'Everyday mosque politics': the Islamisation of space, a complex and negotiated politics

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Abstract

This paper explores the politics surrounding the Islamisation of space in an area of 'non-conflict' to reveal the complexities of '*everyday* mosque politics'. It moves past simplistic Self-Other, insider-outsider binaries of 'mosque conflict' literature to engage the multiplicity, complexity and fluidity inherent in constructions of identity, belonging and 'community' in an analysis that recognises the 'throwntogetherness' of place. Several interviews with local residents are considered through an in-depth, self-reflexive Discourse Analysis supplemented with elements drawn from 'Assemblage' to ground processes of social construction in material reality. The paper presents a more complex account of the negotiations surrounding the Islamisation of space: one that exists in between the binary positions adopted in cases of conflict and in which inclusions and exclusions co-exist, with tolerance and multiculturalism emerging as dominant discourses. Finally, it presents the open and processual nature of these politics.

Keywords: 'everyday mosque politics'; tolerance; multiculturalism; Islamisation of space; discursive assemblage

Introduction

A wealth of literature engages the politics surrounding the Islamisation of space – '(re)inscription of 'old' space with 'new' cultural (Islamic) meanings (McLoughlin 2006: 1045). Conflict issues dominate, as in the special issue of the Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies on *Mosque conflicts in Europe* (Cesari 2005) and *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe: Policy Issues and Trends* by Stefano Allievi (2009). In Britain, 'Mosque Conflicts' purportedly reveal major fears for an eroding 'British way-of-life', and a tendency within the ethnic majority to interpret the Islamisation of space as an ever-expanding (Islamic) threat to the 'English way-of-life' (Eade 1996; McLoughlin 2006: 1046-8). For John Eade, it provokes widespread reflection on the meaning of 'community' and identity at multiple levels, especially the national (1996: 226). For Jocelye Cesari, the level of resistance it meets correlates directly with the degree of acceptance that Islam enjoys (2005: 1018). For Kevin Dunn, mosque conflicts are interwoven with dichotomising socio-spatial constructions of identity, belonging and 'community', resting upon narrow articulations of Self-Other binaries (2001: 304; 2004: 45). However, sustained focus on conflict has granted undue salience to simplistic binaries in these constructions. There is a need to move beyond them; to explore their complexity, fluidity and multiplicity in relation to the Islamisation of space.

This study took place in Epsom, an affluent part of Surrey, situated on the commuter-belt of London (EEBC 2005a: 8) and in its Town Ward in particular where, in 2008, a martial-arts Dojo was converted into a 'Masjid' (EEIS 2010), called 'Islamic Centre'.[1] No significant conflict ensued other than an 'egging' of users by an individual in September 2009 (Islamophobiawatch 2009). Furthermore, with 'Muslims' representing 1.8 per cent of the

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[1] This Masjid, or 'mosque', is not what Allievi would call a *real* 'Masjid' or a 'purpose-built mosque', which he associates with possessing visible signs such as a dome or one or two minarets (2010: 16). The signs on this mosque, or rather Islamic Centre, are limited to its plaque.

ward population (EEBC 2005b), its non-conflictual nature, unlike McLoughlin's study (2006), cannot be attributed to a significant spatial concentration of Muslims locally (Cesari 2005: 1019).

During this piece of research a controversial mosque proposal underway in nearby Worcester Park was refused planning permission (Pepper 2012), its blog www.worcesterparkblog.org.uk becoming an online social-space for conflict:

> I think people on here are getting carried away thinking 100% of WP residents are dead set against this […] To me, Britishness is being tolerant, diverse, forward thinking, self-effacing, humorous, leading the world on lots of things [it] doesn't mean [a] cup 'o tea, white skin and a stinking pub.

'Native Worcester Parker' 17/08/12

> It is entirely normal, in any society, to be wary of alien cultures […] when such cultures promote homophobia, the repression of women and sectarianism then how can you be surprised that they are unwelcome? […] Having a mosque in Worcester Park is part of the declared intention to convert the whole World to Islam.

'David' 25/08/12

Such texts exemplify the narrow polarising positions adopted in conflict situations that reduce analysis to a politics of inclusion or exclusion, something this paper moves past.

This paper positions itself within the existing literature concerning constructions of identity, belonging, 'community', space and place which explore their fluidity, processuality and multiplicity. This perspective allows for a more accurate account of the politics surrounding the Islamisation of space that moves past shrouding binaries. The research explores several local residents' interpretations of the Islamisation of space, examining how it is involved in their constructions of identity, belonging and 'community' alongside how they negotiate such constructions in relation to the Islamic Centre and its users[2] and whether the limited change to the centre's building form affects their interpretations. To ground processes of social construction in material reality (Elder-Vass 2012), this paper's analytical framework (Discourse Analysis) has been supplemented with elements drawn from 'Assemblage' (DeLanda 2006).

Literature and theoretical frame

Islamophobia and 'mosque conflict'

No universally agreed definition of 'Islamophobia' exists (Kaya 2011: 7). Acknowledging the Crusades, Cesari and Allen present it as a 'modern and secular anti-Islamic discourse and

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[2] Mosque-goer/user – although arguably problematic, as it is not un-conative, the term will be used as a way to refer to an individual who uses the Islamic Centre in a way that is separate from and does not directly attach them with a 'Muslim' identity.

practice appearing in the public-sphere with the integration of Muslim immigrant communities and intensifying after 9/11' (2006: 5). This fluid, 'modern' discourse is 'reinforced' and 'reinvented' through stereotypes of Muslims and Islam as: intolerant of other faiths and 'ways-of-life'; militant, terrorist 'bearded men with guns'; and alien to Western or democratic society (Dunn 2001: 292-4). As 'cultural racism', it depends heavily on discourses of Otherness inseparable from colour, or 'biological', racisms, with these similar processes of racialisation informing one another (Modood 2005: 6-7, 13).

Literature on the politics surrounding the Islamisation of space has largely concerned conflict. Kevin Dunn (2001; 2003; et al. 2007) examined how local discourses of opposition to mosque development in Sydney, Australia, were informed by Western-media discourses of Islamophobia and drew on dichotomising constructions of what constituted a 'local citizen' and the 'local community' (2001: 304; et al. 2007: 569). With 'narrow' articulations of the nation or locality these constructions unproblematically utilised a series of Self-Other binaries whereby 'we' (Australian Christian or White) meant the Self, while 'they' ('non-Australian' Muslims) became the Other (2001: 300-5; 2004: 38; et al. 2007: 569, 574). Similarly, mosque supporters deployed 'narrow' constructions of Muslims as 'Aussie- and locals-too' through a discourse of multiculturalism (Dunn 2004: 45). Dunn also uses Hage's (1998: 42-6) concept of the 'spatial manager' to describe those who, positioning themselves in an imagined cultural majority, claim a greater sense of belonging than they afford cultural minorities, feeling thereby empowered to define 'difference' and who should be managed or tolerated (2001: 292; 2004: 38); the implications of tolerance, however, requires further exploration. Dunn rightly argues (2004: 46) that these negotiations present 'the local level as an instructive site at which to examine issues of nationalism and belonging'. However, a focus on conflict and binaries conceals the fluidity, multiplicity and complexity of '*everyday* mosque politics' which shifting the analytical focus onto the 'mundane' arguably reveals.

