), often even denying the validity of detailed analysis (p. 34). By contrast, utopian visions are usually highly detailed accounts of a perfectly ordered society. Although exceptionally, Davis tells us, some millennial thinkers do venture to 'describe the coming kingdom in all its perfection', in most instances, the picture remains 'blurred' (p. 35) or lost in 'a welter of partial schemes and fragmentary reforms' (p. 35). Absent in millennial thinking is the 'blueprint' quality of utopian visions (p. 36), which combine totality, order and perfection (p. 38).

The extent to which attempts are made to describe the Islamic perfect society in detail, in terms of its unique, often non-western, secular features, differs between Islamic groups and movements, with some devoting conferences and books to describing the shape of 'Islamic economics', education, law or modes of governance (as exemplified, for example, by the Al Muhajiroun website on '*al khilafah*', <http://www.muhammadiroun.com>), while others remain extremely vague about the organization of the 'Caliphate', the ideal Muslim world society, when it comes to concrete detail.

Like other utopias, the Islamic one too must be grasped as a narrative,

myth, or fable. It fabulates an earthly paradise, charting the way it will come into existence. Visions of present-day Islamic millenniums and their mode of achievement differ in this respect. Some groups espouse personal moral reform, the education of desire,<sup>3</sup> as the route to salvation; others attempt to impose this reform through coercion (as was the case with the Taliban); and still others work for violent revolution, while the majority hope for the coming of a divinely inspired charismatic reformer; in Sufi parlance, 'the renewer (*mudjaddid*) of a hundred years [or] of the millennium'. Hence, while the transcendental vision is one, routes to the millennium differ.

Much of the discussion about millenarianism in Islam focuses on Mahdism or Shi'a occultation of the hidden, 'twelfth' Imam following the death of Ali (see Ahmed, 1988: 61–4).<sup>4</sup> A widely pervasive belief among the Shi'a (and other current revivalist groups) is that the millennium will be preceded by the coming of the Mahdi and a confrontation with a mythical figure, the Dajjal, the equivalent of the Antichrist, before right prevails. Others highlight the need for this-worldly personal asceticism and reform. The focus on Mahdism disguises, however, the more pervasive millennial tendencies in contemporary Islamic movements.

The millennium in Islam, as indeed in all three monotheistic faiths, is not to be confused with the Jewish or Muslim paradises (Eden, *jannat*), or the Christian Kingdom of Heaven. Whether or not the millennium lasts a thousand years, or comes at the turn of a millennium, its imaginary is that of an earthly kingdom.<sup>5</sup> Writing of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Manuels (1979: 15) argue that: 'Utopia is a hybrid plant, born of the crossing of a paradisiacal, other-worldly belief of Judeo-Christian religion with the Hellenic myth of an ideal city on earth.' In this respect, movements of *jihad* involving martyrdom, which lead through death to paradise, are not the same as those aiming for earthly Islamic utopias. Nevertheless, such utopias share with other utopian visions, including the Marxist-socialist one, a longing for totality and perfection. Second, utopian visions are pitched against present chaos and perceived anarchy, evoking the ignorance, *jahiliya*, of the pre-Islamic city-state. Their eschatological ideas of salvation often envisage the overpowering of a terrible opponent, the beast of the apocalypse, the Antichrist, or in contemporary Muslim cosmology, America, the West and capitalism as omnipotent, evil Satanic forces.<sup>6</sup> In this sense, like other utopias (Levitas, 1990: 122, 170–4), the Islamic one contains a critical reformist message about the present. It espouses the control of base passions and total dedication to the common good. Nevertheless, because of their tendency to promote absolutist or totalitarian visions, utopias have frequently been subjected to anti-utopian counter-narratives (Kumar, 1987; 1991); in the case of Islam, Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* (1988) is an example of a contemporary anti-utopian text which sets out to describe the paradoxes and limitations of Islamist utopian visions of the perfect society.

Given the pervasiveness of current millennial discourses in the Muslim world, it is somewhat surprising that in the volumes on fundamentalism edited by Marty and Appleby (1993a, 1993c, 1995), only passing mention is made of Islam as one of the 'messianic' religions which has recently emerged in the late modern world (see, for example, Rapoport, 1993: 448; and Marty and Appleby, 1993b: 626, 636). A more sustained analysis of the utopianist elements in such religious movements, in which Islam is included alongside Judaism and Christianity, is suggested by S.N. Eisenstadt (1995: 273). Like most scholars of utopian and millenarian movements, Eisenstadt too stresses that they occur during periods of transition, change and uncertainty, or, more specifically, among persons 'dislocated' or 'banned' from the cultural or political centre and positioned on the periphery (see also Levitas, 1990: 194). In similar vein, Christopher Hill has described the rise of millennial and utopianist movements in 17th-century England as a response to the failure of the reformation and the 'experience of defeat' it generated (Hill, 1984). A related view locates the rise of messianic cults in the developing world in the context of the encounter with colonialism and imperial domination, so that when political independence was ultimately achieved, it could be seen to fulfil 'in tangible form . . . the religious promise of liberation and renewal voiced by native prophets' (Lanternari, 1963: xi).

Their vision of the past-as-present-future has led Eisenstadt to argue that new utopianist religious movements are simultaneously modern and anti-modern, traditional and anti-traditional. While they are grounded in 'an eschatological vision that combines the reconstruction of the mundane world according to a sharply articulated transcendental vision' of a pristine past (1995: 263), their modernist stress on the primacy of politics and totalitarian universalism, and their rejection of complex traditions in the name of a 'pure', authentic tradition make them uniquely modern, as does their acceptance of science and media technologies. Hence, another widely shared feature of millenarian movements is their stress on the opposition between pure and impure. This is part of their moral Manicheanism. The same stress on purity often makes them highly ritualistic if and when they assume formal organization. The millennium implies the end of suffering. It is an apocalyptic, redemptive moment, the 'final destructive struggle in which a world tyranny will be overcome by a 'chosen people' and through this the world will be renewed and history brought to its consummation' (Cohn, 1957: 20).

