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Geographies of Identity

Abstract This chapter introduces the key concepts of the research and the theoretical frameworks we draw on to analyse our four country case studies. After addressing the concept of youth, we use poststructural and postcolonial theories to elaborate our understandings of identities as being multiple and fluid, always in process. These perspectives are again drawn upon to understand gender, as constantly brought into being in performative ways. We conclude this section by emphasising the significance of belonging and affiliation in the production of identities. As part of our concern with youth's national belongings, we explore the complexities of citizen identities, probing the imagined community of the nation, and how national affiliations may, or may not, coincide with modern nation-state boundaries. We problematise the Western origins of the nation-state and the implications for states emerging from coloniality. We then consider the relevance of the nation-state within a globalised world and related questions about post-national or more cosmopolitan forms of citizenship. Pursuing our interest in different axes of youth identities, we turn to religion, interrogating the supposed separation of religion and politics in secular modernity, as well as the putative incompatibility of Islam with modernity and modern state formation.

We return to cosmopolitanism to critique its modern, Eurocentric origins and the implications for 'Muslim cosmopolitanism'. We conclude this chapter by engaging with feminist and postcolonial literature which demonstrates how national and religious affiliations are consistently and pervasively inflected by gender.

2.1   Introduction

This chapter introduces the key concepts of the research and the associated theoretical frameworks that we used in the analyses of the four country case studies that follow. We first address the concept of youth, problematising the different ways it is defined and the constellations of contemporary concerns that surround youth, particularly in the Global South. We then turn to our understandings of 'identity' itself, taking up poststructural and postcolonial theories that disrupt modern understandings of the self as a disembodied, autonomous being and instead discuss how we understand identities as being multiple and fluid, always in process. This section also addresses gender, and how this is similarly understood as constantly brought into being, in performative ways. We conclude this section by re-emphasising the significance of belonging and affiliation in the production of our identities.

We then explore the complexities of citizen identities, probing the imagined community of the nation, and how national affiliations and belongings may, or may not, coincide with modern nation-state formations. We problematise the Western origins of the nation-state and the implications of the imaginings of the nation for those nation-states emerging from colonial rule. We also consider recent questions about the relevance of the nation-state within a globalised world, including arguments for post-national or more cosmopolitan forms of citizenship.

We next turn to religious affiliations, questioning the supposed separation of religion and politics in secular modernity, arguing instead with Butler (2011) that religious affiliations are deeply rooted within Western notions of the secular. This also leads us to critique the supposed incompatibility of Islam with modernity and modern state formation. We

return to the concept of cosmopolitanism at the end of this section to explore its intersection with religion and, more particularly, with different understandings of Muslim cosmopolitanism. Here, we position our study within descriptive rather than normative understandings of cosmopolitanism. This requires us to pay sustained attention to the local social relations which inform youth identity constructions. We finally return to gender, engaging with feminist and postcolonial literature which points to the ways national and religious affiliations are consistently and pervasively inflected by gender.

2.2   Troubling 'Youth'?

In addition to troubling the category of youth itself and problematising its work of social construction, we explore in this section the rise of 'youth' as a category of concern in the discourses of international and national policy makers and non-governmental organisations. As a category, youth is typically defined in terms of an age range, although definitions vary considerably. For example, the United Nations (UN) (1995) defines youth as those aged between 15 and 24, while the African Youth Charter (African Union 2006) construes youth to be those aged 15–35. In providing its definition, the UN recognises how the category overlaps with those of the child (defined in Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as persons up to the age of 18) and of adulthood or 'age of majority', this being 18 years in many state legislations. Sitting astride these different overlapping definitions, 'youth' as a category would seem to benefit neither from the 'innocence' associated with Western notions of childhood nor from the 'maturity' that is assumed of the adult. Importantly however, it cannot be assumed that age relations are the same across different contexts. When we further consider how these age-related definitions are gender-blind, and misrecognise how age relations differ between male and female youth, their assumptions become increasingly problematic. Indeed, the very notion of youth has been questioned as a Western concept, holding Western age-related norms that may be quite irrelevant

in the Global South (Cole 2011; Evans and Lo Forte 2012; Sommers 2006). However, we can readily identify international policy documents on youth, such as World Bank (2006), which are nevertheless premised on the transition of an individual from being a child to a youth, and finally to adulthood, as if such life stages could be assumed to be discrete and universal. This supposed linearity also conceals the different ways that 'youth' as a life stage is understood. For example, while youth can be constructed as agents of change and looked to for their potential demographic dividend (see for example UNESCO 2013a), they can also be associated with risk-taking, rebellion, alienation and radicalisation. Overall therefore, the concept of youth reverberates with ambivalence and hybridity (Bhabha 2004).

The contemporary salience of youth as a social category is also related to their socio-demographic prominence, particularly in the Global South, whose youthful populations contrast starkly with the ageing and diminishing populations of many countries of the Global North. Even if the youth population is now projected to fall as an overall percentage of the world total, in absolute numbers youth are still projected to increase massively in the Global South. When launching the World Programme of Action for Youth in 1995, the UN noted that the majority of the world's youth (84% in 1995) lived in the Global South and projected this to increase to 89% by 2025 to 1.2 billion. More recently, UNESCO (2013b) reported that 89.7% of people under 30 live in emerging and developing economies, particularly in the Middle East and Africa.

However, it is the particular conjuncture of this youth 'bulge' with other factors that have made youth's socio-demographic salience a particularly troublesome phenomenon to many policy makers. High levels of youth unemployment are a key issue in a range of different contexts, including many countries of the Global South. After signalling youth as whole to be a 'generation at risk' in 2013, the International Labour Office (ILO) (2014) suggests that youth around the world remain particularly vulnerable. They estimate that 74.5 million young people—aged 15–24—were unemployed in 2013, an increase of one million from the previous year, with global youth unemployment rates at a historical peak of just over 13%, almost three times as high as the

adult unemployment rate. The participation of females in the formal labour market also trails that of males in all regions of the world. While globally youth unemployment has stabilised (ILO 2015), it continues to rise in the Middle East, which currently has the world's highest youth unemployment rate and the largest gender differential in youth unemployment. Importantly however, ILO (2013) also acknowledges the great insensitivity of these statistics to employment conditions in developing economies and suggests that as many as two-thirds of young people there may be 'underutilized', meaning that they are unemployed, in irregular, often informal employment, or not in education and training. ILO (2014, 2015) acknowledges the lack of progress in tackling informal employment, which it sees as a major barrier to poverty reduction. It also singles out developing economies, youth and women as all being especially implicated in such kinds of work.

