

DO WE STILL OTHER? SOME METAPHORS IN MEDIA DISCOURSE ON MUSLIMS AT THE TIME OF COVID-19

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Abstract: The study analyses a corpus of publications in the Bulgarian and the British media at the time of Covid-19 and seeks to critically answer the question whether or not media in the two countries employ metaphors which could still other Muslims. The corpus is comprised of 246 articles manually collected and analysed using Content analysis (Berelson) and the socio-cognitive approach within Critical Discourse Studies as developed by Van Dijk.

The analysis has shown the employment of ten different domains for the development of the conceptual metaphors used to present Muslims or the relationships between members of the group and the majority. The focus of this study is on the least frequently employed metaphors some of which have not been discussed so far. The analysis shows that even at the time of the pandemic the language used to describe Muslims or events related to the group in both countries is highly divisive and othering.

Key words: Muslims; conceptual metaphors; media discourse; CDS; othering.

Introduction

Time and again Muslims have been presented as the ultimate religious Other, the collective Other of the West, the enemy within, the terrorist – all images that in multiethnic Europe and North America have created and still create divisions and present Islamophobia as something natural in mainstream society (see Said; Poole; Poole, Richardson; Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva; Al-Azami; Allen). At the same time, it can be assumed that such divisions and negative images would subside when faced with a pandemic as such a phenomenon requires all efforts to be guided in surviving the calamity. And this would be the most natural thing to do.

That is an even more pertinent reaction as there are studies conducted on media discourse on Muslims at the time of Covid-19, which show that based on the statistical data BAME communities have been more severely affected by the disease for a number of reasons than the majority. Still, in the media there have been established links between “resource-deprived neighbourhoods” (Southcott, Theodore 162) and death and disease which created a “place-based stigma”. In addition, in several studies Awan and Khan-Williams and Awan et al. analyse how anti-Muslim narratives are developed on social media and the impact they have on communities both on- and off-line as well as the triggers for these narratives. As they have shown Muslims, along with mosques, are viewed as the super spreader of the disease. In their research Poole and Williamson confirm that even significant global events

such as the Covid-19 pandemic cannot change the existing negative discourses on Muslims. They outline three main trigger points that confirmed the existing presentations of Muslims, namely: (1) the ‘massification’ of Muslims, particularly in discussions of burials, (2) the creation of a moral panic over the construction of Muslims as refusing to social distance – particularly during religious festivals, (3) and a reconfiguration of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Muslims to acknowledge their role in the National Health Service (NHS) while continuing to construct Muslims in general as atavistic, violent and un-British.” (Poole, Williamson 266). The latter was also observed by Prasad in India: “politicization of COVID-19 was orchestrated in a three-stage process that singled out Muslims as the carriers and the spreaders of the virus and, in the process, constructed them as the country’s enemy” (Prasad 296).

To understand the notion of othering the study uses the definition provided by Miriam-Webster: “The use of *other* as a verb is rooted in sociology: to other a certain culture or individual is to treat that culture as fundamentally different from another class of individuals, often by emphasizing its apartness in traits that differ from one’s own”. In addition, it is also relied on the definition of the process as presented in the glossary of University of California, Berkley:

A set of dynamics, processes, and structures that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences based on group identities. In opposition to belonging, othering is a frame that captures the many forms of prejudice and persistent marginality such as race, gender, sexuality, religion, income, and disability. The term also explains and analyzes a set of common policies and practices that engender othering¹.

Thus, othering is opposed to belonging and is based on outlining differences that set two groups apart (Powell, Menendian), fostering the spread of different stereotypical images and reactions usually of discrimination based on an event in which the othered group was the main culprit (see Prasad; Poole et al.). Once othered the group acquires the position of a scapegoat or a public devil (Cohen) responsible for all ills in society.

The role of the media in this respect has been reiterated multiple times (see Markina; Van Dijk; Sjöberg, Rydin; Eide; LOTE agency) and some of the most efficient devices used are the various conceptual metaphors employed. Both Bulgarian and the British media are characterised with high metaphoricality (Fowler; Fairclough; Dobreva; Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva).