This latter focus can fully capture the importance of the 'visual claim' (Eade 1996: 223) made by the Islamisation of space: 'storefront-mosques' occupying mundane buildings (i.e. an old gym), 'inconspicuous' to non-attenders and thus 'absent' in their 'presence' (Jones 2010: 766), do not create tensions like a purpose-built mosque can, as a dome and minarets become visible signifiers of a 'mosque' (Allievi 2010: 16). Thus, the multiplicity of peoples' perceptions of a building's aesthetic image in their everyday lives requires analytical attention.

Conceptualising belonging and 'community', space and place and identity

Belonging is a sense, a feeling of being 'rooted' in a place (place-belongingness), and also, a discursive resource which constructs, claims, justifies or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion and exclusion (the politics of belonging). Thus, it is an inherently geographical concept (Antonsich 2010: 649; Mee and Wright 2009). First, comprehending belonging as a *sense* accentuates its affective nature. Antonsich identifies contributory factors: auto-biographical, relational (social- and personal-ties), cultural, economic, legal (citizenship) and 'length-of-stay in a place' (2010: 647-9). Secondly, belonging is not a status but a *doing* (Skribis et al. 2007: 262), through reiteration of 'everyday practices' that construct a sense of

stability (Yuval-Davis 2006: 203). Belonging becomes *political* when used in the 'dirty work of boundary maintenance' (Crowley 1999: 30), between those 'claiming' and those empowered to 'grant' it (Antonsich 2010: 650). Thirdly, belonging is a *relational process*, developing from negotiations about who/what belongs (Mee 2009: 843). Throughout, it is inescapably multiple, not zero-sum, since people claim multiple *belongings*, at multiple levels. In sum, interwoven with identity, belonging is multiple, relational, and exists in a constant state of 'becoming' that must be continually negotiated (Antonsich 2010: 651).

The concept of 'community' is approached, in this project, as a discourse and a form of experience about belonging (Delanty 2007: 188). In this sense, 'community' at an imagined group-level (Anderson 1983) with social relations and symbolically-constructed boundaries which are not necessarily national (Rose 1990), is, Delanty asserts, 'more about belonging than boundaries' (2007: 189). Discursively constructed boundaries, however, retain significance, in terms of who defines 'community', how and why (Valentine 2001) and so this research asks each individual what 'community' *means* to them. Furthermore, as individuals have multiple place- and interest-based affinities alongside connections to the human and non-human world, communities become organised through a network of overlapping relations (Murphy and Kuhn 2006). For Murphy and Kuhn, the form, boundary and power relations of 'community' are fluid and dynamic, open to (re)negotiation and (re)definition to become more inclusive or exclusive. In sum, 'community' is a discursive construction that brings the related constructions of belonging, identity and space into play.

Space and place, in this research, are also associated with dynamism, characterised by heterogeneity and openness (Anderson 2008: 228): the product of *interrelations* between identities and entities that are *co-constitutive*; a sphere in which *different trajectories co-exist*; and in a continual process of *becoming* (Massey 2005: 9-10). Places are, then, 'events', particular configurations within the wider power-geometries (Massey 1993: 291) and topographies of space, which represent the temporary conjunction of the previously unrelated, a 'constellation of *processes*' rather than a thing (Massey 2005: 141). The term 'trajectory' emphasises processual change in a phenomenon, whether 'social/discursive' or 'natural/material'; but also its unique temporality as Massey positions place as constructed across overlapping spatialities and temporalities. Place becomes an encounter, an experience that is shaped by the endless everyday negotiations imposed as trajectories intersect; thus *experiences* of a place need examining alongside the *relations* through which identities are forged (2005: 135-9, 154). Borrowing from Gill Valentine, residents 'constantly negotiate' the Islamisation of space, position themselves, 'physically, socially, politically and metaphorically in relation to others' (1999: 51). This approach to space and place allows for its relational examination, incorporates its fluidity, multiplicity and complexity, whilst bridging the discursive-material binary.

The concept of identity is pivotal to analysing the Islamisation of space and, in particular, 'race' and 'racialisation' which will receive specific attention, with points of departure suggested for other identities: class (Brine and Waller 2004), national (Billig 1995), ethnic (Karner 2007), and gender (Butler 1990). Social constructivism understands social identities as discursive constructions, not natural or biological givens (Dunn 2001: 292),

Butler (1990: 33) demonstrates how identity is a *performance*, an accumulation of reiterated statements or actions. Defining oneself in relation to others or Others (Said 1978) is relational, constantly negotiated (Brah 2007a: 254), and inherently multiple as we are positioned across multiple processes of identification which shift and configure into a particular pattern specific to the moment and setting (Brah 2007b: 132-9, 144). The intersectional approach sees identities as mutually-informing 'social-divisions', since 'classes are always gendered and racialised and gender is always classed and racialised and so on' (Anthias 2009: 5, 13). However, modelling identity as an assemblage better incorporates the fluidity and dynamism of identities being drawn into relation for particular moments and settings, rather than constantly intersecting one another; thus, identities are emergent.

The materiality of 'race' (Saldanha 2006: 18) is evident whenever anatomy or phenotype are invoked, through discourses by signification of signs, bodies and space (Butler 1993; 2006: 12). Saldanha also draws on notions of embodiment in which social constructions (or discourses) and corporealities of the body are 'pleated together' under the embodied-Self (Teather 1999: 8). She is careful to say that 'nobody "has" race, but that bodies are racialised [and thus] "race" should not be signified away' (2006: 18, 21). Swanton (2010), concerned with the *affectivity* of racialisation, stresses the importance of 'everyday' encounters in his 'racism of assemblages'. He presents 'race' as emergent and performed not only through bodies but also, the force of material-objects (cars, rucksacks, veils, minarets) – as 'everything can be racialised' (2010: 2339). The implications of these understandings exceed the construction of 'race' itself, blurring the social-material binary whilst accentuating the relational, fluid and dynamic nature of identity.