Policy concerns about youth unemployment have been aggravated by the concentration of unemployed youth in the Global South, and in some cases because of the numbers of youth who follow Islam across many of its countries. Although the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2011) show that the 'youth bulge' across Muslim-majority countries peaked in 2000, by 2010 the overall percentage of those who were under 30 remained at 60% in these countries. With two exceptions, all of the Muslim-majority countries are classified as 'developing countries', following UN definitions. Overall, the number of Muslims in the world is also projected to rise at a faster rate than other religious groups, increasing by about 35% in the next 20 years, from 1.6 billion in 2010 to 2.2 billion by 2030. Nigeria is also predicted to become the 50th Muslim-majority state by 2030 (Lebanon, Pakistan and Senegal are already Muslim-majority countries).

The conjuncture of significant sections of the population in the Global South being unemployed has therefore come together with fears about the development of Islamic 'fundamentalist' beliefs among youth who are marginalised, who may have little to lose, and who are at a risk of becoming alienated and disaffected from society. Such fears have been intensified by the wider geo-political turbulence surrounding the role of Islam in the contemporary world. This has seen a rise in Islamophobia in the USA and in Europe, particularly in the aftermath

of 9/11 and the subsequent wars waged in Iraq and Afghanistan, under the banner of the 'War on Terror', later followed by uprisings and political protests across the Middle East, in Tunisia, Bahrain, Libya, Yemen, Turkey, Egypt and Syria. In today's media, radical Islamic groups that feature regularly include Boko Haram in Nigeria and those fighting under the banner of Islamic state in the conflicts besetting Syria and the wider region. The racialisation of Islam within Europe has also contributed to the polarisation of debate, so that Islamic beliefs come to be constructed in opposition to the right to free speech within 'secular' democracies and the wearing of Islamic dress (such as the *hijab* or *burka*) as an affront to secular principles (Laborde 2008). We critique many of the assumptions surrounding Western forms of secularism in the sections below, particularly when discussing religion (Asad 2003; Butler et al. 2011).

This fear and indeed demonisation of Islam can also be discerned in connections made between fragile states and the presence of a 'youth bulge'. Political science theorists in the USA have posited a correlation with 'burgeoning youth populations' and countries that are prone to conflict. Beehner (2007) sees the main concern being for 'large pools of disaffected youths who are more susceptible to recruitment into rebel or terrorist groups' and who are 'especially prone to virulent strands of Islam as an alternative force for social mobility'. Of 67 states experiencing youth bulges, 60 are claimed to be experiencing conflict and instability (Beehner 2007). Reporting to the UN, Urdal (2012) claims that the presence of youth bulges increases the risk of conflict outbreak significantly, such that for every percentage point increase in the youth population, the risk of conflict increases by more than 4%. Other writers (for example Amin 2013) resist the deficit constructions of youth that are relayed through such correlations, pointing to the 'democratic dividend' that some countries have been able to accrue from a youthful population and highlighting the importance of attending to wider social issues (education quality, employment structures, institutional rigidities) that impact on youth's lives. Poor working conditions along with high unemployment have, for example, been identified as chief catalysts for the Arab Spring (ILO 2011).

Concerns about the youth 'bulge' across the Global South have projected youth to the forefront of international policy debates, with Muslim male youth in particular a key cause of concern. In this context, it seems important to question the representation of youth, and of Muslim youth, in such homogenised and undifferentiated ways within both policy texts and large-scale statistical research. What it means to be a youth, of any particular age, will differ extensively across different economic, sociocultural and political spaces. This means that as such, if we are to gain insights into youth identity constructions, we must attend to their contexts and how this shapes their national, religious, gender and ethnic belongings. Finally, despite all the above concerns, it is recognised that there is a significant absence of in-depth qualitative research into youth perspectives on many of these issues (Hardgrove et al. 2014; Sommers 2011). Furthermore, within the gerontocratic power relations of many societies, youth have also been largely invisible to and ignored by policy makers.

2.3   Troubling Identities?

The concept of identity is central to our research. Theoretically, it can be approached through different lenses, which are coloured by the shifting understandings of the epistemes of modernity, late and post-modernity. In this section, we elaborate and exemplify our theoretical understandings of identity with respect to gender, as one of the most significant structures of inequality, exploring the concept through the writings of postcolonial and poststructural theorists. We also draw out the implications for other structures of identity relevant to our interests in Muslim youth across different national contexts.

Since the structures of modernity arguably continue to resonate through the social fabrics of our contemporary worlds, in both the Global North and the Global South, we begin our discussion of the concept of identity by questioning the ways that it has been construed within modern Western philosophy. This privileged human agency and the application of reason in pursuit of social progress, an emphasis

which represented a significant break with the historic dominance of religious belief. Elaborating on modern understandings of the subject, Taylor (1995) notes how its 'free and rational' self was disembodied and 'ideally disengaged' from the natural and social worlds. This works firstly, in consolidating the Cartesian separation of mind and body, in which the mind was considered more elevated as a human characteristic; secondly, it centres the subject in terms of individual 'selfhood'; and finally, it constructs this 'self' in an atomistic relationship with society. In other words, society was considered instrumentally, to be worked upon and reformed as befitted the purposes of individuals (Taylor 1995). This has relevance for the concept of the nation-state, discussed further below, as well as for the institutions of modern, liberal democracies which are premised on the defence of the freedoms of the rational autonomous self of modernity.