Using Lakoff’s, Lakoff and Johnson’s and Kövecses’ theory of conceptual metaphors, the process of creating such can be defined as a mapping between a more abstract and a more concrete domain through which

¹ See also Powell and Menendian and Curle who provide a similar definition.

a more abstract concept is explained through a more specific one usually related to some bodily/ personal experience or some easily understandable phenomena (Lakoff, Johnson; Musolff). Metaphors are also considered ideological in nature (Fabiano; Somella; Ng) as they trigger particular frames and guide one's mind in a desired direction. For this reason, they are extensively analysed in research in the field of critical discourse studies (Hart; Musolff; Ng).

The overlap of some of the most frequently used metaphors in the presentation of Muslims in the two countries have been analysed on a comparative basis (Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva) and the domains of war, disaster and lowlife have been outlined as the most common ones. Further to these comparative studies, there have been others focusing on the metaphors used by different national media which report the use of domains, such as disease/ pathological disorder (Said; Lakoff; Steuter, Wills; Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva) and transport (Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva). The domains have spawned a variety of additional metaphors linked to Muslims, such as “green peril” (Poole; Hadar), Clash of Civilizations (Haddad; Esposito; Cervi et al.), Fortress Europe, War on terrorism (Fabiano; Pinelli).

As this study is housed within the premises of critical discourse studies (Flowerdew, Richardson; van Dijk) and primarily relies on the postulates of the socio-cognitive approach within them (van Dijk), it is only pertinent to look briefly into the socio-cultural background² of Muslims in Bulgaria and the UK.

The demographic data available show that the number of Muslims in the UK in the period 2017-2019 is 3,868,133 of a total of 66,040,229 or 5.86% of the whole population in the UK and 0.2% of the total world Muslim population. In Bulgaria, the figures are as follows: 861,015 Muslims of a total number of population of 7,057,504 or that is 12.2% of the whole population and 0.04% of the total world Muslim population (Muslim population by country)³. The Muslims living in Bulgaria, although not significant in number globally, have been described as the largest, “historically indigenous” Muslim group in the EU⁴ (see Ghodsee 12). Bulgarian and Muslims have coexisted since the spread of the Ottoman Empire and the version of Islam practiced on the Balkans and in Bulgaria in particular is considered different from the fundamentalist Arab Islam and is generally described as more liberal and

² Here I rely and refer to the view put forward by Fairclough and widely used by scholars in the field that discourse cannot be viewed simply as a text or a group of texts functioning in isolation from the wider socio-cultural background along with the discursive practices that have produced it/them.

³ Nielsen claims that Muslims in Bulgaria are around 1 mill, while in the UK circa 2 mill people. The US Department of State estimates the Muslim population in Bulgaria as of mid-2021 at 10.7%

⁴ A clarification is needed here as Ghodsee refers to the Muslim population in Bulgaria in 2008, however, we can state that even with the waves of refugees, the composition of the Muslim group has remained more or less the same.

tolerant (Taji-Farouki and Poulton). However, as the majority of the Muslims in Bulgaria are considered descendants of the Ottoman Turks who decided to stay in the country after its liberation, they are frequently asked about their true allegiance, especially by nationalists, and this gives rise to metaphors, such as the fifth column of Turkey. Muslims coming from Asia are a comparatively new phenomenon and it is usually members of this group who are viewed as a threat and are associated with the image of Muslim terrorist.

Muslims' presence in Europe is generally linked to the Moorish conquests in Spain in the 8th c., followed by the Crusades and the spread of the Ottoman Empire (Haddad; Smith; Gale, Hopkins 4), as well as to the right of a free entry to all subjects of the British crown and the waves of workers needed on the island. Thus, British Muslims are an ethnically diverse group, comprised predominantly of people of South Asian origin, with Pakistanis shown as the single largest British Muslim group (Gale, Hopkins; Abbas), but also of such members who define themselves as Black: Black Caribbean, Black African or other, Arabs, whites and others (see Masood). The predominance of Muslims of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin has been quoted as the reason for the stereotypical acceptance of these two groups as the paragon of Muslimness in the UK (Allen 52). Thus, the generalized image of Muslims in the UK is of people who are backward, uncivilized and fierce, or as Lapidus (801) concludes, people who are “anti-British, anti-liberal and [having] anti-modern views”. Another aspect which presents Muslims as a threat is the high fertility rates associated with the group along with high illiteracy and unemployment rates (see also Abbas; Mohdin). Adding the increasing numbers of mosques and the visibility of the religion achieved through burkas and other head covers for women and traditional Muslim clothes and beards for men it is not surprising that Muslims are defined as the religious Other in the UK and are subjected to othering practices.