As a form of rhetoric, millenarian discourses may constitute a critical political commentary on world events that can be empowering in its own right. To the extent that this commentary is millennial and redemptive, it demands no immediate action. Much like invocations of Marxist utopias advanced by the radical left in Europe, the articulation of utopian Islamic visions is a badge of moral virtue which does not necessarily imply a serious willingness to give up the material comforts of bourgeois society. The

decisions to mobilize, organize and act are further steps which most people never take. Yet the discourse may travel widely across national boundaries and be shared by believers in widely dispersed places. This has occurred in the case of Muslim millennial discourses throughout the Muslim world. They are widely articulated in the UK among immigrant-settlers with nationalist-religious political tendencies, despite the evident need of British Muslims to create durable bridges to the West. Of course, there also are Muslims who advocate liberal, democratic points of view, as Hefner (<http://www.ssrc/sept11/hefner>, also 2002) argues, but the millennial discourse attracts more attention.

## MUSLIMS IN THE UK AND MILLENNIAL DISCOURSES

Pakistanis number about half of the 1.5 million Muslims settled in the UK. For scholars like myself whose research has focused on the Pakistani diasporic public sphere in the UK, their ambivalent response to the global crisis following September 11 was predictable. It was embedded in a widespread discourse of Islamic millennialism, pervasive in Muslim gatherings, and echoing a global utopian rhetoric.

This millennial rhetoric is hybrid, rooted in anti-colonial struggles and calling for equal citizenship rights in the UK. It can be heard on many different occasions, from commemorations of the life of the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, to celebrations of the birth of the Prophet. In these events, the more conservative religious nationalists among local Pakistanis, usually aspiring community leaders locked in factional battles among themselves, enunciate a virtual discourse of global Islamic hegemony. This vision of global hegemony is a story that Muslims tell themselves in the confines of their own arenas, far from the gaze of other publics. It is an empowering millennial discourse that starts from a sense of the cataclysmic failure of the present-day Islamic community.

In a series of speeches which I recorded in Manchester in different mosques, speakers, most of them lay, spoke of this experience of failure and sense of colonial domination. As one speaker put it,

Today the Muslims are being humiliated in London, Moscow and Washington – since we have started looking at them and turned our back to Medina, since then human beings started being humiliated. We ruled over the whole world as long as we were obedient to Allah but today, why are the Muslims being ground down? Because we have aimed to have worldly, material (*ayashi* – luxury items) pleasures. And we are getting the punishment of turning our back on the Prophet's door. And now today Pakistan has become Palestine . . . and Bangladesh is suffering from storms, 13 lakh [1.3 million] are being killed in Afghanistan, and Palestinians are being tortured. What is the reason for all

that? As Iqbal [the great Urdu nationalist poet] says: ‘Ye Muslims! You dress like Christians and in your civilisation you are Hindus. These are the Muslims. Look, even the Jews will laugh at you [shame you]. (Speech at Friday prayers before Eid, Dar ul Aloom mosque, 5 May 1989, not long after the outbreak of the Rushdie affair)

Like Jewish fundamentalists’ explanations for the Holocaust, speakers suggest that God has abandoned Muslims because of their sinfulness. The trauma of Partition, the loss of three wars with India, the debacle of the 1967 Six Day War, Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, Afghanistan and Iraq, are read as signs of a cosmic Islamic crisis. Another speech recorded the following day in the same mosque echoes this sense of crisis and defeat:

The Prophet said – have fear of God otherwise you will be humiliated. In Pakistan people are each other’s enemies, they are killing each other, in Bangladesh 35 lakh are dead because of the floods, the Palestinians are being ground down; the reason for all this is that we have forgotten God and the Prophet. Were not Umar Abdul Aziz, Khalid Saifullah and Muhammad Bin Qasim the servants of Rasool Allah [God’s Prophet]? ‘As long as you obeyed me you ruled over the world.’ Now you are seeking help from Moscow and Washington and have turned your backs on Allah so God will turn his back on you. (Eid el Fitr, 6 May 1989)

Moosa has argued that ‘rethinking Islam today takes place in the shadows of the genocide of Muslims in the Balkans and the pervasive sense of psychological defeat it brings to the collective Muslim psyche’ (Moosa, 2000: 25). The problem he identifies is that any such rethinking must confront an earlier ‘triumphalist ideology: an age when Islam was a political entity and an empire’ (2000: 35).

The speech of a Pakistani leader of a very strict Naqshbandi Sufi order with Deobandi tendencies, based at another Manchester mosque, invokes the vision of apocalyptic redemption from imperial domination. The speech was printed in English in the order’s magazine, *Ibn ul Waqt*, in December 1999, and is cited here verbatim. It highlights a tendency among more radical Muslims to demonize the West and stress the need for ritual purity as a precursor to redemption.

How can we be beaten by the kuffaar? Simply because we have left Allah and Rasoolullah [God’s Prophet] have we been, and still are being, punished. Consider the nation we are being punished by – America. If this nation goes to a place where our mothers and sisters live, and then have children from them (whose fathers will be Jews and Christians), what will be the state of us! To say such a thing is relevant. Rasoolullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam [God’s Prophet peace be upon him] has stated that we will be persecuted. Who will you turn to, to complain? Who will listen to you? Allah will surely listen on the condition that we repent. If we repent today then Allah will be on our sides. If all the people of Iraq go into prostration today and repent to Allah, promise not to have alcohol sold there anymore, promise to implement purdah, and beg to

Allah, then if you do not see a tornado destroy the kuffaar, then you might question the Oneness of Allah. (Farooqui, 1999: 20)

As early as 1987, well before the Rushdie affair and the first Gulf War, speeches in Manchester envisioned the ultimate global triumph of Islam. Despite present failures, as one orator declared,

God will not forsake us . . . Muslims will remain on this earth; they will not die out but will spread throughout the world. Judaism will die out. Christianity will die out. Hinduism will die out, and one day the name of Islam and only Islam, 'God is one and Muhammad is His Prophet', will remain. And when this day occurs – I may or may not be here to see it – it will be a day when the conscience of the Muslims will be fully awakened, and they will be able to differentiate between theirs and others, and [they] will be able to unite. (Speech by an educated Muslim cleric in the Barelvi tradition before the start of an *eid milad-un-Nabi* procession, to Muslims assembled at the Manchester Town Hall in 1987)