It was the ethos of modernity that, paradoxically, also legitimised the 'civilising mission' of European colonialism. While invoking a discourse of equality, 'every man is born equal', those who had the power to use this discourse also assumed the moral authority of their values, which included a rejection of tradition and religion, and also the superiority of their rationality and knowledge systems. Through these related sets of assumptions, the colonial subject was classified as inferior, even subhuman, in ways that allowed colonisation to be justified as a moral project.

Theorisations of the relationship of the individual and society that emerged during the course of the twentieth century importantly illuminated the significance of social structures and institutions in shaping the possibilities for agency. They also pointed to the contingencies of Western norms that were usually posited as universals, independent of contextual specificities. Different twentieth-century social theorists across a range of disciplinary perspectives recognised the relationship between the individual and society as dialectical. Rather than the modern ideal of unfettered human agency, accomplished through the autonomous action of a sovereign, knowing and rational subject, human agency was always necessarily entangled and enmeshed within historically contingent but ineluctable social structures, in ways that were both constraining and enabling. Bourdieu's theory of practice, for example, conceptualised a dynamic relation between habitus, different forms of

capital and field, none of which could be considered independently of the other (Bourdieu 1990). While these dynamics are always therefore relational, strategic and positional, it is perhaps indicative of the imperative attached to agency within Western thought that Bourdieu has frequently stood accused of determinism.

In contrast to this recognition of social structures, social theorists of late modernity, focusing on the social conditions within the Global North, suggest that the disembedding of the individual from structures such as family or community, coupled with the declining authority of traditional institutions, now implies a greater level of individual agency (Giddens 1991; Beck 1992). In Beck's 'risk society', monitoring and control of the consequences of de-industrialisation and globalisation now lie beyond the reach of traditional structures and institutions, including nation-state governments. Additionally, collectivities such as trade unions that were powerful in fighting for social equality have little purchase within late modern institutions that are primarily oriented towards the individual. All of this implies that concerns relating to collective identities including social class, gender or ethnicity cease to have traction; individuals are instead constructed 'in an open-ended discursive interplay to which the classical roles of industrial society cannot do justice' (Mouffe 2005:38).

An implication of this for Beck (1992) is that individuals in late modern times have to construct 'choice biographies'. In other words, rather than biographies playing out in relatively predictable and stable ways, framed by the lifestyles of industrial societies, the 'fading' of the industrial age means that our lives are increasingly disembedded socially and historically, so that we have to confront the uncertainties of contemporary 'risk society' as individuals. This demands a greater level of self-fashioning than before:

> The proportion of the biography which is open and must be constructed is increasing. Individualization of life situations and processes thus means that biographies become self-reflexive. [..]. Decisions on education, profession, job, place of residence, spouse, number of children and so forth, with all the secondary decisions implied, no longer can be, they *must* be made. (Beck 1992:135, our emphasis)

Giddens (1991) similarly conceptualises identity in late modernity as involving a reflexive project of the self, where 'life politics' rather than nation-state politics is critical for individual self-actualisation. This 'new individualism' is viewed positively by Giddens as opening possibilities for alternative forms of democracy outside the formal, institutionalised spheres of national politics.

However, other social theorists are fiercely critical of the implications for democracy associated with the reduction of politics to 'life politics'. Rather than these opening possibilities for 'democracy from below', Mouffe (2005:40), for example, critiques how reflexive modernity places the individual at the centre of politics and forecloses the recognition of collective identities. She argues that contemporary political debate is negated by the very ethos of liberalism, in particular through its privileging of rational consensus, in ways that misrecognise the power relations and exclusions through which consensus is achieved. As Crossouard and Dunne (2015) discuss in relation to youth's active citizenship in Senegal, privileging consensus may seem benign, but it can also foster the reproduction of relations of domination. A further risk of the non-recognition of the adversarial relations of 'liberal' politics is that conflicts readily become constructed in moral terms, as 'good' versus 'evil', as has happened in the 'War on Terror' (see also Mamdani 2004 below). This makes it important to recover an agonistic understanding of politics, as being intrinsic to our sociality, a point that we take up again below in our discussion of identity.

The supposed irrelevance within late modern times of structures such as social class and gender has also provoked strong critique (Adkins 2003; Skeggs 2004). Resisting the supposed fluidity of late modern understandings of identity, Skeggs (2004) illuminates how the construction of 'choice biographies' requires the mobilisation of resources that are differentially available to us, as is a feel for what resources should be mobilised for different purposes in different contexts. Crucially, it individualises the responsibility for social risks, such as illness, unemployment and poverty, transforming these from being a state or social responsibility into a problem of 'self-care' (Lemke 2001:201). In relation to youth biographies, France and Roberts (2015) also call attention to the continuing significance of social class in supporting some youth

but not others in the construction of their biographies. Further questions have been posed about the work this new individualism does in contexts of postcoloniality, where different and potentially more embedded understandings of community and collective responsibility may prevail (Spivak 2005).

In this section on identity, we have sometimes referred to the 'self' or the 'human agent'. These are both terms that encapsulate the centred, sovereign understanding of identity within modern, liberal philosophies. We have also referred to the 'subject'. This term de-centres that 'modern self' and privileges instead poststructural theories of discourse. These challenge liberal constructions of 'the knowing subject' who use their reason to arrive at 'truth' in ways that were seemingly free of power (Foucault 1970). Instead, we (and our knowledges) are constituted through discourse, in which power relations are ineluctably implicated (Foucault 1977). This undoes a modern understanding of the self, as centred, self-aware and stable. Instead, one is interpellated or hailed through discourse into particular subject positions—as a youth, a boy, a girl, a mother, a Muslim, a Christian. We do not 'control' the terms through which we are interpellated. These are social in origin and precede our coming into being through them. In this way, we are both subject *to* discourse and become subjects within discourse. This naming also brings into play particular evaluative frameworks. For example, if you are named or interpellated as a 'youth', this invokes particular norms and, depending on the context, potentially brings into play many of the ambiguities described in the preceding section.

