

# Genealogies of British Multiculturalism: (dis)locating orientalism in citizenship

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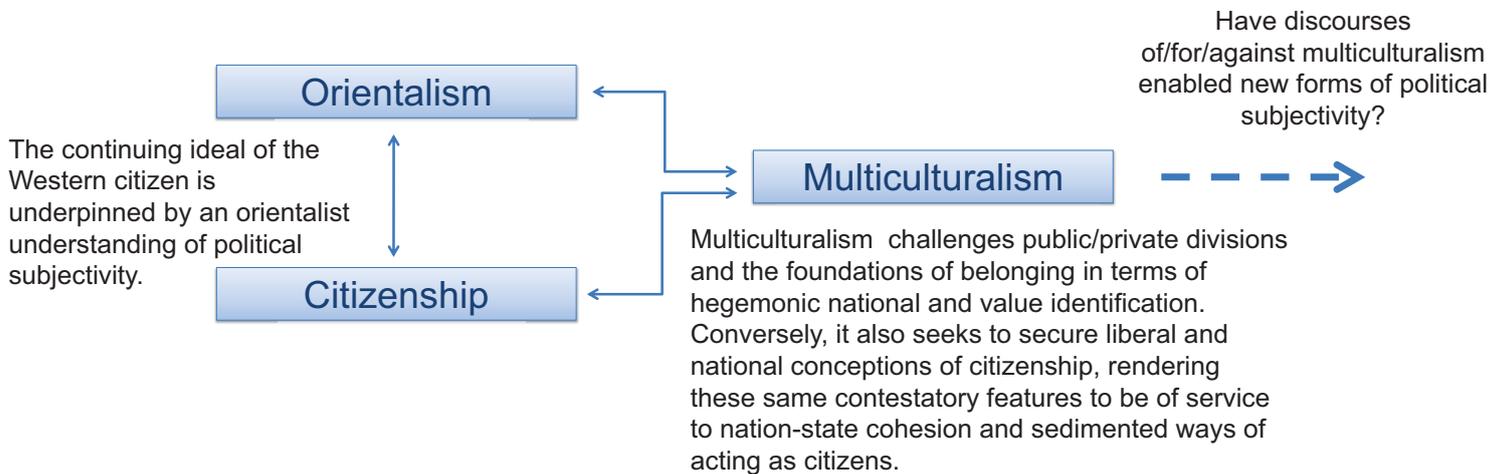


Current debate on multiculturalism in Britain compels us to either rehabilitate or repudiate its politics. While this has been productive for envisaging more nuanced relationships between multiculturalism and citizenship, there has been little investigation into its connections and disconnections with citizenship as an orientalist narrative. Dominant histories assert a pacifying rupture from previous forms of difference management, claiming multiculturalism identifies and solves, or fails to solve, the ever resurgent 'problem' cultural difference poses to national citizenship. Postcolonial histories do not address multiculturalism-orientalism-citizenship relationships and how this shapes our conceptions of political subjectivity.



Winston Churchill, Ayad Alkadhi ©

This research reconsiders British multiculturalisms' histories, both as challenging legacies of an orientalist framing of political subjectivity and as further entrenching its operation.



## Research Aims

- ❖ How have multiculturalism-orientalism-citizenship relationships been configured?
- ❖ What role does British multiculturalisms (as an ever reconstituted political and media discourse for interpreting events and acts) play in the reproduction, mimicry or denial of political orientalism?
- ❖ If certain expressions of British multiculturalisms find themselves challenging a cohesive multiculturalism-orientalism-citizenship nexus, then do these chart paths beyond orientalist citizenship?



The Multicultural City, Amer Jassim©

## Methodology

To address the research questions, I adopt a genealogical methodology and critical discourse analysis to observe British multiculturalisms' constitution and reconstitution as a form of difference management within two broad sites of political subjectivity. Media, political and legislative discourse surrounding the Northern town riots of 2001 and the Danish Cartoons controversies are investigated with and against archival research on riots during the British Raj.