'Assemblage' and 'assemblage thinking'

Assemblage is a theoretically adaptive idea, not a discrete theory, which emphasises formation as much as form; an analytic, descriptive lens and/or orientation used as part of a more general 'reconstitution of the social which seeks to blur divisions of social-material, near-far, and structure-agency' (Anderson and McFarlane 2011: 124; McFarlane 2011). Assemblages describe heterogeneous 'wholes' comprised of the relations between human (social) and non-human (material) elements or 'components', and have a more or less consistent identity, albeit one continuously forged through dynamism (Palmás 2007: 9), as explored in my discussion of DeLanda's (2006) 'Assemblage Theory' below. An assemblage's properties emerge from the interaction between parts, each of which emerges from interactions among entities operating on smaller scales (DeLanda 2006: 5, 107-118). As these constituent parts are place in *external* relation to one another, an assemblage is not an aggregation of its parts but is rather 'the actual exercise of their capacities' – the relations between them which can act to (de)territorialise an assemblage, (de)stabilising its 'identity' (2006: 12). DeLanda's strictly realist standpoint aside, his approach helps to resolve the paradox inherent to relational thought, between stability of form and dynamism of change (Adey 2010: 185).

For Adey, 'assemblage-thinking' comes with an ethos: one addressing the complexity of a phenomenon; that is committed to process-based ontologies that contest conventional

explanations by focusing on materially-diverse configurations; and that emphasise the open-ended, unfinished nature of social formations (2012: 175). Such an ethos complements my theoretical framework and is essential to the aims of my research. I also model Space and Place as an assemblage, as this complements Massey's conceptualisation of them as open, relational, unfinished, heterogeneous and precarious achievements (Lester 2011: 1470) .

Methodology

This project concentrates on the immediate residential area surrounding the Islamic Centre, Hook Road, Epsom, with research undertaken between July 2012 and February 2013. The choice of location rests on three interlinking factors. First, the Islamisation of Space occurred relatively recently (2008). Secondly, no significant conflict ensued. Thirdly, many residents in the immediate area both encounter and thereby negotiate their understandings of identity, belonging and 'community' in relation to the Islamic Centre. The decision to locate my study in a 'non-conflict' area was a conscious endeavour to access the complex negotiations individuals undertake whilst navigating mundane sites of their 'everyday' lives; thus allowing participants to go beyond simplistic binaries associated with, and inherent to, social conflict whilst examining the affectivity of the Islamic Centre. The complexity of individuals' everyday negotiations of identity, belonging and 'community' surrounding the Islamisation of space made a qualitative stance (Discourse Analysis) to data collection and analysis essential. A small sample size, sixteen questionnaires and seven interviews, suited my project as it was not aiming to produce generalisations applicable to the entire local population (Paltridge 2006: 216), but rather, identify significance in complex social discourses. Moreover, participants' identities (included after their quotations) were generated from self-profiling data, instead of pre-determined categories.[3] Six participants were selected for interview, based upon their questionnaire responses, to explore emerging themes. While the study utilises a 'diverse' and unrepresentative sample, one extra participant was strategically sought. For me, it was important to include at least one participant who used the Islamic Centre so as not to marginalise and exclude a particular group under study. Finally, participants in this project, prospective and involved, were informed of its interest in changes in Epsom without specifying the Islamic Centre, in order to reduce 'the wake' of the project, and so limit the chance of influencing local politics surrounding the Islamic Centre.

Discourse Analysis (DA)

Conceptually, DA has evolved critically since Foucault defined the term 'discourse' as the 'practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak' (1972: 49); and it is no longer necessary to 'believe in the discursive construction of reality to regard what people say as a source of insight *about* reality' (Cameron 2012: 17). Conceptualising discourse as 'contributing to' the production, transformation, and reproduction of objects and social life actively relates language to reality by constructing meanings for it rather than passively referring to objects taken as given in reality (Fairclough 1992: 41-2). Discursive practices are constrained, however, as they take place in a constituted material reality with pre-constituted objects and social subjects. Conversely, their dialectical relationship means constitutive

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[3] The 'open' questionnaire included an 'identity box' in which participants could freely describe their identity.

processes impact on pre-constituted reality (1992: 60). So, I understand discourse as essential to conceptualising 'social' and 'material' reality, whilst accepting that it is not the sole source of the speakers' reality.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) highlights naturalisation in the 'ordinary talk' of participants: when reality is presented as simply 'the way things are', rather than shaped by social practices that might be questioned or challenged. In either case, reality results from particular actions which serve particular interests. The central claim of CDA is that the way a person chooses to present certain realities is not random but ideologically patterned with 'hidden agenda(s)' (Cameron 2012: 123-4). Thus, social identities are socially-constructed rather than 'natural', and language, whatever else it accomplishes, is an act of identity, the *performers* conveying what kind of people they are (Paltridge 2006). In that sense, pronouns such as we/us/our and they/them are used decisively by individuals in their identity performances. So I understand talk as deployed *strategically* (Cameron 2012: 158).

I conducted a 'retrospective' (Paltridge 2006: 197) analysis of participants' talk (oral discourse), with interviews (re)constructed as written transcripts: these 'texts' become 'the discursive units of analysis', treated as material manifestations of their discourse (Phillips and Hardy 2002: 4). Transcripts include repetitions, false starts, and markers ('you know'), since *all* of the talk, whether recurring or obscure, must serve some purpose (Cameron 2012). The transcription process aimed to achieve accurate representations; however I recognise my role in their production (Cameron 2012: 43). DA privileges 'naturally occurring texts' as actual examples of language in use and preferable sources of data (Phillips and Hardy 2002: 70) because 'casual conversation is a critical site for the social construction of reality' (Eggins and Slade 1997). In line with Potter and Wetherell's (1987) study of individuals' construction of 'race', I treat my texts as 'naturally occurring data'.[4] While 'researcher-instigated discourse' bears some indeterminate relation to everyday-talk, according to Phillips and Hardy (2002: 70-2), when research interviews concern *the individual*, they can be treated as 'naturally occurring texts'. Finally, my analysis reflexively applies theory to interpret these texts which were examined inter-textually and contextually.

Discursive assemblage(s)

I approach social discourse[5] as an emergent assemblage – a social-*material* entity – on two interconnected levels: first, my transcripts are the material manifestation of participants' social discourses comprising particular assemblages of sentences, words and sounds; second, their social discourses draw on, and are affected by, material reality, and so their particular reality is constructed in this dialectic relationship. As a discursive assemblage, the emergent whole, the social discourse, is constituted through an exercise of the capacities of its component-parts, both discursive and material: spaces and places, things, bodies, social identities and other discursive representations (DeLanda 2006: 9). Importantly, a component

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[4] Importantly, I recognise that these 'texts' have been shaped by a generic structure, that of the written questionnaire.