So we 'exist' through a dependency on the address of the 'other', through the reiteration of discursive conventions and norms in which power relations are always inevitably implicated (Althusser 1972; Butler 1997). This suturing, or articulation of a subject into chains of discourse, is always socially contingent and provisional, rather than stable and fixed. It involves processes of identification, which are constituted through difference and relations to the 'other':

> it is only through the relation to the other, the relation to what it is not,
> to precisely what it lacks, to what has been called its *constitutive outside*

that the 'positive' meaning of any term - and thus its identity - can be constructed. (Hall 1996:4–5)

Taking up this constitutive understanding of discourse as intrinsic to our subjectivation, Hall (1996) suggests we need to put 'identity' under erasure, as a concept that requires radical rethinking. Post-structuralist thinking therefore recognises identities to be multiple and fluid, embodied rather than disembodied, constructed through systems of difference that are inherently bound up with power relations (Foucault 1980; Hall 1996; Mouffe 1992, 2005). In this decentred view of the subject, the articulation of identities is always in process, hybrid rather than singular, fractured, conflictual and inherently political.

   This understanding of the subject as produced through and in discourse implies that identity categories such as 'gender' can no longer be assumed to 'reflect' any pre-existing reality or 'essence'. Rather than assuming gender to be an attribute of one's 'personal identity', we should rather consider how particular regulatory practices constitute different gender formations or gender regimes, which govern culturally intelligible notions of identity performances. Taking up the ways in which discourses 'systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault 1977:49), a category such as 'gender' can therefore be considered 'performative':

> gender is always doing, although not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed. [..] There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results. (Butler 1990:34)

Given that this 'doing' is constituted within discursive norms of practice and intelligibility, the hierarchies through which identities come to be read as legitimate in any particular context need always to be interrogated. This is particularly so given that their construction disappears from view so that they come to be read as a naturalised 'facticity', rather than '*effects* of institutions, practices, discourses with multiple points of origin' (Butler 1990, xxxi, emphasis in the original).

   Crucially, Butler's critique of the concept of gender also locates it against a wider set of concepts and norms, illuminating how sex,

sexuality, gender and desire are conjoined within a particular matrix of intelligibility, in this case involving compulsory heterosexuality. Dunne (2008) provides in-depth studies of particular constellations of sex, gender and sexuality across multiple educational and social contexts in Sub-Saharan Africa. These authors call our attention to the significance of context in producing matrices of intelligibility and to the multiple ways in which gender and sexuality intersect with other social categories. Thus, socially and culturally constructed categories of identity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality, sexuality and class, do not act independently of one another. Rather, they interact on multiple, often simultaneous levels, contributing to systematic social inequality (Hill Collins 1991). While gender is of course central to our analysis, in all our case studies we take account of its intersections with other identity categories. These include ethnicity and nationality, that may also be naturalised as biological 'facticity'.

The emphasis by Butler on desire also highlights the significance of the affective in the articulation of identity. Rather than the privileging of rationality and the concomitant disparaging of the affective that pervades modern thought, from a poststructural perspective, the affective is understood as being integral to the articulation and suturing of identities. Taking up how the reiteration of norms produces the materialisation of our worlds, as posited by Butler (1993), Ahmed (2004) argues that these processes are affectively charged and that it is through the circulation and reiteration of affects that the social is delineated and normalised, producing the very effects of 'boundary, fixity and surface' through which our worlds materialise (Ahmed 2004:12).

Ahmed's (2004) theorisation of the affective does not therefore view emotions as individual or psychological 'dispositions'. Rather than residing in subjects or objects, or as something we 'have', emotions are 'effects of circulation' (8), where different emotions 'stick to' and delineate both subjects and objects, individuals and collectives. Instead of arising as a response to different groups or collectives, the circulation of affects within a particular discursive formation has constitutive effects, so that collectives, such as nations, ethnic, or religious groups are delineated through the circulation of feelings. These may be of strong, 'thick' belonging, or conversely of alienation. In any context, particular affects

will be accorded value rather than others, so that feelings of pride, fear and disgust circulate in relation to particular objects, such as a nation, a particular race or an ethnic group. The circulation of affect associated with these collectives lead to them being naturalised as social categories and allow them to work in particular although contingent ways as social markers and boundaries, privileging some groups, while marginalising others. We take this up below more specifically in relation to the affiliations and sense of belonging that sustains the concept of the nation and its imagined community.

While relevant to all identity constructions, in our study the affective is particularly in play in the positioning of the postcolonial subject, given that discourses of colonial power remain as traces, recruited in the production of identities, and as referents in the construction of self and other. For Bhabha (2004), the space of the 'other' through which identity is constituted should be considered as 'a graphic historical and cultural specificity' for the postcolonial subject, for whom the 'problem' of identity can be seen as a 'persistent questioning of the frame, the space of representation, where the image […] is confronted with its difference' (66). He draws on Franz Fanon to consider how the embodied postcolonial subject has to 'meet the white man's eyes' (60). Fanon finds this gaze to be filled with 'treacherous stereotypes', which include symbolic totems such as 'tom toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects', representations which all reproduce difference and exclusion. Using graphic symbolism, the space of the production of his identity is described as 'spatter[ing] my whole body with black blood' (Fanon 1986). This brings out the epistemic violence in the objectifications of the gaze of the colonial 'other' on oppressed peoples. These objectifications become inscribed within identity narratives that constitute the colonised subject. In concluding this section, we note how Bhabha (2004) also alerts us to the significance of cultural and historical contexts for the production and articulation of identities.

Identities in Context

The central interest of this book is the production of Muslim identities in different national contexts, each affected by the traces of postcoloniality, and how this is further inflected by gender. In the following section,

we take up the theoretical framing outlined above, which understands context as of primordial significance for the production and performance of identities. Throughout the section, we point to the constitutive work of discourse, how its naturalisation of concepts such as the nation provides grammars of identity and belonging, in which the articulation of difference is pivotal. After considering the nation and the nation-state, we explore the different ways that religion is enmeshed within state formations, including those that claim to be secular, before turning to a consideration of how the intersecting discourses of nation and religion are pervasively gendered.

