

# British Muslims

## Loyalty and Belonging

Proceedings of a seminar held on 8 May 2002

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Available from:  
[www.Online-Islamic-Store.com](http://www.Online-Islamic-Store.com)  
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

*Published by*

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*British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data*

British Muslims: Loyalty and Belonging

1. Muslims - Great Britain - Attitudes
2. Identity (Psychology) - Great Britain - Religious aspects - Islam
3. Muslims - Great Britain - Political activity
4. Allegiance - Great Britain

I. Seddon, Mohammad Siddique II. Hussain, Dilwar III. Malik, Nadeem IV. Islamic Foundation

305.6'971'041

ISBN 0 86037 308 8

Printed in Great Britain by Antony Rowe Ltd, Chippenham, Wiltshire

*Cover/Book design & typeset: Nasir Cadir*



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## Transliteration Table

### *Consonants, Arabic*

initial: unexpressed medial and final:

ء ' َ	د d	ض ḍ	ك k
ب b	ذ dh	ط ṭ	ل l
ت t	ر r	ظ ḏ	م m
ث th	ز z	ع ʿ	ن n
ج j	س s	غ gh	ه h
ح ḥ	ش sh	ف f	و w
خ kh	ص ṣ	ق q	ي y

### *Vowels, diphthongs, etc.*

Short:            َ a      ِ i      ُ u

long:            َā      ِū      ِī

diphthongs:            َو aw

                         ِي ay



GEORGE ORWELL famously wrote in his book, *Animal Farm*, that, 'all are equal but some are more equal than others'. The question of political, racial and religious equality is an ongoing debate within the context of a modern secular nation-state like Britain. When national identity is constructed around specific ideas and notions of race and religion, multi-cultural diversity and religious pluralism are negated via exclusivity. As a result, any social entities existing outside the concepts of a very definite and exclusive national identity are treated as 'other'. Muslims in Britain are often viewed in terms of 'otherness'. They are also measured by their responses to their religious and national identities particularly when there is a clear contention resulting in a question of loyalty. 'A true and faithful allegiance to the legitimate sovereign or government of one's country', would perhaps be an accurate description of 'loyalty' within the context of citizenship and nationality. But for one to truly experience and manifest loyalty the feeling of inclusion and belonging must already be firmly established. Belonging would suggest that one is fully included in a specific member group, or in this case nation, and that the particular rights regarding individual inclusion within the member group are assigned. Belonging, therefore, is the precursor to loyalty and that, because one cannot belong without a sense of loyalty, both idioms are possibly interdependent. In response to the current socio-political debate on loyalty and belonging perhaps Orwell might say, 'all are British but some are more British than others'.



THE ISLAMIC FOUNDATION, established in 1973 in the city of Leicester, is a major centre for education, training, research and publishing. The Islamic Foundation aims to be an active force in shaping the future and enriching the lives of people around it. It serves this aim by building bridges between Muslims and others, and by promoting the highest standards of academic research and by its publication programme.



THE CITIZEN ORGANISING FOUNDATION (COF) is the UK's primary training Institute promoting broad based citizen organising – primarily amongst the key civil society institutions of faith, labour and youth. In 2000 'Muslim News' awarded the first Annemarie Schimmel Award for Excellence for 'Championing a Muslim Cause' to COF.

ISBN 0 86037 308 8

British Muslims : Loyalty

B7616 NEW2-A \$8.95