[5] I say *social* discourse as it was produced between participants and me during the research encounter.

removed from a discursive assemblage retains its identity due to its relations of 'exteriority' (2006: 10-11); or, if 'plugged' into another assemblage, its capacities may be exercised differently. Furthermore, discursive assemblages are infinite (assemblages comprised of assemblages), open not closed (with both relations to be made and capacities yet to be exercised, DeLanda 2011), volatile (with components acting to (de)territorialise the identity of an assemblage), and unique (the particular configuration of components at a particular point in time-space). To approach social discourse through an understanding of assemblage is to incorporate these characteristics of fluidity, multiplicity and complexity (DeLanda 2006: 24-5). In addition, drawing on CDA, discursive assemblages are configured *strategically*, not randomly; a particular assemblage is mobilised to produce particular meanings, concepts and understandings – a particular social discourse – for a particular purpose.

This piece of research centres on how the Islamisation of Space – the Islamic Centre in Epsom – has been *interpreted* by local residents. Modelling the Islamic Centre as a particular assemblage within the broader understanding of Space and Place as assemblages, is essential for analytically modelling how local residents draw on it differently as a component of discursive assemblages in constructing their *experience* of the locality (the negotiations surrounding spaces, identities, belongings, communities etc.). It is equally essential to model the Islamic Centre as a particular emergent assemblage itself, not simply to conceptualise how it consists of components which are both social/discursive and natural/material (building materials, capital, discourses, bodies and in particular its plaque – Massey 2005), but also to foreground how its component parts have the capacity to play, to differing extents, both 'expressive' and 'material' roles (DeLanda 2006: 22). While both role-types are related to causality, the latter focusing on causal interactions, it is the catalyst role that the former can spark which I will focus upon. 'Expressive' of meaning and identity, a component is transformed from a simple repository of ascribed meaning into an entity capable of emitting meaning; thus, the Islamic Centre becomes capable of *affect* – 'the capacity to affect another' (Swanton 2010: 2339; Tolia-Kelly and Crang 2010: 2310). Recognising the affectivity of the Islamic Centre permits examination of residents' negotiations surrounding it, in relational terms, making lucid the forces between human and non-human.

Reflexive analysis

Approaching this research as a reflexive process means interrogating my 'positionality'. First, as a local resident, an 'insider', with a sense of belonging in the field, maintaining a 'critical distance' is essential to securing an analysis that is 'sufficiently' critical (Walsh 2009: 80-1). Secondly, my 'positions' and at times multiple related identities (British-born, African-English, mixed-race, young male, English-speaking, middle-class, student…) impact on *my* research in ways that can never be fully traced: in my research questions, my interactions with participants, and my interpretation of the collected texts (Walsh 2009: 80). Identities and positions remain in a 'state of flux' during research (Srivistava 2006). How participants and I negotiate them during the research encounter will shape the nature of the texts produced and thereby our*selves* (Rose 1997: 316). Thus, 'positional space' (Cousin 2010: 15) throughout the research was fluid and negotiated, making my positionality integral to my analysis. While my analysis comprises *my* interpretations, and needs be approached critically, I argue that I

am appropriately placed to interpret them. 'Talk is always designed by those who produce it for the context in which it occurs; they are actively constructing the accounts they give for a certain kind of recipient in a particular situation' (Cameron 2012: 145). Accordingly, these texts were generated for my interpretation. Furthermore, I recognise that 'all knowledge is produced in specific circumstances and that those circumstances shape it in some way' (Rose 1997: 305). Therefore, the knowledges produced from *my* research are partial productions; 'situated knowledges' (Rose 1997: 305).

Analysis

'Multiculturalism' and 'Tolerance' emerged as common, and often intersecting, social discourses structuring residents' interpretations. 'Multiculturalism' can refer to particular discourses or social forms which incorporate marked cultural differences (Hesse 2002: 2). However, Pitcher suggests that it is neither stable nor coherent an entity although race finds expression in the 'politics of multiculturalism' through a racial politics fashioned from a lexicon of pluralism and diversity, constructing positions ranging between and across exclusive categories of identity and belonging, such as 'us' and 'them' (2009: 19-20). Recognising multiculturalism as a dominant discourse about coexistence and tolerance means paying attention to how these discourses are *used*. Writing in the American context, Wendy Brown maintains that tolerance is often uncritically held as a 'virtue' although, as a discourse, it 'inharmoniously' blends goodness, capaciousness and conciliation together with discomfort, judgement and aversion necessitated by something undesired. She repositions tolerance as an 'act of power' and normativity that positions and dominates others by setting limits. In effect, tolerance is a 'mode of incorporating and regulating the presence of a threatening Other within', which conceptually blurs the binary of identity/difference or inside/outside (2006: 26-7). In the British context, Wemyss (2009: 3-4) relates the tolerance discourse to notions of belonging, arguing that it privileges 'white experience' and makes the 'white subject' invisible by normalising it and simultaneously subjectifying the 'non-white other'. The following discussion affords a *space* for the differently positioned viewpoints of these local residents to confront one another (Gidley 2013), not only revealing the diversity of interpretations surrounding the Islamisation of space, but also important commonalities.

Identity: tolerating 'the Muslim'

Participants assembled a diverse range of discursive and material components within their social discourses to construct a 'Muslim' identity for mosque-goers: spaces (the Islamic Centre and Farhim Brothers store), corporealities (phenotypes and beards), things (clothing and foods), cultural practices (Friday Prayers) and discourses (of Islamophobia and Otherness). However, noticeable slippages were made in their use of pronouns. In addition, participants recognised a broader multiplicity of mosque-goers' identities in their constructions surrounding the Islamisation of space, assembling 'Muslim' identity components with other everyday components – including spaces (schools), discourses (of gender, masculinity, class, ethnicity and nationality) and practices (working, gardening and

greetings). In doing so, their discursive assemblages revealed participants' identities in relation to mosque-goers as well as to my positionality within the research encounter.

An extended extract from Max's social discourse illustrates not only the complexity of his negotiations surrounding the constructions of his own and mosque-goers' identities, but also how emergent and fluid they are with particular components being plugged in at particular points to produce particular meanings.