Before examining our three axes of analysis—nation, religion and gender—we reiterate the importance of the affective to our understandings of identity. Intrinsic to these understandings are identification with a collective of some kind—this could be a religious sect, a football team, a trade union, an ethnic group, a local, national or a global community. Drawing upon a discursive understanding of the construction of identity, the boundaries of these communities are always constituted through power relations and difference, and are affectively charged. They are constituted through the iterative circulation of symbolic representations in which are embedded particular histories and imaginaries. In other words, these narratives contribute to the ongoing production and the reproduction of a shared imaginary in relation to which social actors may align or distance themselves. In describing these as 'discursive', we are drawing on Foucault's understanding of discourse, as always imbricated in the material and social world, as constitutive of our ways of being and doing, and as providing grids of intelligibility through which particular objects, practices and subjectivities may be understood.

As Fanon's situation also illustrates, these narratives also work to ascribe identities, i.e. his identity construction has to work through symbolic representations and 'treacherous stereotypes' associated with his skin colour. Similarly, the circulation of narratives associating Islam with 'fundamentalisms' and with terrorism works to ascribe particular identities, in ways that precede and exceed any particular individual, marking boundaries of belonging or alienation that are intensified through the effects of circulation. These effects are always contingent in time and space—the wearing of the hijab in a Paris suburb will have

different symbolic values in different Paris suburbs, which will again be very different from Dakar or Hyderabad. However, while always local, the reach of information technologies in contemporary societies also allows an interpenetration of the local with the global and the potential intensification of affects of affiliation or alienation in ways that accumulate to produce dangerously homogenised understandings of particular groups—including the problematic association of Muslims with 'Islamic fundamentalisms' that we critiqued in the opening section.

We now turn to more specific explorations of our theoretical framework with respect to our three main analytical concepts—dealing in turn with nation, religion and gender.

2.4   Citizen Identities, National Belongings and State Formation

As we have argued above, our social and historical contexts fundamentally inform who we are and shape the imaginaries that infuse our citizen identities. Taking forward a poststructural analysis, we engage now with the imaginaries that sustained the emergence of the modern (nation) state as a system of government and how this might overlap or differ from the imagined communities of the nation. We then consider the additional complexities of the fractures that were created between the state and the nation in contexts of postcoloniality, both with respect to the emergence of new nations from their colonial condition and in relation to different neo-colonial imperatives that lie within contemporary discourses of global governance.

The Flourishing of Liberal Democracies and the Imagined Communities of the Nation-State
The concept of the nation-state emerged in Western societies within modern times and in association with modern forms of liberal democracy. As a form of governance, the nation-state combined a concern for the security of particular territorial boundaries and the governing of the people within those boundaries. This allowed the flourishing

of civil society, commerce and industry. Historically, this liberal framing took as its first premise the 'natural liberty' of individuals to better themselves and to pursue their own interests. The flourishing of the modern nation-state was also therefore intrinsic to the development of capitalism in the Western world. Indeed, rather than reflecting any flourishing of equality, recognition as a citizen of early modern democracies was premised on property ownership and social class positioning (Isin 1997), as well as racial, religious and ethnic hierarchies that often resulted in protracted violence between different groups (Mamdani 2004).

In describing the nation as an 'imagined community', Anderson (1991) calls attention to the work of construction involved in the forging of any nation and how this was integral to the emergence of the modern state. This work of 'imagination' involves the circulation of narratives and the policing of boundaries of belonging through symbolic representations of different groups as described above. However this work was all the more necessary for the forging of the modern state given the mass migration which took place alongside the agricultural reforms and processes of industrialisation of the modern era. As Bhabha (2004) comments, '[t]he nation fills the void left in the uprooting of communities and kin, and turns that loss into the language of metaphor'. Through metaphor, the meaning of 'home and belonging' is reconstructed, so that it can span the cultural differences of 'the imagined community of the nation-people' (200).

Bhabha (2004) is calling attention here to the performativities of the production of the nation. This involved 'nationalist pedagogies', involving the reiteration of norms and the interpellation of the national subject in both past and present:

> The people are the historical 'objects' of a nationalist pedagogy [..] the people are also the 'subjects' of a process of signification [..] as that sign of the *present* through which national life is redeemed and signified as a repeating and reproductive process. The scraps, patches, and rags of daily life must be repeatedly turned into the signs of a national culture, while the very act of the narrative performance interpellates a growing circle of national subjects. (Bhabha 2004:208–209)

For our study, it is important that this double work of production of cultural narratives and interpellation of the national subjects in past and present should be considered always in process, rather than accomplished and secure. Beck and Levy (2013) point out that while the constructed nature of the 'nation' is generally recognised, the naturalisation of the concept of the nation means that its constant (re-)figuration, i.e. the ongoing acts of 'writing the nation' that Bhabha (2004) describes above, is too readily overlooked. The production and re-circulation of these cultural narratives of nation are of particular interest in our case studies which have relatively short national histories borne out of particular extra-national, colonial and postcolonial configurations of power that encompass multiple sub-national social collectivities. These provide the discursive resources with which youth construct intelligible narratives of their identities.

Distinguishing Between State and National Belongings

We also need to emphasise how the coincidence of the imagined community of the nation and the boundaries of the nation-state is constantly in question, both historically, when state boundaries were often drawn up in very arbitrary ways, and in contemporary times of mass migration. We are making an important distinction here between 'nation' and 'state', where nation refers to a community of people who aspire to be politically self-determining, and state refers to the set of political institutions that a particular community may aspire to achieve for themselves (Miller 1995). The concept of the state points us therefore to the institutions and systems through which control and administration of a given territory is secured, including if necessary through the use of force. Historically, it has also been a key source of citizenship and rights. However, the boundaries of nation and nation-state seldom coincide (Guibernau 1996; Yuval-Davis 1997). Thus, a nation may be striving for exit from a state, for greater autonomy within a state or for the unification of different states. With the emergence of other post-national forms of citizenship, we return below to a consideration of the ways different forms of cosmopolitan belongings, including global religions, also intersect with national identities (Beck and Levy 2013).

