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MUSLIM DISCOURSES ON INTEGRATION AND SCHOOLING

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A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Huddersfield

August 2012

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Acknowledgments

This thesis would not have been possible without the help, support and guidance from my family, teachers and friends. Over the last two decades I have been fortunate enough to benefit from advice and direction from a number of people. In particular, I would like to thank - Prof. Zia Sardar for his support and inspiration, Dr. Atif Imtiaz (Cambridge) for his time and counsel, Father Phil Summner (St Patricks Church, Oldham) for his comments on this thesis, Dr Sheikh Muhammad Mansur (Cardiff) for his help in thinking through the finer points of *Maqasid al Shariah* and *Fiqh al Aqliya*. Finally, to Dr. Virindar Kalra, (Manchester), for taking me ‘under his wings’ and guiding me through undergraduate, post-graduate and now doctoral studies – for which I am eternally grateful.

Special thanks to my supervisors Prof. Mark Halstead and Dr. Paul Thomas for sharing their wealth of knowledge, experience and guidance. Thanks also to my colleague, Dr Emma Salter for her encouragement and support.

My greatest debt is to my wife Shefa and my children, Talha, Musa and Hannah, without their patience and sacrifice, this thesis would not have made the light of day.

Abstract

Since 2001 Muslim communities in Britain have largely been governed through the educational policy framing of integration and segregation. This Manichean bio-construct sees mono-cultural ethnic schools as problematic spaces, whilst integrated schools as the liberal ideal. By drawing upon the *subaltern* studies approach, this study provides a space for Muslim pupils and parents to articulate their own discourses on integrated and segregated schools in Britain. In doing so, it allows Muslim communities a position of power, by giving them *agency* to construct their own narratives on the policy debate on integration and schooling.

This thesis attempts to make sense of Muslim discourses through a theoretic interpretation drawn from Muslim intellectual history. By using Ibn Khaldun's (d. 1406) sociological theory of '*asabiyya*' this study provides a broader theoretical context to the Muslim voice. The empirical and the theoretical perspectives contained in this study attempts to make significant contributions to the study of race, religion and Muslim studies in Britain.

Public policy discourses has often seen the concept of integration as a linear cultural process, with minority groups gradually adopting the social mores of the host society. Evidence presented in this study sees integration as an analytical process and not as a fixed cultural template. It shows how the concept of integration can often be used, by political actors, as a tool for anti-Muslim racism.

The discourses of Muslim parents and pupils have much in common with each other, especially when rejecting the idea of self-segregation, or highlighting the importance of '*asabiyya*' based on religion, but they have little in common with the public policy framing of Muslim communities.

Sociological studies have often demonstrated the disjuncture between public policy and lived experience. This study confirms this observation by elucidating the disconnect between political discourse of integration and lived cultural experience of Muslim communities. The discourses of Muslim communities in this study suggest a complex, paradoxical, intersectional reading of integration, which is fundamentally rooted within *social constructionism*. Most importantly it dismisses the integration and segregation binary, as seen within the educational framing of Muslims, whilst recognising the importance of Muslim group solidarity, or *'asabiyya* in Muslim discourse.

Transliteration

The transliteration system adopted throughout this thesis is the ‘IJMES System’, which is the system is used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*.

a, i, u =	z =	q =
b =	s =	k =
t =	sh =	l =
th =	ṣ =	m =
j =	ḍ =	n =
ḥ =	ṭ =	h =
kh =	ẓ =	w =
d =	‘ =	y =
dh =	gh =	’ =
r =	f =	

Long vowels: = ā, = ī, = ū

Diphthong: ay = ; aw =

Tā’ marbūṭa

Has been left out with no following *idāfa* **a**

Has been included with following *idāfa* **at**

Ḥurūf shamsiyya

Have been transliterated as written, rather than as pronounced. Example: *al-shams*

Tanwīn

Has been ignored unless it was necessary to use it.

1.0 Introduction

Since the events of the 2001 riots, 9/11 and the terrorist attacks in London in 2005, we have witnessed in Western Europe a crisis in multiculturalism combined with a policy debate on integration of Muslim communities within a heightened security context. These policy debates within the last decade have played a significant role in the way in which Muslims are positioned. It is often argued that, despite Muslim community settlement in the UK since the 1960s, Muslims have failed to integrate mainstream British society. Instead, they have chosen to live socially isolated and self-contained lives with ephemeral connections to the wider host society.

This thesis will focus on the UK context and explore three major themes associated with this discursive positioning. The first theme will explore the robust educational policy imperative which has emerged during the last decade and has attempted to address the ‘Muslim question’ through ethnic integration, segregation and de-radicalisation policies. Major socio-political and security events at an international and domestic level have given way to policy approaches attempting to address the ‘*Muslim question*’. The first approach views Islam as essentially anti-modern and antithetical to Western secular mores. The role of integration policies is to require Muslim communities to reject the key tenets of Islam, and to assimilate into Western secular liberalism. This can be summarised as the ‘*Islam problematic*’ given that attention is drawn to the religion and not to the adherents. Thus it is not surprising to note the following irony expressed by Australia’s Senator Bernardi: "Islam itself is the problem - it's not Muslims" (Harvey & Lewis 2011). The second approach sees no major conflict between Islam or Muslims and integration. The problem lies not in the ‘text’, but rather in the interpretation. The future of Islam and Muslims in the West lies in a liberal, depoliticised reading of the text. This can be

seen as the '*Muslim problematic*' given that the focus of attention is placed less on the religion and more on the followers' 'practice' of segregation and extremism.

The second theme will aim to address the meta-narrative on the 'Muslim question'. It acknowledges the significant absence of the Muslim subaltern 'voice'. 'Subaltern' is used here as the Marxist term associated with the works of Antonio Gramsci (d. 1937), later adopted by the Subaltern Studies Group. The exact meaning of 'subaltern' is widely debated and contested (Spivak 1994). I have taken the idea of subaltern to mean a person or a group who is marginalised and powerless (Young 2003). Exploring the 'Muslim voice' lends itself to the following question - what right does a relatively new minority community have to have their voice heard? In responding to this question, this thesis has factored the following points. (i) Democracy and the principle of equality enshrined in the Equality Act require the voices of minority communities to be heard and heeded. (ii) Connected to the first point is the pressing urgency to ensure that the political rhetoric with regard to equalities measures up to reality. Milner (2007) has noted how "“people of colour have been misrepresented, exploited, silenced and taken for granted in educational research” (Milner 2007:387). (iii) Subaltern and Critical Race Theorists have all recognised the importance of minority groups' 'narratives, counter-narrative and naming of one's own reality in education' (Milner 2007:390)

The third theme will attempt to fill the void in the theoretical understanding of integration and group dynamics within the Muslim intellectual tradition by exploring the works of the fourteenth-century Muslim sociologist Ibn Khaldun.

The overall aim and objective of this thesis is to address the above three themes through the following: (i) to examine the key debates on ethnic integration and segregation concerning mono-cultural schooling. Mono-cultural schools, as understood within this thesis, include independent and voluntary aided Muslim faith schools and state schools with majority Muslim cohort. The attempt by some local authorities to use school academies as an attempt to merge/close mono-cultural state schools with a view to creating ethnically diverse ‘mixed schools’ will be examined in light of the underlying value structures. Three value structures in particular will be at the forefront of the assessment: ‘forced integration’, assimilation and de-radicalisation. (ii) To recognise the absence of empirical work on Muslim discourses on integration and schooling but to compensate for this lacuna by evaluating pupil and parental discourses on this same matter. This section will be concerned with assessing a number of questions associated with ethnic integration, segregation and schooling, such as (a) What are the discursive categories used by Muslim students to make sense of integration, segregation and schooling? (b) Do these discursive categories differ within the contexts of mono-cultural and mixed schools? I will explore, through the parental discourses on schooling, the framing around integration and schooling against that of ‘self-segregation’, faith and parental choice. (iii) To contextualise the pupil and parental discourses within a wider theoretical underpinning - the works of Ibn Khaldun (d.1406) and his concept of *‘asabiyya* will be used to interpret dominant themes associated with Muslim group dynamics, including group feeling, group loyalty and group solidarity. *‘Asabiyya* is a sociological term that is used by Ibn Khaldun to describe and explain a number of themes associated with group dynamics, including Muslim group solidarity, group loyalty and group cohesion.

For the purpose of this study the concept of integration will be understood as a discursive category and emphasis will be placed more on what ethnic integration within the context of schools means to the Muslim community. This thesis will attempt to assess the category of integration within Muslim discourse through Potter & Wetherell's (2010) methodology of discourse analysis. It is envisaged that an understanding of what integration means to the Muslim community will help inform the public policy discourses on integration.

Research Context

The research context was shaped by two important factors; first, northern mill towns with significant Muslim populations were identified for the purposes of this research, namely Blackburn, Burnley and Oldham. These local authorities were determined by external policy factors responding to growing levels of residential and school segregation (Burgess *et al.* 2005), connected with this, was the attempts made by some local authorities to address ethnic segregation through integrated schools (Taylor 2009). Second, whilst conducting the research within schools, I was conscious of the fact that the majority of the Muslim respondents were from the Indian subcontinent. A wider sample from Manchester (Moss Side, East Didsbury and Eccles) and East London was chosen to gather data from Yemeni, Somali, Arab and convert communities, so that a broad assessment of Muslim voices could be explored.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis will be divided into six parts, with eleven individual chapters. A brief outline of each part is provided as follows. Part 1 of this thesis will comprise a review of the literature that forms part of the Muslim discourse with regard to educational policy and integration. Chapter 1 aims

to provide an outline of the contours of integration by looking at the various ways in which integration is studied. Chapter 2 provides a general outline of the literature that addresses education with regard to Muslim communities and the integration debate. This chapter also examines the policies of the New Labour and Coalition governments on schools and integration as a way of demonstrating contemporary discourses on integration and educational policy. Chapter 3 includes Muslim discourses on integration through the scholarly debates of Euro-Islam. The general theme of part 1 acknowledges the absence of empirical data on Muslim community narratives on education and integration.

Part 2 examines the methodological principles employed in this thesis. Parts 3, 4 and 5 will include the research findings which aim to bridge this gap by exploring Muslim pupil (Part 3) and parental (Part 4) discourses on integration, segregation and education. The meta-narrative at the centre of both of these parts is characterized by the different ways in which Muslim pupils de-construct the binary opposites of ‘mono-cultural’ schools as ‘bad’ and ethnically mixed schools as ‘good’. Instead, what the pupil discourses make clear is the importance of group solidarity based on faith within schooling, whilst recognising the importance of ‘doing multiculturalism’ by ‘mixing’ and ‘getting to know each other’. The parental discourse also supports the importance of faith, race and class inter-sectionality but rejects the idea of ‘self-segregation’ and instead advocates the importance of integration through faith within a broadly mixed schooling environment. Part 5 explores the discursive repertoires Muslim parents used to de-construct the public discourse on integration. Part 6 uses the Khaldunian sociology of *asabiyya* to provide a theoretical platform to interpret the importance of group dynamics within Muslim communities as noted in Parts 2 and 3 of this thesis.

Chapter One:

1.0 Contours of Integration Discourse

Debates on integration within the public, academic and policy arenas, given the current socio-political milieu, may appear to some as a relatively new phenomenon. In reality the intellectual antecedents of integration can be traced back to the US and particularly to the works of Gordon (1964) and Park and Burgess (1969). Both Gordon (1964) and Park and Burgess (1969) viewed integration as a linear process, whereby immigrant communities migrating to US were seen to gradually adopt the culture, language, values and beliefs of the host society. This, they argue, was achieved through four successive stages, starting with *contact*, and followed by *completion*, *accommodation* and finally *assimilation*. Integration within this context was largely viewed as a process of assimilation grounded upon the principles of Anglo-conformity. An analysis of the debates on integration within academic and public policy discourse shows the lack of consensus as to the precise meaning of integration. This point is further reinforced by Joppke & Morawska (2003) who cite sociological studies that have questioned the validity of a society that has reached consensus on fully integrating its migrant population. They highlight:

Post-classical sociology, even before the arrival of ‘globalization’ has shown that such a ‘society’ does nowhere exist, except in the imagination of some (especially political) actor...However an academically more adequate picture of modern society is that of a multiplicity of autonomous interdependent ‘fields’ (Bourdieu 1989).

(Joppke & Morawska 2003: 3).

In order to make sense of the complex hermeneutics and the political usage of the term ‘integration’, this chapter will provide a summary of the various conflicting ways in which the idea of integration has been used. This chapter also aims to provide an overview of the diverse ways in which the idea of integration is debated within public discourse. The first part of this chapter intends to provide the broader historical context of integration and community cohesion debates within Britain. The second part of this chapter considers four dominant approaches to integration. The first approach will provide a critical assessment of integration based upon the works of Bauman (1991), Bauman and Testler (2001), Green (2006) and Gillborn (2008). Most of these approaches draw upon the interplay between post-modernism, sociology and critical race studies. The second approach will debate the discourse of integration as a way of framing anti-Muslim prejudice. The third approach will evaluate the idea of integration through the prisms of key political actors and their speeches on ‘shared values’. The final approach will explore the pluralist or multicultural approach to integration based upon the principles of diversity and identity politics.

1.1 From assimilation to integration

Within the context of Britain, ‘assimilationist’ thinking played an important role during the influx of post-war Commonwealth migration during the 1950s and the early 1960s (Gillborn 2008; Tomlinson 2008; Mullard 1980;). A new politics of managing cultural difference through multiculturalism was introduced by Jenkins (1967), who rejected the ‘inherently racist nature of the assumptions underpinning the assimilationist model’ (Mullard 1980) and, rather than ‘a flattening process of assimilation’, advocated instead an integration based upon ‘equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance’ (Jenkins 1967). Joppke & Morawska (2003) have noted how a shift from assimilation to the discourse of integration ‘conceived [immigrants] not as objects of manipulation and control but as subjects of freely willed integration, for which the state can at best set parameters, but never guarantee a specific result’ (Joppke & Morawska 2003:5). Integration was thus seen as a two-way process and rooted in the broader public sphere (Saggar 2008). Integration did have a degree of influence on educational policy, particularly during the 1960’s and 1970’s educational policy of bussing (Halstead 1988; Tomlinson 2008), which was later abandoned largely due to public protest (Halstead 1988). During the 1980s, integration as an educational policy and public discourse was extended by different approaches to multiculturalism (Modood 2007, 2010; Philips 2007; Parekh 2000; Taylor 1992; Kymlicka 1989;). The shift from assimilation and integration to multiculturalism is highlighted succinctly by the Swann Report (1985), which influenced educational multiculturalism in the UK:

It has generally been accepted that attitudes towards the educational needs of ethnic minority pupils fall into a clearly defined chronological pattern, moving from early days of what usually termed “assimilation”, through attempts to give at least some recognition in schools to backgrounds of ethnic minority children - usually known as “integration” - to the more recent moves towards multicultural education.

(Swann Report 1985: 191).

Multiculturalism within public policy and academic discourse has often been presented as drawing to a close after the race riots, 9/11 and 7/7 (Goodhart 2004; Philips 2005). In fact, the idea of multiculturalism has always been contested (Okin 1999; Hesse 2000; Barry 2001; Hewitt 2005; Kundanani 2007; Joppke 2009).

Multiculturalism as a state policy and its emphasis on cultural recognition through government policy and on providing an equal say for minority groups was seen as an inappropriate way of meeting the contemporary challenges arising from recent political events. It was argued that, hitherto, policies of multiculturalism had been promoting a sense of ‘difference’ which nurtured a sense of racial and religious ‘separateness’. The concept of community cohesion was developed and promoted as a way of meeting the new challenges post race riots and 9/11. For Cantle (2008) the key task for multicultural societies is:

To come to terms with domains of difference and to develop a greater consensus...bonds between fellow citizens require greater sense of commonality. Furthermore, agreement about how to achieve such a consensus will also be required and it is suggested that this will depend upon breaking down the separateness between the minority and majority community and between the different minority communities themselves. Mutual trust and common sense of belonging will only be created through constant interactions and shared experiences.

(Cantle 2008:12).

For Cante, a 'new framework for race and diversity' based upon the philosophical tradition of communitarianism (Etzioni 1993; Robinson 2005) is required in order to nurture a sense of 'commonality'. This, he argues, can be nurtured through promoting the ideas of 'active citizenship', 'shared values', 'common vision' and a strong sense of 'shared identity' (Cante 2008). Cante (2008) maintains that this can be achieved through the social contact theory (Hewstone & Brown 1986; Halabi 2000; Hewstone *et al.* 2006, 2007; Hewstone 2006; Wagner *et al.* 2006) which, he argues, is 'a cornerstone of community cohesion practice' (Cante 2008:116).

The social contact theory is grounded upon the works of Hewstone & Brown(1986), Hewstone *et al.* (2006, 2007) and Hewstone (2006) and is based upon the premise 'that repeated cross-cultural and intergroup contact have direct effects on reducing prejudice, increasing levels of forgiveness, building group trust and reducing levels of anxiety' (Hewstone 2006:277). Cante's (2008) thesis is largely a policy response to the perceived pervasive questions on 'parallel lives' (Cante 2004), 'sleep-walking to segregation' (Philips 2005) and the 'virtual apartheid' nature of schools in the UK (Ouseley 2001).

Cante's (2008) idea of community cohesion has been hugely welcomed by local authorities and its principles of social contact have been used as a key tool of public policy, especially within the field of education and housing (Cante 2008). Despite its influence on public policy, community cohesion, as a concept, has also attracted a number of critics. For example, Robinson (2005) sees community cohesion as a 'sound right' policy which provides a commonsense rather than empirical justification for policy intervention. For Robinson (2005:1415), conceptually speaking, community cohesion 'represented an empty vessel into which the pre-occupations of contemporary public policy were poured'. McGee (2003) is critical of how, within a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-faith society, one can achieve consensus

over shared values. Despite these criticisms, the idea of social contact, shared values, common vision and shared identity have played a crucial role in framing the concept of integration.

1.2 When integration means assimilation: Integration as a rhetorical category

Integration is not publicly debated. It is a categorical imperative, a general norm that is imposed on everyone but particularly one group: immigrants and all those gravitating around them.

(Narcira Guenif Souilmas, quoted in Fekete 2008:12)

The best form of integration is assimilation.

(Otto Schily, quoted in Caldwell 2009:125)

Integration, assimilation and acculturation are all idioms that are frequently used interchangeably within the public discourse. Integration is considered by many social thinkers as a rhetorical category which is best understood through a detailed analysis of the variety of ways in which it plays as a reified normative construct, aimed at achieving certain socio-political objectives. Writers within this tradition do not view integration as a linear progression with ‘outsiders’ gradually becoming ‘insiders’; nor do they view integration as a social or moral imperative. Instead, they view integration as a highly politicised construct which is riddled with paradoxes (Rumbaut 1997), politically motivated interest convergences (Bell 2004) and, above all, lacking in empirical evidence (Finney and Simpson 2009). They all share the view that integration, as a category, should be subjected to rigorous systematic analysis and critique.

The idea of integration implies an objective towards equilibrium in society between the host society and the ‘new’ community. The role of an academic, Bauman (2001) argues, should be ‘to cast a suspicious eye on any claim that the social world operates in an orderly way and with a tendency towards equilibrium’ (Bauman & Tester 2001:11).

Bauman (1991) provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding the discourse of integration and its association with modernity. He argues that one of the main objectives of modernity is maintaining public order in society. One of the ways in which nation states achieve this order is by ensuring that all migrant communities are fully assimilated into the dominant cultures of the nation state. The process of so doing, Bauman (2001) argues, creates a sense of 'otherness' in those who don't fit in. By using the Jewish experience of pre-war Germany, Bauman (1991) highlights how assimilation can lead to a sense of contradiction, spiritual isolation and loneliness and, most importantly, a feeling of ambivalence. Moreover, he demonstrates how the Jews were identified as having a 'problematic presence' (Bauman & Tester 2001). This is further articulated as follows:

Acculturation did not incorporate the Jews into German society, but transformed them into a separate, ambivalent and incongruous, non-category category of 'assimilated Jews', prised from the traditional Jewish community as much as from native German elites... The assimilating Jews acted under the pressure to prove their German-hood, yet the very attempt to prove it was held against them as the evidence of their duplicity and, in all probability, also of subversive intentions.

(Bauman 1991:190-19).

Following the same outlook as Bauman (1991), Santiotis (2004), drawing upon the works of Jackson (1998) and Sardar (1998), has argued how, within the contemporary context, a sense of ambivalence is ascribed to Muslims through misrepresentation and categorisation as 'pariahs' (Santiotis 2004).

A number of critical perspectives on integration have been developed drawing upon the traditions of Foucault (1969), Said (1978), Bell (2004) and Van-Dijk (1997). A range of studies

have argued that the best way of viewing the popular discourses of integration is through the analysis of the different ways in which integration is used in political speech.

Nancy Green (2006) has demonstrated how the concept of assimilation needs to be ‘re-examined not as a description of immigration history but as an analytical category constructed...over different time frames’ (Green 2006:239). Drawing upon critical race theory, Gillborn (2008), in his review of educational policy relating to race, highlighted how contemporary discourses on ‘integration’ and ‘cohesion’ are best understood as code names for contemporary assimilation (Gillborn 2008: 81). This has been confirmed by a number of other writers, who have argued that integration is far from being a neutral term. They argue that, in fact, the idea is politically motivated and hermeneutically loaded, and is used to mean ‘assimilation’ (Banton 2001; Back *et al* 2002; Fekete 2008; Kalra 2008) and ‘domination’ (Banton 1967). Bowskill *et al.* (2007), in their analysis of British print media and Muslim schooling, argue that integration is best understood through a series of liberal hegemonic positioning. In sum, most of the writers who view integration as a rhetorical category see the function of integration as a device by which the West is projected within a reified construct whilst the ‘other’ is viewed through the pessimistic lenses of essentialism (Philips 2007).

Gillborn (2008) has also highlighted how the contemporary discourse of integration following the July 2005 London bombings is best described as ‘*aggressive majoritarianism*’. This occurs when ‘majority dislike and prejudice towards Muslims are enforced in the name of common sense, integration and even security’ (Gillborn 2008:81). Kundnani (2007: 123) also showed how the concept of ‘new integrationism’, as developed within the political milieu of 9/11, has redefined integration as ‘effectively assimilation.’ Crozier *et al.*’s (2008) research on young Muslim children’s experience of schooling highlighted the ways in which teachers will

use 'integration' as a tool to criticise Muslim pupils for not mixing with their white peers and failing to attend school trips or participating in extra-curricular activities - even though these actions were motivated by a complex set of factors including acceptance of anti-Muslim prejudice and racial harassment by both staff and pupils (Crozier *et al.* 2008). van-Dijk (1993, 1997) views these forms of political discourses on integration as forms of racism which seek to maintain and legitimise dominance (Van-Dijk 1993). Crozier *et al.* (2008) echo van-Dijk's observation by demonstrating how integration is not about sharing 'cultures and values' but rather an educational imperative which is used to maintain conformity, control and people knowing their place.

1.3: Framing Muslims: Politics of Anti-Muslim Prejudice

One of the most pervasive assumptions in discourse of European Muslim integration is that Muslim religiosity threatens Europe.

(Mogahed 2007: 14)

Islam is often presented as being diametrically opposite to the West. The former is often projected as obscurantist, undemocratic and misogynistic, whilst the latter is seen as secular, advanced and grounded upon the principles of liberalism. Whilst this type of reasoning has gained particular momentum following the events of 9/11 and 7/7, the ideological antecedents have a long intellectual and historical tradition. These can be traced back to the 8th century with the rise of Islam as a dominant political force (Southern 1979; Djait 1985; Daniels 1991; Said 1978/1997; Sardar 1999; Macfie 2000). Furthermore, a strong critical response to this form of Manichean framing of the ‘other’ has also been developed by a number of academics and policy analysts. For Said 1978/1997 and Tibawi (1980) the framing of the ‘other’ or the non-European is largely associated with the colonial positioning of the non-European inferior, antiquated and alien subject of the West. They see the ‘other’ largely as a product of western ideological biases articulated through scholarship and systems of thought. Whilst Beck *et al.* 2002; Fekete 2008, 2009 and Kalra 2008 see the current treatment of Muslims, as a continuation of the colonial legacy, but also the part of the racialised political treatment (Goldberg 2002) of minority communities in Britain.

Integration is often associated with a normative cultural embodiment of Britishness and national cohesion. The increasing Muslim presence in Europe, together with the growing security concerns about Muslim communities, has given rise to this discursive framing of the Muslim problematic, which is often associated with anti-Muslim racism (Kundnani 2007) and Islamophobia (Marranci 2004; Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia 2004; Allen

2010). Anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia are dominant approaches which have attempted to make sense of the current discourse on integration within a wider context of ‘new racism’ (Barker 1981).

The concept of anti-Muslim racism¹ is used to explain the phenomenon of ‘new racism’, which focuses less on the hostility against Islam and more on the aggression and prejudice against Muslims - that is to say anti-Muslim prejudice focuses on the ‘lives of Muslims’ in the West (Malik 2009). Poynting & Mason (2007) see the current portrayal of the Muslim problematic arising out of a transition from anti-Asian racism, revolving around the essentialised ‘*Paki*’, to anti-Muslim racism - with the objective of the hate being transferred from race to culture. For Kundnani (2007), contemporary discourses on ‘integrationism’ are grounded upon concerns over anti-Muslim political culture associated with the war on terror, self-segregation, alien values and forced assimilation.

Meer & Modood (2005) have also rejected the ‘narrow view of racism’ as advocated by Malik (2009) by highlighting four factors that have given weight to the ‘refutation of racism in the “Muslim question”’. First, they contest the argument that Muslim identity is based on choice, whilst racial identity is involuntary. Second, they challenge the idea that animosity is directed towards religion in general and not Muslims in particular. Third, they critically assess the view that the general population is more at ease with ethnic identity as opposed to religious markers. Finally, they challenge the notion that some find it difficult to sympathize with a minority that is perceived to be disloyal or associated with terrorism, a view that leads to a perception of Muslims as a threat rather than as a disadvantaged minority.

¹ In fact a number of similar concepts are used to describe the same phenomenon. For example Kundnani (2007) and Poynting and Mason (2007) prefer to use ‘anti-Muslim racism’, Malik (2009) uses ‘anti-Muslim prejudice’ whilst Halliday (2002) chooses to use ‘anti-Muslimism’.

Islamophobia came to public attention following the publication of *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* by the Runnymede Trust (1997). The report provided a definition of Islamophobia as ‘referring to dread or hatred of Islam and, therefore, to fear or dislike of all or most Muslims’. Thus it is not surprising to note that the Runnymede Trust places anti-Muslim prejudice within its subtext². The report articulates the ‘hatred of Islam’ by exploring the *Closed and Open Views of Islam*³ and a detailed assessment of anti-Muslim prejudice within education, the criminal justice system, the media and religiously motivated attacks, thus combining the macro framing of Islam with the micro experiences of Muslims in Britain. This is further articulated by the following:

The term Islamophobia refers to the unfounded hostility towards Islam. It refers also to the practical consequences of hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities, and to the exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs.

(Runnymede Trust 1997:1)

The Runnymede Trust’s follow-up report *Islamophobia: Issues, Challenges and Action* (2004) highlighted how hostility towards Islam and Muslims has taken various forms over ‘different times and different contexts’ (Runnymede Trust 2004: 7). The report acknowledges how, within the context of 9/11 and 7/7, Islamophobia has become pervasive and has developed a global reach, with an increasing characterisation of a humanised West and a de-humanised ‘other’. Marranci (2004), also drawing upon a contextualised reading of Islamophobia, suggests

² In fact, the title of chapter two of the report is ‘Islamophobia: The Nature of Anti-Muslim prejudice’. Despite this, Allen (2010) is highly critical of the way in which Islamophobia is used to refer to Muslims of Asian heritage, thus associating religion with ethnic identity. According to Allen (2010:62) the report substitutes ‘Muslim’ with markers of South Asian heritage 127 times, which is ‘equivalent to 70.5 per cent of all references in the text’.

³ Closed and Open views of Islam are tabulated based upon to 8 distinctions of Islam. These distinctions are then compared with an open and a closed view of Islam. For example, is Islam monolithic or diverse? A closed view will view it as monolithic whilst an open view of Islam will consider it as diverse with internal differences. Other distinctions include: whether Islam is separate/interacting, inferior/different, enemy/partner, manipulative/sincere, criticisms of the West rejected/considered, discrimination defended/criticised and Islamophobia seen as natural/problematic.

that it's not an unfounded prejudice against Islam, but rather that its roots lie in European perceptions of Islam acting as a 'transruptive force' with regard to Judeo-Christian values. Marranci (2004:2) goes on to argue that some of the contemporary concerns about multiculturalism lie in 'Europe's fear that, in a real multicultural environment, Islam might transform what Europe is today'. Fekete (2009) further demonstrates how the discourses of integration function: they accuse Muslim cultural practices of representing a 'threat' to Europe from within. She also notes how 'the adherence to Islamic norms and values threatens the notion of Europeaness itself' (Fekete 2009:44). Similarly, Allen (2010) sees Islamophobia as akin to a *new racism* which essentialises and demonises Muslims as the 'other'; as a result, Muslims are likely to be on the receiving end of discriminatory practices. This is further clarified by Allen's (2010) following definition of Islamophobia:

Islamophobia is an ideology, similar in theory, function and purpose to racism and other similar phenomena, that sustains and perpetrates negatively evaluated meaning about Muslims and Islam in contemporary setting in similar ways in which it has historically...As a consequence of this, exclusionary practices - practices that disadvantage, prejudice or discriminate against Muslims and Islam in the social, economic and political sphere ensue, including the subjection to violence - are in evidence.

(Allen 2010:190).

The materials covered above draw upon three salient arguments. First, they recognise the ways in which the discourse of integration positions itself in opposition to the Muslim 'other'. As we will observe in chapter 8, this process has a significant impact on the way in which Muslims define themselves. Second, the wider historical context of Orientalism and the representation of the 'other' are significant in understanding anti-Muslim prejudice and Islamophobia. Finally, the role of 'new racism' is crucial in examining contemporary prejudice against and exclusion of Muslims.

1.4 Integration as Shared Values

In the last decade there has been a growth in the use of the term ‘shared values’ by political actors as a way of responding to and dealing with a range of problematic policy concerns. Social problems, such as segregation or violent extremism, are seen as arising largely due to the weakening of collective identity. These political actors draw mainly on the communitarian approach (Etzioni 1994) which argues that a decline in moral standards and an increase in social ills are largely due to the expansion of citizens’ rights. According to the communitarian logic, civil rights need to be balanced with responsibilities; it’s only through a collective political project that the social problems in society can be addressed.

Diwan (2008), in her study of citizenship and education, notes how leading civil servants argue that the current problem of ‘Islam and Muslims’ can only be addressed through an asserted emphasis on shared values.

This section examines the speeches made by leading UK politicians on integration and the Muslim question from the perspective of the value base of the host society. Whilst these approaches differ in both style and substance, it will be made clear that they envisage a singular narrative of Britain through a set of British values imposed upon migrant communities. What these approaches further undermine is the articulation of an integrated society based upon universal values of human rights, justice and democracy (Osler & Starkey 2000; Kundnani 2007; Diwan 2008).

Blunkett and Integration through Citizenship

David Blunkett, the Home Secretary during the race riots of 2001, was one of the early pioneers of the use of shared values in addressing the question of integration. Blunkett's vision of integration can be found in the Crick Report (1998) which he commissioned. The Crick Report (1998) focused on the political notions of 'education for citizenship' for minority communities. This, he argued, is 'about learning laws, codes and conventions' or what Crick (1998) terms 'common citizenship'. Essentially, what the Crick Report was advocating was the importance of addressing the question of political apathy with regard to poor voter turnout during local and national elections. The report focused on pupils' understanding of political institutions in the UK and also on the importance of participating in political life through democracy and 'active citizenship', which Crick (1998) saw as volunteering, cooperation and participation in society.

The Crick Report (1998) was to have a significant influence on Blunkett⁴; this is clear from the contents of the important White Paper and integration strategy published in 2002 - *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain*

Secure Borders, Safe Haven sees the process of migration and globalisation as an inevitable reality of the modern world. In order to respond to these challenges, nation states need to ensure that integration of minority communities in general and immigrant groups in particular takes place. In order for this to happen, the Paper argues that 'we need to be secure within our sense of belonging and identity' and only through a collective shared identity will 'we' be able 'to embrace those who come to the UK' (Home Office 2002:1). The White Paper used the

⁴ David Blunkett was also a student of Bernard Crick. Blunkett appointed him to head up an advisory group on citizenship education when Labour came to power in 1997.

perspective of the Crick Report put a strong emphasis on active citizenship based upon ‘shared identity’ and ‘common values’ (Home Office 2002:11). *Secure Borders* placed an urgency upon active citizenship which is the ‘ability of new citizens to participate in society and to engage actively in our democracy’ (ibid). This will help people understand both their ‘rights and their obligations as citizens of the UK and strengthen bonds of mutual understanding between people of diverse cultural backgrounds’ (ibid).

Blunkett’s approach to integration is based upon the idea of active citizenship, whereby Britishness is largely measured through political participation and involvement in democratic structures. A number of writers have criticised Blunkett’s idea of citizenship. Osler & Starkey (2000) are critical because he doesn’t cover racism in depth, which they find rather puzzling especially given the publication of the Lawrence Enquiry. Furthermore, they argue that ‘there is an implied process of assimilation or integration which requires more effort on the part of minorities than for white British’ (Osler & Starkey 2000). Instead, what Osler (2000) and Diwan (2008) argue is to use the principles of the human rights model within schools as a way of understanding and tackling structural inequalities and discrimination and also to support young people to develop identities within the context of diversity.

Blair and duty of Integration

Tony Blair (2006), in his seminal speech on multiculturalism to the Runnymede Trust, chose to define integration through a set of values which unifies people as citizens. The London bombers of 7/7, in Blair's understanding, were not integrated into British society despite the fact that all of the perpetrators were born in Britain and went to state schools. For Blair (2006), integration is defined through a set of British values which cannot be measured through culture or lifestyle choices, but are rather based upon a set of reified British values. Blair (2006) stated:

When I talk about integration... It's not about culture or lifestyle. It's about values. It is about integrating at the point of shared, common unifying British values. It isn't about what defines us as people, but as citizens, the right and duties that go with being a member of our society.

The 'rights and duties' that Blair (2006) chose to use to define the essential values that made someone integrated were the 'belief in democracy, rule of law, tolerance, equal treatment for all, respect for this country and shared heritage'. It is only by buying into these duties that we can claim 'the right to call ourselves British'.

The deliberate use of and rhetorical reference to 'our' society, and also the 'right to call ourselves British', are grounded upon the notions of Britishness predicated upon a set of values that all citizens in general, but *outsider* Muslim communities in particular, had to fully embrace. After all, Blair (2006) argues that 'the right to be in a multicultural society was always implicitly balanced by a duty to integrate'. For Blair (2006), the above-defined values should be asserted within the public realm through set policies; this should also ensure that 'we expect everyone to conform to them'.

Brown, patriotism and a patriotic purpose

Gordon Brown (2006), in his *Fabian New Year Conference* lecture on identity and Britishness, almost 11 months prior to Blair's speech on Britishness and integration, focused on the idea of patriotism and patriotic purpose as a way of tackling the question of integration and the Muslim question. Muslims are required, as a way of integrating into the political community, to demonstrate their allegiance, commitments and patriotism to Britishness, which for Brown (2006) is defined through 'liberty, responsibility and fairness'.

For Brown, patriotism is based upon notions of progressive forms of Britishness which is defined through three fundamental values drawn from political philosophy. Brown sees 'British patriotism and patriotic purpose founded on liberty for all, responsibility by all and fairness for all'. For Brown (2006), references to 'patriotism owe more to progressive ideas than right-wing ones'. So:

Modern progressive view of Britishness as I set out in a speech a few weeks ago does not retreat into self-interested individualism, but leads to ideas of empowerment; responsibility does not retreat into a form of paternalism, but is indeed a commitment to the strongest possible civic society; fairness is not simply a formal equality before the law, but is in fact a modern belief in an empowering equality of opportunity for all.