> it does feel a little bit weird when you drive past there on a Friday without thinking and there's suddenly all these people in their you know their full <u>regalia</u> or whatever it's called I can't think what it's called off the top of my head but it does look a bit weird and you think well you know they're not walking down the road sort of yeah right you know like threatening people or or:: they're just going about their business you can't have a go at people like that really […] but it is they've been lucky in Epsom because Epsom's more of a forgiving place it's got a little bit more class than some places and you know people let them get on with it I think people are on the same attitude as me as long as they're not annoying or intimidating anyone

> Max (sex, cars, money, football and women)

Max frequently engaged in processes of social differentiation between himself and mosque-goers. In the particular discursive assemblage above, he uses 'race' as a 'technology' (Swanton 2010), (re)constructing an 'everyday' encounter that racialised mosque-goers as 'Muslims' through productive relations between the site of the Islamic Centre ('there'), the cultural practice of Friday Prayers ('on a Friday') and their mode of dress ('their regalia'). His discursive assemblage accentuates the performativity and affectivity of these components; elsewhere in particular, 'Islamic' clothing has been deemed an 'overdetermined' and 'essentialised signifier' of Islamic culture and 'Muslimness' (Dyer 1999: 5). Furthermore, a discourse of Islamophobia is introduced by his use of a demonstrative pronoun – '*these* people' – prior to this utterance, thereby 'activating' (Gundel et al. 2004) components from a preceding discursive assemblage to reintroduce the notion of 'covered faces' alongside implied understandings of confrontations and potentially threatening encounters. The synergy (Saldanha 2006: 17) between components of the 'Muslim-identity' in Max's construction has emotional affect: the encounter makes him 'feel a little weird'. Introducing a discourse of 'strangeness' (Ahmed 2000), the strategic use of *look* – 'it does look a bit weird' – accentuates the materiality of the encounter, something to be seen and monitored (Yancey 2012: 1). Thirdly, Max's choice of 'you' generalises the experience – 'when you drive past there on a Friday' – and masks his position. An emotional boundary separates the mosque-goers, constructed as 'weird', therefore 'aberrant' and 'out of place' (Ahmed 2004: 7-8) in the local space, from himself, constructed as the 'norm', the 'centre point' from which difference can be perceived and measured, revealing the 'invisible' component of his discursive assemblage – *whiteness* (Garner 2007: 34, 43).

Throughout the extract, Max strategically deploys a social discourse of tolerance: first, to cope with the Islamisation of space and the mosque-goers; secondly, to manage these tolerated entities he would prefer not to exist – in Max's words, 'you know it's [Islamic Centre and its users] not ideal really is it?' First, Max's hesitations, false starts and pauses indicate care in presenting himself as a tolerant person. He used the discourse marker 'you know' to negotiate a 'common ground', should I make the correct inferences, so that *his* construction becomes jointly, rather than 'individually', made (Jucker and Smith 1998: 194, 196).

> these people don't cause trouble at these mosque you know you hear you know
> I'm not gonna sort of like urm have a go at them f for nothing you know

'You know' actively marks mosque-goers as no 'threat', therefore no cause for action, and finally, positions Max as a tolerant person. Secondly, Max's 'whiteness' is never directly mentioned but easily inferred from my (black) positionality as the racialised Other (Garner 2007). Reading a phenotypical difference off my body, he sorts our corporealities (Swanton 2010), and, with his gesture of apology, positioned me as the site of difference, grouped with other 'coloured people' and mosque-goers, to be tolerated by him, the '*white*-tolerator' (Brown, 2006: 44-5; Wemyss 2009).

> so you know if they're going to pick on the Muslims pick on all the coloured
> people ((gesture of apology towards me)) (2.0) urm you know pick on all the
> Eastern Europeans

Socially salient, his gesture demanded I actively manage my positionality. My silence met his tolerance with my own, blurring the tolerator-tolerated boundary. He then (re)negotiated his positionality within his social discourse of tolerance: a significant pause preceded his strategic toleration of 'Eastern Europeans' to return his whiteness to its previous position of 'invisibility' (Wemyss 2009: 137).

Max's social discourse of tolerance can be fruitfully compared with a discourse of multiculturalism which positions individuals as representatives of the group, wherewith tolerating the group becomes tolerating its representative-individual(s) (Brown 2006: 34). For Max, Islam is only tolerable on a generalising premise – '*you know* religion's not all bad'. Drawing on 'non-Muslim' aspects of identity among 'Muslim' acquaintances to extend his tolerance to mosque-goers:

> you know I don't I don't really particularly agree with their fanaticism but urm
> you know its urm urm .hhh if they it seems to do them alright you know I'm quite
> friendly with the boys up the road in the Farhim Brothers and you know they're
> nice blokes […] yeah the boys in there yeah you know all they do is work hard
> and you know they go to the mosque every Friday but you know I don't but you
> know they're nice blokes so you know you know you can't knock them religion's
> not all bad

Constructing a discursive assemblage of tolerance surrounding workers in a local halal grocery-store, the Farhim Brothers, he presented a partial commonality between himself and the shop workers by assembling 'working-class male masculinities': 'boys', 'nice blokes' and 'hard work' (Morgan 2004: 169; Seale and Charteris-Black 2008: 463). Nevertheless, components in this discursive assemblage acted to relationally construct a racialised identity for the shop workers through discourses of Islamophobia ('fanaticism') and cultural practices (Friday Prayers). Negotiating his tolerance involved assembling identities that were both inclusive *and* exclusive. His discursive assemblage illustrates how multiple identities were realised in negotiating his tolerance.

Finally, in Max's social discourse of tolerance a power-relationship emerged. Max's decision to tolerate the Islamisation of space, and by extension the mosque-goer's 'difference', is based on what Brown terms a 'licensing action' specifying conditions on which the tolerated will remain so (2006: 29). Max's constructed position as a local 'broker of tolerance' resonates with Dunn's (2001) 'spatial manager' concept; here, marginalisation led to monitoring and regulating 'difference'. First, Max saying 'the mosque […] has done really well it's slipped underneath the radar really' suggests the Islamisation of space should have been monitored. The military rhetoric connotes a perceived threat. Second, his 'fair play' grants them licence so long as others are not '<u>confronted</u> with a load of people with all their faces covered', or 'there will be trouble'. Currently non-threatening, not 'throwing' 'Muslimness' 'down everyone else's throats' nor 'annoying or intimidating anyone', but 'just going about their business', the mosque-goers are tolerated only if practising their 'difference' in a *depoliticised* and *private* fashion (Brown 2006: 46). Lastly, he constructed Epsom as a 'forgiving place', drawing on constructions of community, belonging and space. For Max, tolerance is a way of incorporating and regulating the presence of a potentially threatening Other Within (Brown 2006: 27).