Methodology

Having the abovementioned theoretical findings as a background, this study tries to prove whether media discourse in Bulgaria and the UK during the pandemic used some new metaphors to further promote the process of othering observed by scholars before me.

The main questions posed are:

- Do media discourses in Bulgaria and the UK use conceptual metaphors in their publications from the time of the pandemic to refer to Muslims?
- Are there new metaphors that are observed?
- Are these new/ less frequently used metaphors othering or not?

In order to respond to these questions a manually collected corpus has been compiled of all publications featuring the key word *Muslim* published in the Bulgarian *Dnevnik*, *Sega*, and *Standart*, and the British *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Telegraph* in the period 1 January 2020 to 5 June 2022.

The reason to choose these particular newspapers rests on the fact that their profiles are similar, i.e. they are all considered serious press, or broadsheets. In addition, the Bulgarian *Dnevnik* is defined as liberal or liberal-conservative, *Sega* is a politically and economically independent platform critical of the government, and *Standart* streamlines news and events 24/7 and is pro-government. On the other hand, the British newspapers are centre-left – *The Guardian*, liberal – *The Independent* and conservative – *The Telegraph*.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the newspapers selected provide different points of view, but are in a way reciprocal in their political slant, which is important in terms of objectivity of analysis.

Further to that objective, the corpus contains news articles as well as opinion pieces and editorials. The articles have not been grouped by genre as each one provides a different perspective and opinion which is of essence when analysing metaphors as they generally convey or reflect attitudes.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis have been applied when analysing the data. Content analysis (Berelson; Markina) has been applied in its quantitative stance to assess the number of occurrences of specific metaphors and the domains they stem from, while the socio-cognitive approach within Critical Discourse Studies (van Dijk) has been applied to assess data qualitatively and thus, comment on the ideas and attitudes the employed metaphors convey.

Results

The total number of articles collected on Muslims in the analysed period within said time-frame is 333 (248 British and 85 Bulgarian articles) of them 106 (92 British and 14 Bulgarian) contained metaphors referring to the community or the relations between Muslims and the majority. The findings are presented in Table 1:

Muslims			
Newspapers	No. of articles	No. of articles featuring Muslim related metaphors	%
<i>The Independent</i> (I)	25	0	0
<i>The Guardian</i> (G)	108	35	32,40
<i>The Telegraph</i> (T)	115	57	49,57
Total UK	248	92	40,5
<i>Standart</i> (St)	7	0	0
<i>Sega</i> (S)	63	6	9,52
<i>Dnevnik</i> (Dn)	15	8	53,33

Total BG	85	14	31.43
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Table 1. Number of articles vs articles featuring metaphors on Muslims

At this stage of the study, the data shown guide us to three main conclusions: 1) Metaphoricity in said period was not that high in both media as there were newspapers that did not feature any metaphors, i.e. The Independent and Standart. 2) At the same time, there were newspapers that featured more than one metaphor in an article and the variety of domains employed is considerable, as exemplified in Table 2:

	Domains	Muslims				
		<u>Dn</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>T</u>	Total
1	low life (animal/ reptile/ termite/ bird/ plant)	4	3	16	31	54
2	war	6	8	46	52	112
3	disaster	5	0	11	20	36
4	fortress	0	0	1	0	1
5	rebirth	1	0	1	0	2
6	family	2	0	2	3	7
7	trade	2	0	0	0	2
8	machine	1	0	0	0	1
9	passage	0	1	0	0	1
10	mistakes/ objects	0	0	2	3	5
11	disease	1	0	1	5	7
12	container	0	0	1	9	10
13	amusement park	0	0	0	2	2
14	sport	0	0	0	1	1
15	rubbish	0	0	0	1	1
16	The Bible	0	0	0	2	2
	Total	22	12	81	129	244

Table 2: Muslims – domains and number of metaphor occurrences

3) Table 2 also shows that the biggest variety of metaphors has been employed by the British newspaper The Telegraph featuring a total of 11 domains for its metaphors, followed by The Guardian with 9, Dnevnik with 8 and Sega with only 3 domains. Thus, it can also be concluded the variety of metaphors used by the British newspapers is bigger than the one observed in the Bulgarian newspapers.