Cameron and muscular liberalism

More recently, the prime minister David Cameron (2011) presented his ideas on integration at a security conference in Munich to delegates of EU ministers and heads of state. The speech conflated multiculturalism and integration with security and counter-terrorism policies. First, Cameron made the distinction between 'good' Muslims who see 'Islam as a religion practised by people' and 'bad' Muslims who are 'Islamic extremists' who view Islam as a political ideology'.

Secondly, he uses the ‘slippery slope’ argument to draw a link between violent extremism and extremist or illiberal views. This, he argues, is:

At the furthest end of those who back terrorism to promote their ultimate goal: an entire Islamist realm, governed by an interpretation of shariah. Move along the spectrum, and you find people who may reject violence, but who accept various parts of the extremist worldview, including real hostility towards Western democracy and liberal values.

For Cameron (2011), one of the main causes of the Muslim problematic is the weakening of collective identity through an emphasis on cultural difference through state multiculturalism.

This is further articulated as follows:

Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream. We’ve even failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong. We’ve even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run completely counter to ours.

A potential way forward in addressing the Muslim question is through the idea of ‘muscular liberalism’. Although Cameron did not define what he meant by muscular liberalism, his choice of a strong rhetorical vocabulary provides an insight into the hard-line approach against ‘tolerance’ of cultural difference. Cameron argues that ‘frankly, we need a lot less of the passive tolerance of recent years and a much more active, muscular liberalism’. Moreover, Cameron argues that belonging to the state is to believe in the principles of liberalism which are based on ‘freedom of speech, democracy, rule of law and equal rights of race, sex or sexuality’.

Critical overview of values discourse

To address the question of integration, Blair (2006), Brown (2006) and Cameron (2011) used the discourse of values as an oppositional positioning for the Muslim problematic. Whilst there are subtle nuances in the above approaches to shared values, a certain moral panic can nevertheless be seen to have been generated through the essentialised Muslim presence.

In addition to the oppositional positioning, there are also a number of fundamental flaws in the way in which shared values are conceptualised. First, given the starting premise of the debate, it is difficult to see how the values discussed by the above political actors are ‘shared values’; rather, it is clear from the style and content of the debate that these are essentially values enforced by a politically dominant group on to a powerless minority group (Halstead 1996). Second, the above discourse of values has been described as ‘aggressive majoritarianism’, whereby majority dislike of and prejudice towards Muslims are enforced in the name of common sense, integration and even security’ (Gillborn 2008:81). Third, in light of Leicester’s (1989) theoretical approaches to shared values, the above political positioning is grounded on an ‘absolutist position’, which is based upon the dominant values of the host society. This position is compared with a ‘cultural relativist’ approach which sees the ‘shared values’ approach as difficult to achieve, as it is socially and culturally defined. In order to provide an exit between the ‘absolutist’ and ‘cultural relativist’ approach, Leicester (1989) provides a ‘limited relativist’ position which views shared values as a collective project that is on-going and negotiated by all concerned. Finally, integration as ‘shared values’ approaches views Islam through an Orientalist lens - Islam is essentially different from Western secular mores and it’s only through adopting an enlightened Western secular world-view that Muslims can have a future in the West. Moreover, the political speeches by Blair (2006), Brown (2006) and Cameron (2010) carry an implicit

rejection of Islam and seek to relegate it to the private sphere. According to Diwan (2008:58) 'this may be due to the perception that religion and, in particular, Islam cannot be relegated to the private sphere, and that it's a whole way of life threatening Western values'.

1.5 Cultural Identity and Difference: The Politics of Recognition

This section will explore ideas of integration through the principles of pluralism. This position maintains that there are a number of ways in which a person can be 'British', which may ultimately require us to "rethink 'Europe' and its changing nature, so that Muslims are not a 'Them' but part of a plural 'US', not sojourners but part of its future" (Modood 2005:209).

Cultural difference is an essential feature of contemporary society. It is principally a result of globalisation, and economic and ecological migration. This has led some sociologists to describe many cities within Europe as 'super-diverse'. According to Vertovec (2006), this incorporates a level of cultural difference which ruptures previous ethnic diversity within UK cities based upon conventional migration from the Commonwealth or countries with colonial links. Instead, 'super-diversity' comes from migration resulting from a complex, dynamic set of variables which results in 'new, often small, scattered groups with multiple origins and transnational connected groups' (Vertovec 2006:1). Patterns of super-diversity have also made space for diverse and vibrant Muslim heritages; Muslims from South Asia no longer have a monopoly over the 'Muslim voice', but rather form a single voice along with other voices from Libya, Turkey, Somalia and Yemen.

The question of understanding cultural difference may appear to be a relatively new discipline but Parekh (2006), in a comprehensive assessment of various philosophical approaches to cultural diversity, demonstrates how our understanding of cultural difference can be traced

back to early Greek philosophers. According to Parekh (2006) the early approaches using Christianity as a normative world view were interested in *moral monism*, which argues ‘that only one way of life is fully human, true or the best, and that all others are defective to the extent that they fall short of it’ (Parekh 2006:16). Parekh (2006) further highlights how different forms of *moral monism* were used by liberal theorists, such as J.S Mill (d.1873) and others, to argue that liberalism, with its emphasis on autonomy and self-determination, is considered the ‘true’ way of living. Whilst this approach was later criticised by many contemporary liberals (Parekh 2006), a number of other approaches to cultural difference were developed within the liberal tradition (Rawls 1971; Taylor 1994; Kymlicka 1995; Modood 2007). It is worth looking at two approaches to cultural diversity (Taylor 1994; Modood 2005, 2007, 2010), especially given their prominence in chapters 5 and 6.

Politics of Multiculturalism

The politics of recognition acknowledges two crucial points: first, there is a failure to recognise the cultural identity of minority and other underprivileged groups in society; and, second, this failure to recognise cultural difference has socio-psychological implications for the individuals or groups concerned. Taylor (1994), drawing upon a long tradition within Western philosophy, recognises the importance of cultural difference with its emphasis on equal respect, human agency and self-expressive choice. He sees the importance of the ‘politics of human dignity’, which he argues is closely associated with equal worth and respect. For Taylor (1994), equal worth and respect as a ‘*universal human potential*’ happens when each person is made to feel they deserve respect and recognition.

One of the crucial elements of cultural difference is the need to recognise that human beings are born in and influenced by their cultural communities. Thus it is critical to appreciate the fact that cultural difference has value. For Taylor (1994:68), ‘just as all must have equal civil rights and equal voting rights, regardless of race or culture, so all should enjoy the presumption that their traditional culture has value’. Not only do all cultures have value, they also start with the position of equal worth which demands recognition and nurture.

The demand there that we let cultures defend themselves, within reasonable bounds [is important]. But the further demand we are looking at here is that: we *recognize* the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their *worth*.

(Taylor 1994: 64).

Taylor’s (1994) concept of cultural recognition provides a generic template in understanding the necessity of cultural difference in contemporary society; it also appreciates the meanings and significance of culture and the role it plays in enriching the daily lives of citizens. Furthermore, Taylor’s (1994) conceptual framing of cultural diversity has policy implications for the way in which schools and the educational curriculum are constructed and administered. For Taylor (1994), part of the politics of recognition requires major institutions to provide recognition of cultural difference in the ethos, curriculum and functioning of schools.

Taylor’s approach to multiculturalism has had a significant impact on the way in which cultural difference is perceived and articulated by a range of academics. However, Taylor’s model does not offer any concrete examples of how the politics of recognition work in practice. Modood (2007), throughout his career, has attempted to do this by articulating the recognition of Muslim communities within a secular liberal context.

The question of Muslim integration, Modood (2007, 2011) argues, should be understood within the context of multiculturalism or the ‘politics of difference’. The politics of difference for Modood (2007) is not an individualised project but a collective group process. Moreover, the politics of difference, for Muslims, means that it aligns itself to other minority groups, such as gender, race and sexuality – this, for Modood (2007), is the ‘3+1 principle’. Muslim groups, according to this principle, are not requesting any additional rights but rather advocating that the same rights and recognition that have been granted to the three cited groups be extended to them. Thus:

Marginalized and other religious groups, most notably Muslims, are now utilizing the same kind of argument and making the claim that religious identity, just like gay identity, and just like certain forms of racial identity, should not just be privatized or tolerated, but should be part of the public space.

(Modood 2007:70)

Modood (2007) rejects the argument that Muslim identity cannot be associated with gender, sexuality or race because these are ‘ascribed and involuntary’ identities, whilst religious identity is essentially a matter of choice; thus religious groups should have less recognition, legal protection and claim on the public space. Modood (2007) sees this argument as ‘sociologically naive’ because:

No one chooses to be or not to be born into a Muslim family. Similarly, no one chooses to be born into a society where to look like a Muslim or to be a Muslim creates suspicion, hostility or failure to get a job you applied for.

(Modood 2007:71)

Cultural Identity

A central feature in Taylor's (1994) and Modood's (2007) works lies in the fundamental question of the 'self-concept'. How people see themselves or define their identity is crucial to understanding the works of Modood and Taylor. As already noted in the works of Modood (2007), cultural identification is crucial in contemporary society. In fact, many people identify themselves, associate with others and make political claims based on a range of cultural markers, such as gender, race, sexuality and religion. In recent years there has been an increase in identity politics, whereby social interest groups have articulated their own narrative or made political claims and demands based on the above markers of identity.

Modood (2005), drawing upon a decade of research, articulates the pivotal role played by religion for second-generation South Asian communities. Modood *et al.* (1997) were among the first academics to point out the significance of recognising faith-based markers of identity for Muslims.

Modood's (2005) works challenge the dominant conceptualisation of race and racism which, he argues, is embedded within the 'Atlantocentric' perspective, arising from the American experiences of racism and the civil rights movement. According to Modood this standpoint is rooted in the Black experience and fails to conceptualise the Muslim experience of racism, which is often motivated 'by cultural motifs such as language, dress, religion and family structure' (Modood 2005).

The recent political events in Europe and America, such as 9/11 / 7/7, the murder of Theo Van Gogh in 2004, the War on Terror and the Danish Cartoons, to name but a few, have played a critical role in shaping the public imagination of Muslims. Meer (2010), in light of these

developments, has also demonstrated the rise of Muslim identity based upon the idea of Muslim consciousness. Meer (2010) uses DuBois' (2007) idea of double consciousness as a way of understanding the rise of Muslim consciousness through a detailed assessment of Muslim schools and the depiction of Muslims in the media. Double consciousness, within a Du-Boisian context, is a psycho-social phenomenon model used by Black or oppressed groups to negotiate their experiences. This is further explained as follows:

[T]he negro is ... born with a veil, and gifted with a second-sight in this American world - a world which yields to him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two un-reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves be lost...He simply wishes to make It possible to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spat upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face.

(Du Bois 1999:10-11)

Meer (2010) uses the key principles as highlighted above, such as a) sense of looking at one's self through the eyes of the other, b) longing to attain self-consciousness, and c) the idea of twoness, to understand the rise of Muslim consciousness. Meer (2010) argues that Du Bois' idea is helpful because, instead of rejecting the double self, he rather attempts to reconcile the differences. He argues how 'living in the two worlds at once furnishes the minority subjectivity with powers to see what the majority are blind to and so, through second sight add something to the equation of diversity' (Meer 2010). The Muslim contribution lies within a multicultural

framework, where conception lies not in assimilation or separatism but rather in a sense of ‘enduring hyphenation’.

The works of Modood (2007) and Meer (2010) provide a broader context of Muslim identity. Three other approaches, each providing their own accounts of identity, will also be helpful in understanding pupils’ and parental construction of Muslim identity. The first of these approaches explores Muslim identity as hybridised; the second approach sees Muslim identity based upon a connection to the Muslim ummah (community), whilst the last considers Muslim identity as a secularised and individualised identity.

New Ethnicities

The sociology of identity carries a central feature which has challenged the conventional thinking of identity as implying sameness, stability and continuum with a central coherent essence which persists throughout one’s life. Instead, research on identity has pointed out that it is a socially constructed phenomenon.

One of the dominant approaches to identity is the notion of hybridity, which has been articulated mainly through post-colonial theorists such as Hall (1992) and Bhabha (1994). They argue that identity is not ‘fixed’ but rather constantly in a state of flux. Bhabha (1994) rejects the notion of the essentialised ‘other’ with its unchanging antiquated and obscurantist world view. Bhabha’s (1994) work has demonstrated how hybridity within a colonial context generated a sense of ambivalence in the colonial administrators, which then led to the changing of the power dynamics between the colonisers and the colonised. He argues that this was done largely through the process of mimicry which ruptures the notion of ‘fixity’ in the ‘other’. Furthermore,

Bhaba (1994) notes how 'hybridity intervenes in the exercise of authority not merely to indicate the impossibility of its identity but to represent the unpredictability of its presence' (Bhabha 1994:163). For Bhabha (1994):

The time for 'assimilating' minorities to holistic and organic notions of cultural values has dramatically passed. The very language of cultural community needs to be rethought from a postcolonial perspective, in a move similar to the profound shift in the language of sexuality, the self and cultural community, effected by feminists in the 1970's and the gay community in the 1980's.

(Bhabha 1994: 251).

Hall (1996) has a slightly different approach to identity from that of Bhabha (1994). For Hall (1992) identity is a construct and a process, which is never completed and forever in the process of 'becoming'; it is a process which is steeped in the diasporic experience. This point is further articulated as follows:

This new politics of representation has to do with awareness of black experiences as a diaspora experience and the consequence which this carries for the process of unsettling, recombination, hybridizing and cut-and-mix.

(Hall 1992: 258)

What the above argument of 'new ethnicities' or the 'hybridity' argument developed by Hall (1992, 1996) suggests is that there is more than one way of defining and structuring one's identity. *New Ethnicities*, for Hall (1992), provide a multiplicity of ways of being in a globalised consumer culture.

Muslim Identity in Britain or British Muslim Identity

There are three major approaches that help explore the idea of British Muslim identity. The first approach sees the association between British Muslim identity and the experiences of discrimination ‘as a fact of life’ (Archer 2003; Seddon 2010). Seddon (2010), drawing upon extensive ethnographical research on the Yemeni Muslim community in Manchester, notes:

The combination of prejudice, discrimination and exclusion appears to have heightened emphatic self-definitions of religious identity, often ruling out any proximity to being British. The assertion of “Muslimness” in opposition to a discriminatory hegemonic British identity provides a universal “belongingness” which further undermines the national identity.

(Seddon 2010:557)

In light of the socio-political events of the last decade, the British Muslim experience, according to Seddon (2010), is marked by hostile negativity. For Ansari (2000), this particular experience informs an identity construct based upon a resistance to hegemonic British identity (cited in Seddon 2010). Muslim identity is thus an identity which acts as a transruption of a reified hegemonic whiteness, and is essentially an oppositional discourse. Identity construct within this context takes a reactionary form to a hostile agent who refuses the acceptance of the ‘other’ based on equality and equity (Modood 1992).

The second approach to Muslim identity observes a symbolic shift in identity- construct from the first generation of Muslims in Britain with their cultural ties embedded in the countries of their origin to the second and third generation of Muslims born in the West whose identity is seen as de-culturalised, de-territorialised and, above all, highly individualised (Roy 2004). This

perspective perceives identity as a product of globalisation which has witnessed the significant transfer from the localised and traditional forms of identity of their parents to the more individualised forms of religiosity. According to Roy (2004), contemporary discourses on religiosity have the following key facets: 'individualisation, the quest for self-realisation, rethinking of Islam outside the framework of a given culture and the recasting of the Muslim ummah in non-territorial terms' (Roy 2004:232).

For Roy (2004) cultural forms of contemporary Muslim religious loyalty are grounded not in integration or civic or ethnic nationalism but rather in the worldwide 'Muslim ummah'. As Roy (2004:19) has pointed out, 'the Muslim ummah no longer has anything to do with a territorial entity. It has to be thought of in abstract or imaginary terms'. Roy (2004) has also noted how the process of Westernisation through globalisation has resulted not in an increase in liberalism or secular humanism but rather in an appetite for religious fundamentalism because 'it acknowledges without nostalgia the loss of pristine cultures, and sees as positive the opportunity to build a universal religious identity delinked from any specific culture, including the Western one perceived as corrupt and decadent' (Roy 2004:25).

The final approach to Muslim identity sees the process of contact between Muslims and secular space resulting in the social and religious transformation of the Muslim community. Cesari (2004) sees the contact between Muslim immigrant communities in Europe as resulting in individualised and secular forms of religious identity which are transforming the way in which Muslims view their religion. Three types of religious identity are noted by Cesari (2004). For Cesari (2004), *ethical Islam* requires Muslims to hold dear the ethical tenets of religion,

including the legal and the ethical codes. *Emotional Islam* sees the connection to religion through an emotional contact. The manifestation of emotional Islam can be seen in donations to Muslim charities during times of natural disaster or political upheavals. *Cultural Islam* implies that Muslims continue to practise their faith largely on cultural grounds without heeding the deeply religious reasons.

The above approaches to Muslim identity within the context of the West may appear to have a number of advantages, especially as they see identity as a construct rooted in socio-political experiences. However, there are a number of criticisms associated with the approaches. First, they can be seen as contradictory rather than complementary. Take, for example, the approach of Cesari (2004) which broadly provided an optimistic, secularised identity compared to the deeply fundamentalist account of Roy (2004). Second, each perspective on identity explores the relationship between the subject (a Muslim) and the socio-political context, without exploring or examining the textual or the theological imperative for Muslim behaviour, such as acts of charity.

1.6 Conclusion

This section provided a summary of the different ways in which integration is debated within distinctive socio-political contexts. The first part of this chapter provided a brief overview of public policy debates on integration through the prisms of community cohesion. The theme of community cohesion is continued in chapter two to demonstrate the intersectional nature of community cohesion and to explore the former government flagship project in tackling violent extremism and contemporary discourses in education.

Four distinctive and often conflicting approaches to integration were also debated in this chapter, namely the rhetorical approach, integration as ‘shared values’, integration as a form of anti-Muslim prejudice and the multicultural approach to integration. The rhetorical approach to integration will prove to be helpful in understanding some of the pupil and parental discourses on integration. Integration as ‘shared values’ is discussed further in chapter two when considering the educational policy on segregation. Integration as a form of anti-Muslim prejudice forms part of parental meta-discourse in chapter 9. The multicultural approaches to integration will also prove to be of relevance when examining parental discourses on integration. Some of these approaches are also developed and expanded throughout this dissertation. The purpose of this chapter was to examine the complex and conflicting literature with regard to integration as a socio-political idea through which we view society.

Two major themes emanate from the literature review of integration; firstly, the policy discourse often perceives integration from a dualistic perspective, in that it sees integration as the liberal ideal for maintaining the social order in a complex and changing social world. The policy of liberal consensus has become increasingly muscular following the events of 7/7, as documented in David Cameron’s (2011) speech in Munich. Secondly, there is a significant void

in the literature which allows Muslim communities to become active agents in shaping the discourse of integration. Muslims are often the object of talk, seldom are they allowed a voice to articulate their experiences on an important policy framing which influences their various aspects of their life. In responding to both these themes, Chapter 2 will attempt to provide a critical overview of approaches to integration within schooling by focusing on the policy of community cohesion and the controversial Prevent policy. Chapter 3 will focus on the Muslim scholarly discourse on integration by exploring the different ways in which Muslim communities of Europe are debated.

Chapter 2: Educational Policy, Muslims and ‘Self-Segregation’

2.0: Introduction

What is the role of public policy in addressing pervasive issues such as racial and ethnic segregation? For some, such debates on segregation are politically constructed myths which lack detailed empirical evidence (Finney and Simpson 2009); for others, they are emerging threats that require urgent and radical public policy intervention (Phillips 2005; Cattle 2008). A range of policy reports dating back to the 2001 riots in the North of England have captured the public ‘concerns’ over segregated communities in general and non-white mono-cultural schools in particular. Among them, Sir Herman Ouseley (2001) discussed the ‘*virtual apartheid*’ nature of schooling in Bradford, the Cattle Report (2001) warned of ‘*parallel lives*’ created by the schooling system, whilst the Ritchie Report (2001) encouraged Oldham to adopt policies that would lead to better integration and the desegregation of schools. The public discourse surrounding segregation reached its peak following the publication of two studies which warned of the pervasive nature of ethnic segregation in UK schools. The first analysis was conducted by Burgess and Wilson (2004) using principles based on indices of isolation and dissimilarity - two widely-used measures of ethnic segregation (Massey & Denton 1988). They reported high levels of ethnic segregation in secondary schools in England, and also suggested a relationship between high levels of school segregation along ethnic lines and the towns that experienced the riots during 2001. They thus reinforced earlier policy reports which made correlations between spatial segregation and racial conflicts. The second study by Johnson *et al.* (2006), drawing on the analysis of the ethnic composition of all schools in England, echoed these findings; they

demonstrated how the issue of ethnic segregation is a major concern, especially given that school segregation along ethnic lines is greater than residential segregation along those same lines. They argued:

It has been shown herein that not only is there ethnic segregation in the country's primary and secondary schools, but also in addition – for both the South Asian populations and for the Black Caribbean and Black African populations – that school segregation is very substantially (and significantly) greater than is the case with residential segregation.

(Johnson *et al.* 2006:988)

Despite some of the criticisms of the above approaches to measuring segregation, as highlighted by Banton (2001) and Finney & Simpson (2009), popular discourses on ethnic segregation further expressed fears of 'Muslim ghettos' (Carey 2008) and 'no-go areas' (Nazir-Ali 2008) for white people in some northern towns. Segregated communities, parallel lives, Muslim ghettos and insular communities have subsequently become part of collective folk wisdom, which continues to influence political agendas both in the UK and in other EU countries with sizable Muslim populations (Kepel 2004; Bown 2007; Laborde 2008; Thomas 2011; Caldwell 2009).

This chapter intends to build upon the discussions highlighted above by providing a detailed analysis of contemporary thinking on education and integration with particular regard to Muslim communities. Two major themes are explored in this chapter; the first part provides a generic outline on the debates concerning Muslim communities, schooling and segregation, whilst the second part provides a detailed analysis of the New Labour policy of using school academies to tackle racial segregation in order to prevent violent extremism.

2.1: Muslim Communities and ‘self-segregation’

The segregation thesis has become a dominant discourse shaping Muslim geographical space within the UK (Cantle 2008; Thomas 2011) and also within a range of other European countries such as France (Bowen 2007; Laborde 2008). Segregation is often seen through the lenses of the 2001 race riots and the events of 9/11 and 7/7. Thus, the segregated nature of some European cities is seen by many political actors as highly problematic. The problem of segregation is seen to contribute towards racial tension (Cantle, 2008), violent extremism (Davies 2009) and questioning of loyalty (Bowen 2007).

High levels of segregation are seen by many as being reinforced through kinship and family ties. The *Biraderi* system, in particular, within the Pakistani community is seen by some as playing a pivotal role in sustaining high levels of segregation (Peach 2006). High levels of endogamy within some Muslim communities are also thought to play a vital role in maintaining closeness within community and family groups. For example, Peach (2006), drawing upon the 2001 Census data, highlighted how 96 per cent of Muslim women married within their own faith. Moreover, levels of first-cousin marriages within communities in Bradford and Birmingham are also seen to be sustaining high levels of endogamy and homogamy; Peach (2003) estimates that at least 55 per cent of British Pakistani couples are first cousins.

Ali (2010) argues that segregation of Muslim communities is best explained through the Islamicate⁵ concept of '*convivencia*'. *Convivencia* is a Spanish concept used to describe religious and cultural coexistence. It allowed Muslims, Jews and Christians during the 9 - 14th century to

⁵ Hodgson (1974), in his three-volume *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, made the distinction between Islamic and Islamicate practices. The former description entails all religious practices based upon the tenets of faith, whilst the later included cultural practices, founded in Muslim societies, which do not have a religious basis (Hodgson 1974: v. 1: 59).

develop their own identity and culture, each creating and managing their own space, a situation accepted by the Muslim rulers and the respective communities. Ali (2010), a critic of this *convivencia*, shows how it 'is neither a fruit juice nor a fruit salad but it is like the individual baskets of different fruits in a fruiterer's shop' (Ali 2010:188). For Ali (2010), *convivencia* encouraged an idea of separateness and isolationism despite some positive features. Ali's (2010) criticisms echo those of Marranci (2011) expressed through his idea of 'hydra-multiculturalism' taken from the Greek mythical monster which had independent heads (on a single body) occasionally fighting one another. One of the important ways of overcoming hydra-multiculturalism is through education, which can be used to transform Muslim communities living in the West.

This transformation has to take place through education, a field in which urgent reforms are needed to create an integrated society in the future... Education should not only teach rights and responsibilities but most importantly for developing the faculty of critical thinking, which is internationally suppressed by Muslim religious orthodoxy... In short, the new generation of students must be educated not only in values of citizenship, democracy and cultural pluralism but also to think critically and analyse objectively all received wisdom.

(Ali 2010:189).

The above debate on [self] segregation constitutes the meta-narrative for framing debates on the Muslim community. Over the years a number of counter-narratives have also been developed which challenge this position. First, the empirical evidence to sustain the segregation thesis is critically scrutinised by Finney & Simpson (2009). Evidence presented in their study includes census and survey data together with detailed sociological commentary on some of the national headlines which debates on integration have hitherto informed. Finney and Simpson (2009) aim to counter a series of 'myths' surrounding the following sensationalised media headlines: 'Britain is becoming a country of ghettos', 'minorities do not want to be integrated'

and ‘minority whites cities’. Perhaps the most important feature of their work is their exploration of how the collection and analysis of race statistics has become a highly political process which is further used to set political objectives. They argue how the discourse of ‘segregation’ has become a growing issue largely due to speeches [cited below] made by Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

Some districts are on their way to becoming fully fledged ghettos - black holes into which no one goes without fear and trepidation...The walls are going up around many of our communities and the bridges... are coming down.

Finney & Simpson’s (2009) study highlights how such statements by leading public figures help to generate a sense of moral panic which owes more to sensationalised media headlines than to empirical fact. The above comments, they argue, cannot be substantiated by any concrete evidence; they argue that no towns or cities in the UK can be classified as ghettos - in which 90-100% of the population is made up of one ethnic group. Furthermore, Simpson *et al.* (2007) reject the idea of self-segregation; they cite evidence, based upon census data, of Muslim communities in Oldham and Bradford gradually moving out of traditional Muslim areas and into ‘non-traditional’ white neighbourhoods.

Second, evidence in support of Simpson is also provided by Phillips (2010). Drawing upon the idea of *Muslim spaces of hope*, Phillips (2010) highlights a number of spaces in which cross-cultural contacts between Muslim communities and the wider public is the norm. For example, Phillips and Iqbal’s (2010) study on the role of Muslim communities in the anti-war movement assesses the debates on the political mobilization and organizational intricacies of collaborative, political activities by Muslim groups in, for example, the Stop the War Coalition

during the Bush years. Documenting this particular part of Muslim history is immensely important as it shows Muslim willingness to transcend differences and to share platforms with a range of various political groups to work on shared struggles.

Finally, Werbner (2005), drawing upon extensive anthropological data, provides a critique of self-segregating isolationism; her analysis traces the historical process of Muslim migration and settlement in Britain to show how ‘dislocations and relocations of transnational migration generate two paradoxes of culture’. The first, she argues, is that, in order to sink roots in a new country, transnational migrants begin by setting themselves culturally and socially apart. They form ‘encapsulated communities’. Second, within such communities, culture is conceived not as homogenous but rather as conflictual, open, hybridising and fluid.

2.2: Muslim Faith Schools and ‘self-segregation’

Faith schools in general and Muslim schools in particular are often viewed through the prisms of divisiveness and segregation (Short 2002; Merry 2005; McCrery 2007; Odone 2008; Halstead 2009). In fact the above discourse of Muslim segregation, marked by a problematic presence, is extended to the Muslim faith school debate. Since the events of 9/11 and, more importantly, the London bombings of 7/7, Muslim schools have often been seen as incubators of extremism, and the reaction to fundamentalism has shaped the popular discourse with regard to Muslim faith schools.

Muslim faith schools are often projected as sectarian institutions. Grillo (1999), for example, singles out Muslim schools with ‘separatist beliefs’. He claims that they are determined to maintain and sustain culturally detached institutions. The social-cultural ethos of Muslim faith schools is seen as the antithesis of secular Western mores. The educational content and values of

Muslim faith schools are according to David Bell (2005), chief Inspector of Schools and the head of the Office for Standards in Education, Muslim schools are deemed to be undermining the process of equipping Muslim students for life in modern Britain (Smitthers 2005). The ‘strict’ gender segregation of girls from the age of puberty is seen as one of the popular drivers for Muslim schools (Afshar 1989; Haw 1994; Basit, 1997). Gender segregation is interpreted as a medium through which segregation of culture is achieved and sustained. Thus it is not surprising to note that, for Afshar (1989), the role of Muslim faith schools is to define Muslim women as potential moral and cultural anchors. For Basit (1997), Muslim faith schools are seen as a way in which British Muslims socialise their ‘daughters to construct a British identity by adopting and rejecting aspects...of British ethnicities through a combination of freedom and control (Basit 2007: 425). Meanwhile, McCreary *et al.* (2007) highlight major concerns regarding Muslim faith schools, arguing that they are defined in opposition to the liberal West and also pose challenges ‘to our own educational beliefs and values’ (McCreary *et al.* 2007:203). More recently, following the same sentiments, MacEoin (2009) sees some of the Muslim faith schools rejecting integration and putting great emphasis on difference and on desertion of and resistance to Western influences. He notes how Muslims see:

Non-Muslim countries as part of the realm of unbelief and they see education as a process of inoculating children against infection by Western ideas. As far as possible they try to shield children from Western influence—hence the prohibition of art, music, and drama—but above all children are taught to reject the Western tradition of learning through discussion and argument.

(MacEoin 2009: 9)

Moreover, MacEoin (2009), echoing the popular discourse on Muslim faith schools, highlights three possible consequences:

There are three especially disturbing consequences of separatism. First, the children in these schools are not being prepared to be the successful citizens of a

free society. Second, children who are taught to suspect and sometimes despise mainstream British culture will be more vulnerable to appeals from violent extremists. And third, the new sectarianism is undermining the religious toleration that has been the hallmark of this country for many years.

(ibid.)

To sum up, Muslim schools are seen as defining a cultural space which is grounded upon extended family honour and loyalty to religious tradition, all of which are seen to be in opposition to Western secular liberalism (Merry 2005; McCrery *et al.* 2007). To address some of these issues a number of academics have long advocated the idea of ‘common school’. The ideas of common schooling can be traced back to the writings of John Dewey (1916) in which he argued that the objective of schooling should be based upon a process that nurtures a common purpose or an outlook for a better future. A key process that allows this to take place is the sharing of social space which encourages communication between pupils. Dewey (1916) maintains that ‘communication is a process of sharing experience till it becomes a common position’ (Dewey 1916:8).

Pring (2008) and others (Levinson 2008; Alexandar 2008), following the spirit of Dewey’s (1916) notion of ‘education as a social function’ (Dewey 1916:9-19), see the purpose of education as creating and sustaining a ‘common culture’. Faith schools, or by extension monocultural schools, are considered to be the antithesis of the desired objective of common schools. Common schools within this perspective are seen as promoting a sense of equality, equal respect for others and a sense of social justice (Pring 2008). Pring (2008) argues that if the formal education:

...of young people were to achieve its fundamental purpose of preparing the next generation to live harmoniously together, despite the important differences in culture that the students bring to that community. More positively, the intermingling of those differences in the community of the school would be seen as an enrichment of those very differences.

(Pring 2008:1).

Halstead (2008) and Haydon (1987, 2008) provide a detailed response to Pring's (2008) argument by highlighting a number of anomalies. First, they scrutinise the notion of 'common values'. For Halstead (2008), 'common values' usually translates as the 'dominant values of the society', which 'some might see as promoting one set of loyalties (to the state) at the expense of another set of loyalties (to a religion, for example)' (Halstead 2008:323). The values system presented within the common school can be seen as an '*absolutist approach*' to shared values which, according to Leicester (1989), is grounded in the dominant values of the host societies, as opposed to a *limited relativist* position, which views values in society as an on-going, collective negotiated activity. Diwan (2008), in her work on education and citizenship, has also provided a critique of 'shared values'. She argues that the focus of citizenship education within schools:

Should be a process of inclusive communication and collective problem-solving, rather than trying to achieve the outcome of 'shared values'. Whilst it is important for social cohesion to have substantive commonality of values, what is often not addressed however is how such commonality and shared values is arrived at. That is, the process of reaching shared values is as least as important as shared values themselves. If this is not addressed then shared values cannot move beyond merely a synonym for assimilation into a mono-culturalism based on a numerical majority.

(Diwan 2008:59).

The arguments against Muslim faith schools have also been rigorously contested by Halstead (2009) and Halstead & McLaughlin (2005); they see the above hypothesis of separatism and segregation as based upon empirically unstable and highly politicised 'inaccurate and mischievous claims' (Halstead 2009: 50). Moreover, they have defended the rights of faith schools in general and Muslim faith schools in particular from a framework of liberalism.

The argument about female autonomy and cultural control of Muslim women is questioned by Odone (2008). She views Muslim girls who have attended Muslim faith schools as

having agency. She points out how a significant number of Muslim girls attending Muslim faith schools go on to attend university.

The 'divisive' and 'ghettoised' nature of Muslim faith schools has been challenged by Halstead (2009), Halstead & McLaughlin (2005) and Meer (2009). Meer (2009) questions the notion that Muslim faith schools reject integration; instead, he demonstrates how Muslim faith schools actively engage in constructing and negotiating a British Muslim identity. Meer (2007) also questions the essentialised construct of Muslim faith schools and instead views Muslim faith schools as evolving spaces which recognise the importance of reflective and critical thinking. Most importantly he argues, echoing the works of McLaughlin (1992), that Muslim faith schools engage with principles of 'delayed integration', the idea being that the nurturing of one's own faith in a formative period of schooling allows people to integrate in the future.

2.3: New Labour, School Academies and the de-radicalisation imperative

Following the July 7 bombing, British Muslims have increasingly been seen through a set of pathological lenses; Muslim neighbourhoods have been viewed as 'ghettos' which are hotbeds of terrorism. McGhee (2008), drawing upon published government reports, has observed *soft* and *hard* approaches to the Muslim question. For McGhee (2008), hard approaches include anti-terrorism legislation, such as the Crime and Security Act 2001 (linked to internment of foreign national terror suspects), the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 (connected with placing terror suspects with control orders) and the Terrorism Act 2006 (clamping down on extremist influences with the introduction of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours).

Soft approaches to de-radicalisation include a ‘community-relations’ approach to fighting terrorism, which “examines the central problematic associated with presenting Muslim communities as suspect communities in the ‘war on terror’” (McGhee 2008:8). Part of this ‘community relations’ approach, which includes Cantle’s (2005) thesis of ethnic segregation leading to racial conflict, was extended to argue that ethnic segregation could lead to radicalisation and extremism (Davies 2008). The extension of community cohesion to national security is a theme that can be identified in the Department for Children, Schools and Families’ prevention of violent extremism toolkit, titled: ‘*Learning Together To Be Safe*’, which was launched after the conviction of Hamand Munshi - the youngest British person to be convicted under the UK Terrorism Act. Munshi was arrested in West Yorkshire on his way home from a GCSE chemistry exam in 2006 and sentenced to two years imprisonment for ‘downloading information about bomb-making material from the internet and hidden notes about martyrdom under his bed’ (Gammell 2008). This toolkit provides ‘advice’ and ‘guidance’ to schools with a three-tiered approach to countering the extremist narrative carried out in the name of Islam. The first tier is defined as ‘*universal actions*’, which include the school ‘promoting community cohesion and promoting equality and wellbeing’. The second tier strengthens *targeted* work, which includes schools using the ‘curriculum to challenge extremist narratives’. Finally, and perhaps most controversially, is the specialist *tier* which encourages schools to ‘form good links with police and other partners to share information’.

Birt (2009), Dodd (2009) and Kundnani (2009) have highlighted major concerns with the above principles of preventing violent extremism. They have shown how the emphasis on tackling violent extremism puts the integrity of the teaching profession at risk as teachers are increasingly expected to ‘become the eyes and ears of counter-terrorism policing’ (Kundnani

2009, 7). Dodd (2009) has shown how ‘the government programme aimed at preventing Muslims from being lured into violent extremism is being used to gather intelligence about innocent people who are not yet suspected of involvement in terrorism (Dodd 2009, 1). Dodd (2009) revealed how a ‘nine-year-old schoolboy in east London was referred to the authorities after allegedly showing “signs of extremism” – the youngest case known in Britain. He was apparently "de-programmed" according to a “source with knowledge of the case” (ibid.).