In contrast, other participants engage critically with discourses-of-Islamophobia:

what I see in the news they are a complete opposite […] every Muslim now is like is trouble and you know is urm and a danger to our society and when you actually meet them in person it is a completely different matter […] they're just like any one of us like me you they're just like me you normal people

Johnny (British Citizen, Filipino roots, Family, Adapting)

Johnny described how everyday encounters with 'Muslims' who attend the Islamic Centre and those outside the local area challenged his previously held 'fear' of them ('I'm not so urm scared of them'). In constructing this position, he drew upon the research-encounter itself, suggesting 'Muslims' are just like 'us', 'normal people', as he slips between positional pronouns. Such a disavowal of social differences, however problematic, serves to challenge the equally strong positions present in Islamophobia. Johnny represents the potential for moving past a position of tolerance into more positive relations.

Belonging and community: multicultural and tolerated belongings

Belonging(s) were constructed and claimed by participants who discursively assembled a range of components for themselves and others, under a complex politics of belonging. Though these claims were unique, their components tended to include spaces (Islamic Centre, houses, streets, schools), things (passports, food), discourses (of Otherness, care, whiteness, neighbourliness) and everyday practices (greetings, mowing, casual conversation, gestures). 'Everyday' practices most commonly contributed a sense of 'community', frequently linking belonging in the locality to discourses of care (Mee 2009). Similarly, notions of 'community', often rooted in the spatiality of the locality, became tied to constructions of identity where the Islamisation of space, particularly the Islamic Centre, was a key component in discursively assembling a sense of identity, and of belonging, for the 'Muslim-community'; succinctly put by Sam:

> you know they know where they belong they they they've got a sense of identity
> a sense of belonging

<div align="center">Sam (independence, flexibility, family, British, architect)</div>

Furthermore, in the politics of belonging surrounding the Islamic centre, constructions of community, identity and belonging were multiple, as inclusions and exclusions were constantly engendering more complex belonging(s) for members of the 'Muslim-community'. However, my analysis will focus on how constructions of 'community' were understood and *used* rather than their diversity. Additionally, the importance of the act (or performance) in these constructions was revealed – they were something to be done (Skribis et al. 2007: 262). Finally, whilst interrelating and negotiating them, participants drew on my positionality, accentuating the processual nature of both belonging and 'community'.

David identified himself as a 'member of the local community', since 'playing a role in the community is quite an important thing for [him]'. A member of various social groups and local charities donor, 'community' for him 'centred on' his everyday interactions (greetings, brief conversations and gestures) on his way to work and the 'neighbourhood'. Like all participants, he saw 'multiple communities' present, himself a member of just some. David's social discourse was one of multiculturalism in which the racialised Other is incorporated into the 'we' of the nation, thereby affirming it through 'the difference of *stranger* cultures rather than against it' (Ahmed 2000: 95; Pitcher 2009: 95). Similarly indicating how processes of inclusion and exclusion co-exist, mosque-goers affirmed David's imagined 'we', the 'local-community'. David's constructions of 'community' were informed through understandings of his own and others' belongings in the local area, and involved complex negotiations surrounding the Islamisation of space. One particular discursive assemblage surrounding the Islamic Centre consolidated his identity as a member of the 'local community' alongside the mosque-goer, 'Mohammed', through such mundane practices as greetings ('I see him quite a lot […] obviously I give him a wave') and regular conversation ('I always stop in and am chatting with him'). Moreover, David constructed a sense of belonging locally for Mohammed, through discourses of neighbourliness and care.

> I go up pass there on the way to work and I always give it a look and think yeah
> he's doing a really good job here but he's in there a lot

David (a-political, local community member, no class, roots working class)

The act of *caring for* the Islamic Centre lawn affectively expresses a sense of belonging for Mohammed locally, so his contribution to the look of the neighbourhood – the *space of care* – gains David's appreciation in 'a good job here' (Mee 2009: 856). Again, 'look' accentuates the materiality of the lawn in affectively expressing Mohammed's belonging, constructed relationally through this spatialised 'everyday' encounter. However, in this discursive assemblage components also acted to construct Mohammed's 'Muslim identity' and position – 'he's in there a lot' – within a community where David does not *feel* he belongs: the Islamic Centre building is positioned as a site of belonging, a 'specialised area for them', and moreover,

> I'm all for getting <u>that</u> side of the community I think it's really important that we we integrate like that but I feel that there is a little bit you know I'm not excluded but urm you know but they're <u>different</u> […] they're different you know there's a <u>difference</u> there

However, Mohammed's belonging was also rooted in the local school, like David. Thus, David constructed multiple belongings for himself and Mohammed through identities rooted in spaces, practices and discourses, which were positioned through notions of 'community'. Such components have multiple intersecting boundaries, the fluid nature of which is accentuated by his frequent slippages between the pronouns 'we', 'them' and 'they'. Acts of 'community' and 'belonging' accentuated the fluid nature of David's boundaries as he situated the Islamic Centre in a 'wider religious thing [network]', associating only three members with the local 'community'.

> two or three of the people [mosque-goers] that I sort of see regularly […] and I know at prayers [...] at all stages of the day and you know urm there's a bigger influx but it's people that I don't you know associate with the community

Overall, David approaches the politics of belonging surrounding the Islamisation of space not as simple binary divisions but rather as complex and interrelated processes in which inclusions and exclusions exist side by side.

Similarly, Raymond, a self-identified Muslim, constructed the 'Muslim-community' as both inclusive and exclusive: despite drawing boundaries based on national identities, the Islamic Centre afforded these internal communities a shared-space (place-belonging) of common affiliation to a 'Muslim-community':

> Raymond: being a Muslim as you realise I go to the mosque over there I meet other people from other countries […] different nationalities yeah it can be from Bangladesh Pakistan and errr:: […] but they're all Muslim community […] I mean obviously but because of the space and things like that you cannot congregate in (1.0) <u>one</u> specific area

> Baker: but now you can?

> Raymond: now you can yes you can yeah

Discussing the Islamisation of space and its reception by the 'community' with Raymond, he described their relationship as one of tolerance.