Imagining the Nation in Postcolonial Contexts: Historical Fractures and Differentiations

We must also consider how many countries with pretentions to liberal democracy were implicated in colonial expansion, which impacted upon each of the contexts in focus in this book. From the early eighteenth century, states within Europe became recognised through a common legal framework as having sovereignty over their boundaries and the peoples living within those boundaries, so that the notion of the 'nation' and its boundaries became normalised. However, this legal framework was not seen to be relevant to large parts of the non-European world. Instead, conquest and competition flourished unfettered by the norms of commerce and European civil society. This resulted in large-scale land appropriation, the extirpation of indigenous peoples and the colonisation of Africa and Asia (Dean 2007). However, given the supposed superiority of modern Western forms of civilisation, as opposed to the 'barbarisms' of the colonies, such activity was justified morally under the rubric of the 'civilising mission' of the West. As Mignolo puts it, 'modernity and coloniality are two sides of the same coin' (2007:43). However, rather than being included as 'citizens', colonised peoples found themselves ruled over as 'subjects' (Mamdani 1996).

We further highlight the symbolic and material violence accomplished through the classificatory work of Western knowledge in colonised lands. As Said describes, from its position of hegemony, the West both managed and indeed produced 'the Orient' politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively (Said 1978:8). Rather than reflecting a pre-existing reality, Orientalism *created* 'the Orient' by 'making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it' (Said 1978:3). Drawing again on Foucault's understanding of discourse and power/knowledge, the work of Orientalism is in other words recognised as having constitutive force. In relation to our discussion of the imagined communities of colonised lands, the work of Orientalism importantly contributed to a reification of the differences between communities, ethnic groups and religious belief systems.

The social and material effects of Orientalism's classificatory processes were deepened and exacerbated, however, by the ways in which colonial powers devolved local rule to favoured ethnic groups, using a combination of direct and indirect rule. This led to the consolidation and installation of some ethnic groups or castes as privileged local elites, both during and after the eras of colonisation. As Nandy (1983:3) argues, processes of colonialisation brought the colonised 'to accept new social norms and cognitive categories' in ways that had irrevocable constitutive effects on the possibilities for subject formation and the constitution of the social. For Kabeer (2002), the classification of indigenous groups, coupled with indirect rule, means that 'colonised populations thus achieved their national independence organised as religious, ethnic and tribal communities rather than as individual citizens' (2002:14). Mamdani (1996) similarly suggests that after independence, politics in the ex-colonies might have been indigenised, but attempts at redistribution of power quickly reverted to regional, ethnic or familial ties, leading to modes of (national) politics that were dominated by clientelism and patrimonialism, based in divisions and differentiations that had been sharpened as an effect of colonial rule. Such divisions are shown to remain significant in the case studies that follow. For example, as shown in Chap. 6, recognition of religious differences in Nigeria which informed the rule of North and South during the eras of colonial rule continues to reverberate through youth's discourses of identity, with regional and religious hierarchies being inextricably entwined. In Lebanon, religious differences were central to the structures of local rule under the millet system of the Ottoman Empire. They later became formally embedded in the Lebanese constitution (Joseph 1999) and now remain at the heart of ongoing religious and political strife that fractures the Lebanese state and extends more widely across the region. In Chap. 7, we show how this historical structuring of the nation-state of Lebanon continues to play out, so that religion remains a central axis of differentiation in the narratives of our Lebanese youth participants.

The 'imagined community' of new nations which emerged from colonial domination has been highlighted as additionally complex, given the defining role of the West in the imagination of modernity. Chatterjee (1993) poses the significant question of what might be left

for the postcolonial nation to imagine, given the defining images of modernity which had already been constituted by the West. His analysis of Indian nationalists' efforts to modernise suggests their recognition of the superiority of Europe in domains such as the economy, science and technology, and mechanisms of government. However, differentiation from Europe *was* possible through the separation of the spiritual from material domains, such that the spiritual became the domain which bore the essential and distinctive 'hallmarks' of the new postcolonial nation's cultural identity. Thus, while seeking to emulate the West in certain domains, such as the development of democratic forms of government, science and technology, Chatterjee (1993:6) argues that differentiation through the spiritual and cultural domains became a 'defining feature' of postcolonial nationalisms in Asia and Africa. Such distinctions were found to reverberate through our case studies. For example, we will see how the 'West' and its 'modernity' was sometimes emulated by Senegalese youth participants, for example in their endorsement of Senegal's espousal of secular republicanism. In contrast, local cultural norms were invoked to construct female youth's claims to equality as 'other'. (see Chap. 5). We discuss the gendered implications of the ways differentiation was articulated in the section below.

The Postcolonial Nation in a Globalised World: New Spatialities for Politics?

In the post–World War II (WWII) era, the complexities of forging new nation-states has been further complicated by the growing influence of the web of multilateral organisations that now span the Global North and Global South. Questions have been raised about the extent that these perpetuate forms of neo-colonialism, within which the Global South remains the poor relation in need of remedial intervention/attention. If multilateral agencies such as the UN were founded in the post–World War II period to secure world peace and respect for human rights, later World Bank policies such as structural adjustment clearly impacted disproportionately on the post-colonies. Even if ostensibly benign, the promotion of universal human rights by international agencies has also been questioned for the ways they perpetuate neo-colonial relations. As Benhabib (2011:13) argues, rather than a progressive

development, their inherent individualism means that human rights discourses may also act as a 'Trojan horse', shielding the spread of neo-liberal values. Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi (2005) also question the 'turn' to rights-based approaches by many development actors. They alert us to the ways contemporary 'rights talk' sits well with the prioritisation of partnership, participation and dialogue that now informs aid delivery, and question the instrumentalities of the use of 'rights-based' discourses in such contexts in ways that leave neo-colonial power relations undisturbed.