The Coalition-led government’s revised Prevent Strategy (HM Government 2011) also reinforced the partnership work between the Department of Education (DoE) and the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) with the support of £4.7million to work with local authorities and schools. A further £950,000 of regional funds was also allocated to embed the above toolkit within schools. The revised Prevent Strategy (HM Government 2011) also placed the *Channel Project* at a strategic and central role in the fight against terror. The *Channel Project* is the government’s multi-agency risk management initiative, which despite the strong criticism highlighted by Kundnani (2009) together with the submissions made to the *Preventing Violent Extremism Select Committee* (House of Commons 2010), for its possible human rights infringements, given that young students are referred to the police for expressing controversial opinions. The *Prevent Strategy* (HM Government 2011) further integrated the *Channel Project* within the government’s child protection and safeguarding policies. The implication of this approach is that it blurs the boundaries between security, counter terrorism and education. It further undermines and puts the integrity of the teaching profession at risk, as they are increasingly expected to become the eyes and ears of counter-terrorism policing (Kundnani 2009)

One of the leading government figures to champion this policy of national security and educational policy was Sir Cyril Taylor. Taylor was a key figure in contemporary educational policy and his influence on both Conservative and New Labour educational thinking is clear. He served as an advisor to ten successive Secretaries of Education starting with the Thatcher era and ending in 2007. Taylor also served as chairman of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust from 1987-2007. Taylor's (2009) policy drive makes the link between integration through schooling and de-radicalisation. For Taylor (2009), it's the Muslim community which displays a problematic presence. He argues that, unlike other migrant communities, the Muslim community has yet to be assimilated (Taylor 2009, 111). The failure to 'assimilate', which Taylor uses interchangeably with 'integrate' (ibid), can allow:

Extremist views and ideologies to be propagated resulting in radicalisation of individuals and leading to increased racial and religious tensions, criminal and anti-social behaviour, and ultimately a breakdown of cohesion within the community. What, therefore can be done to better integrate our ethnic minorities into their communities and to resolve these problems? The most important way is to avoid racial and religious discrimination of all kinds, but a particularly effective way is to better integrate children at school age.

(Taylor 2009: 112).

Taylor (2009) argues that Muslims can be integrated into mainstream society through the School Academies programme and the reason for this is grounded in a de-radicalisation imperative, which is summarised in the following interview:

Our Muslim communities are much more likely to help the police over atrocities such as the July 7 tube bombings if they are better integrated. It is a radical step but I believe a multi-faith community academy initiative can create new schools in socially deprived areas with a far more balanced intake of pupils.

(Taylor, in Garner 2007)

Taylor is one of the senior educational advisors supporting a model of schooling which Gillborn (2008) has described as '*aggressive majoritarianism*', whereby 'majority dislike and

prejudice towards Muslims are enforced in the name of common sense, integration and even security' (2008, 81). The following sections provide concrete examples of Taylor's (2009) policy of 'aggressive *majoritarianism*' with particular reference to the School Academies programmes in Blackburn, Burnley, Leeds and Oldham.

2.4 School mergers and ethnically 'mixed schools'

An assessment of four local authority areas in the North of England demonstrates how some local authorities are using the School Academy programme as a way of tackling the issue of school segregation by merging schools with different ethnic cohorts. This approach to desegregation typically involves a school with a mainly Muslim cohort merging with a school with a predominantly white intake. Table 1 provides examples of four local authorities in the North of England that have adopted such an approach.

Whilst the schools highlighted in this study are not the only local authorities to have adopted such a measure to address the problem of racial and ethnic segregation in UK schools, the four local authorities used in this section nevertheless provide a better insight into the impact of this approach. It is crucial to note that the four local authorities that have adopted such a measure have not been selected randomly; all four areas in question have witnessed excessive media coverage of their Muslim communities. Oldham and Burnley were faced with the 2001 summer riots. Blackburn was thrust into the media spotlight following Jack Straw's (2006) article for the local *Lancashire Telegraph* on the *niqab* controversy. Finally, Leeds attracted international media attention after it was identified that three of the four 7/7 bombers were from that city; in fact two of these bombers, Hasib Hussain and Mohammad Siddique Khan, were ex-

pupils of Mathew Murray High School in Holbeck, Leeds - which was one of the schools involved in the school merger (see table 1).

An evaluation of the school merger programme adopted by the local authorities under the School Academies highlights the following key trends. Firstly, schools with a predominant or growing Muslim cohort are a) closed down and merged with schools with mainly white intakes or b) closed down so that the pupils are dispersed throughout the borough. Secondly, the school merger changes the school boundaries and therefore limits the problem previously caused by the existence of mono-cultural primary feeder schools, opening up the new school to a broader geographic boundary. Thirdly, the physical location of the new buildings which arise from the school merger is most often in mainly white residential areas. Finally, all of the schools highlighted below have been strongly opposed by the local communities and, in the case of two of the schools (Leeds and Burnley), there were to experience ‘bitter warfare’ (Hutchinson and Roser 2005) with ‘rising levels of racial tensions’ (Roser 2005) which culminated in ‘full-scale riots’ (Murphy 2008). This is also confirmed by research on a national level, which has highlight the routine experience of racism and racist abuse by Muslim students as part of their schooling (Crowzier and Davies 2008). Furthermore, Archer’s (2003) study of Muslim boys, masculinity and schooling, also noted how experiences of racism can reinforce Muslim group solidarity.

Table 1: Details of School Academies surrounding ‘mixed schools’.

<i>Local Authority</i>	<i>Predominantly Muslim school cohort</i>	<i>School merger with mainly white school cohort</i>	<i>New school created from merger</i>	<i>Status(As of March 2012)</i>
Blackburn with Darwen	<i>Beardwood High School</i>	<i>Pupils dispersed throughout borough</i>	-	<i>Developmental</i>
Burnley	<i>Ivy Bank School</i>	<i>Habegam School</i>	<i>Hameldon Community College</i>	<i>Operational</i>
Leeds	<i>Mathew Murray High School</i>	<i>Merlyn Rees Community High</i>	<i>South Leeds Academy</i>	<i>Operational</i>
Oldham	<i>Grange School</i>	-	<i>EACT - Eductrust Academies Charitable Trust - relocation mainly in white neighbourhood).</i>	<i>Developmental(New Build 2013)</i>
Oldham	<i>Kaskenmoor Secondary School</i>	<i>South Chadderton School</i>	<i>Oasis Academy</i>	<i>Developmental (New Build 2012)</i>
Oldham	<i>Breeze Hill School</i>	<i>Counthill School</i>	<i>Waterhead Academy</i>	<i>Developmental(New Build 2012)</i>

2.5: Social Contact and Group Dynamics

The above approach to integration and schooling is based upon principles associated with the social contact thesis. A number of academics (Cantle 2008; Hewstone 2006; Wagner *et al.* 2006; Thomas 2010) have highlighted empirical evidence in support of the idea that greater contact between different ethnic groups is a useful indicator for reducing levels of prejudice between groups. But Hewstone (2006) has ‘argued that integration is and must be about meaningful contact, anything else will not do’ (Hewstone 2006:245).

Social contact theory⁶ has been used by a number of local authorities as ‘a cornerstone of community cohesion practice’ (Cantle 2008:116), and there is ample evidence to support this theory (Cantle 2008; Hewstone 2007; Wagner *et al.* 2006; Thomas 2011). Nevertheless, it is broadly agreed amongst social contact theorists that declining levels of prejudice towards different ethnic groups is predicated on a range of issues, such as the duration of contact, the voluntary or non-voluntary nature of contact and the nature of group perception (Allport 1954; Hewstone & Brown 1986). In fact, as Amir (1969) and Cook (1978) have identified, there are five conditions for effective social contact (cited in Short 2002). First, the social space must provide an opportunity for ‘real acquaintance’; the people in question ‘should get to know each other as individuals’ (Short 2002: 568). Second, the social space should be free from prejudice or the reinforcing of any stereotypes. Third, contact between groups should be a coming together

⁶ There is compelling evidence that supports the idea of social contact to reduce prejudice within schools. Academic literature from the United States, which has operated a policy of racial de-segregation since the case of *Brown v Education* 1954, has been a focal point for academic research assessing social contact within schools. Evidence in support of social contact within the US post-*Brown vs. Education* can be found in Wells *et al.* (2005) and Erick (2010). Research which questions the success of the racial de-segregation of schools using empirical evidence can be found in Stephan & Feagin (1980), Cohen (1980) and Taylor (1986). A detailed theoretical critique of the racial de-segregation of schools in the US can be found in Bell (2005). There are also many criticisms of the social contact model. For example Dixon *et al.* (2005) have argued that contact only works within a laboratory context, whilst Levin *et al.* (2003) have argued that reduction in prejudice leads to contact rather than meaningful contact leading to reduction in prejudice. In other words, less prejudicial people are more likely to seek out contact.

of groups of equals. Fourth, it ‘should be [a] mutually interdependent relationship’ (ibid.). Finally, contact should be based upon ‘equality and equalitarian inter-group association’ (ibid.). The above School Academy policy to create integrated schools as a way of reducing ‘extremism’ through cohesion or social contact should be interpreted in the light of the above conditions of social contact.

The role of history is also important in shedding light on the effectiveness of the above measure as advocated by New Labour policies. In fact, the above policies revive the memory of the 1960s policy of *bussing* which, according to Tomlinson (2008), was adopted by 11 local authorities with significant BME population. Troyna (2004) notes how the policy of bussing was restricted after a ‘group of white parents in the Southall district in London complained to the Minister of Education, Edward Boyle. They claimed that the educational progress of their children was being inhibited in those schools containing large numbers of non-white, mainly South Asian pupils’ (Troyna 2003:71). Troyna (2004) further notes how ‘Boyle’s law’ was introduced, requiring a 30% cap on BME pupils in a given school, when it was supported by the Department of Education and Science in 1965. The broader objective of the 1960s idea of bussing, as noted by Troyna (2003), is further described by Halstead (1988):

The first was to assist the language development and general integration of minority children in the city ensuring that no schools, even in areas where the ethnic minorities were concentrated, had a majority of such children; the original limit of 10 per cent of immigrants in a school was quickly raised to 25 per cent, and raised again in 1969 to 33 per cent’.

(Halstead 1988:27).

The current policy agenda also needs to acknowledge the importance of parental choice in shaping and maintaining racial separatism (Cumper 1994). Perhaps the most famous example of this was captured by Parental Alliance for Choice in Education (PACE) which supported the predominantly white parents of Thornhill in refusing to send their children to a school in a predominantly Asian area of Savile Town, as required by Kirklees Council, West Yorkshire. The important theme arising from this case-study is the way in which the campaign and, ultimately, the ‘white flight’ was framed as tension ‘between individual freedom and the public good’ and the shortcomings of ‘multicultural education’. More recently, Dench *et al.* (2006) have documented in their study of the East End how education was instrumental in residential ‘white flight’. They found a number of strategies adopted by white parents to maintain educational segregation. Dench *et al.* (2006) demonstrate, in the following, how white flight operates:

They can get their children to white or whiter schools within the borough. They can move their children out of the borough without changing residence themselves. Or the family as a whole can move elsewhere.

(Dench *et al.* 2006: 145).

The East End study presents the ‘white flight’ as a rational act which is grounded in the white residents’ view of the local Asian community lowering the standards of education. They also perceive the local schools to be neglecting the educational needs of white children.

Whilst the above studies highlight the importance of parental choice with regard to schooling, the study by Kintrea *et al.* (2008) demonstrated the importance of factoring the issue of ‘territorial space’ when dealing with young people. Kintrea *et al.* (2008) found how territoriality is a part of everyday life for many young people, particularly secondary school children between the ages of 13 and 17. Territoriality was identified as ‘long-standing’ and ‘generational’ and territorial identities were ‘frequently expressed in violent conflict with

territorial groups from other areas' (Kintrea *et al.* 2008:4). Given the strong relationship between ethnic segregation in the above towns and the locations of these schools, it is interesting to note how opposition to the schools can be framed within a discourse that combines territoriality with ethnicity.

2.6 Conclusion

Two major themes were debated in this chapter. The first theme critically explored the picture of segregation and isolation of Muslim communities, through mono-cultural school experiences, as marked by the perception of a problematic presence. Dominant discursive repertoires that are used to support the segregation thesis were also examined. The salient point which the first part of this chapter tried to explore is the deeply contested nature of the study of segregation involving Muslim communities.

The second part of this chapter examined the New Labour school academy policy of creating ethnically mixed schools as a de-radicalisation imperative. This part explored the public policy framing of Muslim communities through de-radicalisation strategies. Some of the themes associated with this section are developed within part 2 of this thesis through pupil discourses on mixed schools. This will attempt to shed light on how Muslim pupils involved the idea of integration within the context of schooling in the above ‘merger debate’.

This chapter provided two concrete examples of integration policies with objective of ensuring social order in society. The community cohesion and the Prevent approaches to integration are essentially social order discourses, both of these approaches attempts to reduce social unrest or prevent act of extremism. Mixed schools were seen to facilitate the process of integration, whilst mono-cultural state schools in general and mono-cultural Muslim faith schools in particular were seen as hampering the process of integration. This was further demonstrated by Taylor’s (2009) policy discourse on community cohesion within the school academies policy, which was seen to reflect an *aggressive majoritarian* approach (Gilborn 2009), grounded in the political ideas of de-radicalisation and not on a desire to create a

‘common school’ (Pring 2008; Levinson 2008) based upon the liberal principles of equality, social justice and fairness.

Chapter 3: ‘Euro-Islam’ and Muslim Discourse

3.0 Introduction

The position of Muslims living in non-Muslim lands as minority communities has been a topic of lengthy debate amongst Muslim theologians dating back to the eighth century (Abou El Fadl 1994; Lewis 1994; Michot 2006). In fact, approval was given for Muslims to live in Christian lands by the Prophet Muhammad during the formative years of Islam (Lings 1988). With the expansion of the Islamic empire (Hodgson 1974) from the eighth to the eleventh century C.E, the topic of Muslims living under non-Muslim rule was further debated by the four juristic schools of thought within Sunni Islam. In an assessment of these debates Abou El Fadl (1994) demonstrates how the legality of Muslims living in non-Muslim lands in the first ‘Islamic centuries was cryptic and ambiguous’ (Abou El Fadl 1994:141). A systematic theological position only matured after the twelfth century as a response to the historical and political changes and challenges. Abou El Fadl (1994) further notes how the ‘various positions adopted by the jurists were a function of specificity and reflected a dynamic process of legal development’ (*ibid*). Contemporary debates on Muslim integration have taken a significant turn following the events of September 11th, covering a range of theological (Ramadan 2009, 2010), socio-political (Modood 1992, 2005, 2007) and historical themes (Matter 2000, 2008; Ansari 2004; Seddon 2007; Geaves 2009; Halliday 2010)⁷.

⁷ The literature on the Muslim presence in the UK is vast. Matter’s (2008, 2000) contribution has been particularly valuable. Halliday’s (2010) and Seddon’s (2007) research on the Yemeni *lascars* in the UK pre-1945 has provided valuable ethnographical insights into the Yemeni communities in Cardiff, South Shields and Birmingham. More recently, Geaves’ (2009) biography of William Abdullah Quilliam has made a useful contribution to the field of Muslim communities in Victorian Britain.

This chapter will consider the theological, anthropological and sociological works of mainly Muslim academics and theologians on the integration of Muslims in the West. The first part of this chapter will provide a brief overview of the debates within the Muslim academic and theological communities. The second part will focus on a critical study of two conflicting approaches to integration within Europe. The final part will provide an overview of Ibn Khaldun and his concept of *'asabiyya*. *'Asabiyya* is a sociological term dating back to the 14th century. I will use it to explore, within a classical Islamic framework, the contemporary questions of group solidarity and the cohesion of Muslim communities.

3.1: Overview of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a* and *Fiqh al-Aqalliyya*

Al-Affendi (2009) sees the emerging European Muslim identity as grounded in independence and creativity. For him, the integration of Muslims in Europe is not a passive act of conformity to existing cultural norms and values but rather a ‘positive one “building a new Europe” that can be richer and better’ (Al-Affendi 2009:25). Two important theological developments have shaped the European Muslim discourse on integration, namely the renewed interest in ‘*maqāṣid al-Sharī'a* and *fiqh al-Aqalliyya*’.

Fiqh al-Aqalliyya or ‘*fiqh* for minorities’ (Islamic jurisprudence for Muslims living as minorities) provides a theological imperative for the Muslim community to integrate into Europe whilst preserving their religious and cultural identity as Muslims living in the West (Al Alwani 2003). *Fiqh al-Aqalliyya* is a new term for an old idea that used to be called *fiqh al-nawāzil*, or ‘jurisprudence of momentous events’ (Keller 1995). It captures the understanding that Muslims living in the West need to develop their own jurisprudence without resorting to the opinions of scholars from Muslim majority countries. This understanding views jurisprudence as a ‘specific discipline which takes into account the relationship between a religious ruling, the condition of the community and the location where it exists. It is a *fiqh* that applies to a specific group of people living under particular conditions with special needs that may not be appropriate for other communities’ (Al Alwani 2003:3). Nuh Keller (1995) notes how *Fiqh al-Aqalliyya* played a central role amongst Islamic jurists dealing with the condition of Muslim minority status. This was particularly the case with the Muslims living in Cordoba, in southern Spain, after the Christian conquest in the thirteenth century. The *Māliki madhhab* (school of jurisprudence), the dominant school of thought for Muslims living in southern Spain, developed a body of literature known as the *nawāzil ahl al-Qurṭuba*, or the ‘momentous events of the people of Cordova’

(Keller 1995). This rich, scholarly strand of work can be seen through the *fatawas*, (the formal legal opinions of a jurist) of the *Mālikī* scholar Ahmad al-Wanshirīsī in his twelve-volume *al-Mi'yār al-mughrib 'an fatāwā 'ulamā' Ifrīqiya wa al-Andalus wa al-Maghrib* [The standard, expressing the fatwas of the scholars of Tunisia, Andalus and Morocco] (ibid).

The importance of geo-political culture in shaping Islamic theology has long been acknowledged by Islamic jurists from diverse schools of thought. Muslim theologians base this precedent on the early founders of Sunni legal thought, such as the writings of Imām al-Shāfi'ī (d.820) who was 'flexible with certain rulings and opinions, changing them according to the realities of a particular situation or specific reason which arose as they moved from one country to another' (Al Alwani 2003:8).

Rosen's (1989) detailed study of Islamic *Shariah* courts in Morocco demonstrates how legal opinions were framed not within strict legal parameters but through a cultural paradigm. In other words, judicial discretions were applied for detailed and specific cultural reasons. More recently, the work of Jackson (2005) has contributed towards a creative space for Black Muslim identity rooted within the rich cultural tapestry of African-American cultural experience. Furthermore, Abdullah (2004), writing within the context of broader convert communities in the West, has highlighted the Islamic cultural imperative:

For centuries, Islamic civilization harmonized indigenous forms of cultural expression with the universal norms of its sacred law. It struck a balance between temporal beauty and ageless truth and fanned a brilliant peacock's tail of unity in diversity from the heart of China to the shores of the Atlantic. Islamic jurisprudence helped facilitate this creative genius. In history, Islam showed itself to be culturally friendly and, in that regard, has been likened to a crystal clear river. Its waters (Islam) are pure, sweet, and life-giving but—having no color of their own - reflect the bedrock (indigenous culture) over which they flow. In China, Islam looked Chinese; in Mali, it looked African. Sustained cultural relevance to distinct peoples, diverse places, and different times underlay Islam's long success as a global civilization.

(Abdullah 2004: 1)

Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah is an approach to Islamic theology that can be traced back to the works of Imām al-Juwaynī (d. 1085), his student, Abū Ḥāmid Al-Ghazālī (d.1111) and, most importantly, the writings of al-Shāṭibī (d.1388). The current framing of this approach can be seen in the writings of Yusuf al-Qardawi, Faisal Mawlawi, Muhammad al-Ghazali (d.1996) and Tariq Ramadan.

Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah is a complicated science which sees the nature of shariah from an ethical, rational and multi-dimensional perspective. The key objective of this approach is 'the all-encompassing principle of those higher objectives to promote good and ward off evil' (Ramadan 2009:71). Ramadan's approach to *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* echoes the classical views of al-Qarāfi (d.1868) who stated that 'a purpose (*maqṣid*) is not valid unless it leads to the fulfilment of some good (*maṣlaḥa*) or the avoidance of some mischief (*mafsada*)' (Auda 2008:4).

The consensus amongst the '*ulamā*' (religious scholars) is that *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* lies in the higher objective of shariah, which constantly shifts and embraces different socio-cultural landscapes. For Ghazali (d.1111) the *maqṣid* consist of the preservation of i. religion, ii. life, iii. mind, and iv. lineage v. wealth. Ibn Ashur (d.1973) expanded the concept of *maqṣid* to include

freedom as one of the main purposes of shariah, whilst Muhammad al-Ghazali (d.1996) included principles of equality and human rights (Al Awani 2003).

It is clear that both of the above approaches to shariah in the West have played a crucial role in the Muslim discourse of integration. It is crucial to note that the hermeneutical structure in which these debates are framed is grounded in a theological epistemology which places emphasis upon religious tradition. This meta-narrative of integration is constructed within an Islamic paradigm which draws upon key features of Islamic jurisprudence, including the Qur'ān, *sunnah*, *qiyās (analogy)* *ʿurf (culture)* and *ijtihād (consensus)* (Kamali 1991).

Recently, different approaches to integration have emerged which transcend theological hermeneutics by using an Islamicate memory drawn from the history of Mu'tazilite⁸ rationalism (Martin *et al* 1997) and secular Western liberalism. This perspective on integration embraces the core principles of liberalism and secular public space. A number of approaches have emerged which attempt to achieve this, including the collective writing of the Progressive Muslim Union, which advocates the re-reading of Islamic texts with an emphasis on gender, justice and pluralism (Safi 2003).

⁸ The Mu'tazilite School influenced Muslim theology and philosophy between the 8th and 10th centuries; they assimilated Greek logic into Islamic philosophy and theology. The Mu'tazilite were rationalist. They rejected deterministic theology and upheld principles of free will [Watt 1985]. According to Martin *et al.* (1997), there has been a growing interest in the '*spirit of Mutazilite discourse*', especially in the works of Muhammad Arkoun (France), Hassan Hanafi (Egypt), and Harun Nastution (Indonesia). It is important to stress that most of these writers have been at the margins of the Muslim community.

3.2: Tariq Ramadan: Integration a Textual Perspective

Ramadan is seen by many as one of the foremost Muslim intellectuals in the world⁹, and his writings and talks are accessed by Muslims and non-Muslims throughout the Western and Muslim majority countries. His writings have brought admiration and praise, but also criticism (Fourest 2007). Ramadan's grounding in the Western and Islamic sciences allows him to speak with authority on traditional Muslim scholarship and secular sciences alike. (He holds two PhDs; his first thesis was on Arabic and Islamic Studies, while his second thesis focused on the works of Nietzsche. He also completed his traditional Islamic studies at Al-Azhar University, Cairo).

Ramadan is the author of many books that are written in French and translated into English. His early works examine the question of Muslim identity and political and cultural integration (Ramadan 1999, 2001), his later works assess the challenges of Islamic reform (Ramadan 2004, 2009) and, more recently, his work has attempted to develop a philosophy of pluralism (Ramadan 2010). His writings usually follow a set template with the first section of most of his books (Ramadan 1999, 2001, 2004, 2009) attempting to read and re-read Islamic textual sources 'in light of a new Western context' (Ramadan 2004:4), whilst the second section of his books deal with the practical implementations of his ideas. In sum, Ramadan's works attempt to deal with the question of [religious] text and its application within a secular Western context.

⁹ The American Foreign Policy magazine in 2009 considered Ramadan one of the top 100 contemporary intellectuals in the world.

In order to create a space for Islamic reform, Ramadan (2009) expands the principles of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* as developed by al-Ghazālī (d.1111) and others, by including dignity, justice, creativity and diversity as objectives of the shariah. He positions himself with other twentieth-century Muslim reformers in developing and expanding upon the concepts of '*islāh*' and '*tajdīd*' (Ramadan 2009)¹⁰. Ramadan (2009) sees an important distinction between 'adaptive reform' and 'transformational reform'. The former sees religion merely adapting to the socio-economic environment of the West, whilst the latter 'is indeed imperative...it means observing the world, noting its changes then coming back to the text to suggest new readings, alleviations, or exceptions in their implementation' (Ramadan 2009:33).

Ramadan's writings have made three important contributions in developing and nurturing a sense of Western Muslim identity. Firstly, his writings have rejected the classical Muslim typology of viewing the world as *dār al Islām* (abode of Islam) and the West as *dār al ḥarb* (abode of war), in other words as diametrically opposed to each other. This idea of a bipolar view of Islam and the West is reinforced by a number of Western writers (Huntington 1997) and also a world view that continues to exist within the *al-Qaeda* discourse (Kepel 2004; Michot 2006). For Ramadan (2004) the West is no longer part of *dar al ḥarb* (abode of war) but rather components of *dār al Shahāda* (abode of testimony). He argues, 'Muslims can now enter into the world of testimony, in the sense of undertaking an essential duty and a demand...to promoting goodness and justice' (Ramadan 2004:77).

¹⁰ Abu Khalil (1995) sees '*islāh*' as reform, such as we see manifested in the reformist writings of Abduh (d. 1905) and Rida (d.1935). The idea 'revolves around the need for fulfilling the ethical requirements of Islam by addressing modern problems and by introducing modern answers that are drawn from the Quran'. *Tajdīd* is understood as Islamic revival, which according to prophetic tradition, involves the belief that God will send down someone to renew the faith every thousand years (ibid).

Secondly, Ramadan draws a distinction between the *al-Thābit* (immutable) and the *al-Mutaghayyir* (changing) within Islamic textual sources. Ramadan argues that there are key aspects of the text which are *immutable* and transcend time, space and critical inspection. These consist of the vertical relationship between God and His subjects, such as the Islamic creed and worship. The *changing* elements of Islamic sources deal with social affairs or horizontal relationships (*muʿāmalāt*) between people within a given society. For Ramadan, *muʿāmalāt* matters are based upon the principle that everything is allowed except for what is explicitly prohibited within the scripture. This, he argues, opens the prospect of:

...fields of rationality, creativity and research. So long as they remain faithful to principles and respect prohibitions, their intellectual, scientific, artistic and more generally social, economic, and political productions are not innovations, but instead welcome achievements for the welfare of humankind

(Ramadan 2009:21).

Finally, Ramadan's (2009) approach to Islamic ethics is very critical of the 'Islamic' prefix before many disciplines, such as 'Islamic economics', 'Islamic art' or 'Islamic education'. He argues:

There is no "Islamic economy" just as I said; there is no "Islamic medicine". What can be found in the Islamic Universe of reference is a series of principles outlining an ethics, a general philosophy of the economy's goals, but there is no such thing as an economy which is "Islamic" by essence or through some specific disposition. There is no "Islamic economy", therefore, but an Islamic ethics.

(Ramadan 2009:242).

Ramadan's (2009) guiding principle of Islamic ethics is based upon the ethos of *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, which, he argues, should respect 'the dignity of humankind, nature and all living species...protect the welfare and their development, their diversity as well as fraternity, justice

and solidarity’ (Ramadan 2009:243). Thus it is not surprising to note that Ramadan is a strong critic of Islamic schools; he argues that schools following an Islamic ethical framework ‘will instil a sense of diversity, human solidarity, cultural and artistic creativity’ (Ramadan 2009:280). Ramadan’s concept of Islamic ethics allows Muslims to move beyond the idea of integration to a discourse of “post-integration” which entails ‘involvement, contribution and participation’ (Ramadan 2010: 67-73).¹¹

Ramadan has come under intense scrutiny for his works on Muslim integration; sadly most of these criticisms have been targeted against the ‘person’¹² (Kepel 2004; Fourest 2007) as opposed to his ideas. Regarding Ramadan’s ideas, three major criticisms can be noted which have significant impacts on the construction of a Western Muslim identity. Firstly, Ramadan perceives Europe as a monolith. His ideas do not take into account the diverse history and socio-political makeup of different European countries; neither does his theory account for the nature of public space and its approach to religious communities throughout Europe. Thus, European Muslim identity will naturally differ in France which has a policy of *laïcité*¹³ and in Britain which has traditionally recognized religion within the public space¹⁴. Secondly, Ramadan’s distinction between the vertical and horizontal domains of Islam, such as the *al-Thābit* (immutable) and *al-Mutaghayyir* (changing) aspects of Islamic practice, is rather dualistic and

¹¹ Philips & Iqbal (2009) provide a valuable example of a ‘post-integration’ case-study of Muslim participation and contribution in the anti-war movement.

¹² Ramadan is the grandson of Hasan al-Banna the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood; some of the criticisms against Ramadan are essentially character assassinations, unjustifiably linking Ramadan and Islamism.

¹³ A number of EU countries have developed policies which radically undermine the role of Islam in the public space. For example Belgium, Italy and The Netherlands have legislation or pending legislation outlawing the veil in public. Sweden has introduced legislation which bans the construction of minarets.

¹⁴ Fetzer & Soper (2005) provide useful account of various nation states in Europe that have provided spaces for religious communities.

bipolar. In reality there are a number of aspects of Islam which are based upon both horizontal and vertical relationships between ‘Man’ and God, such as marriage. Finally, Ramadan’s application of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah* to Islamic ethics is rather contradictory. He seems to be using the *Maqāṣid* approach as a way of transcending or often undermining key aspects of Muslim scholarly consensus (*ijmā‘*). For example Ramadan (2009:250-251) seems to suggest that poultry which are certified as organic can be classified as *ḥalāl* without going through the traditional ritual slaughter¹⁵. These ideas not only go against the *ijmā‘* of the scholars but also go against the basic principles which Muslims feel are necessary components of Islamic belief.

3.3: Bassam Tibi: Integration - A Liberal Perspective

Bassam Tibi was born in Damascus and educated in Germany; he is currently professor of International Relations at the University of Gottingen. Tibi has also served as the ‘A.D. White Professor at Large’ at Cornell University. In recognition of his work the German president Roman Herzog (b.1934) awarded him the Federal Cross of Merit - *Bundesverdienstkreuz* - in 1995 for his work on Islam and the West.

Tibi’s works are published in German and English covering a range of topics, including Islamism, modernity and Euro-Islam. This section will provide an outline of Tibi’s works on Euro-Islam and the question of Muslim integration. In order to do this it will be necessary to cover Tibi’s ideas on Islamic politics and modernity as this will provide a context in which to understand his ideas on integration

¹⁵ Ramadan is interested in understanding the principles that inform the legal position. For Ramadan, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah* would necessitate the treatment of animal welfare as an important component of the act of ritual slaughter.

Tibi's works provide a critical assessment of traditional Islam in engaging in an academic study of Muslim culture which embraces the idea of 're-thinking Islam' (Arkoun 1994). For Tibi it is of paramount importance that Islam be reformed so that it is compatible with secular Western modernity (Tibi 2002, 2008). In order for this to take place, Muslims need to reject some of the core elements of Islam, such as Islamic Shariah (Tibi 2008:63) and the concept of Jihād (Tibi 2008:64). This, he believes, should not only be abandoned altogether but also replaced by an Islamic acceptance of democracy and cultural pluralism (ibid).

Tibi is highly critical of political Islam or Islamism, seeing Islamism as a *totalitarian* idea based upon the concept of *Futuḥāt* or expansionist Islam. For Tibi (2008), 'Islamists envisage replacing Westphalian order by a Global Islamicate, in which *dār al-Islām* (House of Islam), based on *Ḥakimiyyat Allāh* (God's rule), is enhanced to encompass the entire globe.' (Tibi 2008:103) For the West, he maintains, this should be particularly worrying, especially given that 'the goal to be achieved by an "Islamic world revolution" is the pax-Islamica of a new world order that replaces the present one based on a Westphalian synthesis' (ibid). He further adds, 'in summing up the preceding analysis of Islamist-Jihadist internationalism resulting from the politicization of Islam in a "revolt against the West" it can safely be stated that the major target is the existing secular order' (Tibi 2008: 118).

Political Islam is a topical area of academic study, especially after the events of 9/11. A glut of academic publications has allowed researchers to contextualize Tibi's works. Thus it is not surprising to detect a number of key flaws within Tibi's idea of Islamism. For example, political Islam is grounded in a number of contrasting approaches, not all of which are based upon Tibi's totalitarian and expansionist thesis of challenges to Western political order. Esposito (1997) and Tamimi (2001) have both demonstrated how political Islam can flourish within the

framework of democracy. Turkey's ruling A.K.P (Justice and Development Party) is an example of a political party grounded in political Islam which is eager to make the necessary political and judicial changes to become a member of the European Union. Moreover, Tibi's work is rather dated as it does not take into account the idea of post-Islamism (Bayat 2007) or the political reality in most Muslim countries which have rejected Islamic parties at the ballot box (Roy 2004).

The study of Muslim culture and, most importantly, the location of culture within changing contexts of society are pivotal in Tibi's understanding of Islam. For Tibi, Islam does not necessarily comprise theological and ritualistic aspects of the religion. Tibi argues, 'I should go beyond religious doctrine and propose a view of religion as cultural systems which are in fact symbolic systems offering a way to perceive reality' (Tibi 2008:29). It is within this evolving cultural context that Tibi locates his concept of Euro-Islam. He sees this concept as an important socio-political and, most importantly, a cultural imperative for Muslims living in Europe. For Tibi, Euro-Islam should not be complete anathema to Muslims; after all, he argues, there exists African and South Asian Islam. The cultural imperative of Euro-Islam is summarized as follows:

The background to the concept of Euro-Islam comes from the observation of customary, i.e. lived, Islam. In Western Africa Islam, though Arab culture by origin, is basically African, just as in Indonesia it is Indonesian, accommodated to *adat*/traditions of local cultures. In non-Arab traditions of Islam, one encounters varieties of cultural accommodation. Then one may ask: why cannot Islam be European in Europe, along similar lines?

(Tibi 2008:192)

Moreover, given the secular liberal outlook of Europe, Euro-Islam will essentially adopt a secular liberal framing. He summarizes this point as follows:

By the notion of Euro-Islam I denote a cultural pattern of Islam adjusted to the political culture of civil society and to the separation between culture and politics. This liberal design of Islam could result from a process of indigenization of Islam in which Islam could become European as much as Afro-Islam in Africa is African.

(Tibi 2001:206)

Tibi's analogy of African Islam or South Asian Islam is not entirely accurate because Islam came to Africa and South Asia as a political force. The relationship and the dynamics of power is completely different from 'Euro-Islam' especially given that Muslims came to Europe as migrant communities and as post-colonial subjects. Moreover, a review of Hodgson's (1974) classical text on the history of Islam suggests that it was African and South Asian culture which adjusted to Islam rather than Islam adjusting to the political culture of a given society. More recently, Roy (2004) has demonstrated the ways in which Muslim communities, particularly in the West, are increasingly becoming individualized, de-territorialized and, more significantly, uprooted from local culture. What seems to be defining the Muslim presence in Europe for Roy (2004) is the globalization of an imagined Muslim *'ummah* and the idea of Euro-Islam.

One question regarding Euro-Islam that Tibi is dealing with is: what does Euro-Islam look like? Is it an abstract or a reified term or does it work in practice? What type of cultural form might Euro-Islam adopt? In addressing some of these pressing questions, Tibi (2008) sees that 'the substance of the notion of Euro-Islam is aimed at the incorporation of European values of democracy, laicite, civil society, pluralism, secular tolerance and individual human rights into Islamic thought' (Tibi 2008: 157). By aspiring to or actively pursuing Euro-Islam, Muslims will not be rejecting their cultural heritage because 'Euro-Islam is the very same religion as Islam...which is culturally adjusted to the civic culture of modernity' (Tibi 2002: 37). In fact Muslims should be aware that:

Identifying with the precedents of the Hellenization of Islam between the ninth and twelfth centuries, which gave birth to medieval Islamic rationalism, is pertinent. The Muslims of today need to revive this tradition in their heritage to open their minds, thus ensuring a better future against the claims of totalitarian political Islam.