> some months back where this person was very angry about somebody blocking the:: BUT as it happen because here the chairman says always be careful don't block people anybody's driveway […] these people have tolerated us (3.0) and we are part of the community […] SO DON'T GIVE THEM ANY reason […] that err they'll start (1.0) maybe hating:: us

<div align="center">Raymond (British, Mauritian, Muslim, Freedom of expression)</div>

He alone mentioned tolerance directly, but for Wemyss such a discourse 'is most visible to those it dominates' (2009: 13). Raymond perceived the 'community' as a 'whole' that encompassed other social groups and social divisions, situated in the locality:

> everybody has got their own what you like (1.0) they have got their own groups they have got their own (1.0) they have got their own religion […] but as a whole you are a community living in the surrounding in a sort of specified area regardless of whatever caste creed or colour they are

However, Raymond mentioned the relationship of tolerance when relaying advice given by the Islamic Centre's chairman; the view was only indirectly his. His utterance constructs a power relationship between the 'Muslim-community' and those others in the 'community-as-a-whole' and within which a 'licensing-action', ostensibly concerning frequent parking issues, underlies the tolerance awarded to the 'Muslim-community' as it could 'give them a reason' to remove it. And so, both the 'Muslim-community' and the site of their belonging – the Islamic Centre – are adversely positioned as tolerated socio-material entities in local social space. Raymond negotiates this tolerance in his social discourse by appealing to 'you', local residents generally –'you can get you know angry about it' – using 'you know' to infer that he too shared the position. Feeling 'bad' about it, he constructed emotional distance between himself and the 'Muslim-community' (Ahmed 2004), further compounded by the personal pronoun 'they' when referring to mosque-going drivers. My position as a local resident was reflected in 'the last time somebody blocked *your* driveway (emphasis added)' it was a person 'who doesn't live around here' and 'doesn't [go] to the congregation [at] the mosque here', concluding 'not necessarily these people are Muslim you know what I mean'. As 'Muslims' are not always to blame, by extension the Islamic Centre is positioned as giving no strong cause-for-action or the removal of their ascribed 'tolerated belonging(s)'.

Space and place: becoming 'the mosque'

The previous sections explored the Islamisation of space through constructions of space and place in relation to participants' constructions of identities, belongings and 'community'. This section focuses on the building – the Islamic Centre, its current form (or assemblage) and accompanying affectivity.

> Sam: is it a mosque?

Baker: err I think (1.0) it is:: it's an Islamic Centre

Sam: yeah

Baker: but I'm not sure whether it is a mosque or not

Sam: it's missing its minarets isn't it so:: urm err

Baker: I mean do you see it as a proper mosque or do you see it more of as an Islamic Centre?

Sam: I see it as a as a Islamic Centre

<div align="right">Sam</div>

I had asked him whether he felt the 'mosque' had changed the image of the local area, and in our ensuing conversation I attempted to limit my influence on his perception of the building as either an 'Islamic Centre' or 'mosque'. It was not commonly perceived as a 'proper mosque', as it lacks certain expressive components (Allievi 2010: 16; DeLanda 2006: 18) that would allow it to be affectively read as one, informed by discourses surrounding Islamic architecture (Gale 2004: 20; 2006). Whilst the Islamic Centre was understood as 're-inscribing old space [a dojo] with new cultural (Islamic) meanings' (McLoughlin 2006), it was not understood as a *material* transformation:

> I don't think that necessarily it changes the area because it's only a temporary sort of I mean for example today you know it's there's nobody […] I went out with the dog it was all it all looked pretty quiet […] it's a big change in that it was never used for anything like that before […] so you know it's okay so I don't think that there's been no physical change as far as the cultural shift

<div align="right">David</div>

Most participants voiced views similar to David's. It was from the relations between the Islamic Centre and its users that the building's identity as a 'mosque' was expressed. These relations affectively communicated the 'mosque-identity' with his image of the local space changing at particular points in time, most commonly Friday Prayers. Nana's extract accentuates the process of *becoming* a 'mosque' through these relations, foregrounding the fluid and relational nature of space (Massey 2005) that emerged during this piece of research.

> Nana: I think there's lots of people who don't even know whether it is a mosque do you know what I mean?
>
> Baker: err yeah [[err
>
> Nana: [[so they would probably only know from people going in but they wouldn't know necessarily if they had just drove past […] nothing really to indicate

<div align="right">Nana (Italian culture, trainer, parent, wife)</div>

Two discernible approaches to interpreting the Islamisation of space emerged from my intertextual analysis: first, the social discourse of multiculturalism which positioned the Islamic Centre as a 'symbol' of the local area becoming more 'multicultural' (Gale 2004: 2); second, the social discourse of tolerance which placed the Islamic Centre in a tolerated position, not wholly separated from notions of a 'multicultural' area.

Nana's social discourse of multiculturalism implied the Islamisation of space was characteristic of contemporaneity – 'which *you know* is going to happen' – alongside similar past changes in the local area. Nana was asked to expand on her questionnaire response in which she saw 'the new mosque as appropriate for a multicultural area'.

> Nana: so:: hasn't affected me in a negative way <u>at all</u>
>
> Baker: mmm do you feel that it's changed the image of the local area at all?
>
> Nana: only from a multicultural point of view because obviously now there is a lot of urm maybe more:: Muslims that have moved into the area which you know is err going to happen is you know err as I said in the fifties and sixties it was Spanish and Italians and Filipinos but it's different it's evolving […] it's changing all the time isn't it?

For her, the local area (or place) is fluid and constantly 'changing'. Through strategically assembling similar trajectories, of which the Islamic Centre is but one, she constructed a progressive ('evolving') multicultural-image for the local area (Gale 2006: 1176).

In Elizabeth's social discourse of tolerance she constructed herself and the other local residents as tolerating the Islamisation of space and by extension its users.

> the only effect that it has had ha is that <u>sometime they park on the road on the double yellow</u> haha […] urm and that can be annoying urm but then you see the traffic warden so haha […] there hasn't been a backlash […] err I think originally there was a sort of the little kids stone throwing type thing […] but on the whole I think that most of the schools have got a <u>mix</u> of people so the kids are kind of used to seeing people from kind of everywhere in the world […] so I think that they're like actually that's my mates so and so who I go to school with goes to that mosque so I'm not going to err smash it up […] my own personal point of view <u>yes</u> I see the people going along there but I've not they're not rude abusive they're not obstructive they're not awkward urm::
>
> <div align="center">Elizabeth (English, Female, Christian, Job, Immediate Family)</div>

When asked whether the Islamic Centre had changed her image of the local area, she chose to focus on its negative impacts, such as parking issues. Her statements are marked as 'unserious' through laughter (haha) and she dismisses any acts of intolerance ('stone throwing') as done by 'little kids', and therefore innocent and insignificant. Thus, the subtlety and virtue of other local residents and her own tolerance are maintained (Brown 2006). Furthermore, the 'multicultural' school acts as a key component in her social discourse of tolerance, being presented as the space for learning tolerance.