The international human rights regime has nevertheless been seen as provoking some 'unbundling' of the association of citizenship with the nation-state. This potentially involves more cosmopolitan forms of citizenship, and the 'emergence of new types of political subjects and new spatialities for politics' (Sassen 2006:279). However Calhoun (2008) draws attention to the multiple meanings of the term 'cosmopolitanism' and disrupts common-sense assumptions that the concept is somehow inherently benign. In its Greek origins, the 'cosmopolitan' was a citizen of the world, as opposed to a citizen of the *polis*. In contemporary everyday language, it often implies someone who is worldly, well-travelled and urbane, who is accommodating of diversity and difference. However, these forms of cosmopolitanism misrecognise their reliance on social and material privileges, and are underpinned by forms of class consciousness that assume their superiority in relation to the 'provincial' (Appiah 2006; Calhoun 2008). Other understandings of 'cosmopolitanism' are more normative. Some look to yet more developed forms of supranational governance in support of a global human rights regime (e.g. Held 1995), in ways that seem oblivious to its Western biases. Others highlight the continuing significance of local values and practices, alongside universal human obligations (Appiah 2006). The tensions between these poles lead him to describe cosmopolitanism as 'the name not of the solution but of the challenge'. We return again to different understandings of cosmopolitanism below, when addressing religion.

At this point, we note that if the significance of the modern state for citizenship might have been disrupted by the development of supranational law and supranational institutions, different authors (for example

Cheah 2006; Nash 2009; Sassen 2006) stress the continuing role of the modern state for the enforcement of human rights, but in ways that are becoming increasingly unequal. As Nash (2009) illuminates, supposedly 'cosmopolitan' understandings of citizenship have produced a proliferation of groups enjoying different citizenship status, ranging from 'super-citizens' to 'un-citizens'. The 'super-citizen' enjoys full citizenship rights, has secure employment, international mobility and so can just 'fly home' should they encounter an infringement of their human rights. On the other hand, 'marginal citizens' may have formal citizenship rights, but they are effectively debarred from claiming them because of their relative poverty, institutionalised racism or because they have been forced out by conflict. The situation of those fleeing war in Syria is a contemporary illustration of the latter. Nash (2009) suggests that rather than ushering in a new era of universal rights, the interstices between international and national legal systems may be 'concretizing' new forms of inequality. Thus, just as the concept of identity depends on its 'constitutive other', the concept of the citizen is also produced in relation to its 'other', the non-citizen. Nash (2009) describes these as 'Un-citizens', who include undocumented migrants, refugees, and those detained as part of the 'War on Terror' in 'non-places' that are outside of national jurisdictions, such as Guantanamo Bay or the camps at Bagram.

In conclusion, this section has drawn on a range of social theorists to critique the concepts of nation and of the nation-state, framed by ideologies of modernity. We have highlighted the Western origins of the nation-state alongside the paradoxical subjugation of much of the Global South during the colonial era; the further complexities that Orientalism created for the emergence of new nations in postcolonial times; and the ways this led newer nations to seek differentiation through the uniqueness of their cultures. In a globalised world, we have problematised how the promotion of international human rights may work to spread neoliberal values. Despite the claims that these may offer new forms of cosmopolitan citizenship, we conclude by suggesting that citizenship rights still mostly depend on the nation-state, although claims to rights are becoming increasingly fractured and unequal in the interstices of international and national legal systems.

2.5 Religion

We begin this section by considering the discursive grammar through which religion has been constituted within modernity and in particular with respect to the formation of the nation-state. We have highlighted above how the rejection of traditional forms of authority such as religion was integral to the emergence of modernity, which claimed instead to privilege man's (*sic*) use of reason. As Taylor (2011) comments, taking the examples of the USA and France, modern liberal democracies were therefore ostensibly constructed on the basis of a 'principled distance' between religion and the state. However, although much has been made about the supposedly 'secular' nature of modern democracies, this section will demonstrate firstly the highly variable ways that different nation-states recruit religion into their national imaginaries; secondly, the problematic claims on the part of some nation-states to be 'secular' and thirdly, the equally problematic construction of Islam as 'incapable' of secular thought. As part of the questioning of binary constructions of Islam and Christianity, we draw on authors (Mahmood 2012; Laborde 1995) who point instead to their similarities and the dynamic syncretic fusions that occur between religions in their diffusion around the world during different historical periods. We conclude the section by returning to the concept of cosmopolitanism, and how this relates to religion, particularly with respect to Muslim cosmopolitanism.

Western Democracies and Their 'Secularisms'
We turn first to Asad (2003) who explores the emergence of the concept of religion, and the different boundaries it invokes. This includes the emergence of religion as transcendent to the natural world and the later putative separation of religion and politics. In his 'anthropology' of secularism, Asad (2003) traces the emergence of a 'new grammar' associated with Christian thought, which re-positioned religion outside of the world, immanent and transcendent to it. In contrast to how Greek gods were seen as being involved in natural and social processes, the emergent Christian cosmology was 'separative', in supposing a distinction between the 'natural' and the 'supernatural' worlds (27).

In this new way of thinking, the natural world was also reconceptualised as a realm which could be manipulated, material, subject to mechanical laws, while the 'supernatural' lay beyond this, a realm that Asad (2003) describes as 'peopled by irrational events and imagined beings' (28).

Asad (2003) suggests that this prepared the ground for a new discursive grammar, allowing the emergence of the concept of 'secular space' within early modernity. This was informed by the 'disenchantment' that characterised the modern epoch, which implied 'a stripping away of myth, magic and the sacred' (13). In addition to the construction of a binary between reason and religion, this redrew the boundaries of the 'real' versus the 'illusory', the natural versus the supernatural, in ways that supposedly allowed man 'direct access to reality', and also helped to consolidate the 'myth' of secularism as intrinsic to liberal democracies (Asad 2003:13).

Although recognising that different democracies reflect different 'modern imaginaries', Asad's analysis of the American, English and French democracies that emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries nevertheless points to the continuing interpenetration of religion and the state within each of them. Echoing his arguments, Taylor (2011) disputes the primacy attached to 'secular reason'. He finds this to be a 'myth of the Enlightenment' (52), and takes issue with theorists such as Habermas and Rawls who would argue that democratic values can be founded on the use of reason alone. As Butler (2011) also points out, attempts to traduce religious belief through a critique of its cognitive status fail to attend to the ways religion works as a 'matrix of subject formation, an embedded framework for evaluations, and a mode of belonging and embodied social practice' (72).