The speaker makes clear that the achievement of the final rule of Islam is a vision that he himself may not witness. His words are thus not a call for organized action, but an expression of desire and faith in a future millennium when Muslims will rule the earth. His sentiments are echoed in a speech made in another mosque in Manchester promoting strictly reformist (UK Islamic Mission) tendencies, in 1989:

. . . But listen, no matter how much trouble you make, our religion (*din*) will prosper and will spread, but you don't know it. You are ignorant. This is a complete way of life, this is the straight path and it will surely succeed, and a time will come when there will be Muslims all over the world. (Speech made at the Medina mosque, 12 May 1989)

Or, as another speaker puts it: 'Oh God, for the sake of your greatness please make Muslims successful honourably and destroy the enemies of the country. May Islam achieve fame and shame non-belief' [*kufur*, apostasy]' (speech on Eid Zoha, 13 July 1989).

The contemporary 'Khilafat' movement, advocating the restoration of the caliphate, which includes a wide variety of organized chilliastic and militant groups from Jammāt-ud Dawa, Al Muhajiroun and Hizb ut Tahrir, to the Taliban and Al Qaeda, espouses an anti-nationalist, pan-Muslim utopian ideology. It draws its inspiration from Sayyid Qutb, an Egyptian member of the Muslim Brotherhood (the *Ikhwan*) executed in 1966, who denounced most Muslim regimes as *jahiliyya*, and legitimized their overthrowing (on Qutb see Binder, 1988: 170–205). In his article 'Paving the Way' Qutb argues that the ultimate objective of the Islamic movement of Jihad is to establish:

. . . [the] headquarters of the movement of Islam, which is then to be carried throughout the earth to the whole of mankind, as the object of this religion is all

humanity and its sphere of action is the whole earth . . . there are many practical obstacles in the establishing of Allah's rule on earth, such as the power of state, the social system and traditions and in general, the whole human environment. Islam uses force only to remove these obstacles so that there may not remain any wall between Islam and individual human beings.<sup>7</sup>

Radical Islamic groups, some based in the UK, denounce the fatalism and inaction of the Muslim majority and promote militant action, in the first instance against the regimes of Muslim countries. Against this, in spite of the resemblance to Islamist revolutionary utopian discourses, British Pakistani diasporic rhetoric is rooted in a political imagination *that makes no serious attempt to implement its millennial fantasies*. Moreover, countering the conservative camp is a social democratic one to which most Pakistani British Labour Party members, city councillors and MPs belong. These two camps also reflect major political divisions in Pakistan itself between different political parties – broadly speaking, the Muslim League and some religious parties versus the Pakistan People's Party. The latter recruits from the majority Barelwi stream of Islam which is traditionalist and relatively apolitical. Even when lay orators or Muslim clerics, like those cited above, position themselves imaginatively at the hub of a global civilizational battle centred on the UK, their fantasy is not underpinned by fundamentalist organization or violent mobilization.

## MUSLIMS IN THE UK: A SPIRAL OF ALIENATION?

Despite such millennial discourses, for a while it seemed that new diasporas in the West had achieved a golden age: of creativity, freedom, civil rights, equal citizenship, and – along with these – prosperity. They were the fortunate few who had escaped postcolonial underdevelopment, poverty and oppression to create flourishing communities in the West. The dark side of diaspora – persecution, racism, exclusion – so familiar from the histories of the Jewish, Black, Armenian, Indian and Chinese diasporas, had been banished, or so it seemed, forever. Thus Karen Leonard (2000), writing about South Asians in America, highlights the efflorescence of voluntary activities and popular culture in what has increasingly become a successful, prosperous diaspora community, only occasionally divided by religious or national conflicts and loyalties. In the UK, too, the South Asian community has prospered overall, although Pakistanis in some depressed northern British towns have not shared this general affluence. Despite this, like other South Asians, they have felt themselves to be more fortunate than those they left behind on the subcontinent.

But global crises such as September 11 or the confrontation between

India and Pakistan over Kashmir bring out the dark side of diaspora. They may also divide complex diaspora communities such as the South Asian one in the UK and, as a consequence, raise serious questions about multiculturalism and the kinds of cultural commitments minorities might legitimately foster. In the UK, the South Asian diaspora is segmented, encompassing Indians and Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans. It is multi-faith and linguistically plural. Despite the fact that Pakistanis in the UK, like Sikhs and many Hindus, are mostly Punjabis – a fact expressed in their tastes, lifestyles, clothing, food, music, and customary wedding popular culture – they prefer to highlight their Muslim identity, especially in public political contexts. They increasingly see Islam as their most valued, high-cultural identity, especially as the British-born younger generation begin to lose touch with their Punjabi popular cultural roots. Pakistani parents insist that their children learn to read the Qur'an in Arabic and respect prohibitions on alcohol and premarital sex.

After September 11, however, privileging a Muslim identity in the public sphere has become potentially problematic. Alleged acts of Islamic terror have tarred local Punjabi Muslims, despite being for the most part aspiring bourgeois pragmatists, with the brush of Muslim extremism. These allegations have cast into jeopardy past Muslim demands for public respect and multicultural rights within British society. While Hindus and Sikhs seem to be on a path of progressive integration, South Asian Muslims, in many respects identical culturally, seem to be bent on a path of self-destructive self-exclusion and progressive alienation from the western societies in which they have voluntarily chosen to settle.

There are two trajectories evident within the South Asian community. One is positive, leading to mutual respect and toleration. The other is negative, leading to spiralling estrangement. Both trajectories contain their own contradictions. The first hint that British Pakistani Muslims were beginning to draw a line within the *Muslim* diaspora community between themselves and an alien – *also* Muslim – ‘other’, came following the arrest of more than a dozen Algerians in Leicester, a city widely known for its racial tolerance and progressive multicultural policies. Appalled by the arrest, Muslim leaders in Leicester, mostly South Asians by origin, announced that they ‘were more shocked than anyone. We didn’t know who these people were *but we knew they were not involved in our community.*’ The Algerians arrested, they said, had ‘almost no contact at all with Leicester’s *mainstream indigenous Muslim community*’ (Wright, 2002: 12, emphasis added).