Participants were also asked whether their opinions would have changed, had the outside of the building been altered, from which participants inferred a building-form expressive of 'mosque-identity'. Whilst Nana asserted indifference to any material change ('wouldn't have made any difference to me') she also mentioned how she 'could see how some people might have seen that as [...] more threatening'. The latter being Max's position, rendering visible the limits of his tolerance with, 'that wouldn't have happened round here'. Participants' positions varied and so I will explore Sam's position as he drew upon aspects of multiculturalism as well as notions of regulation found in a discourse of tolerance.

Sam constructed the local space as 'multicultural' (a 'mix of culture'). His 'multiculturalist' position was implied through emotional politics (Ahmed 2004), which attracted him to particular spaces and things – 'you know I love the fact there is a new Italian shop'. Achieved through discursively assembling the spaces of Italian and Brazilian outlets, their 'different' foods (implied in 'specialise in certain foods'), and his feelings for them ('love'). Thus claiming their differences (Ahmed 2000), they became part of the 'we' of local social space – 'we've got lots of shops you know a Brazilian café'. However, since the discourse of integration acted as a key component within his social discourse of multiculturalism, (re)assembling the Islamic Centre into a social-material entity that expressed a 'mosque-identity' would be destabilising, introducing a discourse of 'isolation/non-integration' through its 'statement of difference'.

> Sam: I don't mind but it's this thing about integration isn't it which I think is fundamental […] BUT I think if the architecture if they suddenly if they suddenly raise that […] and re-built it into something that was very different urm (3.5) and was made a statement of:: err .hhh (4.0) of err difference of isolation of […] you know of not integrating then that might be an issue [...] people react quite differently to these sort of things don't they
>
> Baker: what would you say a statement of non-difference of difference would be?
>
> Sam: urm (6.0) .hhh be like the Epsom station HAHA […] I think if it had minarets on it it would be a bit odd

For him, clarifying later, the 'mosque-identity' became the relations between 'a dome, crescent moon and minarets', construed as 'out of place' locally through a discourse of strangeness (Ahmed 2000), *affectively* positioned so through feelings of 'oddness' (Ahmed 2004).

Furthermore, when asked what a 'statement of difference' meant, he assembled Epsom station's trajectory, undergoing transformation, using the discourse marker 'like' so that his utterance – 'be like Epsom station' – did not literally represent his intended thoughts on the Islamic Centre. This 'hedging-strategy' (Jucker and Smith 1998: 187, 191) is supported by marking his utterance as unserious ('HAHA') even though his current discursive assemblage refers back to one previously expressing strong feelings about the station's new facade and its incompatibility with local space: 'fire and water'. And so, the (re)assembling of the Islamic Centre into a social-material entity expressive of a 'mosque-

identity' becomes 'jar[ring]' to 'our [the local] cultural-aesthetic'. Local space is constructed as 'English' as he *feels* that 'Georgian', albeit 'pastiche', architecture sits 'comfortable' in it, and thereby, *in place* (Ahmed 2004).

Sam's social discourse of multiculturalism demonstrates how cultural difference can be celebrated yet regulated, thus drawing on elements of the discourse of tolerance. His discursive ambivalence presents a socio-material entity expressive of the 'mosque-identity' as something that 'could be an issue', masking his position by generalising 'people['s] react[ions]' while conceding that if it was 'interestingly and nicely designed [he] wouldn't mind'. Importantly, in retaining his ability 'to mind', he maintains a power relationship in which he can evaluate future regulation, thereby retaining his tolerance and regulating multiculturalism.

Concluding thoughts

This paper has explored a small corpus of collected texts to present a complex account of the politics surrounding the Islamisation of space; an '*everyday* mosque politics' which moves past the existing literature's shrouding binaries regarding constructions of identity, belonging, and 'community'. My examination shifted the analytical focus onto the mundane rather than sustaining the current one on conflict. A more complex politics emerges, one ranging between the polarising positions found in cases of conflict and their constructed binaries of 'us' and 'them'. The mundane raised a politics in which inclusions and exclusions co-existed, resting upon constructions of multiple identities and belongings that were positioned through notions of 'community', also multiple, all of which were grounded in a fluid and dynamic understanding of space and place (Massey 2005).

From my intertextual examination, tolerance and multiculturalism emerged as two important social discourses from which participants constructed positions for themselves and others in relation to the Islamisation of space through discursive assemblages of identity, belonging, and 'community', tied to those of space and place. Neither of these social discourses simply included or excluded the Islamic Centre and its users from local social space, but rather involved complex processes of incorporation and differentiation, including racialisation, across uneven power relations that were negotiated uniquely through participants' constructions.

Discourses of tolerance and multiculturalism require further exploration in relation to the Islamisation of space, ideally with a larger sample size. Here, the social discourse of tolerance tended to be deployed in a relatively negative sense, coping with and managing 'difference' by setting limits (Brown 2006). In contrast, the social discourse of multiculturalism tended to be employed for a relatively positive exploration of 'difference'. However, these discourses were not completely distinct, as processes of management and regulation were present in one participant's social discourse of multiculturalism.

The analytical framework employed here, Discourse Analysis, was supplemented by elements drawn from 'Assemblage Theory' (DeLanda 2006). This accentuated the fluid nature of participants' social discourses and constructions encompassing the Islamisation of space as they relied upon particular relations that were emergent, so in a constant process of assembly. Assemblage-thinking also supported the grounding of processes of social construction in material-reality, allowing my examination to demonstrate how participants drew on the Islamic Centre differently in their constructions regarding identity, belonging, 'community', space and place. Additionally, by modelling the Islamic Centre as an emergent assemblage capable of affect, relations between the building and participants' interpretations of it were explored. It became clear that, with limited changes to the building's façade, it had not been interpreted as a 'mosque' but rather, as its plaque stated, an 'Islamic Centre'. Furthermore, the fluid and dynamic nature of participants' experiences of space and place foregrounded the Islamic Centre's process of *becoming* a 'mosque' through observed relations between the building and its users. Thereby, its interpretation depends on the moment and the particular relations. Finally, my analytical exploration presented the Islamisation of space as but one process of change amongst others being negotiated, such as the local station's development.

Turning to the research encounter itself, the significant pauses, hesitations and rewordings demonstrate clearly participants' care in forming their constructions regarding the Islamisation of space. More importantly however, my analysis revealed the strategic negotiations that participants engaged in, while attempting to create shared understandings between them and myself to produce 'jointly' rather than 'individually' made constructions (Jucker and Smith 1998). Thus, the sensitive nature of the discussion was highlighted but also the complex and multiple levels at which these constructions were produced.

To conclude, social-material constructions and discursive negotiations that characterise mundane and 'everyday' life are appropriate and rich sources for enquiry into the fluid, multiple and complex nature of politics surrounding the Islamisation of space, and reveal its open and processual nature.

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