(ibid.).

Once again, Tibi's analogy between the Hellenization of Islam and Euro-Islam is problematic, for example his reference to the Mu'tazilite School which adopted and incorporated Greek rationalism within Islam. This was only a passing phase within Islamic history during the rule of al-Ma'mūn (813-833).¹⁶ The Mu'tazilite School was rejected and replaced with conservative Asharite theology. Given the fact that the majority of Muslims embrace the Asharite or Maturidi¹⁷ creed of Islam it is difficult to envisage Tibi's Euro-Islam embracing the legacy of Hellenistic Islam.

The idea of Euro-Islam (2010) provides an outlet for its supporters from the public policy impasse of segregation and the communitarian ghettoization of Muslim communities in Europe on the one hand and the majoritarian assimilationist rhetoric on the other. As Tibi (2001:205) notes, 'the question is whether Muslim migrants would become European citizens and in my phrasing Euro-Muslim or whether they would prefer to live in a communitarian ghetto'. Euro-Islam, for Tibi, is based on the philosophy of pluralism (Grillo 1998) which provides advantages for both Muslims and non-Muslims. According to Karic (2002:441) Euro-Islam can be seen as 'liberating Muslims from self-ghettoization and ghettoization of Islam in western Europe'. For non-Muslims Euro-Islam provides a useful approach to the integration of Muslims into Europe

¹⁶ Al-Ma'mūn (d.833) was an Abbasid Caliph; he was closely associated with the Mu'tazilite school. Al-Ma'mūn was responsible for the *miḥna* (inquisition) based on the nature of the Quran which was a key doctrine of Mu'tazilite rationalism. The doctrine lasted until a few months before the death of Al-Ma'mūn in 850AD.

¹⁷ The Asharite and Maturidi form the dominant creed of the Muslim world. These schools of 'Aqīda (Creed) are named Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī (d.935) and Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī (d.944); they represent the orthodox Islamic Creed (Yusuf 2007).

post 9/11. Moreover, Euro-Islam provides a counter-argument to the Eurabia thesis which sees Europe gradually becoming an extension of the Muslim Maghreb (Bat Ye'or 2005; Caldwell 2009). Tibi (2008) reassures the critics who have this particular pessimistic outlook on Islam in Europe by highlighting:

What is important is the question of what kind of Islam they adhere to. If European Islam were to be accepted by Muslims living in Europe, then their presence in Europe would not pose a problem, because a Euro-Islam would be in line with the idea of Europe.

(Tibi 2008: 202)

The above thesis presented by Tibi on Euro-Islam has a number of shortcomings. For example, it seems to suggest that Muslim communities in Europe have two narrowly defined options: either a secularized Muslim identity based on Euro-Islam or an insular 'communitarian ghetto' (ibid.). In fact, Muslims living in the West have a range of other possibilities based on multiculturalism (Modood 1992, 2005, 2007), hybridity (Hall 1992; Bhabha 1994), community cohesion (Thomas 2003; Cattle 2005) and globalization (Roy 2004).

3.4 Ibn Khaldun and *'Asabiyya*

Arnold J. Toynbee (1975) saw the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldun (d.1406) as 'undoubtedly the greatest work of its kind that has ever yet been created by any mind in any time or place'. Toynbee, the British historian and author of the twelve-volume *Study of History*, was influenced by Ibn Khaldun and his cyclical understanding of historical events (Irwin 1997). Irwin (1997) argues that, prior to the translation of the *Muqaddimah* into English¹⁸,

One should bear in mind that Toynbee's transmission of the latter's theories was of some importance, for, until the appearance of Franz Rosenthal's translation¹⁹, Toynbee did more than anyone else to popularize Ibn Khaldun's theories to the English-speaking world.

(Irwin 1997:466)

Irwin (1997) also demonstrates how, through Toynbee, a number of notable historians specialising in Middle Eastern studies were influenced by Ibn Khaldun. Amongst the key historians were Albert Hourani and the great historian Marshal Hodgson. Toynbee was one of many scholars and academics who held Ibn Khaldun in high esteem. For the historian Philip K. Hitti (1978), 'Ibn Khaldun was the greatest historian and philosopher ever produced by Islam and one of the greatest of all time' (Lacoste 1984). For others he was 'one of the fathers of modern cultural history and social science' (cited in Ahmed 2005:592). In fact, for over a hundred years Ibn Khaldun has played an important role in shaping the Western imagination. This is partly due to the French colonial interest in North Africa (Lacoste 1984), but also due to

¹⁸ Arnold J. Toynbee (1975) relied upon the French translation of *Muqaddimah* by de-Slane (1982-8)

¹⁹ Franz Rosenthal's translation of *Muqaddimah* has been welcomed by most scholars. However, a number of leading Arabists have criticised Rosenthal's translation for failing to convey the true spirit and form of Ibn Khaldun's account. Makdisi (1961) argues that an 'Arabist familiar with Ibn Khaldun cannot fail to sense this alienation in spirit between text and translation' (Makdisi 1961:59).

Ibn Khaldun's historical, sociological and philosophical insights. Thus, it is not surprising to note that the works of Ibn Khaldun have been translated into a range of European languages²⁰.

Ibn Khaldun's major work consists of the *Muqaddimah* (prolegomena or introduction), a preface to his *Kitāb al-Ibar* or *Universal History*. Rosenthal (2005) writes in his introduction to the translation of the *Muqaddimah*, that this seminal text can be:

Regarded as the earliest attempt made by any historian to discover a pattern in the changes that occur in man's political and social organization. Rational in its approach, analytical in its method, encyclopaedic in detail, it represents an almost complete departure from traditional historiography, discarding conventional concepts and clichés and seeking, beyond the mere chronicle of events, an explanation - and hence a philosophy of history.

(Ibn Khaldun 2005:xxxix)

Ibn Khaldun was born into an aristocratic family in Seville during the Muslim rule of Andalusia. He came from the prestigious Khaldun family, who trace their lineage back to Hadramout in Yemen (Rosenthal 1958). Most historians draw attention to the scientific, intellectual and political fame enjoyed by the Khaldun family. The fate of the Khaldun family was to change in 1230 when the city of Seville was defeated by the Christian army as part of the *reconquista*. The family then took political refuge in Tunisia under the Hafsid Dynasty where Ibn Khaldun was born in 1331 in the city of Tunis.

²⁰ Schmidt (1930) provides a comprehensive list of all the translated manuscripts on Ibn Khaldun in a range of European countries, including Italy, Russia and Germany. Rosenthal (1958) also provides a useful outline in the introduction to his translation of the *Muqaddimah*.

The political connections of Ibn Khaldun's family would play an important role in the development of his future career as an advisor to a number of leading Muslim rulers in North Africa (Enan 1993). This was a tumultuous period in North Africa with political rivalries between competing Muslim Empires. They each sought to control the important gold trade routes to the west of Sudan (Lacoste 1984). The Almohad Empire, which came to an end sixty years before the birth of Ibn Khaldun, left political offshoots in the Maghreb which were to play an important role in his political career. Three competing Muslim dynasties in the Maghreb struggled for the political control of the Almohad legacy, which included most of North Africa and southern Spain. The Hafsid Dynasty would rule from *Ifriqiyah*, which is situated in present-day western Libya and Tunisia, while the Marinid Dynasty ruled from Morocco; finally, the Zayyad dynasty ruled central Maghreb from the central North African city of Tlemcen (Fromhertz 2011). The political volatility in which these dynasties were caught up played an important role in shaping Ibn Khaldun's *Weltanschauung*.

Ibn Khaldun was well-versed in a range of Islamic disciplines, including the memorization from an early age of the Qur'ān. He was also an eclectic reader of a range of disciplines, including the natural sciences, geography, history and philosophy. Unlike his predecessors, such as Ibn Rushd (d.1198) and Ibn Sina (d.1037), he was not only interested in high logic and philosophical theory, but was also motivated by the desire to understand and explain human interaction.

In fact, Ibn Khaldun maintained that humans are essentially a product of their social environment; their future is determined by the wider social bonds which they create and nurture with fellow humans. These, he argued, were vital in order for individuals to succeed in the *dunyā* (world) and also the *ākhirā* (hereafter). Ibn Khaldun's understanding of group processes is

influenced by the classical Muslim perspective of ‘man’ as understood by Ibn Sina and others.

This is demonstrated in the following observation by al-Shahrāzūrī in his *al-Shajara al-Ilāhiyya*

The individual human being cannot accomplish all the things that are necessary for his livelihood, unless he has co-operation from someone else...Assuming that he could (somehow manage) to live (on his own), it would be (only) with great difficulty and trouble. He would not be able to obtain the various kinds of intellectual perfection (that are the goal of humanity). Thus, of necessity there must exist a group the members of which co-operate to acquire many different crafts and (technical) skills. In this way, each individual accomplishes something from which his fellow men can profit. (The sages) said “man is political by nature” in the sense that he needs this kind of social organization in order to live, to provide for his own livelihood, to improve his situation in this world, and to perfect his soul for the next world...The proper order of such social organization is political and based upon cooperation.

(Quoted Ibn Khaldun 1967 xxiv-lxxv).

Perhaps one of the remarkable features of Ibn Khaldun is his sociological observation of political events that played an important role in shaping his writings. Schmidt (1930), drawing upon the works of one of the founders of European sociology, Ludwig Gumplowicz (d.1909), cites evidence of sociological theory and empirical observations in Ibn Khaldun’s writings. This, Schmidt (1930) argues, relates to his classification of human societies based upon culture, institution, habitat and, most importantly, group solidarity as a way of understanding the impacts of social factors in shaping human behaviour. Rabi (1967) supports the above observation by Gumplowicz (Schmidt 1930) regarding Ibn Khaldun’s methodology, stating:

By applying empirical procedure to social phenomena, a new element was introduced into this field of study. His inclination to devote his works to facts and realities of life was clear in the task he assigned to himself, i.e. to reveal the nature of human association as it is and not as it ought to be whether according to proposed rules of ethics, religion or wisdom.

(Rabi 1967: 28).

The methodological approach underpinning the study of *'asabiyya* is essentially based on a 'scientific methodology' which emphasises the need to gather 'facts' rather than follow hearsay in order to understand social reality. This is clear from a detailed reading of the *Muqaddimah*. For example, Ibn Khaldun dismisses the works of a number of leading Muslim historians because they place 'blind trust in tradition' which undermines scrutiny and academic rigour with 'little effort made to get at the truth' (Ibn Khaldun 2005: 5-9). In this respect, Ibn Khaldun is a committed social scientist interested in understanding his socio-political environment. This is also confirmed by Gellner (1981:86), who suggests that 'one of the interesting traits of Ibn Khaldun...is the extent to which he is a sociologist rather than a moralist'. This is clear from the advice he offered his political masters: 'technical advice on points of detail, or on the wisdom of knowing things...he indulged in no preaching'.

'Asabiyya and the Rule of Four

The central idea of Khaldunian *weltanschauung* is *'asabiyya*. Some writers find the concept difficult to translate and have failed to capture the essence of what Ibn Khaldun was trying to convey. Rosenthal (1958), in his English translation of *Muqaddimah*, used 'group feeling' within and between people to convey the meaning of *'asabiyya*. A range of other commentators used other synonyms to capture the essence of *'asabiyya*, such as 'sense of solidarity', 'group feeling', 'group loyalty', 'esprit de corps' (Rabi 1967: 49), 'group consciousness' (Daood 1967:xli) and 'group cohesion, and common will' (cited in Laborde

1984:101). ‘*Asabiyya* can be seen as set of attitudes and emotions governed by complex social processes which have psychological ramifications.

‘*Asabiyya* is an old idea which is derived from the Arabic root word –*s-b*, meaning to ‘bind’ (Lacoste1984:103). The word in fact appears in the *ḥadīth* literature in the following: ‘Does ‘*‘asabiyya* mean loving one’s people?’ No, replied the Prophet ‘*‘asabiyya* means helping one’s people in just action’ (ibid).

For Ibn Khaldun (2005), *homo sapiens* was essentially a product of his social environment. Human beings were created to live together in communities as part of a wider social network. He argues that they are unable to maintain a fulfilled life on their own. Given the fact that individuals are rational people, it is not surprising to note that individuals live together in groups to achieve their basic needs and also their higher socio-political objectives through ‘*asabiyya*.

In order for ‘*asabiyya* to flourish, four distinct kinds of relationship are central, namely blood ties, alliance, clientship and religion. Each of these relationships plays a crucial role in protecting individuals within the group (Rabi 1967). As Ibn Khaldun notes:

Their defence and protection are successful only if they are close knit groups of common descent. This strengthens their stamina and makes them feared, since everybody’s affection for his family and his group is more important than anything else.

(Ibn Khaldun 2005:97-98)

As stated above, ‘*asabiyya* provides a sense of protection and support against external threats. Ibn Khaldun further notes that a successful form of ‘*asabiyya* generates fear and at the same time commands respect from other people. In order to elaborate this point, he introduces the idea of

'house'. For Ibn Khaldun (2005:104), fear and respect can be generated either through religion (as in the case of the Abbasid Empire) or through tribal contact (Ibn Khaldun 2005:102). The fear and respect of groups based upon the principle of *'house'* is elaborated below:

A *'house'* means that a man counts noble and famous men among his forebears. The fact that he is their progeny and descendant gives him great standing among his fellows, for his fellows respect the great standing and nobility that his ancestors acquired through their qualities.

(Ibn Khaldun 2005:102)

Ibn Khaldun (2005:160) considered religion a crucial element of *'asabiyya'*. For Ibn Khaldun, *'group feeling is necessary to the Muslim community. Its existence enables (the community) to fulfil what God expects of it'*. Religious solidarity along with numerical support of citizens is equally crucial in maintaining political support. This is clear from the following:

The expansion and power of a dynasty correspond to the numerical strength of those who obtain superiority at the beginning of the rule. The length of the duration also depends on it. The life of anything that comes into being depends upon the strength of the temper. The temper of dynasties is based upon group feeling...Group feeling, in turn, depends on numerical strength.

(Ibn Khaldun 2005: 130)

The above observation also demonstrates the importance of *'asabiyya'* in the formation of the state. Strong *'asabiyya'* rooted in *'umrān badawī* (nomadic life) would gradually lead to movements of people towards *'umrān ḥaḍāraī* (sedentary life) or life in the towns (Lacoste 1994). *'Asabiyya'* within this context would suggest giving life to new forms of living. This cycle of stronger tribes moving from the desert to the cities and replacing existing weaker groups was seen to repeat itself every four generations. The first generation of Bedouin invaders moving from nomadic life to the cities is loyal to its group and sees success through solidarity and cohesiveness. It is *'asabiyya'* that gives success, sustenance and political legitimacy, and the

rulers ensure that these qualities that led to their success are at the centre of their priorities. The second generation still has association and loyalty to the group and puts in place the relevant support systems to nurture the rule of the founding fathers. Discord and dissent start to emerge with the third generation. This is when rulers begin to enjoy the luxuries of the dynastic rule and lose contact with the group by employing external experts. This reliance on external support instead of utilising group solidarity, group cohesion and tradition leads to the further weakening of *'asabiyya*, and the fourth generation falls victim to new stronger forces of *'asabiyya* emerging from the desert to take over. The process then repeats itself.

For Ibn Khaldun (2005), just as 'the world of the elements and all it contains comes into being and decays' (pg.105), so group cohesion, tradition and culture through the law of nature go through similar modification. Society, by its nature, goes through transition and change which, according to Ibn Khaldun, is usually underpinned by the *rule of four*:

The rule of four (generations) with respect to prestige usually holds true. It happens that a 'house' is wiped out, disappears and collapses in fewer than four, or it may continue unto the fifth and sixth generations, though in a state of decline and decay. The four generations can be defined as the builder, the one who has personal contact with the builder, the one who relies on tradition and the destroyer.

(Ibn Khaldun 2005: 106)

Ernest Gellner, Akbar Ahmed: Anthropology of 'asabiyya

A number of academics have used the theoretical concept of *'asabiyya* to understand contemporary Muslim society. Gellner (1981), in his study of North African societies, applied the concept of *'asabiyya* along with the works of Durkheim to guide his anthropological study. Gellner (1981) was attempting to understand the social changes that were occurring in most North African societies as a result of modernity. Gellner (1981) was interested in exploring the

changes from ‘mechanical solidarity’²¹, described by Ibn Khaldun and based on close-knit ‘*asabiyya*’ as exemplified in pre-industrialised tribal societies, to the ‘organic solidarity’ of Durkheim (1997) based on complex society in an industrial context. Gellner (1981) argued that, despite this social transformation, group solidarity can still be maintained. This transition from ‘mechanical’ to ‘organic solidarity’ is further articulated in the following:

Contrary to the logic of Ibn Khaldun’s premises, industrial society - a mass of mobile, atomised, highly specialised individuals - has exemplified its own kind of social cohesion and identification, working on a new principle which has not infrequently been capable of arousing the fervour of broad masses and of leading individuals to make extreme, self-denying sacrifices. The name of that principle is nationalism.

(Gellner 1981:92)

More recently, Ahmed (2005, 2003) has used the Khaldunian sociology of ‘*asabiyya*’ to understand the post 9/11 world. For Ahmed (2003, 2005), Ibn Khaldun provides detailed answers to some of the pertinent issues relating to the ‘Muslim question’, such as ‘ethnicity, group loyalty...revenge, suicide and the tribal code’ (Ahmed 2005:591). For Ahmed (2003, 2005), the traditional ‘*asabiyya*’ within the Muslim world successfully transmitted cultural values which the next generation (Ahmed 2005:594) is gradually eroding. This is largely due to the rise of globalisation and modernity within the Muslim world. For Ahmed (ibid.):

²¹ Durkheim (1984) argues that a type of society based upon the division of labour produces certain types of solidarity. He highlighted two major types of group solidarities - *Mechanical solidarity* and *Organic solidarity*. The former is nurtured through family and kinship ties and is found in traditional and religious societies, whilst the latter is based on complex, individualised and increasingly secularised forms found in industrial and modern societies.

Tribal and rural groups can no longer provide '*asabiyya*'; urban areas in any case are inimical to it. The result is loss of vigour and cohesion. Muslims everywhere are voicing their alarm at the breakdown of society. They know that something is going fundamentally wrong but they are not sure why. With the inherited colonial structures of administration, politics and education disintegrating and new ones yet to supplant or consolidate them, and with old identities being challenged, Muslim society is in a state of flux. '*Asabiyya* is at its weakest in these societies.

(ibid.)

Ahmed (2005) sees a number of factors contributing towards the collapse of '*asabiyya* in some Muslim countries. Many of the factors that Ahmed (2005) identifies are associated with the rise of industrialisation, which led societies, according to Durkheim (1984), to move from traditional communities to complex societies. Some of the factors that Ahmed (2005) identifies can be seen as follows:

...'*asabiyya* is collapsing [in Muslim societies] for the following reasons: mass urbanization, dramatic demographical change, a population explosion, large-scale migrations to the West, the gap between rich and poor (which is growing ominously), the widespread corruption and mismanagement of rulers, the rampant materialism coupled with the low premium on education, the crisis of identity, and, perhaps most significant, new and often alien ideas and images, at once seductive and repellent, and instantly communicated from the West, ideas and images that challenge traditional values and customs.

(Ahmed 2005:595).

Ahmed (2003, 2005) sees the breakdown of traditional '*asabiyya* giving rise to new paradoxical forms of *hyper-'asabiyya*. *Hyper-'asabiyya* is based upon 'exaggerated and even obsessive loyalty to one's group and is usually expressed through hostility and often violence towards the other' (Ahmed 2005:592). Ahmed (2005) concludes that the post-9/11 world is essentially marking the beginning of a 'post-honour' world. Thus, for Ahmed, *Hyper-'asabiyya* is the 'cause and the symptom of the post-honour world we live in' whereby, in 'dishonouring others', people think 'they are maintaining honour.' (ibid)

‘Asabiyya and Segregation?

The task for sociologists interested in understanding *‘asabiyya* and the question of the integration of Muslim communities in Europe will be to examine the relationship between *‘asabiyya* and segregation. Ahmed’s (2005) distinction between *‘asabiyya* and *hyper-‘asabiyya* demonstrates the positive and negative approaches to understanding group solidarity. The Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (Lacoste 1984:103) suggests that *‘asabiyya* is greater than blind loyalty to one’s group; rather it is a mechanism through which people help others at a time of need. More recently, contemporary scholarly discourse on Muslims in the West seems to argue that Muslim *‘asabiyya* can be understood as transcending self-segregation or as nurturing a sense of hostility between ‘us’ and ‘them’.

March (2009, 2009a), drawing upon the works of contemporary traditional scholars such as Mawlawi and others (Sheikh Yusuf al-Qardawi, Sheikh Abd Allah Bin Bayya), argues how one of the conditions for living in the West is to partake in *da‘wah*, although *da‘wah* here is not understood in its conventional sense of proselytizing. Rather, it incorporates a complex set of terms, drawing from the Qur’ānic narrative, including ((1) good-willed exhortation [*al-maw‘īza al-ḥasana*]; (2) argumentation [*jadal*]; (3) non-coercion [*lā ikrāh*]; and (4) wisdom [*ḥikma*] (March 2009a:76). For Mawlawi, these conditions cannot be fulfilled without social interaction and the forming of bonds, trust and affectionate feelings towards non-Muslims. Thus Muslim *‘asabiyya* within a European context does *not* necessarily translate into self-segregation, hostility or indifference towards non-Muslims. Indeed, as Mawlawi has pointed out, the idea of *ḥubb al fiṭr* (or innate love) towards non-Muslims should be nurtured and sustained. This is contrasted with love towards one’s fellow Muslims which he argues is based on *ḥubb al-‘Aqīda*. Thus, as March (2009a: 78) argues, bonds between communities should be based on ‘common interest,

shared experience and secular virtue', and love for one's fellow Muslim brother does not mean the hatred of fellow non-Muslims.

The celebrated Mauritanian scholar Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayya also draws similar conclusions to Mawlawi and others that loyalty towards one's faith does not rule out loyalty and obligations of citizenship to the nation state:

The highest and most exalted of these loyalties is that based on creed, which includes faith in basic pillars of religion, the shared practice of rituals and adherence to moral virtue. This relationship of loyalty is not incompatible with loyalty to a homeland, which binds people together into a contract of citizenship and defends its territory against aggression.

(Cited in March 2009a:80)

3.5: Conclusion

The above section highlighted the rich scholarly discourses on integration. This chapter demonstrated the diverse attempts made by Muslim academics in the west to articulate a progressive future for Muslims in the West. The perspectives highlighted above frame the conversation around Muslim integration and political participation through two discursive lenses. Ramadan (2009) tends to adopt a theological approach whilst Tibi (2001, 2008) uses secular liberal ideas. What both of the above detailed accounts, together with the rise of liberal and progressive ideas²² (Kurzman 1998; Safi 2003) of Islam taking root in the Western world, demonstrated is the complex and diverse ways in which integration and political participation are framed. Werbner's (2000) summary of the range of Muslim scholarly discussions on integration, citizenship and political participation in Europe notes that 'we find in these international debates among Muslim scholars an attempt to engage with and accommodate to Western democratic values within the framework of Islamic law... Their views highlight a shared judicial approach to reinterpret the law in order to adapt it to realities of everyday life' (Wernber 2001: 314). Ibn Khaldun's work, whilst rooted in traditional Muslim scholarship, was used to explore the importance of *'asabiyya* in religion and Muslim group dynamics in particular. A detailed examination of *'asabiyya* in light of the research findings will be explored further in chapter 10.

²² Liberal Islam puts emphasis on modernity and Western discursive epistemology. Kurzman (1998) identifies three Muslim liberal trajectories. First, the liberal shariah approach sees shariah as essentially liberal with gender equality and democracy as essential features of Islam. The second, the *silent shariah*, argues that shariah is silent on key questions of modernity, which provides space for Muslims to construct a liberal future. Finally, the Interpretative shariah sees the role of shariah as a human endeavour which is interpreted via human action. For Safi (2003), progressive Islam sees greater textual emphasis on the ideas of 'justice, pluralism and gender' and sees the role of Muslims as promoting ideals of *'ihhān'* (beauty) and *'adl'* (justice). Their claim is that there could be no justice in Islam 'without gender justice'. Progressive Islam differs from liberal Islam because its proponents see their role as 'intellectuals being involved in 'multiple critiques', namely a critique of the Western epistemology and also a particular Muslim reading of textual sources.

Part 2: Methodology: Analysing Discourse

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will be divided into three main sections; each section will explore the procedure and examine the technique and methods used to collect and analyse the primary data. The first section will provide a reflective account on issues concerning positionality and reflexivity. It will explore the potential impacts of the researchers' own *weltanschauung* on data collection and interpretation. The second section will explore the general themes associated with the Muslim discourse and the 'subaltern voice'. The second section will highlight: (i) the ethical framework; (ii) the research method; and (iii) the data analysis associated with this study. The central theme of this chapter will be to firmly establish the validity and the integrity of this research.

4.2 Positionality and Reflexivity

Positionality, or the location of the self, is central to assessing the question of validity in research. Thus it is not surprising to see that a number of scholars including the BERA guidance have stressed the importance of considering one's 'own positionality' (Jackson 1993, cited in Hopkins 2007) and the 'politics of positions' (Rose 2007, cited in Hopkins 2007) during the research process. Milner (2007) has also cautioned that there can be 'seen, unseen and unforeseen' (pg.387) dangers when researchers 'do not pay attention to their own and others' racialized and cultural systems of coming to know... the world' (ibid).

In researching this project the issue of positionality and reflexivity has been a central component. I am conscious of the fact that I am a Muslim of Bangladeshi origin, born in the UK, with over 10 years of community development work experience. I have been a school governor for 10 years and have also served as a member of Oldham's Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) since 2005. Since 2010 I have also been the Chair of the Oldham Inter-faith Forum. Researching the Muslim communities in light of this experience should bring about certain advantages through 'alliance formation' (Harvey 1996:360) and developing rapport and shared experiences (Hopkins 2007). My research positionality also carried certain privileges with over 8 years' experience as a local government policy analyst; I was able to use this experience to gain access to the research field. There are also possible shortfalls that this experience brings which required conscious and detailed negotiation, such as the question of prejudging some of the responses to school policies, the commitment to a particular line of thought, or attempting to prove one's own ideas and beliefs. I was able to negotiate some of these questions through reflecting upon my role as a researcher within the research process and dynamics, together with a critical inspection of the self within the power dynamics of data

collection, making myself more accountable and the research findings more valid. One of the key ways through which this was achieved is through the following. Firstly, for the process of data collection I avoided all the secondary schools or parents that I had contact with - either through my voluntary work or my professional role. This allowed me to approach the 'field' not as a community activist but rather as a researcher interested in understanding the social world. This also meant that none of the respondents were prejudiced in providing an answer which deemed to be politically correct. Secondly, my approach to understanding the social world was grounded upon a phenomenological perspective (Denscombe 2003) that is to say that I was interested in understanding the social world through the eyes of the other. In order to do this I had to 'bracket' out or suspend judgment (Moustakas 1994) on any of the issues or points discussed by the respondents or during the process of data analysis and interpretation. This is particularly important because the role of the phenomenological researcher is interested in how Muslims interpret key political events and how they make sense of their experiences.

Connected to the issue of positionality is the crucial question of the intellectual project driving this study. Similar to the work of feminist, post-colonial and critical race theorists, this research project is rooted in the political nature of research. It intentionally locates the 'subject' not at the periphery of research but rather as central to the research design by recognising the importance of the subject's 'voice'. In order to achieve this it was particularly important that respondents had the ability to articulate their voice regarding the public framing of Muslim visa via the question of integration. The phenomenological approach further helped ensure this through the process of *bracketing* and the quest to understand the social world through lenses of the subaltern.

As a Muslim conducting academic research on the Muslim community in an intense political environment, I discovered that this research had raised a number of personal dilemmas. I was conscious of the fact that the object of my research had personal implications and this required detailed and often sensitive negotiating of the *emic* (insider) and *etic* (outsider) perspectives of research.

4.3 The Muslim Discourse and the Subaltern Voice

The pivotal element for understanding the Muslim discourse is to focus on language as a means of exploring the hitherto mentioned aims (see introduction page 1). Potter & Wetherell (2010:1) have recognised the importance of using sociology and social psychology to study ‘talk’, especially given the fact that it ‘orders our perception and makes things happen, and thus shows how language can be used to construct and create social interaction and diverse social worlds’. Moreover, the importance of studying speech is further reinforced by Heritage (1984), who argues that ‘the social world is pervasively conversational, one in which an overwhelming proportion of the world’s business is conducted through the medium of spoken interaction’ (cited in Silverman 2000:821).

This thesis draws upon primary source data in order to uncover a Muslim *etic* perspective on integration by providing a space for Muslims to articulate what integration means to them and to ‘talk’ about the political framing of integration. As already stated in the introduction (see page 1, footnote 3), the Muslim voice is an important research topic, not only to guide the principles of equality and democracy, but also to inform academic debates. A number of writers have also supported this observation. Ahmed (2009), for example, in her report on the ‘*Voices of Young British Muslims*’, noted how ‘much is written about young Muslims but we rarely seem to actually hear their voices’. Fekete (2009:63), drawing upon wider academic research, has also stressed how ‘seldom is the “other” given a hearing, except to confirm our prejudices’. Furthermore, Critical Race Theorists have also observed how dominant groups in society construct their own discourse, which at times can be diametrically opposed to that of marginalised groups. Delgado (1995), one of the leading exponents of the Critical Race Theory, identifies:

Members of what could be loosely described as out-groups, groups whose marginality defines the boundaries of the mainstream, whose voice and perspective whose consciousness - has been suppressed, devalued and abnormalised. The attraction of these stories should come as no surprise. For stories create their own bonds, represent cohesion, shared understanding and meanings. The cohesiveness that stories bring is part of the strength of the group. An out-group creates its own stories, which circulate within the group as a kind of counter- reality.

(Delgado 1995:64)

For Delgado (1995), counter-discourse can be used as a way of challenging normative constructs of race, racism and power relations. Moreover, stories or counter-stories are powerful means of resisting and challenging the hegemonic discourse of the state. Delgado (1995) shows how ‘most of the storytelling focus[es] on its community - building functions: stories build consensus, a common culture or shared understandings, and a deeper, more vital ethics’ (Delgado 1995:65).

For the purpose of this research I will be exploring parental and pupil discourses on integration and schooling. The significance of examining the discourses of both of these groups is supported by Parker-Jenkins (2002, 2005), who has acknowledged the importance of parental rights and also the rights of children in educational endeavours, whilst recognising the fact that the rights of children may conflict with the rights of parents. This does not mean that the voices of the wider Muslim community, such as those of faith leaders, teachers and community activists, are excluded. Indeed, many of the respondents in the parental sample groups were also committed activists and religious leaders.

A research project which recognises the Muslim subaltern voice has a number of questions associated with it, such as (i) what constitutes a Muslim subaltern voice or (ii) why

review books written by non-Muslims within the sociological components of the thesis and not include them in the theological debates? In response to (i), subaltern studies recognise the importance of providing a space for the ‘voices’ of minority groups and the powerless, who are often pushed to the margins of society (Apple & Buras 2006; Young 2006). The Muslim community in the UK is principally a marginalised and powerless group. This observation, is confirmed by a range of studies, based on a number of socio-economic and discriminatory indicators (Hussain 2008). The Muslim community, following the events of 9/11 and 7/7, is also projected through a range of negative and problematic categories in the media (Poole 2002) and also within public discourse (Kundnani 2007; McGhee 2008). The importance of the meaningful engagement of the Muslim community with questions relating to schooling is pertinent, especially given the fact that over 50% of all Muslims in the UK are under the age of 25, and a significant number of these are below the age of 16 (Ahmed 2009).

In response to (ii), the publication of Said’s (1978) classic work on Orientalism has generated a lengthy debate on Europe’s ability to fully understand the ‘other’. The decision to exclude non-Muslim theological writings on Islam and integration from chapter 3 of this thesis was taken in order to demonstrate the vibrant nature of Muslim academic and theological debate on this topic rather than to make a *Saidian* epistemological point regarding the West’s essential bias against Islam and Muslims. Indeed, a cursory review of non-Muslim studies of Islam (Schimmel 1992; Esposito 1994; Hodgson 1994 Murata & Chittick 2008; Mattar 2008) and Muslim communities (Gellner 1981; Eade 1989, 1992, 1994), demonstrates the West’s genuine desire to understand the ‘other’.

4.3 Analysing Discourse: Methods, Principles and Analysis

Ethical Framework

The ethics of research are seen by Bulmer (2006:45) as requiring a ‘matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others’. The importance of making ethical considerations in research design and practice has been of paramount importance, for example considering the historical connection between research and eugenics in Nazi Germany (Farrell 2005). This has led Boeije (2010:44) to argue that contemporary research in ‘general is a human practice, one in which social values and ethical principles apply and moral dilemmas occur’.

In order to guide this research project, ethical guidance provided by a number of professional bodies, such as the British Educational Research Association (BERA), the European Social Research Council (ESRC) Research Framework and the British Sociological Association (BSA) was adopted. The ethical questions used to frame this research consist of the following. First, are there any potential or actual risks of harm involved for the research participants? Second, how was the privacy of the respondents maintained throughout the research process? Third, did the respondents provide full consent? If so, how was the confidentiality of the respondents safeguarded? Finally, were the respondents or the agencies involved deceived in any way? These ethical principles will be further explored within this chapter.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis (or discourse studies) is a generic term encompassing a number of approaches within sociology and social psychology to analyzing text and talk. These include the following: (i) ethnomethodology, which allows the analysis of talk in interaction in everyday life through conversational analysis; (ii) content analysis, which is a generic approach covering the analysis of documents and newspapers using Critical Discourse Analysis to explore issues of power, domination and social inequality and their relationship with racism and sexism, and also includes social psychological approaches to discourse which involve the analysis of conversations and interviews which have been transcribed (for further discussion see below); and (iii) narrative analysis, which allows researchers to assess how people use stories or counter-stories to interpret their world.

It is important to recognise, in light of the above three dominant approaches to discourse studies, that analysis of discourse ‘is not a method but a discipline’ (van-Dijk 2007: xxvii) similar to other disciplines (such as sociology). Discourse analysis will draw upon a range of methods depending upon the objective of the study. Thus, it is not surprising to note that two of the major journals for discourse analysis - *Discourse Studies* and *Discourse and Society* - view discourse studies through the prism of analysing text and talk.

According to van-Dijk (2007) the development of discourse studies was largely shaped by epistemological shifts within a range of disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, linguistics and socio-psychology during the early 1960s. During the 1970s, discourse studies started to develop a common theme which provided a framework for the analysis of discourse. According to van-Dijk (2007) these themes can be characterised as follows. First, academic

research started to recognise the importance of examining naturally-occurring speech. This was influenced by the changes in linguistics, from the examination of sentence structure and grammar to the importance of analysing language ‘beyond the sentence’. Second, social sciences started to recognise the importance of macro processes of language as opposed to the previous interest in grammar, syntax and morphology. A number of significant changes in sociology, cultural studies and ethnomethodology, with its emphasis on studying language in everyday life, facilitated this process. Third, academic debates started to feature the social and cultural context of language as an important area of enquiry. This was aided by sociolinguistics, with its emphasis on examining the relationship between language, gender, race and social class. Finally, semiotics and its emphasis on the study of signs, symbols and meanings provided a space for the analysis of non-verbal aspects of language. This meant that non-verbal communications were given the same precedent as verbal communication.

Discourse Analysis and Social Constructionism

The above section provided a brief overview of discourse studies by demonstrating how the subject became a product of cross-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary developments. It established how discourse analysis was viewed as a discipline, rather than a method with a range of methodological approaches. More crucially, despite its wide-ranging approaches to discourse studies, it explored some of the common features in discourse studies by focusing on the analysis of the use of language in everyday life.

Defining Discourse Analysis

The research method adopted in this project is based on the works of Potter & Wetherell (2010). Potter & Wetherell's approach, as highlighted in *Discourse and Social Psychology*, has become a foundational text for both specialist scholars (van-Dijk 2007) and also researcher practitioners (Charlebois 2010). According to Mills (1997), this perspective is based on a content analysis of discourse studies and developed because of the emphasis on the analysis of transcribed data. Potter & Wetherell's (2010) approach to content analysis is based on a generic study of discourse:

We will use 'discourse' in its most open sense, following Gilbert and Mulkay (1998) to cover all forms of spoken interaction, formal and informal and written text of all kinds. So when we talk of 'discourse analysis', we mean analysis of any of these forms of discourse.