Evident here are the linguistic contortions increasingly required by local Pakistanis to distinguish Good Muslims from Bad Muslims in the UK, ‘our’ Muslims from Muslim ‘others’ (in the upshot, most of those arrested were released without charge).

An important theoretical distinction is at stake here. The attack on the

World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001 may seem to have been the work of Muslims living in the diaspora. The suicide bombers were mainly overseas students, while Al Qaeda evidently consists of a transnational network of Muslim activists based outside their natal countries, including Osama bin Laden himself. Sociologically speaking, however, the need is to distinguish between temporary or itinerant transnationals and political exiles, and settled diaspora communities of economic migrants or refugees. Diaspora communities develop local roots and a stake in the continuity of their relationship to the country of settlement. They are permanent sojourners, in the sense that while they recognize a continued affinity and loyalty to the home country, they increasingly come to participate as active citizens in the country of settlement. By contrast, transnational itinerants or political exiles, to the extent that they see their sojourning as temporary, have no commitments and loyalties to the country of settlement, at least unless they begin to sink roots locally. Many never do. In terms of globalization theory, then, although there is increased mobility across national boundaries from the developing world to the West, not every migrant outside his or her country of origin is a 'diasporic' in the full sense of this term. September 11 was not the work of Muslim diasporics but of itinerant transnationals, most of them Saudi nationals. Hence the implicit reference of a local Muslim community leader to the loyalty of the 'mainstream indigenous Muslim community', is intended to differentiate the diaspora community from itinerants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Soon after this declaration, however, news reports announced that three young Pakistanis from Tipton, a little-known town in the English West Midlands, had been arrested in Afghanistan and taken to Camp X-Ray at Guantanamo Bay. All these young men were relatively educated, soccer players for local teams, and apparently integrated into British society, although two had belonged to Asian youth gangs earlier in their lives. Why did they join the Taliban?<sup>8</sup>

## THE DEBATE IN BRITAIN ABOUT LOYALTY TO THE POST-NATIONAL STATE

The response to September 11 in the UK, as in the USA, threatened to precipitate a moral panic about Islam, multiculturalism and the toleration of difference. Moral panics work, as Stanley Cohen argued, by demonizing tangible surface targets through a process of 'displacement' (1972: 9). In a moral panic, underlying social contradictions converge on apparently concrete causes. As moral panics overlap, as the 'demons proliferate', the sense of threat reaches a point of crisis in which ordinary people begin to fear 'the breakdown of social life itself, the coming of chaos, the onset of

anarchy' (Hall et al., 1978: 322–3) – in short, apocalypse, that only an 'exceptional' response can forestall.

September 11 became an event that seemed to threaten the social order of the world. Muslims settled in the West were in danger of becoming scapegoats for the crisis. In the UK, the news that young British Pakistanis had joined the ranks of the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan led to a debate about whether they should be tried for treason or some other criminal offence (Hopkins, 2001). The issue was raised by the Defence Secretary, Geoff Hoon (Dodd et al., 2001), and debated live on TV in the British House of Commons. The debate reflected a growing moral panic about the limits of liberal multiculturalism. As Hugo Young, a journalist for the *Guardian* newspaper put it, multiculturalism can 'now be seen as a useful bible for any Muslim who insists that his religio-cultural priorities, including the defence of jihad against America, overrides his civic duties of loyalty, tolerance, justice and respect for democracy' (Young, 2001: 18). Counter-statements by Muslim leaders that these young radicals were merely a tiny, unrepresentative minority failed to convince fully. Such statements were pitched against surveys that reported widespread support by British Muslims for the Taliban (four in ten thought it right to fight for them according to a *Sunday Times* poll, Basse, 2001 reports) and almost universal condemnation of the Allied war in Afghanistan, widely perceived to be an attack on Islam. There was pervasive denial that the West had proved its case against bin Laden.

Following revelations of the antagonisms of young Muslims in the West to the western alliance, the 'loyalty debate' in the UK took on a momentum of its own, carried forward by surveys, television forums, Radio Live phone-ins, and newspaper letter columns. An Asian weekly, *Eastern Eye*, attempted to counter such claims of disloyalty, announcing as its front-page caption in giant letters that 'British Asians are Proud to be British'. The article reported a survey it had commissioned in which Asians and Muslims were asked if they felt 'loyal' to the UK (*sic!*). About 90 percent claimed that they did (Taheer, 2001: 1–6). British Ministers such as the Home Office Secretary, David Blunkett, unveiled schemes for new immigrant education to citizenship and warned of the need to disperse Muslim 'ghettos' (*Eastern Eye*, 2001: 2). Another government minister, Estelle Morris, the Education Secretary, cautioned that religious schools 'must integrate in the community' (Wintour, 2001).

Such authoritarian state responses gloss over the tragic predicament of a diaspora caught between deeply felt loyalties, at an historical moment not of its own making. Most British Muslims in the diaspora witnessed the collapse of the World Trade Center's twin towers on television, sitting in their living rooms, with the same helpless sense of horror as other television viewers. As it emerged that an obscure Islamist, Osama bin Laden, and his Al Qaeda clandestine global network, were probably responsible for the

devastation, it seemed that the clash of civilizations predicted by Huntington (1993) between Islam and the West had finally materialized. At that moment, diaspora Muslims in the West became symbolic victims of a global mythology, caught in a spiral of alienation and ambivalent identifications that no local protestations of innocence could counter.

Since September 11, global images of terror have invaded every home in the UK, France, Germany and the USA. They reveal the terrible vulnerability of Muslim diaspora communities in the West, susceptible to being essentialized as fanatical and irrational, a potential fifth column in a clash of civilizations. In the past, British Pakistani Muslims had always been a vocal minority, demanding equal citizenship rights and never being afraid to speak their minds even if their opinions – support for the Iranian *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie or for Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War – were out of line with British popular sentiments. They felt sufficiently secure in the UK to express their political opinions, however contentious, without fear. Indeed, in their own public arenas, in the diasporic public sphere they had created for themselves as we have seen (see also Werbner, 2002a), Manchester Muslims articulated familiar visions of apocalyptic battles between Islam and the West, especially the USA, the source of all evil. So too, they used Islamist rhetoric to attack Middle Eastern regimes, criticizing them for their corruption and weakness in the face of the West.