Another conclusion that can be drawn while analysing the quantitative data is that the overlapping domains are six altogether (marked in bold), which

shows similarity of thinking patterns, while there is difference in the remaining 10 domains used, which establishes them as culture specific. As the overlapping six domains have already been analysed in various publications before, the focus here will be on said remaining 10 domains.

Starting from the first domain that does not show an overlap between Bulgarian and British newspapers, the findings show the presence of the **domain of fortress** being realized as the well-known metaphor of FORTRESS EUROPE which has been employed only by *The Guardian* in the British corpus from the Covid-19 period:

Kurz plans to prop up domestic support by vilifying Muslims and *further fortifying the nation-state against migration movements* (G/ 09.01.2020).

The metaphor is particularly divisive as it plainly states that those who are Muslim and of different religion than the dominant group should be kept out, out of the country and out of education, out of normal existence. The reason for that is their difference and the threat they pose. The latter being successfully fanned by the media through the employment of the image of the Muslim immigrant who poses a threat because of the possible radicalization that they could bring or the direct threat of a set up terrorist attack. The latter also coincides with the stereotype of the ferocious savage.

The domains of **mistakes/ objects** and **container** are employed by the two British newspapers featuring metaphors. A figurative way that Muslims are done away with is through erasing them which **objectifies** them and presents them as a mistake, i.e. something that is wrong and incorrect:

It's a deformed legal monster, which aims not only to contain Muslims but *to erase them* from the public sphere. (G/ 27.07.2021/ 28.07.2021); “The systematic campaign of *cultural erasure* in many ways shows how authorities in Xinjiang and Beijing view ordinary expressions of Uyghur identity, faith and culture as a strategic threat to them and Party rule,” said Nathan Ruser, a researcher with ASPI, a Canberra-based think tank (T/ 12.06.2021).

As the examples show, the contexts that the metaphor occurs in are not the same, as *The Guardian* talks about British reality, while *The Telegraph* is focused on the fate of a Muslim minority group in China. This difference in contexts, while similarity in realizations of the metaphor speak of similarity in perception and an established image of something wrong or inappropriate attached to the group.

In a different example this objectification is supported further by showing people as fragile and able to be broken: “This wasn't even a law; it was simply government guidance, and it *broke* more than one of us. It ruined my education” (G/ 27.07.2021/ 28.07.2021). This metaphoric expression is

touching as one can draw parallels between breaking a horse and breaking a person. In both cases it is a matter of crushing one's will and making them conform and obey some rules. In the example, the reference is to the French ban on scarves and it describes the feelings of losing one's identity by a number of Muslim girls and women. Because of their unwillingness to conform and remove their scarves they were forced only into the religious part of their identities denying them the opportunity to pursue education or other possibilities for development. The metaphor is again divisive as it is applied only to Muslim while no restrictions are imposed on non-Muslims and not wearing burkas is established as the norm. Thus, the divide is burkas vs non-burkas.

In addition, Islam itself is presented as something that can be moulded or shaped or at least people can try to do it:

The perception that the French leader was seeking to *remould Islam* touched deep wounds, said Asma Barlas, a retired professor of political science at the University of Ithaca in New York (G/ 28.10.2020); Ms Marvel, review: Marvel's first Muslim superhero breaks barriers, if not *the mould* /h/ [...] (T/ 08.06.2022).

In this respect, a mould is a type of **a container** that shapes the liquid/substance poured inside. The connotations of the two examples can be described as negative, as in the one from *The Guardian* the journalist refers to Islam as a religion that is deemed necessary to reshape, suggesting that the former shape was not acceptable or with flaws. In the second case *mould* can also be related to the domain of production suggesting that all Muslims are shaped in a similar fashion, thus linking the idea with the stereotype of Muslims being a homogeneous group, thus, denying them their unique identities.