(Potter & Wetherell 2010:7)

The precise definition of discourse analysis is deeply problematic; this is largely due to the evolution of the discipline from different and often contrasting approaches. Moreover, it has led many scholars, as highlighted in the four-volume text of discourse studies edited by van-Dijk (2007), to use discourse analysis as a generic approach for most research associated with language in its cognitive or social context. Despite these uncertainties over the exact definition, I have adopted the content approach to discourse studies (Mills 1997). This is because the emphasis in this study was placed on analysis of data, which were transcribed and then analysed.

Discourse studies within the context of this research see discourse as a social construct, which can be analysed as a source of data to reveal interesting insights into aspects of a person's life (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984). More importantly, discourse analysis within the Gilbert &

Mulkay (1984) tradition can be utilized by researchers interested in the ‘systematic description of discourse employed by particular groups of social actors in specific settings’ (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984:16). This point has been further reinforced by a number of research studies adopting discourse analysis within the context of education and schooling (O’Donoghue & Punch 2003; McClure 2003).

Discourse analysis within the Potter & Wetherell (2010) tradition is interested in assessing how individuals attempt to socially construct their world. One of the main reasons for this is based on the recognition that discourse analysis ‘focuses attention on the process whereby the social world is constructed and maintained’ (Hardy 2002: 2). This point is confirmed by Wood & Kroger (2000:2), who see discourse as a form of social practice, or a process which is used to ‘do things’. This is further articulated as follows:

Generally speaking, the topic for discourse analysis is more properly framed not as language or talk, but in terms of phenomena that are constructed discursively (e.g. racism, abuse etc.), that is in terms of what people are doing with words.

(Wood & Kroger 2000: 9)

Social Constructionism

A central theme that arises in the above discussion is the way in which discourse analysis is positioned within the idea of social constructionism. A social constructionist view of the social world is based on the research principle of anti-realism, in that ‘it denies that there is external reality awaiting a definitive portrayal by the researcher and it therefore disavows the notion that any research can arrive at a privileged account of the aspect of the social world being investigated (Bryman 2008: 500). Unlike other scientific approaches to research, such as the positivist tradition with its emphasis on empirical truths and deductive reasoning, discourse

analysis is based upon the social-constructionist paradigm. This idea views people constructing their world through social experience. Given our understanding of social science, this is not a novel idea. After all, Piaget (1955) demonstrated how children in schools are actively involved in creating their social world through experience.

Social constructionism, as an idea within social psychology, is derived from the work of Gergen (1985), who defined social constructionism as a position which is ‘principally concerned with elucidating the process by which people describe, explain or otherwise account for the world in which they live’ (Gergen 1985:3). A central premise within Gergen’s (1985) thought is that human beings do not reflect a given ‘reality’; rather, they are actively engaged in constructing and re-constructing their social world through discourse. Gergen’s (1985) view of social reality has major implications for this thesis, as it rejects the essentialised construct of the Muslim community as reflecting a fixed reality. Instead it accepts the principle of social constructionism, which views Muslim communities as actively constructing their social world. Shweder and Miller (1985) have also applied Gergen’s (1985) idea of social constructionism through an ethnographic study of the UK Hindu community. The study acknowledged how the Hindu community used the discursive positioning of *Karma* and the ‘just world’ hypothesis to make sense of their reality through constructing a world based on reincarnation - whereby a person’s current ‘form’ is largely based on the actions of his/her previous life. A central thesis within Shweder and Miller’s work (1985) is the idea that humans are not simple beings reflecting a given fixed reality; rather, they are active agents of social construction.

Potter & Wetherell (2010) have explored the implications of the social constructionist approach to discourse analysis by comparing two personality constructs: the traditional and social constructionist positions. A traditional construct of the self, they argue, ‘assumes that the

self has one true nature or set of characteristics waiting to be discovered and once discovered a correct description of these characteristics will follow' (Potter & Wetherell 2010: 95). Potter & Wetherell (2010) provide a range of approaches within psychology and sociology to highlight the traditional construct of the self as having fixed measurable traits (as exemplified in the works of Eysenck 1964), or the understanding of the self as structured by their roles in society (as seen in the works of Mead 1934). The social constructionist position rejects these positions and instead focuses on the self as a social construct. Potter & Wetherell (2010:102) argue that the 'question becomes not what is true nature of self but how the self is talked about - how is it theorized in discourse? This is a move which is welcomed by the discourse analyst'. The social constructionist view of personality has a radical conceptualisation of the self in that it sees 'not one self - waiting to be discovered or uncovered - but a multiple of selves found in the different kinds of linguistic practices' (ibid.).

Discourse as function, variation and construction

Discourse analysis as already highlighted above is more interested in the study of 'linguistic *content*' than of the 'linguistic *form*'; the latter is preoccupied with grammar, rule, and syntax whilst the former sees language as a 'social practice' (Potter & Wetherell 2010:48). In other words, the objective of analysis is based on sociological questions rather than linguistic ones. This is clear from the fact that discourse analysis pays particular attention to three important components of language use, namely discourse as *function, variation and construction*. Potter & Wetherell (2010) note how:

People perform actions of different kinds through talk...they accomplish the nature of these actions partly through constructing their discourse out of a range of styles, linguistic resources and rhetorical devices.

(Potter & Wetherell 1999:48)

The above observation acknowledges the importance of discourse as a function that is used to achieve set objectives. The *functional* element of discourse is crucial as it unveils the complexities behind human actions and motivations. Given that the functional element of discourse is rooted in changing social contexts, it comes as no surprise that the assessment of language reveals *variations* in speech content. Potter & Wetherell (2010) note how:

A person's account will vary according to its function. That is to say, the purpose of the talk. For example, if we take two descriptions of a particular individual, we will expect them to vary in accordance with the feelings of the person doing the describing...What is happening in these cases is that people are using language to *construct* versions of the social world. The principal tenet of discourse analysis is that function involves construction of versions, and is demonstrated by language variation.

(Potter & Wetherell 2010:33)

Sampling, Access and Consent

Discourse analysis is interested in the context of language use as opposed to the quantity of the people speaking. Given the labour-intensive nature of analysing discourse, it is relatively common to come across classical studies using a single text (Potter & Wetherell 2010:161). Whilst this is true in theory, in practice the average sample size for a research project with similar objectives to those of this thesis includes 30 respondents. This is demonstrated in Charlebois' (2010) study, examining the 'discursive constructs of femininity amongst Japanese women', or Gilbert & Mulkay's (1984), much cited sociological study, which had a total sample size of 34 respondents. The sample size of this project reflects both Charlebois' (2010) and

Gilbert and Mulkey's (1984) relatively large sample sizes for discourse analysis. It is important to note that a large sample size in discourse studies does not signify any deficiencies within discourse methodology. It rather acknowledges that a large sample size will require more work and time (ibid.).

The sampling process included in this study reflects the methodological principles associated with qualitative research in general and discourse analysis in particular. Almost all research methods have strengths and weaknesses (Denscombe 2003), and discourse analysis is no different. Some of the many advantages associated with discourse analysis are highlighted as follows. Firstly, the analysis of data is grounded in social context. The discourses associated with Muslim communities and integration is grounded, not in 'arm chair' theorisation, rather within the social contexts of schooling and community. Secondly, discourse analysis is more interested in depth of the information provided by the respondents rather than the breadth of information. According to Denscombe (2003) '*thick description*' of information is best placed to explain complex social situations. This particular approach is best suited for this study, especially given the political sensitivities associated with governance and Muslim communities (Thomas 2009). Finally, given that discourse analysis is interested in *function, variation and construction* this means that it is in a better position to deal with ambiguity and contradictions.

Some of limitations associated with discourse analysis are seen by the following. Firstly, given the emphasis on *thick description* of data means that the analysis might be less representative, this limitation, was partially overcome by including an eclectic mix of sample groups, locations and settings. The Muslim communities in UK are a *super diverse* (Vertovec 2007) community, ranging from the historical Muslim communities, including communities from Yemen and the Indian sub-continent and the recently arrived communities from East Africa. In

order to capture the diverse mix of communities, the sampling process included communities from the historical Muslim community and the emerging Muslim communities. In order to ensure the sampling process reflected this diverse mix of Muslims, the geographical reach had to be widened to include Manchester and East London. The geographical spread is also important, especially given that the ‘problematic’ presence of segregated communities is often associated with north-mill towns. By including the respondents from other towns and cities adds to the geographical diversity. Secondly, it is argued that discourse analysis often assumes that the findings are often associated with the researcher rather than the discovery of ‘fact’. This criticism was mitigated through the conscious awareness of ‘self’ in the process of data gathering and data analysis (see section on positionality and reflexivity). Furthermore, given that this research is grounded within the *subaltern studies* perspective, means that the objective of this research is to give the voice to Muslim communities, thus the importance lies not in the researcher’s voice but rather the voice of the powerless. Finally, there is the concern that discourse analysis de-contextualises the meaning of the findings, in other words, the process of coding and categorizing the data is disconnected from the location i.e. the research setting. This is a general criticism associated with qualitative research methods (Denscombe 2003), as a result, attempts were made to factor the importance of data and location. For example Table 2 and Table 4 provides outline of the dominant categories and the themes associated with each location. Table 5 provides an outline of how the emerging themes and categories were factored in whilst writing the findings section.

Pupil Cohort

Three geographical areas were identified for this study – Blackburn, Burnley and Oldham. These local authorities were chosen owing to the media attention on ethnic integration, schooling and Muslim communities (a detailed discussion of this is highlighted in Chapter 2). According to the 2001 Census, a majority of the Muslims within these areas are of Indian sub-continental heritage, even though most of the respondents were born within the UK. In order to obtain a much broader perspective of Muslim voices, interviews in Manchester were conducted due to the ethnically diverse nature of the Muslim communities there. The Manchester focus groups allowed me to draw on a range of diverse Muslim perspectives, of Yemeni, Somali and Muslim convert heritages. East London was also identified as being likely to provide a wider geographical account of the Muslim discourse. It is important to note that the broader factors of diverse Muslim voices, geographical area and gender have all been included to provide a comprehensive account of Muslim discourse.

Ofsted reports were used to identify schools with mono-cultural and mixed pupil cohorts. The information gleaned was then combined with interviews with parents, teachers and pupils to ascertain the full status of each of the schools. Once this status was confirmed, a standard letter was sent to each school explaining the nature of the research together with a request for a meeting with a senior member of staff. Furthermore, as and when required, local networks were also used to arrange meetings with either the head teacher or members of staff responsible for school outreach. These preliminary meetings with individuals from each of the schools allowed me to explore with them the nature of the research, explain its purpose and discuss the ethical framework of the study. Each respective school then identified two focus groups comprising pupils from years 9 and 10. All the pupils participating in the study gave consent to the head

teacher or the relevant teacher who organised the focus groups. Before conducting each interview, I explained the overall objective of the study to each focus group member and discussed the ethical framework of the study. Following this process, each of the pupils taking part was asked for his/her consent to participate in the research. All the pupils identified by the school (with the exception of two) participated in the research. Of these two, neither could commit to the 45 minutes required for participation in the focus group interviews. Overall, the students were willing to be involved in the project; they liked the prospect of missing out on core teaching time! The fluency of each of the groups differed. In some cases it was difficult to engage the pupils with the research topic. Out of a total of 21 focus groups, 3 were compromised as a result of this. The remaining 18 focus groups produced high-quality data. The students proved to be articulate, dynamic, lucid and willing to engage generally and to discuss schooling, integration and Islam. Given the fact that all the schools had control over the allocation of pupils for the focus groups, I had no control over which pupils were chosen. Some of these groups were mixed-gender whilst others were single-sex groups. A comprehensive outline of each focus group is provided in table 2.

The majority of the focus groups were conducted on school premises, usually without an accompanying member of staff but with one exception - the Muslim Girls' School. This allowed the pupils to speak openly, without staff intervention or influence. A number of individual interviews (see table 2) were also organised. These were essentially follow-up interviews with different pupils to examine some of the key issues in more depth. A total of 6 of these individual interviews were conducted within a youth club setting, temporarily acquired through close contacts within three voluntary organisations (from Manchester, Oldham, and Burnley). In order

for these interviews to be conducted, full (written) consents were received from the respective parents.

In order to engage with diverse Muslim communities, the Somali, Yemeni, and white and African-Caribbean convert groups were included (see Table 3). This was achieved by working closely with youth groups from both Eccles and Moss Side in Greater Manchester. Table 2 provides an outline of the pupil sample. It identifies the location of each of the focus groups and the number of these groups conducted within school or youth club settings. The pupils' names together with the names of the schools have been anonymised. Steps were also taken to keep their anonymity and privacy secure.

Table 2: Pupil Sample

Focus Group	Location	Type of School	Setting	Number of Focus Groups	Gender (Number)	Size of Focus Group (Total Number per Group)	Ethnic Breakdown
Union College	Oldham	Mixed	College	2	Mixed	6 (12)	12 Pakistani
Rolls School	Oldham	Mixed	School	3	Girls (1) Boys (1) Mixed(1)	6 (18)	9 Bangladeshi 9 Pakistani
Westgate School	Oldham	Mon-cultural State	Youth Club	1	Girls	5 (5)	5 Bangladeshi
Hollings School	Oldham	Mixed	School	2	Boys (1) Girls (1)	4 (8)	8 Bangladesh
Islamiyya Muslim School	Blackburn	Faith school	School	2	Girls	5 (10)	10 Indian
East London School	London	Mixed	School	3	Girls (1) Boys (1) Mixed (1)	5 (15)	10 Bangladeshi 5 Pakistani
ACS School	Manchester	Mixed	School	2	Boys (1) Girls (1)	5 (10)	4 Arab 6 Pakistani
Manchester College	Manchester	Mixed	Youth Club	2	Boys	5 (10)	10 Somali
Charlestown School Eccles	Manchester	Mono-cultural State	Youth Club	1	Boys	8 (8)	1 Pakistani 5 Yemeni 2African-Caribbean
Individual follow-up interviews	Oldham, Burnley,	Mono-cultural State	Mosques	6	Boys	6	3 Pakistani 3 Bangladeshi
			Total	18		102	102

Table 3 Ethnic Breakdown of Pupil Sample

Ethnicity	Number of Respondents
Pakistani	36
Bangladeshi	35
Indian	10
Somali	10
Yemeni	5
African Caribbean	2
Arab	4
Total	102

Parent Cohort

A total of nineteen individual interviews and four focus groups were conducted with Muslim parents. Each of these parents either had a pupil in secondary school or a child in year 6 waiting to attend a secondary school. As with the pupil sample, all parents' names and personal details have been anonymised; steps were also taken to ensure that their anonymity and privacy will remain secure.

Table 4 below provides a breakdown of the geographical area, gender and ethnic background of the parental sample group. Parents' interviews were obtained via a "snowballing sample", snowballing sampling as a non-probability sampling technique allowed me to locate and recruit parents for interviews. This method was particularly helpful, especially in locating 'hidden population' of parents who sent their children to Muslim faith schools.

Table 4: Breakdown of Parental Sample

Number of Respondents (Location)	Ethnicity (number)	Gender	Focus Groups	Individuals
6 (Manchester)	Bangladeshi (3) Pakistani (3)	Male	(1)	
4 (East London)	Bangladeshi	Male		(4)
5 (Manchester) Moss Side	Somali (2), African Caribbean- convert (3)	Male	(1)	
4 (Oldham)	Bangladeshi	Male	(1)	
3 (Manchester) Hale, Didsbury	White Convert (2), Pakistani (1)	Male (2) Female (1)		(3)
1 (Rochdale)	Pakistani	Male		(1)
8 (Oldham)	Pakistani (4) Bangladeshi (4)	Male (3), Female (1) Male (3) Female (1)		(8)
3 (Burnley)	Pashto (1) Bangladeshi (2)	Male (1) Female (2)		(3)
4 (Burnley)	Bangladeshi (4)	Male (2) Female (2)	(1)	

4.4 Interviews, Transcription and Analysis of Data

Interviews

Frey & Oishi (1995:1) see interviews as ‘a purposeful conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (interviewer) and another answers them (respondent)’. Researchers working within the qualitative tradition have long used ‘purposeful conversations’ to aid understanding or reveal complexities of the social world. The effectiveness of using focus group interviews for the analysis of discourse has been confirmed by Goodman & Burke (2010). They note how focus groups are ideal for producing meaningful interaction between research participants.

In conventional qualitative research interviews, greater emphasis is placed on ‘obtaining and measuring consistency’ in the data extracted from interviews (Potter & Wetherell 2010:163). This is done because it is assumed that consistency is an accurate reflection of the beliefs and ideas of the respondents. Discourse analysis takes into account the idea of constancy and goes a step further to focus on ‘how talk is constructed and what it achieves, rather than whether it is an accurate description of the participants’ internal state’ (Potter & Wetherell 2010:164).

The crucial feature of conducting interviews using discourse methodology is to try to generate an ‘interventionist and confrontative arena’ (ibid.) through the process of interviewing. Potter & Wetherell (2010) are not advocating a form of disputation during the process of interview, but rather stating the claim that interviews should be able to explore function, variation and construct of speech. One of the many ways this thesis has done this is to encourage pupils and parents to talk about a variety of forms of integration within mixed-school and monocultural school settings.

For the purpose of this research, semi-structured interviews (Willig 2001) were used to conduct focus group and individual interviews. Potter & Hepburn (2007) define semi-structured interviews in discourse analysis as follows:

An interview of this kind will typically be guided by a schedule of topics or questions, although their order in the interview may vary and interviewers are likely to depart from the schedule and use a variety of follow-up questions (or comments, responses, or some other contributions).

(Potter & Hepburn 2007:283)

This method of using semi-structured interviews with a range of open-ended questions was a useful approach to generate interaction and also to provide space for discussion to take place. This particular method of engaging with respondents to encourage speech has been an effective model to provoke debate and dialogue (Griffin 2007). To help structure and guide the interview, Potter & Hepburn's (2007) framework for conducting interviews was adopted. First, particular care was taken not to 'flood the interview with social science agendas and categories' (Potter & Hepburn 2007:12). To do this, especially for the pupil sample, would have rendered the interviews useless. Second, the complex and varying footing positions of interviewer and interviewee were avoided as (ibid.) *footing positions* occur when the interviewer reports another person's speech. An example of a *footing position* would be to use Ramadan's (2009) position on integration to shape and influence the interview discussions. Thirdly, during the focus groups/interviews, due care was exercised not to orientate the interviews towards a set objective through question and probe.

Transcription

For an effective discourse analysis to occur, a clear and comprehensive transcript of interview data acts as the cornerstone of successful research practice. In order to analyse interview data, discourse analysts have developed a system for transcribing 'talk'. Gail Jefferson's (d.2008) transcription and notation model (see Table 5) is used within certain circles. The Jeffersonian (2005) model is based on a detailed and painstaking approach which puts emphasis on text, hesitations, overlaps, intonations, pause and length of speech measured in seconds. A detailed Jeffersonian transcript notation is provided below (Heritage 1984). The Jeffersonian model for discourse analysis has a number of advantages; for example Potter & Hepburn (2007), argue:





The full Jeffersonian representation of talk makes most apparent the jointly constructed, socially engaged nature of what is going on, including the close dependence of what the interviewee says on the interviewer's question (and vice versa) in all its specifics.

(Potter & Hepburn 2007: 289)

The detailed emphasis on transcription as noted by Jefferson can also be very laborious and time-consuming. For example, Potter & Wetherell (2010) have calculated the ratio of tape time to transcription time using the Jeffersonian model. They conclude that this model is based upon the ratio of one to ten - in other words ten minutes of interview time would take an hour to transcribe.

For the purpose of this research the Jeffersonian model was avoided for three reasons. First, given the size of the sample it would have been immensely time-consuming to adopt the model (ibid). Second, the Jeffersonian model, with its emphasis on fine details, would not have improved the overall quality of the data (Parker 2005).

Table 5: Jefferson Transcript Notation (Heritage 1984)

Symbol	Name	Use
[text]	Brackets	Indicates the start and end points of overlapping speech.
=	Equal Sign	Indicates the break and subsequent continuation of a single utterance.
(# of seconds)	Timed Pause	A number in parenthesis indicates the time, in seconds, of a pause in speech.
(.)	Micropause	A brief pause, usually less than .2 seconds.
. or 	Period or Down Arrow	Indicates falling pitch or intonation.
? or 	Question Mark or Up Arrow	Indicates rising pitch or intonation.
,	Comma	Indicates a temporary rise or fall in intonation.
-	Hyphen	Indicates an abrupt halt or interruption in utterance.
>text<	Greater than/Less than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker.
<text>	Less than/Greater than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more slowly than usual for the speaker.
	Degree symbol	Indicates whisper, reduced volume, or quiet speech.
ALL CAPS	Capitalized text	Indicates shouted or increased volume in speech.
underline	Underlined speech	Indicates the speaker is emphasizing or stressing the speech.
:::	Colon or Colons	Indicates prolongation of sound.
(hhh)		Audible exhalation.
 or (.hhh)	High Dot	Audible inhalation.
(text)	Parenthesis	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript.
((<i>italic text</i>))	Double Parenthesis	Annotation of non-verbal activity.

In fact, the Jeffersonian model would have been an obstruction to the overall flow and coherence of the transcript, especially when dealing with intonations, pauses and overlaps within the text. Finally, a number of canonical discourse studies (Gilbert and Mulkay 1984; Griffin 2007) have demonstrated alternative ways of transcribing data from a non-Jeffersonian tradition.

For the purpose of this study a generic approach to transcription, as suggested by Potter & Wetherell (2010) and based on a modification of the Jeffersonian model, was used to capture the detailed conversation without the aid of detailed Jeffersonian notation. During the process of transcription, particular attention was paid to capturing the entire conversation using the orthographic model.

Following the interview process each of the interviews was transcribed based upon the orthographical model highlighted above. Following the process of data transcription, each of the interviews were coded, this allowed the emerging categories from all of the interviews to be highlighted. A detailed analysis of each of categories together with the emerging themes, arising from the pupil and parental sample group, is highlighted in table 4. Table 5 provides a summary of the dominant themes arising from the discourse analysis.

Table 6a: Analysis of Categories and Themes

Category 1: Mixed Schools

Pupil Sample	Parental Sample	Emerging Themes
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)	Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley	Social contact as 'norm'
	Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale	Mixed schools in middle class areas
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)		Integration seen as 'mixing'
Union College, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)		Mixed school ideal- help learn other people's culture/ religion. Mixed school = 'knowing each other'.
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)		Imperative- help prepare for 'future', 'real world', 'work', 'college/university', 'multi-cultural society'. Occurred despite of sticking together- racial religious group solidarity.
Union College, Rolls, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)	Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley	'Mixed school' positive 'mono-cultural negative'.
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4,5,6)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Provide integration (maintain own identity- hybrid) not assimilation
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,4)	Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley	De-radicalisation tension- accounts of racism and help reduce racism. Push factors leading to 'sticking together'.

Table 6b: Analysis of Categories and Themes

Category 2: Sticking Together

Pupil Sample	Parental Sample	Emerging Themes
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4,5,6)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Symbolic violence = ‘protection’, ‘safety’
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (2,3,4)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	‘to seek out’ Muslims
Union College, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	<i>Social grammar</i> ‘jokes, language, experience’
Union College, Rolls, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Perceived hostility- reinforces solidarity – racism, Islamaphobia
Union College, Rolls, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)		Ummah- not imagined rather contested. Examples shape discourse (hajj, war Iraq, Gaza/ shia vs. sunni, deobandi, beralawi, ‘only heard of term etc.) Ummah crucial
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4,5,6)		Attempts by school encourage mixing- perceived ‘sticking together’.

Table 6c: Analysis of Categories and Themes

Category 3: Mono-cultural Schools

Pupil Sample	Parental Sample	Emerging Themes
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Mono-cultural school as social deficit. Does not provide relevant capital for positive future
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Mono-cultural/ mixed schools product of environment.
Union College, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4,5,6)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Free from racism and anti-Muslim prejudice
	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Working class neighbours- Conscious neglect of school
Islamiya Muslim school	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Dialectical space for delayed integration
Islamiya Muslim school	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Positive space for nurturing Muslim solidarity and Muslim identity.

Table 6d: Analysis of Categories and Themes

Category 4: Integration as political construct

Pupil Sample	Parental Sample	Emerging Themes
	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	‘Why Muslims’ - integration as a tool from anti-Muslim prejudice.
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (2,3,4)		‘Why not other communities’
Union College, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Role of media – Islamophobia and racism.
	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Integration political construct. Political tool rather than a cultural process.
Union College, Rolls, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4,5, 6)		Wider narrative of integration constructed in opposition to being Muslim. Narrative changes.
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3) <i>Islamiya</i> School.	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Debate on Muslims integration does not reflect Muslim reality. People do mix!
<i>Islamiya</i> School follow-up interviews (1,2,3)	Oldham, Rochdale, Burnley, Hale, Didsbury	Muslim school- ‘we do mix’ ‘we do socialise’. Help integration <i>adab</i> – good citizens.
Union College, Rolls, Westgate, Hollings, East London, Manchester College, ACS, Charlestown, follow-up interviews (1,2,3,4)		Muslims more integrated than other communities.

Table 6e: Analysis of Categories and Themes

Table 5: Summary of Dominant Themes: Pupil and Parental Discourse

Pupil		Parental	
Mono-cultural Schools	Mixed Schools	Mono-cultural schools	Mixed schools
Social deficit	Ideal type – good form of social capital	Social deficit and conscious neglect of schools	Middle class ideal
Anti-Muslim prejudice	Cultural pluralism and ‘getting to know each other’	Dialectical space and delayed integration	Class, social capital and social mobility
Dialectical space-integration through faith	Social political climate and ‘sticking together’		Group solidarity

Analysis of Data

A number of successful approaches have been developed, implemented and reviewed as far as the analysis of discourse is concerned (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984; Fairclough 1992; Van-Dijk 1993; Wood & Kroger 2000; Potter & Wetherell 2010).

In order to analyse the data from these transcripts, techniques utilised by Wood and Kroger (2000) and Potter & Wetherell (2010) were adopted. For Potter & Wetherell (2007), these techniques are based upon a detailed critical assessment and understanding of the transcript. This involves a thorough understanding of the nuances, subtleties, contradictions and complexities associated with the data. This can only happen when the researcher reads and re-reads the transcripts a number of times to develop a comprehensive understanding of the text. This approach to data analysis is also provided by Potter and Wetherell (2010) using a bicycle analogy to convey the rationale behind discourse analysis:

Analysis of discourse is like riding a bicycle...there is no mechanical procedure for producing findings from an archive of transcript...Just as with bike riding, it is not easy to convey the analytical process in abstract. Words fail us at this point, it is not the case of stating, first you do this then you do that. The skills required are developed as one tries to make sense of transcript and identify the organizational features of documents....analysis involves a lot of careful reading and re-reading. Often it is after long hours struggling with the data...that a systematic pattern emerges.

(Potter & Wetherell 2010:168)

Potter & Wetherell (2010) identify two processes used to commence discourse analysis. First, the researcher looks for the systematic pattern that may emerge from the *variability* and *consistency* of data. He/she looks for patterns in the data through assessing the *variability* of data; that is to say, the researcher looks at the ‘differences in either the content or the forms of the accounts’ (ibid.). Then he/she moves on to the ‘identification of features shared by accounts’ (ibid.) The second process involves constructing a detailed hypothesis by assessing the

variability and consistency of the text. Gilbert and Mulkay's (1984) approach to analysis of data, based on the *interpretive repertoire*, was also used to intensify the analysis. For Potter & Wetherell (2010:138), an *interpretive repertoire* is a 'lexicon or register of terms and metaphors drawn upon to characterize and evaluate actions and events'. Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) observed two types of repertoires in their study of scientists working in the UK and the US. They noted how the *empirical* and *contingent repertoires* best explained the discursive framing of the scientists' academic research. The former looks at the logical, chronological presentation of the discourse as presented by the actor, whilst the latter examines the speculative and often personalised experiences presented within the text.

A number of practical tools were also adopted to aid the development of systemic patterns within the data, based upon the works of Wood & Kroger (2000) and Maclure (2003). First, whilst examining and re-examining the text, the idea of *scaffolding* helped build a picture or a profile through assessing the text. *Scaffolding* works by 'simultaneous examination of utterances and their context, with recognition that utterances can be analysed for it and treated as context for others' (Wood & Kroger 2000:96). Second, *agency* of actors and the role they play in constructing their words is also pertinent to assess. This allows researchers to understand how 'talk' reveals actors' autonomy or their dependence on external stimuli. Thirdly, most research methodologies within the qualitative tradition focus on 'what is said by respondents'. *Negative case analysis* allows the researcher to focus on what isn't said, as this allows space to examine 'the data for exceptions' (Wood & Kroger 2000). Finally, Maclure (2003:9) highlights the importance of examining the binary opposites of discursive realities. This is the way in which actors construct social reality based upon 'us and them'. Such binary oppositions are 'is one of the key ways in which meaning and knowledge are produced' (Maclure 2003:10).

Part 3: Research Finding:

Chapter 5: Debating ‘Muslim’ Mono-cultural Schools

5. Introduction

Following the summer riots of 2001, most government reports (Ritchie 2001; Ouseley 2001; Cantle 2001) expressed concerns over ethnic segregation in some of the northern mill town schools in the UK. In addition to these reports a number of demographers also cautioned against the prevalent nature of ethnic segregation within British schools (Johnson *et al.* 2006; Burgess and Wilson 2004). Chapter 2 evaluated how subsequent government policies framed monocultural schools through the prism of terrorism, fundamentalism and segregation (Taylor 2009; Davies 2008). A key conclusion drawn from this discussion was how integrated or mixed schools were considered essential for the functioning of a vibrant democracy, Muslim mono-cultural schools, on the other hand, were seen as potential sources of racial division and social disorder.

The first part of this chapter explores how Muslim pupils make sense of their experiences of mono-cultural state schools, whilst the second part considers the framing of the discourse on Muslim faith schools. This chapter will also examine the complex attitudes with regards to school segregation and integration. It will further demonstrate how pupil discourse is grounded in a contradictory and complex relationship between cohesion and integration, rather than behaviours that can be grouped together based upon set typologies (Sewell 1997; Shain 2003; Erik 2010).

5.1 Mono-cultural Schools as a deficit model

Pupil meta-discourse generally accepted mixed schools as the dominant feature of the urban landscape. Thus, it was not surprising to note that, for the vast majority of respondents living in cities (such as London and Manchester), mixed schools were considered the general norm. It is important to note that they did not interpret mixed schools in terms of a dominant ethnic group; instead, schools were seen to be made up of diverse ethnic groups reflecting each respective borough.

Schools in the northern mill towns which experienced the riots were identified by a number of focus group members as hyper-segregated schools, as most Muslims living outside these towns found it difficult to comprehend schools comprising one dominant ethnic group. This is clear from the following expression by a Somali Muslim from neighbouring Manchester after learning about the mono-cultural schools in Oldham. He finds it difficult to comprehend how, in a diverse society, people can still attend schools that are made up of one ethnic group.

F10: 189: R3: I can't understand how you can have schools in Oldham
190: with mainly Pakistani people, how can that happen? I
191: don't understand, I find that quite strange!
192: R4: WHAT? How can that be?
193: R3: IT'S TRUE, I TELL YOU IT'S TRUE!
194: I can't believe that, how can that happen? In the school
193: that we went to there were all mixed people. I take it,
194: there were few white kids, but it was mixed, we had
195: Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi kids. I find that strange
196: that's all I'm saying.

The reason why the above focus group member viewed the mono-cultural school experience as 'strange' was because he regarded the idea of mixed schools as the norm for most

Muslims in Britain. The focus group members expressing reservations about monocultural schools acknowledged the importance of education in creating and nurturing a crucial space for young people to ‘mix’ and to integrate²³. This form of integration provided social value for the individual and also society as a whole. This discursive framing of school experience can be seen to support Dewey’s (1916) perspective of education as a *social function*, which is based upon the idea that schooling should nurture a contingent experience between social and racial groups. It further supports Levinson’s (2008) account of how schooling can be used for ‘realising the multicultural ideal’.

In light of the pupil discourse on the ‘social function’ of education, mono-cultural schools were seen as a *deficit model*. It was argued that, by attending mono-cultural schools, young people were ‘*losing out on their educational and social experience*’. The deficit model was articulated by using two distinctive repertoires of linguistic and social deficit.

The linguistic deficit was based upon the recognition that Muslim pupils attending monocultural schools develop a spoken repertoire which makes it ‘difficult’ to communicate or socialise with ‘white’ children. The following example cited by a young Pakistani male attending a mixed school in Oldham highlights how a close friend, overseeing him talking to a white friend, found it difficult to comprehend how he ‘could chat to white people’.

²³ A detailed discussion of this idea is presented in the second part of this chapter.

F4: 233: R3: I got mates that go to Breslin School, there's only 3 white guys
 234 in entire school... One day my mate
 235: saw me '*chattin*' to some white guys, they said 'maan how
 236: can you talk to him ... This is the problem too much
 237: segregation.

There are three main themes associated with the above observation. Firstly, Muslim pupils, in some urban cities, tend to communicate using a particular repertoire which juxtaposes language borrowed from the 'hip-hop' subculture of the United States with a 'switching' code which moves with fluidity between English and Urdu or English and Bengali. Secondly, it was argued that '*chattin*' with white people was considered 'uncool' or socially unacceptable. This was largely due to the sub cultural ideas associated with what was considered 'cool' and types of actions that were frowned upon. Finally, it was argued that this particular type of attitude is nurtured through attending mono-cultural schools, as children generally feel comfortable socialising with peers with whom they share the same social space.

The three themes highlighted above are further supported by wider research. For example, Shain (2003), in her research on Asian girls in Greater Manchester, notes how some girls would use their mother tongue in school as a conscious attempt to exclude fellow white students. She also highlighted how the selective use (or switching) of language is used as a mechanism through which the balance of power is maintained (Shain 2003:65). Furthermore, she demonstrated how 'some girls would also use peer pressure as a way of maintaining friendship with their own kind' (Shain 2003:68).

The *social deficit* model with regards to mono-cultural schools was based upon the general agreement that Britain was a diverse multicultural society. Mixed schools within this perspective were seen as a microcosm of contemporary diverse society which was seen to provide students with relevant social skills for multicultural life. Attending mixed schools was

seen to provide relevant knowledge, expertise and training to deal with multiculturalism. This was clearly articulated by the following:

F5: 19: R1: I think you can learn more when you got a diverse
20: people and not just your own kind. This is because
21: if you get used to multiculturalism in school it will be
22: easier for you when you get a job in the future.

It is interesting to note how the above respondent touched upon how attending a mixed school will provide skills that will be of use for future employment opportunities. This highly important theme is apparent throughout the pupil discussion on mono-cultural schooling. The pupils feel that education is not just about getting the correct grades; rather, schooling can provide wider social experience that is crucial for future socio-economic prospects. This particular construct of education further supports the idea that education should be a ‘fostering, nurturing and cultivating process’ (Dewey 1916:9). The importance of attending a mixed school because it provides a space to nurture bonding and bridging forms of social capital²⁴ is further highlighted in the following observation:

F3: 25: R2: I think it’s a good thing because when you go to college
26: you are going to meet different types of people. So if you’re in
27: a school with one race, you’re not going to understanding

²⁴ For Putnam (2000:19), social capital refers to ‘connections among individuals - social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them’. He makes a distinction between bridging and bonding capital. Bonding capital consists of socialisation with people that are ‘like you’ with the same family, religion and culture. Bridging capital occurs through interaction with people of different racial and cultural background. Putnam (2000) argues that the decline in social capital since the 1960’s has undermined a range of traditional, social and civic practices. Ficher (2001:2) is highly critical of Putnam’s thesis by a) ‘casting doubt on some of the empirical claims.’ b) Failure by Putnam to consider new forms of social capital. This has led Fisher (2001:9) to argue that social capital has changed and not declined since the 1960s. c) Ficher (2001:10) sees wider social factors contributing to the decline in social participation, such as work commitment and political scandals, rather than social capital.