Michael Ignatieff argues that faced with autocratic regimes which suppress all dissent:

Muslim political opposition takes the form of apocalyptic nihilism, a rejection of the world as it is – the existence of the state of Israel, the failure of Arab leadership and its elites, the miserable inequalities of modernisation in the Arab world. Modern jihad seeks escape in fantasies of violent expulsion of the infidel, the driving of the Israelis into the sea and mortal strikes against the Great Satan. (Ignatieff, 2001)

In imagining the different diasporas to which they ‘belong’ as matter of course – Pakistani, South Asian, Muslim – each with its own public spheres and performative arenas, local British Pakistanis tended in the past to position themselves imaginatively as the heroes of global battles. Now came the moment of real apocalypse, beyond the imagination, and with it a self-silencing by a people who felt tangibly the potential rage and terror of the West.

Unlike the 1978–1979 Iranian revolution or the Rushdie affair in the UK ten years later, the ensuing moral panic against Muslim minorities in the UK following September 11 was initially relatively muted. A massive police presence was mounted in vulnerable neighbourhoods. Some mosques were daubed with graffiti, an Afghan taxi driver was seriously injured in London the day after the bombings, Asians (not just Muslims) were insulted in streets, buses and pubs, as they went about their daily business (Chrisafis,

2001). In the USA, there was more violence, and two Asians were murdered. Above all, Asians and Muslims felt stigmatized as never before, associated with terror and subject to constant surveillance and suspicion. Young Asians moved around in groups. Women stayed home. Men avoided going out in the evenings. Businessmen suspected that customers were avoiding their firms. There was resentment as well as fear, a feeling of being perceived as unwanted outsiders. As new, draconian laws for non-citizens have been introduced by the British Parliament, infringing on basic rights, and as security at airports, targeting mostly Muslims, has been stepped up; as the rounding up of suspected terrorists in the UK, France, Italy, Spain and Germany continues to make the news headlines, this sense of alienation has grown. We are witnessing a process of what might be called the 'spiralling progressive alienation' of Muslim South Asians in the West, which began with the Rushdie affair.

Global images of terror, violence and fanaticism are contagious. As the world watched bin Laden and the Taliban condemning the West and calling for its destruction, and witnessed Muslim crowds in Pakistan and the Middle East burning American flags and Bush effigies in a violent display of hatred, it was hard for ordinary British men and women not to associate these images with their Asian Muslim neighbours next door. Nevertheless, a *Guardian* ICM poll found that 82 percent of Britons had not changed their feelings towards British Muslims, and 88 percent thought it unfair to link them to the terror attacks, according to an NOP *Daily Telegraph* survey (Travis, 2001). Tony Blair, the UK Prime Minister, stepped in at the very start of the crisis to declare that Islam was a religion of peace and that the Qur'an did not condone suicide bombings. The battle was not, he assured Muslims and the public at large, between the West and Islam, but against a small number of evil individuals – terrorists. By now Huntington's clash of civilizations – or its denial – had become the jargon of politicians and the media.

Akbar Ahmed (2001) points out that: 'The terrible and tragic events of September 11 have opened a Pandora's box of questions about Islam.' Among these, the status of suicide bombings remains unresolved. Arguably, the line between martyrdom and suicide in Islam is highly ambiguous, and the morality of suicide bombings continues to be debated by Muslim religious authorities. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister and Muslim clergy in the UK invoked a moderate Qur'anic interpretation that was clearly intended to protect local Muslims from a local backlash (Blair, 2001; Wintour and Carter, 2001). Muslim leaders, in turn, condemned the World Trade Center bombings as they gathered in Downing Street for a media and press conference. Dressed smartly in western suits and ties rather than traditional garments, they spoke in rational tones and lucid English. Gone were the Muslim mullahs of *The Satanic Verses* affair, with their beards and foreign accents, declaring death to Salman Rushdie in

broken English. The men and women representing the Muslims of the UK in 2001 through the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) conveyed moderation and an awareness of the concerns of the wider British community. Here were representatives of an 'exemplary' diaspora; a diaspora that recognized its minority status and identified with its newly adopted nation.

Yet, before long, the representative status of the MCB was challenged as endemic internecine schisms and divisions between Muslim organizations also surfaced (see Body, 2001). Nevertheless, the organization initially appeared to have achieved a change in British policy for which they had been struggling since the Rushdie affair: the extension of the Race Relations Act to include a clause against incitement to religious hatred. They used the opportunity presented by the global crisis to extend their bid for equal citizenship.

In the end, the law was dropped, although it is now once again on the legislative agenda of the Commission for Racial Equality. But the victory it represented would have been in any case a bitter and double-edged one. The new law was intended as much to curb extremist Islamist rhetoric in British mosques, as it was anti-Muslim racist discourses. London had reputedly become a centre of world Islamic terror.<sup>9</sup> Quite explicitly, the envisaged law was not intended to silence pretentious postmodern writers such as Salman Rushdie or sacrilegious comedians who spoofed Islam. Yet the existence of such a law would probably have made the publication of *The Satanic Verses* actionable in court, even if the novel might ultimately have escaped banning or censorship.

In the early days of diasporic Muslim silence after September 11, whether sympathetic, pragmatic, or merely enforced, there were some lone voices of dissent. The Shaykh of the Naqshbandi mosque in Manchester with Deobandi sympathies, cited above, invited his congregation to raise their hands in support of the Taliban. A young imam at the Manchester Central Mosque told his youthful congregation in English that it was not bin Laden but the Jews who had in fact bombed the World Trade Center. This was proved by the fact, he said, that all the Jews had stayed away from the towers that day.<sup>10</sup> But, on the whole, criticism was muted. Muslims in the UK – and worldwide – were genuinely deeply shocked by the devastation and loss of life in Manhattan.