The container domain has been used also in an article on immigration in Denmark, presenting the immigrants as a liquid that has to be contained through the means of a stopper:

Her [a.n. Ms Frederiksen's] party in the run-up to the election called for *a cap on “non-Western immigrants”*, and has called for those seeking asylum in the European Union to await their decision at a camp in North Africa (T/ 21.02.2021)

The metaphor, although not a new one, as it closely relates to the established metaphor of wave, frequently used to present the movement of immigrants and conveying the idea of unstoppable force, has been used only once in the period of Covid-19. It is divisive in nature as it presents Muslims as something that has to be kept away from the mainstream and clearly sets the opposition Western, i.e. Christian, vs Eastern, i.e. Muslim.

The Telegraph with its widest variety of domains used, features four domains that are unique to its publications on Muslims in the Covid-19 period, i.e. **amusement park, sport, rubbish, and the Bible**.

Amusement parks are usually places where people are entertained and they spend their free time in an interesting way. These places usually feature multitude of rides. This aspect has been used in one of the articles in The Telegraph:

In November Priti Patel, the Home Secretary, criticised *the “merry-go-round”* of failed asylum seekers who changed their religion and used other tactics in order to frustrate the system (T/ 30.12.2021)

The positive vibes of the rides are lost in the example as it clearly refers to the ongoing process of pointless activities employed by asylum seekers, in this case Muslim, trying to enter the country. It cannot be stated that the metaphor in itself is a negative one, however, the fact that it is attributed to Muslim asylum seekers already establishes the boundary between locals/citizens and foreigners/ asylum seekers who are obviously unwanted as they are described as causing problems through the use of the expression “to frustrate the system”.

Sports is another domain that is usually associated with pleasure and a way to spend one’s time in an invigorating way. The idea used in the metaphor presented is a positive one as it suggests inclusion as it means “[transitive] field somebody/something to provide a candidate, speaker, team, etc. to represent you in an election, a competition, etc.” (Oxford dictionary):

When the candidate left the room, another officer questioned whether the local party would benefit from *fielding* an “Asian” in the council ward, Mr Pedley claimed (T/ 06.04.2021).

The negative flair of the example is obtained through the use of the umbrella ethnonym Asian, which sets a division between the Muslim council candidate and the interviewers based on religion and ethnicity and not on merit.

The domain of **rubbish** is used in Indian context signifying the obliteration of a Muslim state:

In August 2019, Narendra Modi, the Indian prime minister, *scrapped* the autonomous status that the state [a.n. Kashmir] had since independence and split it into two union territories (T/ 27.10.2020)

The use of the metaphor is negative as it presents the state as something unwanted and unnecessary, a kind of a waste/ garbage, which can be

discarded. It is even worse as the metaphor refers to the right of independence of Kashmir and shows the attitude of disregard exhibited by Indian authorities.

Interestingly enough, the **Bible** has also been used as a domain for two metaphors used by *The Telegraph*:

Court of Appeal judges rule Islamic marriages not legally binding, leaving Muslim women in ‘*legal limbo*’ /h/ (T/ 14.02.2020); A second year student described the campus as ‘*apocalyptic*’ and said masked men had run around beating female students and throwing rocks at them (T/ 01.05.2020).

The first one uses the distinction between heaven and hell as the origin of the expression “in a limbo” is linked to the hell’s border as shown in Collins Dictionary: Word origin: [1300–50; ME, from ML phrase in limbō on hell’s border (L: on the edge), equiv. to in on + limbō, abl. of *limbus* edge, border (L), place bordering on hell (ML); see *limbus*1] (Collinsdictionary.com <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/limbo>). It can be defined as negative first because of the association with hell, and second, because of the uncertainty felt in the meaning of the expression. Muslim women are obviously singled out in the example and, while the expression could be used in a sympathetic way as a call for action in order to help these women find a way out, it also attributes to the women the negative image of docile and submissive Muslim wives. The second metaphor used from this domain guides the readers to the end of the world and the events happening at Indian schools after the ban on the burkas worn by Muslim girls attending them has come into effect. The metaphor is negative as it once again opposes two religions and presents the violence that Muslims, in this case schoolgirls, experience in India as something beyond imagination.