- 28: people of different cultural background. So I think it's better if
29: you go to a mixed school.

The notion that attending a mixed school not only provides advantages for the students but also wider society is an important point to note. Attending a mixed school within this context is seen as a civic duty or participating in active citizenship; it was a way in which students felt they could contribute to a society that is multicultural. This is clear from the following:

- F4: R2: 30: I think there are a lot of advantages, basically coming to a mixed
31 school - it's good for society. I think it's a multicultural society and
32: I think we mix a lot, don't we?
33: [YEAH:::]

Whilst the above point is drawn from pupil experience in a mixed school, the following observation by a student attending a monocultural school echoes these sentiments. It demonstrates how pupils attending a monocultural school will find it much harder to adjust to different cultural environments in the future.

- F10: R1: 32: By coming to this school we have definitely lost out by not
33: mixing with people of different backgrounds. At the end of
34: the day when we finish school we are going to find it
35: much harder to interact. We are going to have to mix
36: with people of different backgrounds... We don't know
37: what they are like, it would be difficult.

The above respondent continued to provide examples of types of interaction that she might find difficult during higher education or future employment contexts. It is important to note that the examples that were shared did not include aspects of general communication but rather covered aspects of deeper social experiences revolving around humour and telling of jokes.

F10: R1: 40: Yeah, we don't know how they would respond to certain
 41: statements or jokes, we don't know if they would get our jokes.
 42: Like we might say a joke and we would laugh and we would get
 43: it, but I don't know how they may react. This might lead to us not
 44: opening up because we don't know how they may respond or
 45: react or if they might find something offensive.

A number of schools in which the interviews were conducted were often portrayed in a negative light by the media because of their mono-cultural features. Further research on this topic is required, as little empirical evidence exists on the way in which the public image of a school impacts upon its pupils. The following observation provides an insight into the way in which 'mono-cultural' schools depicted as 'problematic' spaces have an impact on the pupil morale. It demonstrates how the deficit model of a mono-cultural schools involves a process of alienation.

F10: R2: 48: Everyone knows that we go to Westgate School because
 49: every time we go on trips only thing that people can see
 50: is Black face. You know they all STARE AT US because
 51: we're all Asians. The other day we went to the
 52: Manchester BBC building and we got the LOOKS.
 R1: 53 Yeah they all look down on us because we are from a
 54: school with people of the same colour. I'm sure you
 55: won't get that if there were all white people turning up!
 R2: 56: They look down at us, they make us look low. I would say
 57: to myself. What is so different about me? They won't say
 58: it in your face, but you can tell in gestures and the
 59: whispers those that don't like you, you can tell.

The deficit model of mono-cultural schools is also supported by wider research; for example, Ahmed (2009), in her study of Muslim youths, highlighted how pupils expressed concerns about mono-cultural schools in many of the urban areas. Her research echoes Cantle's

(2001) thesis of ‘parallel’ schooling experience in many cities. Thomas’ (2010) study also cited many of the concerns young people expressed about segregation and the importance of creating spaces for young people to interact based upon the principles of social contact.

5.3 Contesting ‘self-segregation’ thesis

(I) State Schools

The popular notion that people attend mono-cultural schools due to ‘self-segregation’ was strongly challenged and contested within the pupil discourse, thus confirming existing sociological studies on segregation (Philips *et al.* 2008; Finney & Simpson 2009). The understanding of segregated schools instead focused on a sympathetic and circumstantial reading associated with social and residential factors. It was argued that residential segregation is the principal factor in ethnic segregation in schools; in other words, children went to local schools that happened to be mono-cultural – there was no parental desire for self-segregation. The idea that mono-cultural schools function because Muslim parents want to isolate themselves from the ‘white’ communities (Tibi 2002; Nazir-Ali 2008; Taylor 2009; Ali 2010) was completely rejected. In fact, young people felt that many parents wanted to send their children to mixed schools but were unable to do so for a number of reasons. Some of the factors that were cited included poverty, large families (making it difficult to pay for bus fares etc.) and a general sense of security at being in one’s own residential area. Some parents (with financial means) were able to send their children to mixed schools in other neighbourhoods; it was argued that this was largely motivated by the chance to achieve good educational opportunities (e.g. higher grades) and a general sense that it would provide better prospects for their children²⁵. This is clear from the following observation by a Bangladeshi female attending a mixed school in Oldham.

F5: 43: R1: You don’t go to a school because there are black people
44: or white people. You go to a school because you might want to
45: avoid bullying or get better grades.

²⁵ The theme of parental choice and school is debated at great length in the next chapter.

There was a general consensus that residential area was a key factor that shaped the type of school that young people attended. The greater the racial mix of the residential area, the more diverse the type of school one attended. There was also an acceptance that attending a mono-cultural school may also bring certain advantages. Perhaps one of the main virtues of attending mono-cultural schools is that pupils will be educated in an environment which is devoid of racism. Moreover, attending schools with ‘your own’ kind was seen to provide a space which nurtured confidence and developed a common bond between people of the same ethnic group. This is clear from the following discussion:

- F4: 75: R2: I’d say that all Asian schools are local and the people that
 76: whispers those that the schools are local Muslim people that would
 77 know each other.
 78: R1: You won’t have any problems attending schools with your own
 79: kind compared to mixed schools. You see when you have all
 80: Muslim you won’t have any problems with racism, its:
 81 when you have to go out and socialise with other people you
 82 going to get trouble.

5.4 Contesting ‘self-segregation’ thesis

(II) Muslim Faith Schools

Muslim faith schools have often been projected as problematic, self-segregated spaces which nurture a culture of difference. In fact, this controversial framing can be traced back prior to the security concerns post-9/11 and 7/7. For example, Grillo (1998) has long associated the idea of Muslim schools with the conscious attempt to create and maintain separate lives.

The Muslim respondents highlighted how, by attending a Muslim faith school, they were able to question and discuss contemporary ideas associated with integration, segregation and

identity. Moreover, it was clear that issues associated with citizenship, integration and community cohesion were extensively discussed during and outside the teaching period. This confirms the way in which discourse within a school context plays an important role in constructing young people's social world (Potter & Wetherell 2010).

The subsequent observation noted below establishes one of the ways in which integration is discussed by students attending Muslim faith schools. It provides a critique of the popular understanding of Muslim faith schools as spaces of 'fixity' or unchanging boundaries of identity construct. Instead, the following discussion confirms wider research on Muslim faith schools as spaces where a British Muslim identity is constructed (Meer 2010) based upon mutual compatibility of faith and national identity (Mogahed & Nyri 2007). The focus group respondents verify how ideas of faith and nationality informed their own self-construct. In light of this, it was not surprising to find the focus group members displaying a very strong sense of British Muslim identity.

- F2: 137: R2: If someone asks us how to define yourself, we say that
138: we are British Muslims.
139: ALL: Yeah we are all British Muslims
140: R3: That is the way it has been installed in us and that's the
141: way we define ourselves. Just because we attend a
142: Muslim faith school this does not make us less British. In
143: the same way that Muslims attending state schools
144: makes them less Muslim.

British Muslim identity was a major theme that was consistent throughout the Muslim faith school focus group. For the Muslim girls, religion was determined by one's spirituality and the way in which one conducts one's affairs within society. Britishness is largely determined by the place of one's birth, the geographical location where one lives and the probity of the

individual. It was argued that these cultural values of Britishness were nurtured through secondary agents of socialization.

To live out a British Muslim identity was also seen as a liberating experience. Many saw the impacts of cultural surroundings playing a crucial role in them becoming ‘true Muslims’. Being a ‘true Muslim’ involves having a pristine identity which recognises the importance of location (Al-Alwani 2003; Abdullah 2004) in shaping ethnicity. It was argued that ‘Pakistani’ or ‘Indian Islam’ is largely mediated through the ethnic markers of the respective countries; thus, inter-marriage between various castes or ethnic groups were largely prohibited or socially frowned upon. A British Muslim identity, the girls argued, has the ability to transcend these cultural markers and allow Muslims to practise their faith. As one of the focus group members noted:

F2: 138: R4: I think it’s generally how you live your life, you can either
139: live it as a <true Muslim> or you can just call yourself a
140: Muslim.

British Islam has the potential for nurturing a ‘true Muslim’ identity: an identity which is interested in the way faith is practised in its ‘truest form’ and not one that is diluted by kinship-based politics. These cultural practices were seen as antithetical to the generic principles of Islam. ‘True Islam’, it was argued, comes as a result of expansion of religious knowledge which transcends the Indian subcontinental frame of reference. An example of this is based upon the idea of valuing freedom of religious practice or the importance of greater individual autonomy in defining the British Muslim experience. This is further articulated below:

F2: 166: R3: I think as younger generation we are freer and we let
167: others be free. You see the older generation have
168: strict ideas, such as Pakistani can’t marry an Indian. It
169: was looked down upon, but now I think things will change

170: with the new generation, we are more accommodating
171: and accepting. I think our parents also realise this, as
172: British Muslims we do things differently.

Greater religious autonomy was seen as an important feature of the British Muslim identity; this was manifested by the way in which marriage was debated. Marriage was framed within a broader Islamic framework; the fact that Islam puts no prohibition on people taking marriage partners of different nationalities or ethnicities was seen as an empowering force. The above example [F2] acknowledges the shift in the conceptualisation of marriage between the first and second generation of Muslim communities.

The above discussion shows how the Muslim girls viewed themselves as autonomous agents of change, with an active independent voice or, in the words of the above respondent, ‘as British Muslims we do things differently’. This idea is further supported by the following:

F2: 111: R4: You don’t have to follow the world; you just need to be yourself
 112: and not how the world wants you to be.

The Muslim girls felt that their faith school experience ‘installed’ a positive self-image, which in turn nurtured a British Muslim identity. They argued that this was vital, especially because it was seen to provide an ideal springboard to wider society. The discourse on integration revealed an open attitude to wider society, whereby secular space was not seen to be in conflict with the teachings of Islam; rather, it was a space where Muslims can negotiate and also make positive contributions. The overall narrative showed how attending a Muslim faith school was a means to an end, a transitional sojourn; once completed it would provide relevant and necessary skills for the future. Furthermore, it was felt that faith school education instilled discipline, good manners and strong ethics, all vital components for good citizens. This is

articulated in the subsequent observation, which rejects the popular notion that attending Muslim faith school can be a barrier to future integration, whilst confirming the ideas of ‘delayed integration’ as discussed in the works of Meer (2007) and McLaughlin (1992).

F2: 101: R2: I don’t think it’s going to be an issue going to college, university
102: or even work. I think coming to this school has given us a lot
103: emotionally, morally and ethically. It has taught us not only to be
104: good Muslims but also to be good <human beings and good
105: citizens>. Also, it has taught us the importance of interacting
106: with other people but also how to interact with wider society. I
107: think it has been beneficial coming to a faith school as this one,
108: as it really prepares you for the big wide world.

Integration was framed as a positive act and a naturally occurring process; however, reservations were voiced at attempts to politicise the idea of integration as a way of undermining religious identity. There was a general criticism that, whilst social and cultural change was a normative experience within the Muslim community, particularly amongst young people, it was felt that there was little or no recognition of this within public discourse. One of the reasons for this was the fact that some political actors wanted to use the idea of integration for political gain by wanting Muslims to lose their religious identity and embrace a secular world-view; under such circumstances it was argued that this form of integration should be resisted. This is clear from the following:

F2: 111: R3: MUSLIMS DO INTEGRATE, but what do they want us to do,
112: do they want us to do un-Islamic activities? We can’t do that,
113: as she says, we have to develop a barrier of resistance.
114: There are things that we can or want to do and there are
115: things which we don’t want to do. You can’t force people; we
116: don’t go around telling other people what to do and not to do.
117: We just let people be, even though we may disagree with it.

The above observation demonstrates how Muslim girls are involved in discursive negotiation between preserving core religious identity and interacting with wider secular space. The above also confirms Modood's (2007, 2010) works on the centrality and importance of religion in people's lives. It further reinforces the point that 'all minorities recognise that some give and take is needed if they are to live successfully in a multicultural society' (Halstead 2008:323).

5.5 Conclusion

Mono-cultural schools are often portrayed within public policy (Philips 2005; Cantle 2008) and popular discourse (Carey 2008; Nazir-Ali 2008) as problematic spaces, which could not only lead to social disorder (Ouseley 2001; Ritchie 2001; Cantle 2001), but also in extreme cases, lead to violent extremism (Davies 2008). Mono-cultural schools were not only characterised by independent / grant maintained Muslim faith schools, but also certain state schools with over ninety-percent Muslim cohort.

This chapter elucidated how mono-cultural school were framed within Muslim discourse by Muslim pupils. The overall summary of this chapter sees pupil discourses questioning the popular ‘integrated and segregated’ school dichotomy. This chapter looked at how Muslim pupils view ‘mono-cultural’ school experience through three interconnected schemata. First, a generic account of mono-cultural schooling revealed a deficit model of education. It was generally argued that attending mono-cultural state schools had a negative impact on the educational and future career experiences of Muslim pupils. It showed how mono-cultural [state] schools failed to provide students with relevant social capital to develop and sustain professional career prospects. Muslim pupils also highlighted concerns over segregation and recognised the importance of shared spaces for interaction and social contact. Second, whilst acknowledging the problems associated with mono-cultural schools, pupil discourses challenged the idea of self-segregation. Instead, a more nuanced account of mono-cultural schooling was presented based upon various socio-economic readings. Ethnically segregated schools and neighbourhoods were seen to be determined by social class. Pupils attended mono-cultural school due to parental financial circumstances and not because of the desire amongst parents to live a parallel existence. Third, Muslim faith schools were debated through a complex account of schooling. Muslim faith

schools were not considered as problematic spaces for integration, secularism and citizenship, instead they were portrayed as changing cultural spaces which nurtured a British Muslim identity based upon mutual compatibility of faith and national identity (Meer 2007). Muslim pupils rejected the idea that some mono-cultural schools could lead to social disorder. Instead they recognised that certain mono-cultural schools could facilitate the process of integration by providing a dialectical space to debate religion, identity and citizenship. Furthermore, they recognised how in a hostile environment created by the War on Terror (Kundanani 2007), mono-cultural ethnic schools could act as a protective buffer against anti-Muslim racism.

Chapter 6: Deconstructing Binary Opposites of Ethnically Mixed Schools

6.0 Introduction

Chapter 2 explored how one of the aims of creating mixed schools in areas with high concentrations of Muslim pupils was to tackle urban disorder, global terrorism and Muslim fundamentalism (Davies 2008; DCSF 2008).

This chapter examines how Muslim pupils make sense of their experiences in mixed schools. The first part considers how mixed schools are characterised by positive experiences which nurture cultural and social capital. It shows how pupils view integration as a form of commodity which can be used as an exchange value during the transition from childhood to adulthood. The second part highlights a contradictory and antithetical reading of mixed schools as nurturing a sense of segregation by ‘pushing’ pupils to ‘stick together’.

Pupil discourses highlighted within this chapter expand upon the general theme developed in chapter 2 of deconstructing the binary opposites of mixed schools as positive spaces of hope and ‘mono-cultural’ schools as recipes for social disorder.

6.1 Mixed School Imperative: ‘You know it’s all about mixing’

Social contact theory is seen by many as ‘a cornerstone of community cohesion practice’ (Cantle 2008:116). Contact theory is highly influential within local government thinking; as already noted, it is based upon the idea that repeated cross-cultural and intergroup contact is a determining factor in understanding the levels of prejudice against different ethnic groups. Whilst there is ample evidence to support the social contact theory (Wagner *et al* 2006; Hewstone 2007 *et al.*; Cantle 2008; Thomas 2010), it is broadly agreed amongst contact theorists that declining levels of prejudice towards different ethnic groups is predicated on a range of issues such as duration of contact, voluntary or non-voluntary nature of contact, nature of group perception and size of the ethnic population (Allport 1979; Hewstone & Brown 1986). The notion of size of population determining the levels of prejudice has been of particular interest amongst researchers; for example Halstead (1988) shows how a limit of 33% was used by the government to bus Muslim pupils to mainly white schools during the 1960s. More recently, Forman (2003), using evidence from a nationwide sample of Black students in the United States, found that high levels of prejudice were experienced in schools if the Black population went above 35% (cited in Hewstone 2007:103).

The social contact thesis was used by Muslim students in this research as a meta-narrative to construct their understanding of mixed-school experiences. For many, the function of integration was the act of ‘mixing’ between people of different ethnic backgrounds. The students saw ‘mixing’ as, above all, a reciprocal process. This idea of integration is also conceptualized by a number of Muslim writers; for example, Sardar (2009:19) views integration as a ‘mutual process of being accepted and accepting’. He and other Muslim writers (Modood 2007) have recognised that the imperative to *mix* was a civic duty for all and not a burden for one particular

community or group. Nevertheless, there was a general acknowledgement that it was in the best interest of minority groups or, in this particular case, Muslims, to integrate.

Mixed schools were seen as providing both individual and collective advantages. It was argued that those who attended a mono-cultural school were depriving themselves of these advantages. The discourse of mixed-school imperative focused on three fundamental themes. Firstly, mixed schools allowed people to get to know one another. Secondly, mixed schools were seen as a microcosm of wider multicultural society; for most pupils, schooling was a key medium through which integration was achieved and actualised. Finally, the discourse of mixing helped shape pupils' understanding of a diverse multicultural society.

Cultural difference and religious identity were considered to be very important for all pupils, and mixed schools provided a space for these cultural identities to be debated and negotiated. It is within the context of schooling in general and the classroom environment in particular that a safe space for 'mixing' between people of different cultural backgrounds was provided. Furthermore, these spaces were organic and neutral, and evolved due to students' keen interest in recognising one another's cultural differences (Taylor 1994). These settings were not 'organised' or managed by the school; instead, they were evolving contexts in which students took a keen interest in 'getting to know one another'. This is demonstrated by the following discussion:

- T1: 61. SM: What do you mean by 'mixing'?
- 62: R5: You know just socialising and integrating
- 63: SM: In what context?
- 65: R5: In school and in class, like in this college and this
- 66: class there are a lot of mixing we all like to mix and
- 67: interact. We do this not because teachers tell us, but
- 68: because we are interested in finding out about different cultures.

Integration was predicated upon ‘mixing’ or socialising with people. Mixing, as noted by T1, was seen to occur naturally without teacher involvement or intervention. Mixing occurred voluntarily and spontaneously; more importantly, it was driven by pupils’ willingness to know. The idea of ‘mixing’ was also considered an empowering experience as it provided a platform for cultural exchange and debate. This is clear from the following interaction between students in a mixed comprehensive school in Manchester.

- F6: 4: R1: I think it’s a great idea; you get to know and understand
5: and find out about different people and their backgrounds.
6: R2: I think I agree with that, you get to know and find out
7: about people of different cultural backgrounds and
8: R1: [It helps you to understand different people]
9: R3: Also it helps
10: you to find out what they believe and what they don’t
11: believe. They can find out about us about Muslims and
12: what we believe.
13: S: Can you give me an **example** of something that you have
14: learnt?
15: R1: I found out about Lent, my friend is a Christian and by
16: coming to this school and hanging about with my friend
17: it helped me to know other people.

The above observation of schools as public spaces confirms and extends Modood’s (2010) idea of ‘politics of difference’. As Modood (2010) notes, religious identity, like other forms of identity, ‘should not be privatised and tolerated but should be part of the public space’ (Modood 2010:42). The above example together with data produced below demonstrates how Muslim pupils view public space as neutral places where aspects of identity and religion can be debated freely.

Whilst the above construct of mixing [F6] provides an opportunity to participate in the ‘politics of difference’, the observation cited below shows how this process allows students to know about one another’s cultural differences.

T8: 74: R2: If you walk around the school playground
75: <yeah> you will find that people of all cultures mix
76: together. As Muslims we accept that all people are different
77: from different religious and races abilities and disabilities.
78: People speak different languages and eat different foods. So as
79:: Muslims we have to recognise these differences. In fact, I think
80: there is a verse in the Quran about this. We bring these
81: differences to school, we talk about it in the playground and
82: lunchtime. You know sometimes we agree and other time we
83: don’t.

The above observation (F6 and T8) provides an interesting account of pupils participating in the ‘politics of difference’. What is interesting to note is that this happens in the school setting; more importantly, it recognises that students embody a discourse of cultural difference. Whilst it was common for pupils to provide religious examples of debates between students, such as the role of Jesus, the following accounts demonstrate how wider issues, including dietary needs and even aspects of sexuality, were discussed and debated:

F9: 67: R2: We learn about many issues by talking to people of
68: different cultural backgrounds. Religion is one issue. But there
69: are many other examples, obviously when you go to the canteen
70: that sparks many conversations about food, you know some
71: people are veggies and other Hindu people won’t touch meat.
72: There are also some teachers who are you know...gay. And
73: some kids are also like that. Some people take the piss, but
74: we chat sometimes people accept that they are like that and
75: that’s what they do, so safe. You know society is like that,
76: people have to recognise that the society is different.

The process of mixing occurred because pupils had a genuine desire to find out about the cultural difference of their cohorts. Mixing was seen as an active process shaped by a multicultural template of integration, which provided an opportunity for pupils to participate in multiculturalism. This is highlighted by the following comments by the two respondents' who were passionate arguments:

F1: 58. R5: It's part of multicultural Britain <isn't it> how are you
59: going to be <multicultural> if you do not mix.

and;

F4: 31: R2: I think there are a lot of advantages (.) basically
33: to a mixed school it's best for society (.) it's a
34: multicultural society and I think we mix a lot, don't we?
35: [YEH:::::]

Mixing was achieved within a discursive framework; it was only through the act of speech and exchange of cultural references that the objectives of mixing were achieved. It is through the act of discourse that young people constructed their experiences, challenged their own prejudices and, above all, constructed their own versions of social reality. The importance of speech in the act of integration is best exemplified by the following:

F1: 92: R2: You have to talk to people to get to know them,
93: otherwise you end up making things up; you have to
94: integrate before you can get to know each other.

Mixed schools provided a space for students of different cultural and religious backgrounds ‘to know each other’²⁶. The following responses taken from two separate focus groups best exemplify this point. The first example is taken from a focus group in Oldham and the second is from South Manchester; both of them provide an insight into how mixed schools are framed. Moreover, they show how schools are perceived as active spaces, which allow pupils to understand cultural difference.

- | | | | |
|----|------|-----|---|
| F3 | 121: | R7: | You see if you go to a mixed school you get |
| | 122: | | to see other people and you get to know other people. |
| F6 | 4: | R1: | I think it’s a great idea, you get to know and |
| | 5: | | understand about different people and their cultural |
| | 6: | | backgrounds. The real world is made up of people of |
| | 7: | | different backgrounds and this helps you to prepare for |
| | 8: | | that |
| | 9: | R2: | I agree with that you get to know and find out about |
| | 10: | | people of different backgrounds. |

An additional feature of mixed-school discourse was based upon the idea that meaningful and detailed interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims could lead towards greater trust and stronger bonds. It was argued that social contact could help reduce racial prejudice between the Muslim community and the wider public. This is clear from the following observation on the role of mixed schools.

²⁶ The idea of ‘getting to know each other’ is taken from the following Quranic verse: ‘O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted’ (Quran: 49:13). Given the fact that students did not make any reference to the Quran demonstrates the ways in which they may have subconsciously picked this up from the mosque or the wider community.

F5: 22: R2: It helps break down prejudice [from both sides].

Given the history of racial conflict and tension in some of the areas where the focus groups took place, it was strongly argued that one of the many ways of combating antagonism and animosity is through greater social contact. This is clear from the following:

F1: 52: R4: There are different people fighting, which can be a
53: negative factor, I think when different people get to know each
54: other, they will stop fighting and get on with each other.

The above Quranic principle of ‘getting to know each other’ to reduce racial conflict can provide wider discursive support for Cantle’s (2008) idea of social contact reducing racial prejudice. Furthermore, it supports the following observation:

Islam has a highly developed sense of social or ethical citizenship in which, in line with contemporary Western communitarian thinking, duties as well as rights are emphasized.

(Modood 2007:143)

6.2 Doing Integration: Integration as performance

This section demonstrates a strong narrative of Muslims mixing with people of different cultural backgrounds. The act of integration for many Muslims was seen to be important, as was the need to be *seen* to be integrating. This idea of integration as performance was central to the discursive function; this is clear from the following observations.

The focus group interviews cited below confirm that young Muslims ‘do’ mix with non-Muslims; this can be observed in schools and also within wider society. An additional feature as highlighted below is the constant comparison with ‘other communities’ to demonstrate the extent and speed of Muslim integration.

- F1: 122: R6: Muslims do integrate...[for example] in school and also,
 123: in town, you see shop with different Asian people working or
 124: generally mixing.
 130: R2: You also see in your own community, there are people of
 131: different backgrounds and you just get on with your
 132: neighbour its one of those things.
- F1: 161: R5: it's like Amir Khan, he uses the flag and says he's British
 162: Muslim and he is fighting for Britain. We are integrating
 163: more so than other communities. You see Muslim
 164: community is a new community and within short amount
 165: of time I think we have come a long way compared to
 166: say the Jewish or other communities.

The example cited below touches upon the crucial idea of integration as performance by drawing upon changing cultural patterns of eating from fast-food outlets. The observation also confirms that the idea of integration is a conscious act that can be used to silence some of the critics of Islam.

- F6: 7: R3: In Oldham there is so many chicken and chips place, you turn
 8: every corner and you see Chunky chicken etc. What I find
 9: interesting is when KFC started to go Halal all
 10: Muslim flocked there - why? When you have all these places
 11: Muslims still go to KFC. It's because Muslims want to be
 12: seen to be integrating. I think
 13: people do this to show Muslim haters... look we do integrate!

6.3 'This is a mixed school'

This section examines how students understand their own [mixed] schools by comparing them with neighbouring mono-cultural schools in the borough. One of the many ways pupils do this is through a racialized binary discourse: schools with a significant White or Asian cohort are viewed as 'all White' or 'all Asian schools'. Schools with a mainly diverse cohort without one dominant ethnic group are characterised as mixed schools.

The racial dynamics of schools within the borough are central to young pupils; from an early age they develop a detailed knowledge of all the borough's segregated or mixed schools. They were able to provide concrete examples of most schools in their borough which were racially segregated. It appeared that there was a consensus on segregated and mixed schools; moreover, there was an acknowledgement by Muslim students that mixed schools provided a more complete and well-rounded education than the segregated ones. The schools were suitable not because of the educational achievement they offered but because of the quality of experience they provided. This is clear from the following two examples; the first is taken from a focus group in Oldham, whilst the second is taken from a school in East London:

- F5: 14: S: How would you describe this school?
15: R1: I think it's a 'mixed' school
- F8: 1: S: How would you describe this school? I think this will be a mixed
2: R1: school (.) very very mixed
3: R2: Yeah::: a mixed school
4: R1: You have many people from different cultural backgrounds (.)
5: Black, Asians, English and Europeans and yeah::: mixed race.
6: It's a good idea for people of different religion and culture to
7: learn together. I think it makes people better.
8: S: What do you mean 'makes people better'?
9: R1: You know, better person, more tolerant person.

All the focus group respondents were able to provide concrete examples of segregated schools. It is worth pointing out that the schools they described as segregated were not schools that were widely debated in the public domain. It seems that the pupils were reversing the popular discourse of mono-cultural ‘Muslim’ schools with mono-cultural [White] schools. This is clear from the following example:

- F3: 12: S: Can you give me any examples of schools which are
13: R1: segregated? Mounthill, Railsworth
14: R2: [Railsworth]
15: S: They are segregated by?
16 R2: [<Whites>]

The above example demonstrates how schools are defined in racial terms. In the above example, Muslim pupils chose to describe monocultural White schools as segregated; this is contrary to the way segregated schools are framed by the national media. The schools that tend to receive much of the attention in Oldham are those in which Muslims account for over 90% of the students, such as Greevsville, Prozehill and Masenmor. The above observation provides a good example of the way in which the popular public discourse of segregation is reversed.

As noted in the above observation [F3], schools that generated a significant amount of public and policy attention because of their mono-cultural composition did not feature in the immediate discourse. Rather, mono-cultural White schools located in predominantly White neighbourhoods, such as Mounthill and Railsworth, were cited. This further shows how the pupil discourse rejects the public debate on segregation as simply focusing on state mono-cultural ‘Muslim’ schools.

The Muslim pupils adopted a binary framing of mixed or segregated schools. It is worth noticing that the choice of expression used to describe the educational experience did not reflect the language of ‘cohesion’, in other words, no references were made to schools which were ‘integrated’ or ‘cohesive’ as reflected within the public discourse of Oldham. Instead they had their own language to describe the nature of the schools.

Mixed compulsory educational institutions were described in either visual and numerical terms, and most focus group respondents had a clear picture of the diverse range encompassing their own school and the surrounding schools. Mixed schools were viewed as an ideal educational setting by most Muslim pupils; this was because they were able to provide students with the relevant and necessary skills required for a rounded education. This point is further articulated by a year-10 girl from Oldham:

- F4: 110: R1:It’s better if you come to a mixed school (.) because (.)
111: there are many benefits. There are narrow-minded people
112: <I’m not saying this because they are white> I’m saying this because
113: Asians can be narrow-minded. You can think people are so strange
114: because they are from different cultural backgrounds. If they
115: didn’t attend a mixed school they would not have had that
116: opportunity to find out that they are OK.
117: There are good and bad people in all cultures.

The above point highlights the way in which mixed schools are discussed. It shows how mixed schools are seen as providing a discursive space in which prejudices and stereotypes can be challenged.

6.4 *'Sticking together'*: Constructing 'ummahtic' space in school

The preceding section highlighted a variety of ways in which Muslim pupils welcomed the opportunity to 'mix'. It was argued that the idea of mixing provided valuable ways in which social and cultural capital is framed; it also facilitated different ways in which Muslims view citizenship and participation in a multicultural society.

Evidence provided in this section demonstrates how the idea of mixing does not constitute a normative experience for Muslim pupils. This section highlights the importance of Muslim group solidarity (Ibn Khaldun 1958) for young people in the context of the school experience. Pupil discourse in this section demonstrates how experiences and perceptions of racism, combined with the deeply politicised context of Islam within contemporary society, can contribute to a sense of solidarity, ethnic clustering and overall sense of ambivalence within mixed schools. Pupil narratives presented in this section reinforce wider empirical evidence that supports the idea that racism and the global war on terror are shaping Muslim school experiences (Crozier & Davies 2008).

Muslim students in mixed schools talked of developing a range of complex and creative ways to respond to dominant hegemonic Whiteness (Gilborn 2008) by defining and redefining rules of engagement. Hegemonic Whiteness sees schools as possible hostile spaces for Muslim students, spaces which were defined, firstly, by the numerical dominance of White students in a given school. Secondly, there is an understanding that a school where White pupils are in the majority could lead to the privileging of White students over non-Whites. Thirdly, these notions of hostility are often predicated upon personal experiences of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice, based upon the personal (for example, hostility towards the hijab) together with the institutional (such as policies, school ethos) responses to cultural difference. Finally, the role played by

international events, such as the war on terror, must be considered (Imtiaz 2010; Brittain 2008; Allen 2010).

One of the main strategies discussed by Muslim pupils to challenge hegemonic Whiteness in schools was the idea of *'sticking-together'*: *'sticking-together'* functions when a group of students of similar religion consciously cluster together within, as a way of generating support and strength, in the face of a perceived or actual hostile school environment. An important theme emerging from the discourse of *'sticking-together'* is that it transcends markers of ethnic difference and unites young people on the basis of a religious identity. For example, statements such as *'we all Muslims need to stick together'* or *'we have to look out for each other'* provide young people with a way of achieving 'safety in numbers'.

Perhaps the most important features of *'sticking-together'* is that it *'just happens'*; it is akin to a subconsciously conditioned response to perceived hostile environments. Ethnic clustering is not rule-governed; rather, it is an organic process in which people of a particular faith or ethnic background wilfully navigate towards one another, based upon shared cultural traits. There is no malicious intent behind the idea of *'sticking-together'*; in fact, as indicated in the previous chapter, pupils often socialise and 'mix' with people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. This point is made with great passion by one focus group member in a mainly mixed school in Oldham.

F3: 138: R1: It's not like oh she's Bengali and I'm going to hang
139: around with them, it just happens, that we are both
140: Bengalis. If there was a new kid in class and they were
141: English, white or whatever, it won't be that I don't
142: want to hang about with them.

As most young people ‘socialise’ with others based upon shared cultural experience, it came as no surprise to find that this was a key foundation on which ‘*sticking-together*’ was actualised. The key factors that shaped the idea of ‘commonality’ or shared identity were largely defined in cultural and religious terms. Within a mixed school context, ethnic and religious cultures were seen to play an active role in pupils’ understanding of social reality. Thus, diet, religion, language, music and family all played an important role in developing a sense of shared identity. A complex and elaborate explanation was offered to explain the governing principles of ‘*sticking-together*’. For example, the following observation from a mixed school in Manchester highlighted how social forms of discourses, which manifest themselves in the form of humour, constitute an important ‘connective’ in ‘*sticking-together*’. Jokes have often been seen as short stories with an intent to make a person laugh or to demonstrate a sense of irony. Jokes within the focus group interviews were seen to have a discursive feature which requires a cultural decoding framework. This is because most often the jokes are told in a bi-lingual medium; thus, to really appreciate the humour, access to both languages and cultural schemata is crucial. This is further articulated as follows:

F4:	20:	R2:	I mean::: I mean::: (.) it’s different few people are
	21:		mixing now but, I think it’s different if you hang about with
22:			your own kind.
23:	R1:		[IT’S DIFFERENT]
24:	R2:		[IT’S DIFFERENT]
25:	R1:		Our jokes and their jokes are different.
26:	R2:		Yeah:: its different that’s why it allows you all to get along
27:			and connect in a better way.

The above observation touched upon an important feature of the discursive characterisation of ‘*sticking-together*’. This point was further elaborated by a female focus group in a mixed school in Greater Manchester; the summary of their discussion is provided

below. The debate explains how cultural events, such as the religious festivals of Eid and Ramadan, play an important role in forming social bonds. Pupils generally discuss key highlights of their evening or weekends with their friends at school. The fact that most Muslim students share a similar cultural experience of community is seen to further cultivate a common or shared experience. Focus group members often mentioned how the following questions after a festival season might underpin the topic of conversation: ‘What did you do on Eid? What clothes did you buy and where did you buy them from? Isn’t it hard fasting in school? These questions demonstrate some of the discussion points that governed the marking of memorable religious festivals, together with the creation of cultural ties within specific groups. These intimate and highly meaningful discussion points also play an important role in nurturing the idea of ‘*sticking-together*’.

F7:	63:	R4:	Like when it’s Ramadan all the white people will go
	64:		to the canteen during lunch and all the Muslims
	65:		will go out, so that’s a common thing that helps
	66:		them to come together.

The discursive links between home and school combined with the way leisure time is spent act as important anchor points for conversation. The different world-views of Muslim and non-Muslim students within the context of leisure time play a crucial point in defining young people’s shared experiences. The following observation provides an indication of the differing ways in which personalised time is perceived. The example demonstrates how the personal time of White students is perceived as culturally different from most Muslim pupils. This cultural construct of leisure time also facilitates the ways in which Muslim pupils see the notion of ‘shared values’ as competing and differing value structures (Halstead 2008).

F4: 131: R2: It just happens, if we start chatting, we chat
 132: about the same things in common. Some of the
 133: things we chat about is what links us all together
 134: really. Stuff that goes on at home or what we do
 135: outside school. The white kids like talking about
 137: drinking and partying and getting pissed.

Whilst the above comments demonstrate how social and cultural traits can nurture a sense of loyalty based on religious group solidarity, the following observation taken from the same focus group further highlights the importance of shared experience through the discursive framing of ‘commonality’. The idea of ‘commonality’ is based upon the premise that in order to be accepted by the ‘White’ community you have to be ‘like them’. In other words, Muslims have to lose their cultural traits prior to being accepted by their fellow pupils.

F4: 215: R2: You will never get full integration, never never, there is
 216: always going to be a barrier of your skin colour. To them
 217: you will always be a **PAKI**. Nah you can be Bangladeshi,
 218: Pakistani or even an Indian, to them though you are a
 219: **PAKI**.