Indeed, despite the ostensible distance posited between religion and the modern state, many social theorists have also suggested how religious values remained embedded within the values of liberal democracies. Thus, the terms of the American Declaration of Independence held strong biblical resonances from the outset (Nash 2009; Taylor 2011). In relation to the emergence of the notion of the 'secular' in the USA, Taylor (2011) points out that the term first arose in this context in the nineteenth century, when Catholics and Jews found themselves being excluded by invocations of the particular versions of Christianity of

those in authority. He also notes how American Catholics were targeted in nineteenth century as 'inassimilable to democratic mores' in ways that resemble contemporary critiques of those of Islamic faith. More widely, sociologists such as Weber (1930) suggest that the ethos of capitalism and of Protestantism were mutually constitutive. In other words, contrary to the supposed secularism of the modern state, protestant religious values should be considered integral to the construction of the modern self, fostering and legitimating its strong individualism, alongside the development of capitalist values and colonial expansion. Kalberg (1997) takes up de Tocqueville's and Weber's critiques of modern democracy to illuminate how the values of ascetic Protestantism imposed a duty on the individual to work towards their own salvation and prove themselves to god, rather than any earthly authority. While potentially counterbalancing pressures to conformity within a democracy, these values imposed a duty of self-improvement and impelled the individual to prove himself (*sic*) through hard work, competition and the search for profit. Drawing upon Weber (1930), Kalberg notes how this ethos of world-oriented individualism supposed its value system to have god-given superiority, while at the same time also giving legitimacy to wealth accumulation. In other words, religious values were integrally bound up with the emergence of Western democracy, the development of capitalism and its justification of colonial expansion.

Overall, Western democracy's claims to separate the public, political sphere from that of religion must be recognised as highly contentious. Rather, as Butler (2011) suggests, some religions are already 'inside' the public sphere. Public life affirms a particular religious tradition as 'the secular', which consolidates its dominance at the same time as providing criteria for the exclusion of other faiths. Although cloaked in the language of reason, Asad (2003) concludes that 'secularism' functions as a political doctrine. In other words, as a project it seeks the 'redemption' of the rest of the world, and in so doing claims a moral high ground, which means that it can readily underwrite state-legitimated violence. Thus, while the modern liberal state might claim its foundation to be secular and rational, he finds it instead to be 'heavily invested in myth and violence' (2003:56).

Secularism, the Modernising Postcolonial Nation and Islam

The claims to secularism on the part of Western democracies are critical in the contemporary positioning of Islam in relation to the 'modern' world. Indeed, Islam and Islamic societies have been characterised as 'premodern', or even 'anti-modern', with the concept of 'the secular' found to be notable by its absence (Mamdani 2004). Such attitudes are readily discernible in contemporary France, for example in recent controversies surrounding the banning of the *hijab* in French schools. As a religious sign, these ostensibly breach the secularist principles of the French republic, whose constitution is founded on the notion of *laïcité*. While republican framings of nationality conceptualise it as involving a common culture shared by all citizens, Laborde (2008) finds this to be inherently exclusionary, and to downplay the 'ethnic-like, particularist components of French culture' (2) in ways that are oppressive of difference. She suggests that in a climate of widespread racial discrimination, the invocation of the supposedly universal values of secularism provides a legitimisation for ethnicised social relations. Rather than supporting equality between citizens therefore, principles of *laïcité* are used to rationalise and sustain ethnic discrimination within French society. We return below to the redoubling of the burden of such oppressions on women, as the 'symbolic guards' of both religious and national values.

Mamdani (2004) is also concerned to show how political Islam and secular modernity have come together in different contexts. His analysis suggests how the emergence of political Islam, for example in India or Egypt, was not led by Islamic religious scholars (the *ulama*), but by political intellectuals whose dominant concern was for societal reform. This means their discourse was 'largely secular' (4), being concerned with worldly social and political issues, rather than issues of salvation. We will show below how this is relevant in our case studies, for example in relation to the emergence of Pakistan as a nation-state.

Mamdani (2004) therefore prefers the term 'political Islam' to 'Islamic fundamentalism'. In tracing the roots of radical forms of political Islam, which espouse the use of violence, he points in particular to political encounters between Islam and the West, which led to a reworking of traditional understandings of 'jihad'. In more detail, he argues

this had two main traditions (2004:50): the first (the greater jihad) involves a struggle against the weaknesses of the self, and is therefore self-directed. The second (the lesser jihad) concerns self-preservation and self-defence, so can be directed outwardly, and can involve mobilisation for social/political causes. He notes the historical infrequency of 'lesser jihad' and identifies four exceptions, all linked to anti-Western and anti-colonial struggles. He comments on how modern Western thought has misrepresented 'jihad' as an Islamic war against unbelievers and suggests instead that important strands of political Islam continue to have a modernising, largely secular ethos that seeks out societal reform. He does recognise another strand of Islamic jihad that is 'state-centred', however, and sees this as at the heart of contemporary Islamic political terror.[1] This form of jihad can also be directed against Muslims who are viewed as heretical, as we have seen in contemporary conflicts in the Middle East.

In addition to problematising reductive understandings of the concept of jihad, Mamdani (2004) also disrupts overly simplistic equations of political Islam with Islamic fundamentalism, violence or terrorism. He illuminates instead how political Islam has worked as part of national, modernising imaginaries. Mamdani's more complex account of Islam can also be compared to Badran's (2009) feminist analysis of 'secular and religious convergences' in Islam. She urges us to 'historicise' the terms, given the shifts in their meanings and inflections over time. She also asserts that the term secularism was first used in Islamic contexts in the nineteenth century within the struggles of different states for independence from colonial powers. This secular nationalism could not assume that the nation mapped onto the state, but nor did it involve resistance to religion. Instead, within the 'imagined *secular* nation, religion was taken for granted and citizens' plural religious identities accorded recognition and space' (Badran 2009:301, our emphasis). The 'pioneering secular feminisms' that developed in different Middle Eastern contexts through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries are described by Badran (2009) as always having 'a space for religion' (246). Indeed, they drew on Islam to argue for reforms to personal status laws, that is, customary or family laws drawing on local traditions which