As American bombing in Afghanistan, and subsequently Iraq, assumed its fearful, monotonous pounding, however, so familiar from Vietnam, Cambodia or the Gulf War, and as scenes of wounded Afghan refugees or Iraqis and on-the-ground devastation filled television screens, the usual British Muslim transnational identity politics, with its anti-American and anti-Arab regime rhetoric, reasserted itself, but with one important difference. This time the diaspora joined a growing British peace movement critical of the war or the way it was being fought (Gledhill et al., 2001). Muslims could share the same anti-American, anti-war rhetoric with others

in the society. Rather than being seen as deviant and out on a limb, diasporic Muslims succeeded in creating alliances with local activists – CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), the English Left, anti-globalization lobbyists, pacifists. Muslim, mostly Pakistani, spokespersons were young and articulate.

The war in Afghanistan in 2002, and even more so the war with Iraq in 2003, proved that a common enemy can create peaceful alliances across an apparently unbridgeable chasm. The Stop the War alliance in the UK, led by the British left and CND, consciously and deliberately incorporated the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), an organization encompassing Pakistanis along with Palestinians and other Muslims, as equal partners.

## ALTERNATIVE POLITICAL VISIONS AND THE PUBLIC GOOD

Political commitments can be very long term and passionate, embedded in moral narratives of self and community. In this sense they are *meroscopic*, that is, perspectival and positioned. If, as I have argued elsewhere (Werbner, 2002a), diasporas are transnational communities of co-responsibility, recognizing their mutual indebtedness across national boundaries, we need to disclose where their identifications, the centres of their subjective universe, lie. Undoubtedly, the sufferings of New Yorkers touched people worldwide. But not everyone saw New York, as Ien Ang has so eloquently argued, as ‘their’ global city and New Yorkers as compatriots (see Ang, 2002). The Evil Attack on the Free World, in the rhetoric of western leaders, meant something different to those for whom the Manhattan skyline had a beauty and permanence of its own; who saw its towering skyscrapers not merely as the expression of unbridled capitalism, but as cathedrals of modernity, embodiments of the human imagination and its desire to transcend itself. By the same token, while westerners might share Muslim concern for Kashmiri, Palestinian or Iraqi victims of war, the pain felt by Muslims in the face of this suffering was one of shared selfhood. For liberals, the essential fragility of the capitalist economy compounded the horror of the mass murder. For most Muslims this economy was a side show, if not itself an evil global plot. Everyone recognized that the attack was symbolic, but only westerners fully comprehended its potentially devastating consequences.

While people might agree that an act is heinous, as an aesthetic, embodied experience its impact varies between moral communities. This was a critical aspect of the global conflict over *The Satanic Verses* affair. That conflict could be seen above all as a passionate argument about the aesthetics of the religious imagination. So, too, ideas about politics and leadership differ. For many postcolonial Pakistanis, politics, even

democratic politics, evokes a world of self-serving corruption and nepotism. As a result, they are deeply sceptical of all political leadership and state power. Yet they are passionate political actors themselves and so they go on believing that some place, somewhere, the ideal, exemplary political leader will emerge. Inevitably such a leader is envisioned as a charismatic saviour, bearing a religious mantle. In a society in which most people are deeply pious, dissent is often couched in religious terms. The Prophet Muhammad was the exemplary leader for all times: legislator, holy man, warrior and statesman. In speeches made in the diasporic public sphere in Manchester, outstanding individuals, from Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, to Imran Khan, the great cricketer turned philanthropist and politician, are repeatedly mythologized in local narratives as exemplary, unique, God-chosen persons.

This stress on exemplary personhood in Pakistani political culture also makes sense of the ambivalences surrounding Saddam Hussein during the 1991 Gulf war, or Osama bin Laden in the international crisis a decade later. A Pakistani survey in October 2001 found that – against the judgement of their own president – 88 percent of the people of Pakistan believed there was no evidence linking Osama bin Laden to the World Trade Center bombings (Gallup Pakistan, 2001, reported on *Panorama*, BBC, 2001). In his posture and appearance, bin Laden projects the classic image of a pious, saintly Muslim world renouncer, a man who has abandoned his great wealth to live an austere existence in the desert for the sake of Islam, dedicating his life to the battle against western domination. He speaks calmly and looks peaceful, almost ethereal. Such a man could not by definition be capable of mass murder. Nor, for many British Pakistanis, was it conceivable that *any* Muslim would be capable of such an atrocity. Hence the bizarre but nevertheless widely believed Jewish conspiracy theory, with the Jews accused, simultaneously, of being the evil arm of American imperialism and its hidden destroyers. Where westerners might see in bin Laden an evil megalomaniac, ordinary Muslims see a courageous *mujahid* contending with the evil forces that oppress Palestinians, Iraqis and Kashmiris, and which desecrate the holy lands of Islam.

This Manichean discourse of good and evil hides other diasporic vulnerabilities. Pakistanis in the UK are sensitive to the opinions of friends and relatives on the subcontinent. They watch Pakistani satellite TV (there are several stations) and read Pakistani daily newspapers. They fear for the fate of their families back home if violence and civil war erupt there. They identify with the plight of the Afghan refugees, the Kashmiris and the Palestinians. They were aware, more than most westerners, of the murderous record of the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan after they took power with the fall of the communist regime. No wonder, then, that neither the smouldering ruins of Ground Zero, still emitting acrid smoke over the Manhattan skyline weeks after the devastation, nor the deadly and

mysterious anthrax attack on the USA, nor even the rational pragmatism of the Pakistan President Musharraf, seemed to them to justify the Allied war against Afghanistan. The alliance with Arab regimes created so painstakingly by the UK and the USA was treated by many British Pakistanis with cynical scepticism.

Partly the scepticism reflects the fact that Pakistani settlers in the UK share with other South Asians, as well as with West Indian immigrant-settlers, an oppositional postcolonial sensibility. This generates a suspicion *in principle* of the publicly declared good intentions of successive British governments. The postcolonial sensibility meshes with the Islamic utopianist one to create a political perspective suspicious of the good intentions of the West in general.