Given the point that people with ‘brown skin’ are lumped together as one, as seen in the above observation, it is not surprising to note that ‘*sticking-together*’ can also include people of similar ethnic backgrounds, such as Indians (Hindus or Sikhs). Although, most of the time, ‘*sticking-together*’ was referred to as a religious phenomenon, it is interesting to note how ‘*sticking-together*’ can sometimes include non-Muslims. This is exemplified by the following:

F4: 221: R2: There are lot of Hindus that stick with us, for example
 222: there is Chundi, he always sticks with us. So it’s not
 223: always a religious thing. This may be because the white
 224: kids don’t know the difference between Muslims and
 225: Hindus; they just look at the skin colour and
 226: think we’re all Pakis.

Those who are not part of this ‘social bond’ or who choose not to stick with Muslims are often viewed with hostility and a sense of betrayal. Remarks such as “they are sold out” or “he used to be safe, now he isn’t” were often used to describe Muslims who, despite the animosity, continued to associate with White youngsters. This is explained by the following statement which touches upon a crucial point that has already been mentioned above: namely, non-White people who socialise with White pupils are associated with losing their cultural identity. This is confirmed by the following observation which uses the example of music to demonstrate this point further:

F4: 224: R2: NAH::: there’s only Nimo, he used to be safe yeah, but
 225: now he hangs around ‘with them’. He’s sold out...he
 226: listens to rock music, you can tell he doesn’t like it,
 227: he doesn’t even fit in there; he does it to try and fit in...
 228: His mates have had a [bad] influence on him.

Given that the students use their personalised time to ‘*stick-together*’, the above point demonstrates the organic and spontaneous nature of group solidarity. ‘*Sticking-together*’ reaches its peak during certain times of the school day; these times are usually personalised times, such as during break and lunchtimes. This is made clear by the following point:

F6 61: R4: I think during break or lunch people tend to stick together,
 62: but in class, I think people generally tend to mix together.

If the schools are located in a predominantly White neighbourhood then ‘*sticking-together*’ may be exemplified by the perceived essential practice among up to a dozen pupils, travelling to and from the school. When ‘*sticking-together*’ occurs within schools during break and lunchtimes, the numbers can be much smaller - perhaps half a dozen. One of the many reasons for this is based on the way in which Muslim pupils perceive certain geographical spaces

as hostile; these may be neighbourhoods with large concentrations of White people or schools located in mainly White residential areas. The fact that ‘*sticking-together*’ confers confidence and group security is further demonstrated by the following statement by a year-10 boy. The statement further highlights the circumstances in which he will challenge racism, which are usually determined by the people around him.

F3: 93: R3: If I am on my own then I won’t challenge it
 94: [racism], but if I’m in a group then I definitely will. This is
 95: because I know I have my ‘back covered’.

The above point is further reinforced by a year-10 boy from a different school, who goes on to highlight how ‘*sticking-together*’ is commonly accepted by teachers and also by White fellow pupils; he concludes by mentioning how ‘*sticking-together*’ is used as a reciprocal support mechanism.

F4: 120: R3: Everyone knows < EVERYONE KNOWS> we all
 121: stick together.
 122: R1: They know that if they are going to gang up on
 123: one, then all your boyz have you backed
 124: R3: You won’t have a problem
 125: R1: That’s how it works, we have to look after each
 126: other’s back.

There are particular spaces within the school that were ‘marked’ by ethnic clustering; students demonstrated how specific spaces within mixed schools were racialised. There were certain areas within the canteen or the playground where Muslim pupils would play, and there are other places where White kids will ‘hang about’. These spaces were seen not as territories or fixed spaces that erupted in tension or violence but as spaces that organically developed over the

duration of schooling, and which tended to be determined by sports activities or other related pastimes and hobbies.

Teachers have attempted to break down ‘ethnic clustering’ through mixed seating, group work and various sports activities, only to find that, in the absence of such factors, ‘*sticking-together*’ continues as a normalising presence. As noted above, ‘*sticking-together*’ can function based upon territorialised spaces within school. Moreover, this seems to be a dominant idea which most, if not all, people recognise exists’ thus, it comes as no surprise to find that teachers actively intervene during core lessons to break down the idea of ‘*sticking-together*’. There were two main approaches by teachers that were highlighted within the focus groups: firstly, teachers would implement a standard policy within class, mixing pupils up; this would be done either by a policy of ‘boy girl, boy girl’, or through alphabetical ordering of names on the register. The second approach would involve a teacher identifying instances of ethnic clustering and directly intervening. Teacher interventions challenging the idea of ‘*sticking-together*’ were routinely administered against Muslim pupils (and not White students). In these circumstances it is important to note that pupils did not challenge the teacher’s involvement in trying to mix the pupils. This is demonstrated by two examples cited below. The first example is taken from a sports lesson and the second during a school field trip. These examples are taken from two different schools.

F4: 147: R2: It’s like in PE when the teacher (.) because we have two
148: trampolines and all the Asian girls will go on one and all
149: the white girls will go on the other. When this happens
150: and it usually does happen the teacher will say “come
151: on girls. “Why don’t you mix together?”

F3: 244: R3: We went on a trip once and we just happen to go with our
245: mates and the white lads would also go wither their
256: mates. But the teacher came to us and told us to “go and

257: mix with them”. Why didn’t he go up to the white
257: lads and tell them to come and mix with us?

The above examples demonstrate how ‘*sticking-together*’ acts as a normalising presence in a school context. This is confirmed through a collective discourse on schooling and is also based on the examples cited above by the students. This is exemplified by the need for teachers to actively challenge the idea of ethnic or religious clustering of pupils. Moreover, it is generally accepted that, in the absence of external forces such as intervention through classroom structures and streaming students based upon ability groups, ‘*sticking-together*’ continues as a normalising presence.

6.5 Racism and Schooling- ‘At the end of the day you’re still a Paki’

The discourse of ‘*sticking-together*’ is based upon experiences of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice within the school environment. International events and the rhetoric of the ‘war on terror’ have also nurtured a sense of hostility displayed by non-Muslim pupils and teaching staff towards Muslim pupils. These experiences have played a vital role in reinforcing Muslim group solidarity based primarily on religion. In order to support these observations, concrete examples from pupils’ experience and general hostility towards Muslims in the UK were cited. The following examples taken from a mixed school in Oldham provide supporting evidence of anti-Muslim prejudice within an educational context.

- F4: 181: R2: Recently with all that’s been happening in Afghanistan, and
182: stuff with CCF [Combined Cadet Forces based in school].
183: people go there and they get told stories about all these
184: [Muslim] Taliban’s killing ‘all our’ British soldiers, that’s
185: having an impact. People turn against us.
186: S: I take it you’re not members of the CCF?
187: R2: Me and <him> joined it
188: R1: [We joined]
189: R2: There were racism (.) <TOO MUCH> racism that’s why
190: we left.

The above example is particularly revealing as it demonstrates concrete examples of the ways in which ‘the war of terror’ has created hostility and feelings of isolation within schools. This feeling of isolation created by wider political events following 9/11 and 7/7 was also confirmed by the Crozier & Davies (2008) study of Muslim students. Furthermore, the example used by the above focus group [F4] elucidates the crucial question of acceptance of Muslims within wider society in general and the schooling context in particular, and was further endorsed by the following:

F4: 154: R2: At the end of the day it's your ethnic group which matters
 155: end of the day the English people will not accept you as
 156: British at the end of the day that guy will say (.) <THAT
 157: GUY's A PAKI> so we might just stick with that.

Strong examples of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice were not confined to just one local authority; accounts of racism perpetrated by members of staff were also a strong feature in focus group in Eccles, Manchester. An observation by a Yemeni Muslim boy demonstrates this point further:

F8: 126: R4: One day a teacher got hold of my tie and called
 127: me a <scruffy Arab>
 128: S: How did that make you feel?
 129: R4: I don't mind if they call me, but the teachers they should
 130: know better.

Whilst the above citation of hostile treatment by members of staff against Muslim pupils is apparent, other experiences also confirmed differential treatment of Muslim and non-Muslim pupils by teachers. This is confirmed by the collective discourse of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice by Muslim pupils within schools:

F8: 131: R3: One day <yeh> there was a white kid that called
 132: me a <dick head> and I called him fat (.), the teacher
 133: yeah heard this, and can you believe it, he gave me half
 134: hour det. [detention] <GIVE ME HALFHOUR DET>
 135: R2: [That's racist]

F4: 58: R2: YOU KNOW that the teachers don't do anything, they say
 59: that you are pulling the <RACE CARD> that's what they
 60: say, I think that's completely wrong. The other day we
 61: had our Frisbee taken away, it was these (.) white
 62: girls that said 'oh sir' that's our Frisbee to a teacher and
 63: he took it from us, without asking us, and gave it to them.
 64: Do you not think there is a hint of racism?

The above observations of racism are also supported by academic studies. For example, Crozier & Davies' (2008) study on Muslim educational experiences of schooling highlighted how the question of safety was paramount for Muslim parents and pupils. Their study also made 'clear that racist abuse is a lived experience for some on a daily basis, but for all as a feature of their schooling' (Crozier & Davies 2008: 295).

6.6 'Safety in numbers'

Pupil testimonies of schooling confirmed how Muslim pupils do not consider themselves as individuals but as a collective group. This collective body or 'ummah'²⁷ was seen to provide support and protection for fellow Muslims as and when required.

Discursive framing of anti-Muslim prejudice seems to be predicated upon the size of the Muslim population within the school. A school with a small population of Muslim children provided detailed accounts of racism, anti-Muslim prejudice and bullying. This point is further articulated by the following observation.

- F8: 15: R2: They won't call me a Paki in our school
16: S: Why?
17: R2: Because like there are many Muslims and
18: few whites. They only call you names and **treat**
19: **you bad if** there are a small number of Muslims in
20: the school.

²⁷ A detailed account of the way in which Muslim pupils frame the notion of 'ummah' is provided in the following section.

The crucial point of safety in numbers and how this acts as a support mechanism for students inside the school premises is further articulated by another respondent from the above focus group. The example taken from Eccles elucidates how group solidarity is viewed as a way of supporting fellow Muslims; it demonstrates how vulnerability and susceptibility to racism and anti-Muslim prejudice is associated with being alone or without fellow Muslims.

F8: 34: R1: In Charlestown I feel safe you know (.) if you went
 35: to the new Academy and you're the only Muslim yeh (.)
 36: you'll get called a <PAKI> everyday. You see in
 37: our school we all stick together, so they don't
 38: have the guts to call us names.

Personal and group safety were cited as key reasons for attending schools with significant numbers of Muslim pupils; it was felt that this provided a mechanism to challenge racism or anti-Muslim prejudice. Archer's (2003:13) study also confirmed this point; she noted how Muslim boys in particular would use 'aggressive macho talk' to reassert power and autonomy by mobilizing a repertoire of hegemonic masculinity, similar to that highlighted in the following interview by Yemeni Muslim pupils:

F8: 37: R2: It's about your religion, it's good to go to a school where there
 38: more of your people.
 39: R3: Ya man, you feel safe
 40: R2: If you are with your own group of people you feel safe,
 41: but (.) if you are on your own you get picked on and they
 42: would call you names, but if you're in a group and you
 43: are more in ...
 44: R4: numbers, you know you'll finish them off. <Yeh will finish
 45: them off>.

The language of 'aggressive macho talk' can also draw upon external support from the local community. The example highlighted below, taken from a grammar school in Greater

Manchester, demonstrates how a school with a small population of Muslim pupils can draw upon the wider Muslim community for a sense of security.

- F4: 37: R2: One of the things that has helped us is that the school is
38: in Fartown [mainly affluent Muslim ward], even though the
39: school is full of white kids. That's why they don't mess
40: with us. Any other area we would have been
41: slaughtered. Innit?
42: S: SERIOUSLY?
42: R1: Yeah
43: R2: YEAH:::

The above section articulated the way in which Muslim pupils construct their social world as autonomous agents responding to external hostile stimuli. It was particularly revealing how Muslim boys seek out other 'brothers' for support and help in the event of future anticipated racial incidents, rather than approaching the head teacher or other teachers at the school. This was also confirmed by Archer (2003) in her study of Muslim boys and education. She highlights how:

Muslim identity was talked about as a unifying force, one that superseded other, possibly conflicting, national identifications and loyalties, such as potential Bangladeshi-Pakistani differences. Another boy, Raihan, also suggested the ideal of Muslim brotherhood and umma created strength through a global network of identifications, saying 'you got Muslim brothers all over the world so wherever you go a Muslim brother will help you'.

(Archer 2003)

6.7 Islam and the War on Terror

Muslim discourses within schools also drew upon wider experiences of socio-political events. These events help shape the way in which pupils view themselves but also the way in which others view them (Shain 2003). Focus group accounts demonstrate a strong sense of politicisation of Muslim communities in general and Muslim young people in particular. It is clear that Muslim youths take an active role in following both domestic and international affairs affecting the Muslim community. It is also apparent that ‘grievance politics’ following the Bush Years (Imtiaz 2010) played a crucial role in developing a sense of collective Muslim identity which helps shape and nurture a sense of Muslim ummah.

The politicisation of young Muslims is demonstrated by the keen interest they show in the headline news reports regarding Muslims in Europe or throughout the ‘Muslim’ world. The meta-discourse of Muslim pupils usually takes an oppositional reading (Hall 1973) of dominant public discourse on Muslims and Islam. It is important to note that this particular way of reading media events was a universal trait within all the focus groups. In order to form their understanding of ‘Muslim events’, they often consulted a wide range of media sources ranging from traditional and new media outlets. It is also clear that major political events within the Muslim world formed part of collective conversation in everyday life (Imtiaz 2010; Philips & Iqbal 2009).

The repertoire of conspiracy theories allowed some Muslims to explain and understand the events of 7/7. It was clear that some of the respondents who adhered to such a perspective were citing documentaries on YouTube and other websites to justify their views. Conspiracy theories played a crucial role in framing discourses on key landmark events, such as the 9/11 and

7/7 bombings. Most of the explanations were also grounded in new media sources. In fact, these videos and other internet articles were used as supporting evidence which formed counter-arguments against the dominant public reading of 9/11 and 7/7. References to the *Illuminati* or the Freemasonic conspiracy were cited as ‘suspect groups’ that may be responsible for either carrying out or organising the events. The importance of conspiracy theory in shaping popular understanding of September 11 and 7/7 is clear from the following focus group conversation taken from a Sixth Form College:

- F1: 288: R6: Even 9/11 and 7/7 events are both big conspiracies, how
 289: can Muslims carry out something big like that it's impossible
 290: R4: Everyone's seen the videos on YouTube; in fact I can show
 291: you the video that proves that 9/11 is a conspiracy.
 292: R2: You see OBL [Osama bin Laden] likes to show off and admit
 293: things, so why did he not accept it, he could have easily said
 294: he was responsible?
 295: S: OK, who was responsible?
 296: ALL: **[GEORGE BUSH]**
 297: R1: It's simple, he wanted to get access to the oil, there are so
 298: many arguments and questions that have been unanswered,
 299: one thing is for certain that the events of 9/11 and 7/7 was not
 300: carried out by Muslims, it's the Freemasons or the *Illuminati*
 301: that had a hand in it. You only need to see the videos.

The above account provides an interesting example of how international events create social bonding at a local level. The above discourses also demonstrate how young people provide a counter-reading to the dominant normative narrative on the ‘war on terror’. The above narratives demonstrate how Muslims see themselves as a collective ummah; this theme of collective group spirit, together with external events shaping internal discourse is continued with the French debate on the veil cited below. The girls’ focus groups showed an active interest in the debate on Islamic dress and the secular public space. The politicisation of the hijab in some European countries helped inform and define the general discourse on integration, Muslim identity and

anti-Muslim prejudice. Muslim women felt a strong affinity and solidarity with Muslim women in France; this is further exemplified by the fact that issues of loyalty, acceptance and inclusion were all mediated through the prism of the hijab controversy. The issue of the hijab was one of the key dominant issues discussed by the girls' focus groups. There was no connection between the type of discourse and students wearing the veil; most often, girls who did not wear the hijab projected strong feelings of solidarity with fellow 'Muslim sisters'.

- F1: 97: S: Ok if we move on, who is familiar with the
 98: debate over Muslims and integration?
 99: R2: I don't think they mention it as blunt as that, I guess it is
 100: more subtle and you get hints now and again that Muslim
 101: should integrate and be more western.
 102: S: Would you like to expand?
 103: R2: Did you hear about the French president, he is trying to
 104: ban the veil? He was saying like (.) can't remember how
 105: he said it but he was trying to say that wearing the hijab is
 106: not part of French culture and stuff like that, and if you
 107: are a Muslim in France, you can't wear the hijab in
 108: school. I think it's very wrong for him to do that and also
 109: to say that. It's wrong.

The intensity of the feeling behind the focus groups was further articulated by a Muslim girl in the following observation. It demonstrates how the hijab is worn by Muslim girls as a matter of choice; the statement also demonstrates how Muslims view the 'double standards' associated with choices made by Muslim women and choices exercised by non-Muslim women:

- F3: 85: R2: It's like, it's stupid! When
 86: non-Muslim wear very little clothes or often no clothes it's
 87: fine. It is seen as women making a choice and that. But
 88: as soon as I want to wear a scarf it's suddenly such an
 89: abomination, it's strange and it makes me very angry.

The above evidence demonstrates how international events play a crucial role in defining and framing integration; it also shows how Muslim pupils display particular interest in political events involving fellow Muslims throughout the world. An example, which helps elucidate this point further, involved the case of the Gaza bombing in 2008. Some of the interviews were conducted whilst the siege of Gaza was being played out in the media; thus, it came as no surprise to find that young Muslims paid particular attention to the details of the bombings. It was particularly interesting that a group of year-7 (age 12) boys drew links between the siege of Gaza and the global war against Islam:

- F8: 53:R2: I think you have to stick together with your own, you
 54: know <MUSLIMS> because there is a war.
 55: S: How many people think there is a war?
 56: R3: Yeh you only have
 57: to look at Gaza (.) some people make a big deal about
 58: Muslims because of 9/11.

As noted in the above example, young people were able to draw upon a range of tools to criticize the *received knowledge* of key political events through mainstream media. The young people recognised how the media position themselves as diametrically opposed to the issues and concerns facing the Muslim community. The institutional racist usage of front-page headlines as a way of conveying particular readings of events was seen as a means of promoting messages to reflect the problematic nature of Muslim communities was further exemplified by the following observation:

- F8: 65: R2: You know if something happens with Muslims like
 66: terrorist bomb or something like that its always in the front
 67: R6: page but
 68: [I KNOW]
 68: R2: [It's like...]
 69: R6: [YEAH I know]
 70: R6: <You know if its a Muslim that gets killed (.) no one cares
 70: that much (.) but like if a English person gets killed they

- 71: make a big thing and they even make a big ceremony.
 72: But if a Muslim person that is killed by a terrorist bomb or
 73: killed they call him a terrorist.

The above discussion demonstrates how young people feel they are portrayed in the news media; this view is also confirmed by a number of academic studies on the representation of Muslims in the media (Said 1997, Poole 2002). The connection between ‘Muslims as terrorists’ within the news media, and the similar depictions of Muslims in the wider media help shape young Muslim attitudes towards the mainstream media. The following focus group discussion demonstrates how young people develop a critical reading of the ‘Muslim folk devil’ as portrayed in the media (Alexander 2000). The essentialised image of Muslims in the media, they argue, is not a true reflection of the lived experiences of the Muslim community. In other words, they felt there was a disconnection between the rhetoric of the media and the reality of the Muslim community.

- F2: 79: R4: Also in TV there is a lot of blaming the Muslims
 80: R6: Like the analysis of the Quran that came on Channel 4,
 81: everyone watched it and they were all discussing and
 82: analysing it in school.
 83: R2: Whenever there is a film about
 84: terrorism they always associate it with the Muslims (.)
 85: they always put Muslims in a very negative and
 86: stereotypical view. It’s not fair because they do not know
 87: what our religion is or what Muslims communities are like.

Whilst it is clear that the above experiences inform the self-definition of Muslim communities, it is also important to note that the perceptions of Muslims emanating from the media can have a crucial impact on feelings of isolation and alienation. This is clear from the following observation, which captures the feelings generated by the negative media depiction of Muslims as terrorists.

F8: 82: S: How does [the negative media representation of Muslims
 83: you mentioned] make you feel?
 84: R1: It makes me feel not important or accepted (.) it just
 85: makes me feel that I'm alone in a world of darkness.

Most accounts of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice in mixed schools were experienced inside and outside the school premises. The following example taken from a school in Oldham demonstrates this point; it shows how the perception of Muslims as 'terrorists' in the general media informs jokes and general playground humour directed against Muslim pupils.

F4: 191:R2:Stereotypical view of us plain and simple is that we're
 192: terrorist. We say something about a different
 193: subject in class and they'd say <'ARE YOU GONNA
 194: BLOW ME UP'>
 195: R1: It will be like, you'll be walking down the corridor in
 196: school and a group of white students would say 'tick tick
 197: tick tick' - like a bomb going off.

The above section highlights a number of factors shaping the practice of '*sticking-together*' within schools. Wider research on educational experience amongst Muslim pupils has also confirmed some of the above observations. For example, Crozier & Davies (2008) noted how teachers describe '*sticking-together*' as 'collective grouping' or 'pact behaviour' and find it intimidating (Crozier & Davies 2008:295). Moreover, they noted how 'ethnic clustering' is not a sign of ethnic segregation within schools, but rather examples of 'enforced exclusion', which is largely a product of racism. Shain's (2003) research on Muslim girls also confirmed how experiences of racism can lead some girls 'to the formation of an all-Asian female subculture from which white students and teachers and Asian students who appeared to ally with white students in the school were excluded' (Shain 2003:59).

6.8 Conclusion

In the last decade, ethnically mixed-schools have been actively promoted within government policy (Ajebo 2007). In fact, the previous New-Labour government introduced the Education Inspection Act 2006, which placed a duty on all maintained schools to promote community cohesion as part of their Ofsted inspection process (DSCF 2006). The Ofsted Inspection framework 2012 continues to focus on community cohesion as part of a broader collective inspection of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of children (Ofsted 2012). In addition to Ofsted Inspection framework, the New-Labour government, together with the Coalition-led government, as documented in chapter 2, have encouraged the idea of mixed schools through the School Academies initiative.

This chapter developed the meta-narrative highlighted in chapter 2 of deconstructing the mixed school and mono-cultural school binary by exploring two over-arching discursive accounts of mixed schools. First, mixed schools were presented as positive spaces based upon the idea of geographical spaces of hope (Philips 2010), which provided an opportunity for Muslim pupils to interact and also to ‘do multiculturalism’. This experience or ‘performing integration’ were examined through the Quranic lenses of ‘getting to know each other’, which provided data in support of the community cohesion thesis (Cantle 2008) based upon the principles of social contact (Hewstone 2006a) and cultural pluralism. For Muslim pupils the function of a multi-cultural template of integration was based upon the act of ‘mixing’ between people of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. ‘Mixing’ voluntarily occurred within school environment driven by the desire to know and to understand. Moreover, the idea of ‘mixing’ was

considered as an empowering experience as it provided a platform for cultural exchange and debate in a de-facto multicultural society. Most importantly, Mixing was actualised within a discursive framework; it was only through the act of speech and exchange of cultural references that the objectives of mixing were achieved. It is through the function of discourse that Muslim pupils constructed their experiences, challenged their own prejudices and, above all, shaped their own versions of social reality.

Second, pupil discourse highlighted how the geographical spaces of hope (Philips 2010) can also produce ambivalent experiences (Bauman 1991), which can reinforce the importance of group solidarity and belonging to a collective body of Muslims. The collective group was constructed through the religious categorisation of '*asabiyya*', which was largely a response to experiences of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice, combined with the depiction of Muslims within the public domain as having a problematic presence. Data in this section demonstrated how experiences of anti-Muslim prejudice within the context of global 'war on terror' (Imtiaz 2010) played a significant role in shaping Muslim school experiences. These experiences, shaped through pupil and teacher interaction, played a crucial role in politicising young Muslims at the same time reinforcing group solidarity (Ibn Khaldun 1958) through the process of sticking together. '*Sticking-together*' occurs when Muslim students consciously cluster together, as a way of generating support and achieving safety in numbers, in the face of a perceived or actual hostile school environment. Pupil testimonies of schooling confirmed how Muslim pupils do not consider themselves as individuals but as a collective group. This collective body or 'ummah' was seen to provide support and protection for fellow Muslims as and when required (Crozier and Davies 2008).

Chapter 7: Constructing identity in schools

7.0 Introduction

The above two sections acknowledged the complex and ambivalent nature of debating experience of mono-cultural and mixed-schools. This section highlights the way in which Muslim pupils in the above schools construct their identity.

This section will demonstrate how the construct of self is not predicated upon the attendance of mixed or mono-cultural schools. For example, one would have thought, especially in light of the policy discourses on integration and schooling, that Muslim pupils attending a Muslim faith school would identify more with their religious identity compared to those attending a mixed school. In fact, students attending both of these types of school constantly negotiate a hybridised form of identity. More importantly the interviews demonstrate how Muslim pupils see no contradiction between ‘Britishness’ and ‘Muslimness’ (Sobolewska 2010).

7.1 Debating and Negotiating Identity

A general consensus of those in the focus groups highlighted in the above chapters acknowledged that Muslims *do* actively take part in British life. They also accepted the fact that Muslims are, and have been, integrating into British society. One of the key features of Muslim integration focuses upon the notion of mixing; mixing, as already indicated, was seen to be based on the principles of social contact.

British Muslim identity was a major theme that was used to explain pupils' sense of self. What emerged was a picture of young people negotiating, constructing their identity through the prisms of national and religious identity. This, they argued, was demonstrated through the cultural identity associated with 'British Muslimness'. Muslim girls cited the wearing of the hijab through a distinctly cultural expression which juxtaposes the 'modesty' of the East with the fashion consciousness of the West (Bullock 2002).

The role of comedy was also seen as an important component of British Muslim identity which is manifested by cultural media through which humour is articulated. This once again combined a parody of the Asian Muslim culture set in British urban life. An example of this is the comedy and caricature of British Muslim culture, as demonstrated by the popular British Muslim comedian Humza, whose '*Diary of a Bad Man*' is a popular hit amongst a cross-section of Muslim school pupils.

There was also a general recognition that the migration of Muslims from traditional Muslim societies has changed the nature of Muslim society and culture (Cessari 2004). This migration, settlement and the emergence of a generation of young Muslims in Britain have given rise to potentially different sets of questions that Muslims living in Muslim societies were not

used to debating. The following observation clarifies this point in some detail. The discussion starts with question of barriers to Muslims integrating into UK society; respondent 1 argues that, despite the fact that Muslims are integrating into Western culture, they will not be able to ‘fully integrate’ because they will be unable to ‘go to the pub’. Respondent 2 challenges this position by arguing that it was a gross generalisation to assume that all non-Muslims were pub-goers.

F1: 243: R1: Yes it does stop you from integrating; you won’t be able to go to
244: the pub?
245: R2: How can you say that? I know so many Muslim people that
246: drink, so you can’t say that and there are so many non-Muslims
247: those don’t drink or go to the pub.

The above discussion continues, revealing interesting ways in which the identity of Muslims is debated and, more importantly, negotiated. The following example reveals a very interesting question within the context of Muslims living in the West: to what extent is the membership of a particular faith predicated upon religious practice? The following observation demonstrates the idea of secularisation of religious communities; i. e. that membership of a religious community can exist without the external manifestation of religious practice.

F1: 257: R5: YES but they are not Muslims [i.e. those that drink alcohol]
258: R2: YES THEY ARE, but they are not practising Muslims. So if you
259: lie it’s a sin and that does not make you a non-Muslim, you are
260: still a Muslim, although you are doing wrong you are still a
261: Muslim. It’s what you believe and what’s in your heart. It’s not
262: what you practise but what’s in your heart. You don’t have
263: to show everyone.

A similar discussion with a different focus group also draws similar conclusions. This time, the controversial practice of suicide bombing is discussed in light of contemporary political debate.

- F3: 250: R7: I don't see it like that, I just see innocent people just dying. Its
 251: got nothing to do with the religion. Having said that some
 252: people are just prejudiced towards Muslims. It's like you see the
 253: 9/11 bombing and they will blame all the Muslims from that. I
 254: don't think that is right.
 256: R2: Yes, but have we given any reason for them NOT to believe all
 257: Muslims are terrorists?
 258: R5: YES, You are not listening, they are <NOT MUSLIMS> how can
 259: people that are involved in those actions such as killing people
 260: be Muslims. They call themselves MUSLIMS.
 261: R1: EXACTLY, they can't be Muslims
 262: R7: YES they are!
 263: R2: You can't say that, of course they are Muslim
 264: R5: <COME ON MAN> seriously, you can't say that they are
 265: Muslims
 265: R2: Islam teaches us peace, how can blowing up BUILDINGS BE
 266: PEACE.
 267: R5: THAT'S WHAT ISLAM IS, all these terrorists call themselves
 268: Muslims, they are not really Muslims.

7.2 Religious and National Identity

Most students did not see any conflict between religion and national identity; in fact, they felt confident in embracing both Britishness and Islam simultaneously. Students did not have any difficulties in embracing the religious or national positioning as a marker of identity. This is further clarified by the following statement taken from the girls' focus group in Oldham:

- F3: 245: R1: I've never found it difficult being a Muslim and British, it never
 246: stopped me from doing anything.

They felt that both religion and nationality complemented their sense of self and citizenship. This view is further supported by academic studies based on opinion polls (Mogahed 2009) and detailed ethnographic accounts (Ahmed 2009). Some of the dominant ways through which the discourse of identity is discussed can be summarised as follows:

- F1: 180: R2: People can combine their identity, you can combine your
 181: nationality which is being British, with your religion which is
 182: your religion. I can't see any problems with that, you can be both
 183: British and Muslim. In fact, what it means to be British and also
 184: Muslim can also change. For example, I know people that are
 185: practising now but were not doing so last year. And also, some
 186: of my friends that do not wear the hijab were doing so 3 months ago.

As highlighted in the above section, religious identity was not considered by Muslim pupils to be fixed; rather, it was always in a state of flux, adapting, formulating and reformulating based upon external factors. This is displayed in the construct of identity in F1 by R2 [see above], which shows the fluid nature of identity. This approach to identity confirms the arguments made by Hall (1992) and supported by Bauman (1999), who have reasoned that identities are not fixed but rather constantly in the process of becoming.

Pupil discourse did not reveal any sense of difficulty in embracing a hyphenated British Muslim identity; they did not see any questions circulating in public discourse as potential areas of contradiction between duties and responsibilities as a Muslim and a British citizen. By doing this the Muslim discourse was supporting Ramadan's idea of Euro-Islam (2009). Students' discourse did reveal that a strong grounding in the Islamic faith would make a person a better

citizen. The following extract taken from a Muslim girls' school highlights how a strong religious education in the short term can help students to become better citizens in the future.

F2: 101: R2: I don't think it's going to be an issue to go to college,
102: university or even work (.) I think coming to this school has given
103: us a lot emotionally, morally and ethically. So I think it's taught
104: us to become good Muslims but also good <human beings and
105: very good citizens> It has also taught us to interact with wider
106: society and how to incorporate that within our religion. I
107: think it has been beneficial coming to a Muslim faith school
108: as this one, it really prepares you for the wider future.

The above account supports the works of McLaughlin (1992), who argued that grounding in ones culture helps instil and nurture a sense of autonomy in children for the future. Meer (2009), in his study of Muslim schools in the UK, also supported McLaughlin's thesis. What the above testimony demonstrates is how McLaughlin's idea of 'gaining autonomy via faith' (Haydon 2009) can be extended to achieving integration via faith.

7.3 British Pakistani Identity?

The most frequent way of demonstrating an expression of Pakistani identity was through a sense of loyalty to the birth place of one's parents. This was paramount for those students who often visited their parental birth place. A number of students reflected upon their fond memories and also the positive treatment they received from extended family and the wider society during their stay in Pakistan. This was contrasted with the hostile negativity they may have encountered in the UK. This is demonstrated by the following:

- F4: 147: R1: I see myself as a Pakistani.
 148: S: Were you born in Pakistan?
 149: R1: I was born here, but I have been back to Pakistan so many
 150: times, in fact I went back this year during the holiday.
 151: R3: How can you be born here but see yourself as Pakistani?
 152: R1: At the end of the day it's your religion and your ethnic
 155: background that matters.

The nature of 'Pakistaniness', as noted by F4 above, was also seen by many students as a euphemism for religious identity. Many students struggled to separate Pakistani national identity from religion. Both religious and nationalistic markers were seen to be interconnected and inseparable; when the above student (F4) is arguing that 'at the end of the day it's your religion and ethnic background that matters', he is essentially making reference to his Pakistani identity. Thus, it was not surprising to find a number of students describing themselves as 'British-Pakistanis'. In a separate focus group as noted below, one of the respondents clarified the question of loyalty to dual nationality, by stating that he saw Britishness as his national identity and his *Pakistaniness* as his religious identity.

- F5: 82: R6: I see myself as a British Pakistani
 83: [laughter]
 84: R2: How can you belong or be British and Pakistani at the same
 85: time, I don't know?
 86: R6: You learn your religion and what have you from your home, you
 87: also learn your culture and religion from the mosque,
 88: by celebrating Ramadan and Eid and stuff.
 89: R4: That's all our Pakistani culture, all the religion and also the stuff
 90: we do at home is our Pakistani culture. It's nothing complicated
 91: about that is there?

The above experience demonstrates how the Pakistani identity can be seen as a euphemism for the religious identity. In a similar vein, a student from an Iraqi heritage sees very little difference between Arab and Muslim culture.

F7: 130: R1: Yeah::: definitely Islam guides our life (.) that is why I follow the
 131: Arabic culture which is the Muslim culture. That is why I feel it is
 132: so important to follow our culture.

The notion of *travel* or staying in different countries for a long duration also played an important role in shaping one's self-construct. This was raised by a number of students; for example, in the above passage (F4) one's Pakistani identity was constructed after visiting the country of parental birth, but the following example taken from a mixed school in Manchester demonstrates how this label is rejected for a British Muslim identity because, firstly, the respondent had not visited Pakistan or any other countries and secondly, Britishness and Muslimness were the only markers she was familiar with.

F7: 114: R1: I was born here so I consider myself as British Muslim, I have
 115: not gone anywhere so I consider myself to be British.

In most cases the experience of travelling or staying in a different country either for a short or longer duration can provide young people with a sense of belonging and loyalty. If the pupils have constantly moved from one location to another, this can lead to a sense of alienation or difficulty in expressing one's sense of self. This is further articulated as follows:

F7: 120: R5: I am from three countries; I have stayed in these three countries
 121: for many years (.) Pakistan, England and Germany (.) so for me
 122: things are very complicated.

For students experiencing alienation, the process of imagination or sense of imagined community (Anderson 1991), or imagined *ummah* (Roy 2006), can play a crucial role in conceptualising one's identity. This is demonstrated by the following example:

F7: 103: R2: Whilst I was born here and I have a British passport, this does
 104: not mean you can't be part of your mother country. My parents
 105: are from Iraq, I have not lived in Iraq but I constantly try to
 106: imagine, **ALL THE TIME I try to imagine** what it's like to be
 107: Iraqi. All my life we have not stayed in one place,
 108: my parents were from Iraq, then they came to Newcastle, where
 109: I was born, then we went to Dubai to live, and then we came to
 110: Manchester. So if someone asks me where I am from (.)
 111: it's very difficult, I find that difficult to
 112: answer. How can I tell them where I am from?

For some students the country of their birth together with the birth place of their parents helped defined their identity. In the following examples, it is clear how 'Asia', 'Africa' and the 'Arab' world played an important role in self-definition, but also the way in which fellow students are defined.

F3: 166: R7: You see Asians feel that they own this place...
 223: R2: I am an East African Asian...
 F9: 9: R1 ...I don't care - I'm a Yemeni

The above example taken from focus group discussions demonstrates how students often use 'Asian' or 'Arab' as adjectives to describe themselves and also define others.

Whilst some would consciously choose not to use any religious marker to describe themselves, it is useful to point out that students often use Muslim, Asian or African identities interchangeably. In fact, as we have seen above, for many pupils the Asian and Arab categories can often be taken to mean a broader cultural experience of which religion is a major component. For example, one of the students described how all 'the Asians in [her] school all stuck together'; however, in the very next sentence she used the religious marker to describe the same group.