Looking at the examples from the Bulgarian media we see the unique use of the domains of **trade** and **machine** by *Dnevnik*, while **passage** has been used by *Sega*. Thus, Islam is presented as a commodity that can be traded, transported, and exported:

А и ще се стигне до ограничаване на “*вносния ислам*”, който е доминиран от Турция и от най-голямото исламско сдружение в Германия “Дитиб”. (‘And it will come to limiting “*imported Islam*”, which is dominated by Turkey and by the largest Islamic association in Germany, “Ditib”’ – Dn/ 15.06.2021)⁵; Според неговия автор Хаким ел Каруи ултраконсервативният уахабизъм на Саудитска Арабия например от години *се изнася по целия свят* с помощта на средствата, генерирали от продажбата на петрол. (‘According to its author, Hakim el Karoui, the ultraconservative Wahhabism of Saudi Arabia, for example, *has been exported around the world* for years with the help of funds generated from the sale of oil’ – Dn/ 02.11.2020).

⁵ The translation of the Bulgarian examples are provided by the author.

Terrorism is also endowed with the attributes of a **machine** and the Bulgarian Dnevnik presents ultra-right terrorism as having dynamics:

Според нея масовото убийството, извършено от Брайвик, е дало възможност да се *задейства динамиката* на вече съществуващ крайнодесен тероризъм ('According to her, the mass murder committed by Breivik *enabled the dynamics of already existing far-right terrorism to be set in motion*' – Dn/ 22.02.2020).

The metaphor creates the idea of a *perpetuum mobile* which once set in motion would never stop. In this case, the idea is applied to terrorism and is, therefore, with negative charge as it can be suggestive of a massive attack against the Christian world, which naturally creates panic.

The only positive metaphor in the analysed corpus has been found in the Bulgarian *Sega* and is within the domain of **passage**:

От своя страна Борисов декларира, че “*българските мюсюлмани са мост на приятелството* между двата народа” ('For his part, Borisov declared that “*Bulgarian Muslims are a bridge of friendship* between the two peoples' – S/ 03.07.2021).

It shows the contribution Bulgarian Muslims have to friendship and peaceful coexistence of two countries, i.e. Bulgaria and its southern neighbour *Türkiye*. This has actually been a trend in the attitude of one of the former Prime Ministers of Bulgaria, Boyko Borisov to *Türkiye*'s president, so the positive language in this context is expected.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be confirmed that at the time of Covid-19 the analysed Bulgarian and British broadsheets used a variety of metaphors stemming from sixteen different domains, six of which proved to be overlapping for the two countries. As mentioned in the introduction, the overlapping domains have been the subject of former research (Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva; Said; Lakoff; Steuter, Wills; Poole; Hadar; Haddad; Esposito; Cervi et al.; Fabiano; Pinelli) and therefore the focus here is on the remaining ten domains which have not been encountered before. Thus, it can be confirmed that even not to such a high extent, media discourse on Muslims at the time of Covid-19 does employ metaphors.

The conducted analysis shows that even in the sporadic cases of metaphors used by Bulgarian and British newspapers othering is still evident as only two of the domains produced positive metaphors. The positive metaphor employed by the British media comes from the domain of sports and revolves around the inclusion of ethnically different individuals in a council, while in the Bulgarian context, the positive metaphor comes from the domain

of passage and has actually been reported as used in Bulgarian media discourse on Muslims up to 2018 in a positive context again. It can also be stated that the use of this particular metaphor is also determined by the socio-historic development of the two communities in Bulgaria, as Muslims and Bulgarians have coexisted for centuries and know each other and generally do not hold negative feelings.

The remaining domains have been used for metaphors that are divisive in nature. As the analysis has shown the Bulgarian newspapers employ metaphors from the domains of trade and machine to present Islam as a commodity that is being exported from one location and imported into another, often without the consent of the host country or presenting it as a devastating machine which once set into motion cannot be stopped. Thus, the image created is of something unwanted and frightening. The British newspapers rely on the domains of fortress, mistakes/ objects, container, amusement park, rubbish, and The Bible in the realization of negative metaphors on Muslims. Muslims are presented as something that has to be kept away or changed in order to conform. The associations with the end of the world and the edge of Hell further contribute to the negative image of Muslim communities in the UK and once again reconfirm the existing image of all Muslims as the Other, who stands in stark opposition to everything considered own.

The observations made lead to the conclusion that animosity towards those considered culturally different cannot be subsided even at the time of common crisis which affects all people alike.

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