In itself, this does not amount to a clash of civilizations. After all, within the West too, perceptions of the conflict have differed. Hence, in the initial stages of the crisis, virtually all commentators on the terror attack in the British Press, Muslim and English alike, tended to preface their columns with reminders of the sufferings of Palestinians and Iraqi children, and of the USA's complicit role in the rise of Saddam Hussein, bin Laden and the Taliban. It is evident that neither Pakistani nor western intellectual interpretations of the current crisis are uniform. They are *meroscopic*: partial, positioned, sited and inevitably perspectival political visions.

## THE VULNERABILITY OF DIASPORA

The tragedy is, that in the decade since the Rushdie affair and Gulf war, the majority of Pakistanis in Manchester had moved on, away from religious radicalism to more positive activism for human rights. Young British Pakistanis were increasingly taking their full place in society. With the first generation of immigrants on the point of retirement, the days of strangerhood seemed to be over for many. True, there were still deprived inner city neighbourhoods in the UK where unemployed Pakistani youth clashed with police and racist groups. This happened in the northern towns of Oldham and Bradford in the summer of 2001, causing massive destruction of property and ending in fragile truces. But in the more affluent suburbs of Manchester or London, young, British born Asians, including Muslims, were entering university and embarking on managerial and professional careers.

The new global vulnerabilities that were revealed by the intensification of conflicts in the Middle East, affected not only Muslims but Asians more generally, and even diasporic Jews living in the West. Such vulnerabilities raise the question whether members of diaspora communities can ever fully cease to be strangers.

In a key article, Khachig Tololyan (2000) highlights the historical rise and fall of Armenian diaspora centres. The history of the Armenian diaspora is one marked by repeated expulsions, on the one hand, and periodic consolidations of new diasporic centres, on the other. The transition Tololyan identifies in the modern era is from exilic nationalism to diasporic transnationalism. But equally, one can view this history as one marked by alternation between alienation and consolidation, persecution, exile and peaceful sojourning. During periods of consolidation, diasporas not only prosper, but establish powerful transnational organizations and community institutions. This long and complex history means that at any one time, dominant, emergent and dying diaspora communities co-exist simultaneously in different parts of the world, some in a state of ascendancy and others, in decline.

## THE PREDICAMENT OF DIASPORA

What must it be like to feel under siege in one's own home? The predicament for Muslims has been one of a diasporic minority having to make impossible choices. In a postnational world, the meaning of loyalty to the state has arguably been rendered ambiguous. Short of being a paid spy or terrorist, how is disloyalty to be construed? In recent years, Muslims in the UK have developed progressively focused agendas to fight for their rights as British citizens. They actively participate in electoral politics in large numbers and field a large number of local and increasingly national candidates in the different parties. The 'ethnic' vote is a significant factor in British electoral politics.

In ordinary times, the struggle for British citizenship rights and the long-term diasporic commitment to Muslim communities overseas, especially those suffering from human rights abuses (as in Bosnia, Kashmir or Palestine), are not necessarily conflicted. South Asian Muslims living in the West subscribe to the Islamic juridical position that since western democracies allow freedom of worship, Muslims owe complete allegiance to the state, defined as a 'Land of Treaty'. Only a small minority subscribes to alternative Islamic interpretations that either forbid Muslims to settle permanently in the 'Land of Unbelief' and serve in its armed forces, or define Muslims as the vanguard of Islam in the 'Land of Preaching' (see Werbner, 2000).

To the extent that the discourse of Islamic dissent is grasped as a utopian fantasy with no practical organizational backup, then young Pakistanis who join extremist Islamist organizations, usually imported from the Middle East, are a newly emergent, deviant minority. The Taliban version of neofundamentalism (see Roy, 1994) is, in the UK, connected to the

minority Deobandi Muslim stream which takes a politically quiescent stance in the UK, as it did historically in India (Metcalf, 2002). While the rhetoric deployed by this movement is a militant one of global jihad, the stress is on the inner jihad of personal purification (Metcalf, 2001). Most British Asian Muslims arrived in the UK as economic labour migrants and are committed to bourgeois economic advancement for themselves and their children, not to violent dissent.

For youngsters who have grown up in the UK, however, the sense of cosmic malaise may be grasped as a reality to be actively changed. In this, they are somewhat set apart from the underprivileged youngsters who join Asian youth gangs and who engage in violent turf fights in the inner city, sometimes with other Asian youth gangs, sometimes with white skinheads affiliated to British fascist parties. These latter youngsters may have little intention of joining a holy war in Afghanistan or Palestine. As in the rest of the Muslim world, young Islamist activists are as a rule educated and relatively privileged. In Tipton, one of the prisoners arrested in Afghanistan was a law student, the other a computer student. The young Pakistani suicide bombers in Tel Aviv in 2003 were also educated. The mistake is, then, to explain these youngsters' Islamic radicalism as the product of personal racist victimization or deprivation in the UK. If Islamic millennialism is a sense of false, fantastical empowerment in the face of perceived, almost cosmic disempowerment, it attracts those who in their own eyes are potentially powerful (that is, young, educated, successful) but have no way of affecting world politics.

The problem for Muslim diaspora leaders is how to control these young and potentially dangerous Islamic radicals *while continuing to sustain and perpetuate their own millennial rhetoric* with its demonization of America, Israel and the West and its dreams of world Islam.<sup>11</sup> Among British Pakistanis the social democratic camp enunciates a moderate counter-rhetoric (for example, Mahmood, 2001). But in times of international crisis, whether moderation can displace the extravagant but exciting and empowering virtual discourses of global Islam remains an open question. The fact that British Muslims feel secure enough in the UK to enunciate a discourse of political dissent in times of crisis attests to their rootedness in British society. Yet their ambivalence is tangible. It was, after all, Tony Blair, the UK Prime Minister, who invoked the image of a tolerant, peaceful Islam. But almost simultaneously, other Labour Government Ministers were perpetuating myths about Islam and its oppressive treatment of women, the unwillingness of local Muslims to integrate, even to learn English, their self-exclusion, in what emerged as a garbled set of racialized stereotypes (Werbner, 2002b).

On the surface, nothing much has changed for British Pakistanis and they increasingly go about their daily business as usual. The dozens of Pakistani-owned restaurants in Rusholme, Manchester's Asian commercial

centre, glittering with their colourful neon signs, are packed with English lovers of Indian food, and British Asians are increasingly prominent in business and the arts. But events leave a trace. They become 'texts', in the sense suggested by Paul Ricoeur (1981). Taken out of time and place, they affect the reading not only of the past and present, but also of the future. The tragedy is that the global crisis precipitated on September 11 will leave its own trace, a sediment of alienation and radical estrangement which will impact in future on the way people conceive of their identity and citizenship in their country of settlement. Ultimately, living in the diaspora is a matter of continually negotiating the parameters of minority citizenship. For British Muslims, this process, which is usually peaceful, has tragically had to lurch from one confrontation to another, from the Rushdie affair to the Gulf War to the present crisis. The hope is that each time the signs are of a more mature grasp by local diaspora Muslims of what it means to be a British citizen in a global world. The danger is that diaspora Muslims in the West will increasingly withdraw from positive engagement with their English neighbours, and lose faith in the capacity of their country of settlement to recognize what they perceive to be their deepest moral commitments and aspirations.

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### **Notes**

- 1 September 11, 2001, generated an outpouring of scholarly commentaries written from a wide variety of disciplinary perspectives, an aspect of the event highlighted by academic websites (e.g. Social Science Research Council (SSRC), 2002), journal issues (e.g. *Ethnicities*, 2002, *American Anthropologist*, 2002) and books (e.g. Ali, 2002, Hershberg and Moore, 2002, Calhoun et al., 2002). In this article, I add my own perspective as an anthropologist who has studied the South Asian Muslim diaspora in the UK. Versions of the article were given as public lectures at the University of California, Irvine, in February 2002, the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, in October 2002 and the Universities of Western Sydney and Melbourne in July 2003. Parts of it also appeared in the *Times Higher Educational Supplement*, 14 December 2001, pp. 31–32, and an earlier version remains on the September 11 page of the SSRC website (SSRC, 2002).
- 2 J.C. Davis's fourfold classification of utopian forms (arcadia, the perfect city, the moral commonwealth and millennium) is discussed by Levitas (1990: 161–4). On the ideal city see also Kumar (1991: 11 *passim*). The ideal city, Plato's republic, differs from the heavenly city, the millennial Jerusalem, in the

- extent to which it is achieved through rationality as against divine redemption. The Muslim ideal city-state combines aspects of both.
- 3 Hence Davis reports of the Bruderhof Church millennial group that the demand from its members was 'for both outward and inward conformity and ultimately perfect predictability. If necessary, motivations, appetites and desires will be conditioned to that end' (1981: 387). The 'education of desire' has also been used to refer to the way that utopias function as consciousness-raising devices for channeling aspirations (Levitas, 1990: 174). It has been suggested that utopias are expressive of a universal desire for a better way of living (Levitas, 1990: 181).
  - 4 According to Lindholm (1996: 172–3): 'The concept of the redeemer is not Quranic, but was generated out of Christian apocalyptic beliefs and Muslim legend after the assassination of Ali.' See also Ahmed (1976), Gilsenan (1982: 143), Lindholm (1996: 129–130, 270), Rahman (1966: 133).
  - 5 Roy (1994: 64) argues that, '[b]ecause there is no theory of original sin in Islam, man can create God's Kingdom on earth'. The vision of the golden age in Islam draws primarily on oral traditions and historical reconstructions.
  - 6 Gilles Kepel (1985) describes the 'four horses of the apocalypse' seen as enemies of Islam by one Islamicist group, which comprise 'the Jew', the 'Crusade', 'Communism' and 'Secularism'. During the Iranian revolution the USA was described as the 'Great Satan' (Beeman, 1983: 191–217).
  - 7 See <http://www.islam.org.au/articles/23/index.htm>. Islam is a missionizing, inclusive religion, and much of the Qu'ran consists of eschatological promises of heavenly redemption for true believers, and hell and damnation for backsliders and unbelievers, as in *Sura Al Fath* (Victory): 'For those who disbelieve in Allah and His apostle We have prepared a blazing fire' (48: 14). The Quranic basis for Islamic world domination rests on very few passages. Of these *Al Nasr* (Help) consists of three verses only: 'When Allah's help and victory come (or in another version, 'When triumph comes from God and victory'), and you see men embrace His faith in multitudes, give glory to your Lord and seek his pardon' (110: 1–2). Similarly in *Sura* 48: 28: 'It is he who sent forward His apostle with guidance and the true faith, so that he may exalt it above all religions' (in another version, 'to make it prevail over all other religions'). *Sura Al Anfal* (The Spoils) enjoins: 'Make war on them until idolatry is no more and Allah's religion reigns supreme' (or: 'fight them until there is no persecution and all religions are only for Allah' (8: 39)). Interpretations of such verses differ between moderates and militants.
  - 8 The three were sent back to the UK in 2004 after lengthy negotiations.
  - 9 Such allegations were widely made by the British press and, as reported in the press, by non-British western security services. They were ultimately denied by Scotland Yard and MI5 after a series of arrests of allegedly Muslim extremists was followed by their release in the absence of concrete evidence. In December 2002, Pakistani suspects of terror were also arrested in Scotland. Since 2001, the arrest or administrative detention of suspected 'terrorists' has increased in the UK, and has been subject to continuous debate in the Asian press.
  - 10 This rumour spread throughout the Muslim world, appearing first in a Jordanian newspaper, and posted almost immediately on the worldwide web. Thomas Friedman, columnist for The New York Times, suggests it reflected

scepticism in the Muslim world that ‘Arabs could have pulled off something as complex as September 11’. ‘It is a sad fact,’ he comments, ‘that Arab self-esteem is very low these days’. Hence bin Laden is seen as the one man ‘not intimidated by America’s overweening power, as the one man who dared to tell certain Arab rulers that they had no clothes, and as the one man who did something about it’ (Friedman, 2002: 110, 111).

- 11 The extent of intergenerational authority of Pakistani parents over their British-born children is one widely debated in the British press at present, both in relation to the northern British riots and the issue of arranged, and especially ‘forced’ marriages.

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