This demonstrates how parental birth place is often seen as a euphemism for framing a particular cultural practice.

7.4 British Muslim Identity and Muslim Faith Schools

One group that perhaps demonstrated a clear sense of identity was the Muslim Girls' School focus group. The Muslim girls did not solely use the 'Muslim' category as a way of talking about themselves or fellow students, but also used a hyphenated British-Muslim identity (Ramadan 2009). They demonstrated a strong and confident identity, which they felt at ease to discuss at length (McLaughlin 1992; Meer 2009). The meta-discourse of these students did not feature parental birth place as an important component in defining themselves. They were firm on their religious identity; at the same time, they were grounded in what being British meant to them. They argued very passionately about the religious imperative to integrate and the importance of socio-political space shaping one's identity (Alwani 2003).

The Muslim faith school discourse reveals a pristine conception of 'Muslimness' which is free from any denominational links or ties. One of the focus group members described how they were interested in living their lives according to '*true Islam*', which for them was grounded in the idea of tolerance. In this context, 'Muslimness' is very much defined through an ecumenical visioning which transcends nationalistic or other clan-based linkages. It was not surprising to note that Muslim girls were very much in support of marriages across ethnic groups - providing they shared the same faith. This, they were quick to highlight, was a significant shift from their parents' attitudes. Moreover, the girls felt that '*assabiyya*' based upon tribal loyalties to a single ethnic group was essentially wrong and should be resisted.

Responding to various religious denominations within the community of Blackburn, where the school is located, the focus group members displayed a very deep knowledge and understanding of the various denominations within the community and argued for a more pluralistic and encompassing vision of Islam. Moreover, the responses demonstrated how the pupils were not promoting a Deobandi vision of Islam, which most people would associate with the school; instead they projected an ecumenical spirit of Islam. This further demonstrates how Muslim pupils might attend a school of a particular denomination, but may have their own agency and own way of defining their Muslimness.

F2: 141: R2: I do not believe in those <classifications> such as
142: Deobandi, Berelawi, because I think people have the right to
143: believe in what they have to, some of it might be or some might
144: say is wrong you can't stop someone believing in something, if
145: that what they want to believe.

7.5 Conclusion

Part 3 of this dissertation focused on the key findings of this research by considering pupil discourses on mono-cultural and mixed-school positioning through three interconnected chapters. In Chapter 5, pupil discourses on mono-cultural schools and schooling were explored. The dominant discursive repertoire that was used to talk about the ‘mono-cultural’ [state] schooling experience was through the *deficit model* of schooling. Chapter 6 saw the rupturing of the binary opposite of the integration debate – with social contact as good and ethnic clustering as bad. Muslim pupil narratives considered how experiences of ‘mixed’ schools were seen as positive spaces of hope; these ‘spaces of hope’ allowed the functioning of multiculturalism via (a) ‘getting to know each other’ and (b) the politics of difference (Modood 2010). This chapter also explained how these spaces of hope were not based upon a normative experience. It established how experiences of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice within school settings could lead to hyper-ethnic clustering or ‘*sticking-together*’.

This chapter explored how Muslim pupils frame their identity in light of their schooling experience; this section also highlighted how the type of school has no impact on how Muslim pupils see themselves. British Muslim identity was a dominant theme that was used to explain pupil’s sense of self. This further supported Ramadan’s idea of Muslim identity rooted in the west. Furthermore, pupil data supported existing data on how Muslim pupils see no contradiction between ‘Britishness’ and ‘Muslimness’ (Mogahed 2009; Sobolewska 2010). Pupil narratives also confirmed the recognition made by Cessari (2004) that the migration of Muslims from traditional Muslim societies has changed the nature of Muslim society and culture.

Religious identity was not considered by Muslim pupils to be fixed; rather, it was always in a state of flux, adapting, formulating and reformulating based upon external social events. This approach to identity confirms the observations made by Hall (1992) and supported by Bauman (1999), who have reasoned that identities are not fixed but rather constantly in the process of becoming. Identity within this context is seen to be a part of a social construct with external political pressures influencing the ways in which Muslims view themselves. For example both the political and the popular discourses constantly frame Muslim communities as a religious group and not an ethnic group; this is clear from the governments Prevent policy whose stated objective is to work with Muslim communities in tackling violent extremism (see Chapter 2). This account of identity formation further supports the Du-Boisian perspective (see chapter 1) of double consciousness or the idea of twoness in understanding the rise of Muslim consciousness (Meer 2010).

Pupil testimonies from Muslim faith schools also supported the works of McLaughlin (1992), who argued that grounding in one's culture helps instil and nurture a sense of autonomy in children for the future. Meer (2007), in his study of Muslim schools in the UK, also supported McLaughlin's thesis. What the data from this chapter elucidates is how McLaughlin's (1992) idea of 'gaining autonomy via faith' (Haydon 2009) can be applied to achieving integration via faith. Furthermore, this confirms research on the objective of Muslim faith schools, as noted below:

...to Abdullah Trevathan, head teacher of north London's Islamia School, a state-funded school that offers religious instruction and the study of Arabic along with the standard national curriculum, the answer is clear. Trevathan believes that schools such as Islamia- one of the schools to receive state funding in Britain- can play a vital role in hammering out a new Muslim identity, one that combines being a good Muslim with being a good citizen in a pluralist society.

(Jay 2005:37)

Research Finding (II)

Chapter 8: Parental Discourse, Integration and Schooling

8.0 Introduction

Muslim parental discourse on schooling is an under-researched area (Weekes-Bernard 2007). This chapter aims to bridge this lacuna by providing a detailed account of parental discourse; it intends to do this by exploring the relationship between integration, parental choice and the type of schooling.

This chapter will explore parental attitudes relating to the broader aspects of integration. It examines how integration is seen as a natural and a gradual process, resulting from the desire to succeed but also to be *seen* as succeeding. This recognition and affirmation of integration is an important mechanism through which status is gained within the community. Evidence presented in the first part of this chapter rejects the self-segregation thesis and the idea that Muslim communities develop conscious racial boundaries with a willingness to create their own ghettos (Philips 2005; Carey 2008; Nazir-Ali 2008; Ali 2010). Instead, it support the thesis presented by Simpson (2008) and others (Finney & Simpson 2009) that Muslim communities are best described as shifting geographies of ethnic settlement, symbolised by the movement out of traditional areas into more mixed and diverse neighbourhoods.

The second part of this chapter draws a parallel between residential integration and choice of schooling. It highlights how parents' desire to move into affluent middle-class suburbs is predicated on the desire to see their children 'doing well'. Parental choice is best understood

as an intersectional discourse which juxtaposes three equally important ideas based on race, class and faith. It demonstrates how mixed schools within affluent ‘middle-class’ areas are the most popular school choice for Muslim parents; this is because they provide ‘the best educational advantage for their children’s future’.

This chapter further validates the popular notion shared by a number of academics (Alexander 2007; Weekes-Bernard 2007) who maintain that the idea of choice is best understood as political rhetoric, which does little to reflect reality. Parental discourse included within this section supports Alexander’s (2007) observation that ‘the problem with choice is twofold; first, it assumes the ability of all parents to make these choices on an equally informed basis; and, it assumes that the field in which they make these changes is an open and level one’ (Alexander 2007:1).

Finally this chapter concludes by exploring parental views on mono-cultural state schools and Muslim faith schools. This section supports the pupil discourses on mono-cultural schools as a *deficit model*, at the same time confirming the importance of nurturing cultural identity as a way of encouraging integration (McLaughlin 1992; Meer 2009).

8.1 Embourgeoisement, Integration and Group Solidarity

The meta-narrative that dominated all the parental focus groups viewed integration as a ‘lived experience’; it was an idea that Muslim communities fully understood and was considered to be ‘in the blood of all migrant groups’. Integration was not seen as a problematic phenomenon; after all, it was argued that the ‘first generation of migrant communities had already factored this idea in mind, when they made the choice to migrate onto European soils’.

A crucial feature in the discussion focused on the notion of gradualism and inevitability, with integration seen as a feature within the DNA of all migrant communities. Thus, an etic Muslim perspective sees the process of integration as an active and on-going process. The question was not whether integration was happening; rather, concerns were highlighted as to the speed and the form of integration. Furthermore, the phenomenon of integration was discussed within a cultural paradigm; integration was not understood as a form of assimilation which gradually leads to negation of cultural practice or cultural rights. The following example provides the meta-narrative on integration; it demonstrates how residential integration is framed from the perspective of those who decide to move into non-traditional Muslim areas.

AF1: 76: R1: I’ll give you an example: my parents and I have been living in
77: Glodwick since the 1970s. In 2005 I decided to move out into
78: Lees; it is a predominantly white area, so I have already made the
79: leap and so others have also made that leap and made that
80: transition.

Whilst the above change, highlighted by the respondent, seems like a small step for the ‘outside’ community, for the local Muslim community this is a hugely symbolic cultural shift given the close-knit nature of that community. The adjustment from ‘traditional’ to non-traditional areas represents a major transition and it represents different ways of ‘*doing things*’.

This gradual population shift is also supported by wider census data in Oldham, Leicester and Bradford (Finney and Simpson 2009).

Parental discourse supported the idea of Muslim neighbourhoods as close-knit entities with strong levels of bonding capital, providing families and individuals with good support structures. When someone decides to purchase a house outside the neighbourhood, it not only has implications for the individual family, but also has huge implications for the wider community. This is clearly articulated by the following example. It demonstrates how a transition to non-traditional residential areas is seen as '*breaking*' or '*separating ties*' with one's group.

AF1: 83:R1: I think instances like this go unnoticed by the wider society and
84: people tend to focus on the big community and not the little
85: pockets of people that are now moving. WE have made that
86: change within our own community, it is a cultural thing for us.
87: We've got our own cultural dynamics within our own communities
88: as well and so we've broken that and said to people that it is for the
89: better, so we have done the convincing.

This particular style of narrative is described in terms of 'sacrifices' that are made by family members who have made the conscious choice to move into mainly white residential areas. Integration in this respect is viewed as a natural progression from the 'early sacrifices that were made by the first generation of Muslims', who took considerable steps in uprooting their own families from Pakistan and Bangladesh to the UK.

In the above observation, Muslim parents highlighted an important disconnection between *emic* accounts of integration and a detailed *etic* perspective. Worley (2009), in her study, also noted

the detachment between the ‘policy world’ and the lived experience of the general public (Worley 2009:9). This point is further reinforced by the above respondent in the following emotive language:

AF1: 91:R1: I think people who think about integration don’t think of the
92: dynamics within our own communities. They don’t realise the
93: sacrifices we make, in fact we make far bigger sacrifices than the
94: white communities. Because we are so attached to the
95: communities that we live in and we have to look at the cultures
96: within cultures. Sometimes that I think it is unfair because of the so-
97: called POLICY-MAKERS and the decision-makers do not realise
98: these sacrifices that we are making. To them it’s the Muslims who are
99: not integrating.

The genuine attempts to integrate into the host societies are considered to be in line with the ‘migrant ethic’. The ‘migrant ethic’ was articulated by Muslim parents as being largely associated with the notion of social progression and embourgeoisement (Goldthorpe *et al.* 1963). For Goldthorpe *et al.* (1963), the embourgeoisement thesis posits manual workers and their families gradually moving into middle-class neighbourhoods and starting to adopt bourgeois values. A key feature of the parental discourse on residential integration, on the changes arising from the move from traditional monocultural neighbourhoods to prosperous mixed neighbourhoods, corresponded with a change in the value system. This is also in line with Goldthorpe *et al.*’s (1963) classic sociological study in Luton, in which they note how this transition is characterised by a change of value system based on ‘communal sociability’ towards a more ‘privatised form of social existence’ (Goldthorpe *et al.* 1963: 76). Studies on middle-class constructs of Muslim identity are very limited; some studies have argued how minority ethnic ‘participants constructed middle-classness’ in a range of ways but commonly regarded it as unattainable due to its association or conflation with whiteness (Archer 2010:134). Evidence provided within this section tends to argue against Archer’s (2010) findings by associating

residential integration with a symbolic display of progression with upward social mobility and status.

A change in residential transition is also connected with better locations or catchment areas for high-achieving schools. Thus, integration is associated with the notion of embourgeoisement and the aspirations of middle-class styles and standards, which are grounded in the premise that integration demonstrates a symbolic change in the prospects and life chances of the immediate family and also the future of their children. .

Integration within the context of social class is a privilege predicated upon social (Putnam 2000) and cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passerson 1999), which is largely associated with community members that have the financial capacity to move. Those who have had the ‘privilege’ of moving from traditional Muslim residential areas have been seen by others as having ‘made it’ or having become successful in life. This is very clear from the following account of the ‘migrant work ethic’:

AF16: 12: You see our fathers came here not to cut grass but to make a better future
13: for ourselves and our children. This is a teaching that is in our blood that is
14: why it’s important to work hard so that you buy a big house near a good
15: school. You see it is important to invest in yourself and your
16: families. Good house, neighbourhood and expensive cars are all important.
17: You will be respected both by people in this country and also people in
18: Bangladesh. What is the point in working so hard and living in the dumps it
19: makes no sense. Our fathers and uncles worked hard it’s our time to ensure
20: that we go on to make comfortable lives.

Muslim embourgeoisement may lead to a shift in geographic location and will also, as noted above, inform the way in which integration is spoken about. It is important to consider that a

‘breaking’ or ‘separating’ of physical ties with one’s local community does not translate as the weakening of social ties or social solidarity with one’s community; rather, *‘asabiyya* is simply replaced through different forms of social networks. One of the ways in which this was discussed, within the parental sample, is through the idea of recognition and acceptance by fellow community members. The parental sample group referred to the importance of not being labelled as having ‘sold out’; one way of avoiding this label was by having a visible presence in Muslim neighbourhoods, either by purchasing their Asian groceries or attending the Friday prayer. This visual presence provided an important medium for gaining acceptance, achieving and maintaining status.

Perhaps an important medium through which *‘asabiyya* is maintained lies in the choices parents make in purchasing new houses. It was clear that *‘asabiyya* or the group solidarity played a pivotal role for people when considering purchasing a house in a mixed residential neighbourhood. Some of the many reasons for this, including the fear of racism and harassment, are further articulated by the following:

AF3: 15: When we decided to move it was obviously to do with thinking about
16: our children’s educational future. But the area we decided to move into
17: was not an all-white neighbourhood, simply because we had
18: concerns about racism, acceptance and neighbours complaining
19: about curry smells and what have you. This area has a couple of
20: Muslim families, within walking distance and we like that it gives us
21: sense of security and feeling that there are people that we have things
22: in common.

8.2 Mixed Schools: Class Consciousness and Integration

When considering the education of their children, Muslim parents recognised the importance of ‘location’ in shaping the overall outcome of education. It came as no surprise to observe the close relationship between choice of school and type of neighbourhood parents wanted to live in. It was made clear in the previous section that aspiring Muslim parents recognised that moving into a prosperous neighbourhood would have a positive impact on their children’s future. Muslim discourses on choice of schooling are closely interconnected with conspicuous acts of consumption. This broadly reflects a Weberian view of social class; for Weber, class consciousness is associated with the realization of class as a status group (Collins 1986). The movement into a middle-class area demonstrated signs of upward mobility in the same way that sending a child to a school outside the majority ‘Asian’ community signifies an advance in status. Weekes-Bernard’s (2007) study on school choice amongst BME parents also noted the importance of social class in shaping educational decision-making for primary and secondary schools. In fact, as Weekes-Bernard (2007), citing the works of Abbas (2004), argues in the following point, the avoidance of a school due to its mono-cultural BME composition can be seen as a form of ‘class consciousness’:

A small minority of aspirant Black and Asian parents actively avoided schools that were Black/Asian majority, engaging, where affordable, in high rates of residential and educational flight, despite their own awareness of risks associated with educating their children in predominantly white schools.

(Weekes-Bernard 2007:41)

The parental discourses on mono-cultural neighbourhoods, similar to the pupil discourse, were viewed through a *deficit model*. Drawing upon personal and extended family accounts, these mono-cultural communities were connected by a discourse of ‘broken’ societies (Blond 2010). These personalised discourses revealed an acknowledgement of individual community members who are struggling with issues of drugs and alcohol abuse. Familiar cases or incidents within the community were used to construct their narrative of a ‘broken society’. The movement away from traditional areas was also influenced by the desire to move away from the ‘broken neighbourhoods’ to ‘better surroundings’. Whilst this option to move was largely based upon cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron 2000), there was nevertheless a desire by parents to move into better neighbourhoods, which would provide an improved social and educational prosperity for their children.

This particular approach usually means that the family would purchase a house in a different location, away from the mono-cultural Muslim neighbourhood. This would mean the child going to a different school and growing up in a community that does not have problems associated with drugs or social delinquency. The following observation drawing upon the respondents’ personal experiences reinforces the point very clearly:

AF16: 86: I have been living in this area for over three years, it’s a nice area all our
87: neighbours are white and we get on well. My kids were growing up and
88: I did not want them to grow up in ‘crack city’. Things are bad; my
89: children are of that age if I did not move out then they would have been
90: influenced by that. Within my own extended family there are cases that
91: I can talk about, I know the impacts it has on immediate families and
92: also extended families. You can’t tie your child at home they would
93: want to go out and play with their friends and you can’t watch them all
94: day. So now I am happy it’s a quiet area the kids are at home most of
95: the time in their own rooms on their computer and they go to a good
96: school. This is the main fact at least now by going to a good school

97: they can make something out of themselves. In many respects I am
98: very fortunate I had the financial ability to move out. I know of other
99: people that want to move out but their financial circumstances are
100: different, in this current financial crisis things are going to get even
101: more difficult.

Some of the experiences of living in deprived neighbourhoods with ‘mono-cultural’ schools were described as negative experiences. These neighbourhoods were viewed as poverty-stricken and, most importantly, as areas affording few opportunities for their children’s social mobility. The mono-cultural state schools in these deprived neighbourhoods were seen to provide limited educational opportunities, with local youth clubs and mosques providing few or no constructive activities for out-of-school hours.

Families living in predominantly Asian areas did not articulate a desire to live ‘separately’ or maintain a parallel existence; rather, mono-cultural neighbourhoods were products of poverty and personal circumstances. The people who had left the area displayed a sense of achievement and accomplishment for their own respective families and for the wider community. This is clearly articulated by the following account of social mobility:

AF15: 73: You see when I first moved out mainly in search of a good house and
75: also for a better future for my children... They now attend a very good
76: school. But I think the fact that we have moved has been a positive
77: sign for others, now everyone else would also move. You see
78: when I meet the people where I used to live within our old area, they
79: look at me differently and see me in a different light. They give me
80: respect and you know it feels good.

Platt (2005), in a longitudinal study on migration and social mobility, also found evidence in support of the above. He noted how some religious groups such as the Jews and the

Hindus are more likely to end up in higher social groups than their parents, compared to Sikhs and Muslims who have lower chances of so doing.

8.3 Choice and Self and Segregation: Race, Class and Faith Intersectionality

Parental choice and schooling have been at the centre of educational policy in Britain since the 1944 Education Act. Those advocating parental choice in education normally use two key arguments in defence of greater choice. First, in terms of the human rights aspect, many cite the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as a compelling argument. For example, Almond (1994) cites the following clause in the UDHR in support of parental choice: ‘Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children (26, 3)’ (Almond 1994:68). The second argument is the free market approach to schooling; it is argued that greater competition for places between schools will improve the overall quality and standards in education.

A number of arguments are advanced against parental choice²⁸ (Halstead 1994) in education. The dominant argument that is often used against the Muslim community is that increased parental choice will lead to greater social segregation - West (1994) describes this as the ‘good parent bad citizen’ paradox.

This section will highlight how Muslim parental choice on schooling is best understood as an intersectional discourse which juxtaposes ideas of race, class and faith. It demonstrates how

²⁸ There are five general criticisms that Halstead (1994) cites. First, Choice of parents may go against the needs of the state with increasing faith or racial segregation. Second, increased choice could lead to greater social inequality as middle-class parents take up all the best schools. Third, autonomy of the child is seen to be compromised by parental rights. Fourth, choice is largely determined by availability. In addition, Parker-Jenkins (2005) has also examined the relationship between parental rights and the rights of the child through exploring the ‘potential for ‘rights in conflict’. (Parker-Jenkins 2005:36).

mixed schools in affluent middle-class neighbourhoods are the most popular school choice because they are seen to provide ‘the best educational advantage for their child’s future’. Evidence provided in this section argues against the view that Muslim parental choice reinforces racial segregation. This was even the case for Muslim faith schools; the parents that expressed enthusiasm for Muslim schools were motivated by the desire to achieve integration through faith.

A strong theme associated with the overall discourse on schooling and segregation revealed the distinction between the ‘poor- and high-achieving’ schools binary. Schools with significant numbers of white pupils in a middle-class neighbourhood were perceived to be *high-achieving* schools. Not all *high-achieving* schools were given serious attention by parents. Schools situated in middle-class areas, with a ‘reasonable intake of Muslim or Asian pupils’, were given serious consideration. The following quote by a Muslim female parent with many years of teaching experience draws upon own her personal experience to highlight the intricate and intersectional relationship between race, class and faith, when choosing a secondary school.

AF10: 3: Usually Muslim parents think of mixed schools when choosing schools
4: for their kids. A school with more white kids and less Asian children
5: are seen as ‘good’ schools. But when it’s the other way round - with
6: more Asians and less white kids - parents are reluctant to send their kids
7: such as schools in Coppice or Westwood because it’s almost 100%
8: Asians. Also the fact that those schools do not produce good
9: grades. Because of this they think that a school with mainly white kids
10: in a good middle-class area will have better education. This is not only
11: a perception but a reality. You only have to look at the evidence.

The focus on class in the above observation is salient, especially given how working-class areas such as Limeside in Oldham featured prominently in the parental discourse of schooling. It highlighted the reasons why some parents would be reluctant to send their children to a school in a white working-class neighbourhood. The following example demonstrates the

element of class consciousness (Abbas 2000) in framing the schooling choice debate. Moreover, it demonstrates how geographical spaces based upon the social class distinction inform and influence Muslim discourses on school choice.

AF10: 18: The reason why I say parents will be reluctant to send their children in
19: a school such as Limeside is because it's a working-class area. The
20: kids in those areas don't have good role models. They come from
21: shattered families and areas which are mainly made up of council
22: houses. The children have no role models don't do well in school so,
23: Muslim parents will see this to have a bad influence.

The above example highlights the importance of class as a crucial category influencing parental choice and schooling. In the following example, the ethnic and the religious make-up of the school are also given similar precedence; it highlights how Muslim parents are reluctant to send their children to state schools with over 90% white student intake, even if the school is a high-achieving school. Muslim parents maintain that schools with a 10 % Asian or Muslim intake are popular choices amongst parents²⁹. Some of the concerns about sending children to a school with an Asian intake of less than 10% revolve around issues of security, identity and vulnerability.

²⁹ The above observation also demonstrates how the 'ethnic' category of 'Asian' and the religious category of 'Muslim' are used interchangeably.

AF10: 46: Parents will not send their kids to any good school in a middle-class
47: area, for example when we were looking for a school for our children
48: there were a number of good schools that we considered. We rejected
49: those because they had no Asian or Muslim children. I guess the
50: school that we decided to send our children to is a school that has
51: around 10% Muslim kids. The reasons why we did this are clear, if the
52: school does not have a mix then we feared they will be singled out,
53: they will stand out. Obviously there would be fears of bullying, racism,
54: Islamophobia. I think it's important for our children to go to a
55: school that reflects the wider society. So in Oldham the population of
56: school that reflects the wider 15%. If the child does not have their own
57: kind around, there are genuine fears that they will not relate to anyone,
58: they might feel that they have to assimilate in order for them to be
59: accepted. They even might grow up rejecting or hating their identity.

The above observation highlighted the significant relationship between class, race and faith in determining parental choice in schools, with mixed schools seen as ideal spaces for schooling. The above example also demonstrates how an ideal ethnic mix of school is largely determined by the population of the borough. Thus, it was not surprising to note that a percentage of 10% was cited, which roughly corresponds to the size of the Muslim population in Oldham. The above example further demonstrates how mixed-school environments provide an ideal combination of security, education and nurturing of cultural identity. The importance of ensuring children have a firm foundation in their own identity was a key theme touched upon by a number of parents.

The avoidance of schools with 90% Muslim or Asian intake demonstrates the way '*hyper-asabiyya*' is framed. It is important to note that parental discourses recognised the importance of '*asabiyya*'; this is displayed by the fact that parents consciously decided to send their children to mixed schools while, at the same time, there was a realisation that *hyper-*

‘asabiyya had negative impacts on schooling. This observation broadly supports wider academic study as demonstrated in Weekes-Bernard’s (2007) study of ethnic minority parents in the UK

8.4: Cultural Capital and Mixed Schools.

The above section explored the reasons why Muslim parents preferred mixed schools with an ideal Muslim cohort size of 10%. Given the close association between residential area and schooling (Cantle 2001; Ritchie 2001; Clarke 2001), many Muslims found it difficult to send their children to mixed schools due to a combination of factors, including school allocation policies, availability of schools and socio-economic circumstances.

Muslim parents’ discourse on parental choice and schooling unveiled three overarching themes. The first theme was associated with the cultural capital of parents. It has long been established that educational success is largely determined by the cultural capital of the parents (Abbas 2004). Sending pupils to a mixed school was closely allied with the cultural capital of the parents; in other words, parents who had the necessary skills and knowledge to seek out high-achieving schools sent their children to mixed schools. Some parents complained of the educational jargon, complex league tables, selection policies and the school referral systems that were required to navigate and negotiate a good place for their child. They mentioned how the system was set up so that educated parents had the upper hand. This also confirms Brown’s (1994), notion of ‘parentocracy’. Brown (1994) noted how the educational system was grounded more on wealth and wishes of parents and less on pupil merit and ability.

The importance of ‘parentocracy’ was further supported by the following observation: the parent identifies wider socio-economic factors that determine the exercising of choice. Access to a car and, more importantly, the mother’s ability to drive were considered important factors in parents’ decisions to send their children to schools outside their residential area.

AF11: 7: Distance matters depending upon circumstance; parents who
8: want to send children to a good school, they will go out of their way
9: to send them to the best possible school. Our children travel five
10: miles to go to their school. It’s a primary school, we managed
11: to negotiate a place, because the school is located in a posh part of
12: Oldham. The school has declining numbers. It took hours of searching
13: in the library ploughing through figures and league table results. But we
15: managed to get them in. It’s a mixed school with approximately 15%
16: Muslim children... Women’s role is important, you can’t rely on men - they
17: are useless. There are four other primary schools within close distance
18: of our house. The closest schools are full of Asian children; we
19: consciously decided not to send our children there. I’d rather
20: home-school our children than send our kids to those schools. The other
21: school is a private grammar school; we can’t afford to send our kids to
22: that school. The other school is in a rough white council area - so that
23: was out of the question. The main person is the woman,
24: the men are useless you can never rely upon them. The fact that I can
25: drive and I’m independent - this helps. I know from experience that
26: other parents would want to send their kids to the primary school that
27: our kids attend. The fact that they don’t know how to drive or their
28: command of English might not be great or their useless husbands
29: work in taxi trade or restaurants so they sleep during the morning.
31: I know that most of the people in this area send their children not out of
32: choice but out of convenience.

The above observation is also supported by research conducted by Platt (2005). Platt (2005) has recognised the importance of a highly-qualified mother in the family in determining the levels of social mobility amongst BME families.

The second factor that affects the choice of Muslim parents in schooling is faith schools. This is supported by research conducted by West *et al.* (2004) on faith school selection criteria.

West *et al.* (2004) noted how selection criteria can be used, by a range of faith schools, as a policy of social exclusion. In the case of Oldham, two voluntary-aided CoE schools are very popular amongst Muslim parents; both of these schools are situated in mainly white neighbourhoods. The allocation policies of both of these schools are targeted mainly at their Anglican cohort; despite this policy, a number of Muslim parents include at least one of these schools when completing the local authority form for secondary school options. The following observations shed light on some of the reasons why Muslim parents continue to put the CoE School down as a choice.

AF13: 8: This year we were choosing a secondary school for our child. When we
9: received the form we put down Christ School as our first choice,
10: Chatterton as our second option and Hollings as our third – this is the
11: closest to our house. We have just received confirmation from the
12: Local Authority that we missed out on our first choice. This is not
13: surprising especially given that our child is a Muslim. We did this to
14: make a point; in the current debate about community cohesion we still
15: have schools that want to maintain the colour white. They refuse to let
16: any Muslims or even any Hindus for that matter. We felt that if more
17: people put that down as their first choice then some day they may
18: come to their senses.

The above interviewee raised a very important point relating to parental choice of schooling, and the above example demonstrates how an increasing number of Muslims are choosing Anglican voluntary-aided schools as their first choice of school. It was clear that parents did not see a contradiction in sending their children to a mainly Christian school. Neither did the parents feel that they were compromising their own religious faith by sending their children to a Christian faith school. This further supports Halstead's (2009) dual faith school distinction, between 'old and new' faith schools, with the former displaying no overt religious

emphasis, compared to the latter. The following respondent elucidates some of the reasons behind this.

AF8: 78: It's all about how well the school does; if the school is a high-achieving
79: school then obviously it's going to make a difference in the choice.
80: Most of these schools do not teach or preach Christianity, these are not
81: madrasa schools for Christians these are just normal high-achieving
82: schools. We don't see that our child's culture would be compromised
83: by sending our child to the school.

The above observation was confirmed by a Muslim parent from Burnley who provided examples of how educational attainment of a given school plays an important role in shaping educational choice.

AF 3: 23: In the case of our school it was clear that one of the main reasons why
23: it was so popular was because of the results. In those days it was a
25: girls' school in a very affluent middle-class neighbourhood. If a school
26: is doing well then parents will send kids to school. Now the same
27: school is amalgamated with the boy's school it has very
28: poor results. Some Muslim parents are refusing to send their children
29: to the school and instead sending them to schools in neighbouring
30: towns. This does not mean that a school that is high-achieving
31: will naturally become an integrated school. This does not mean
32: that culture and religion is not important. What I'm trying to say is that
33: educational result is an important variable along with the make-up of the
34: school and whether the school respects pupils' cultural values. If you
35: have a high-achieving all-white school and your child is the only Black kid
36: or if you have a school that does not respect your culture or faith then
37: obviously the parents would be reluctant to send their kids. But for
38: us everything was just right - the results, mixed school and a school
39: that was very tolerant towards Muslims and people of other faiths.

These sentiments articulated by AF10 were further reinforced by two separate interviews.

The first evidence was provided a Bangladeshi family in Burnley who highlighted how they send both of their daughters to a mixed comprehensive school in the neighbouring town of

Haslington; they explained how the school was a 40-minute drive from their house, and they felt that this was worthwhile because the school provided a ‘good education’, combined with an ethos which valued cultural difference. In the second interview, a Pashtu community activist and businessman explains how he decided to send his girls to a privately-funded independent Muslim Faith School in one of the neighbouring towns. He highlights how the ‘Muslim’ element of the school was one factor that motivated him to send his daughters to the school.

- AF14: 7: You see in Burnley the local school have very poor grades. The girls’
8: schools used to achieve, it used to do well, so many of our girls
9: have gone on to do good jobs and that makes us proud that in
10: our community there are girls that are teachers and doctors, this
11: is our sense of pride. These are all our daughters. You see
12: now there is no choice, we looked at other schools and we
13: were not happy - so eventually we decided to send our
14: daughters to the Muslim school, at least there they will learn the
15: Deen [religion] most importantly they will have the chance to get good
16: grades. The school they go to is a very good school it is one of
17: the best schools in the area with top grades in GCSE.

The above examples demonstrate the complex factors that shape parental choice when deciding on a secondary school for their children. The above examples further explain the role of the intersectional variables of race, class, faith and educational achievement in influencing factors associated with Muslim parental choice. Perhaps what is important to highlight is not what the parents said but, rather, what they did not say. One important factor that did not arise in the above discourse is the idea that parents were intentionally keeping their children away from the white or non-Muslim community. Instead, the above discussion reveals the conscious choice that parents are making in keeping pupils away from schools with a predominantly Muslim intake or from poorly-performing schools.

8.5 Parental Choice and Mono-cultural Schools

The previous section (8.4) explored the relationship between school and cultural capital in influencing parental preference for mixed schools. This section rejects the idea of parental choice shaping school segregation by highlighting a range of factors associated with Muslim parents sending their children to mono-cultural schools.

It has long been established by academics that parental choice and schooling is a complicated phenomenon based upon a range of issues such as social capital, selection process and availability. The Muslim discourse on parental choice of schooling demonstrates an awareness of the idea of ‘weak choice’. For most parents, Halstead (2006) argues, when it comes to parental choice they have ‘weak choice’. For most parents:

...this means expressing a preference between various state-maintained schools in their vicinity. Families are expected to make judgements about such factors as academic success, discipline, facilities and distance to be travelled, and then act tactically to try to ensure that the child is offered a place at a school that they could consider acceptable.

(Halstead 2006: 24)

Parents were mindful that the discourse on school segregation did not match the lived realities of ordinary people. Many parents felt that school segregation is more an outcome of school allocation policies and wider structural factors than of self-segregation and the parental desire for religious separatism. Weeks-Bernard’s (2007) study also supports this observation. Her study showed how, in certain areas, BME parents were sending their children to mono-cultural schools for practical reasons such as locality of the school, ease of travel and protection against racism. The following observation echoes the findings of Weeks-Bernard (2007):

- AF10: 25: You asked a very interesting question about school segregation.
27: In Oldham when you go past West or other schools you can say that

28: 'yes there is self-segregation' in operation. But in reality the picture is
29: slightly complex. I know so many Muslims that put Christ
30: School and other schools in Oldham as their first choice. You know as
31: well as I do that those schools will not allow any Muslim children... Why?
32: because of the school allocation policy. You see the schools that
33: Muslim kids attend are not from choice but rather the schools that they
34: have no other choice but to send. You tell me who wants to send their
35: kids to crap schools! So I feel that the debate is rather unfairly targeted
36: against us. Let me make it clear - there is no self-segregation, people
37: want the best for their kids. It does not take Einstein to figure out, the
39: current all-Asian schools produce failures. Now if the reverse was
40: true if given a hypothetical scenario, if schools such as West with 100%
41: intake of Muslim students were getting the best results then I would say
42: for certainly there would be self-segregation that would not be due to
43: culture, religion or racial factors but because of educational reasons.

The above observation, whilst providing a useful outline of some of the wider factors associated with segregated schools, raised the following interesting and valid question - why do most mono-cultural racially segregated schools [in Oldham] produce poor results? Some parents argued that this was due to the social capital of the parents and their desire not to show any real interest in the child's future. Thus, it was surprising to note that some Muslim parents decided not to send their children to mainly mono-cultural schools because they did not want their *'child to socialise with those kids'*. It is important to point out that 'those kids' that the parent was referring to were fellow Muslim children. In the following example, a Muslim parent reinforces this point further by stressing the importance of class consciousness in determining the nature of educational choice.

AF9: 11: It was very clear to me that by hook or crook I will get my child into North
12: or either that I'll send my child to the Muslim girls' school in
13: Rochdale, there was no way that I'll want my children to go to West . I
14: don't want my child to socialise with those kids. It sounds wrong but the
15: fact of the matter is that kids that attend the school are not concerned
16: about their future. The parents are not also concerned. They are
17: relieved that the kids are away from home for 6 hours every day. I work
18: in this school so I should know, you get some kids that don't even bring
19: a pen to school, not only that, when it comes to parents' evening you
20: struggle to get a handful of parents.

Parental observations on mono-cultural schools in Oldham reveal many interesting insights into the reasons why some parents might send their children to a school with a 90%-plus Muslim cohort. The following example highlights the factors behind pupils attending mono-cultural schools in Oldham.

AF9: 28: You see in Oldham you have school such as West school that
29: are attended by mainly Muslims, in the case of West it's 100%
30: Bangladeshi, Brozehill is full of Pakistanis the same is true for other
31: schools. I went to West and it was a mixed school the year that I left in
32: 1992 it was 60% White and 40% Bangladeshi, those days the area in
33: Coldhurst and Westwood was also mixed, gradually more white people
34: started moving out so that the growing Asian community in those areas
35: started to buy the houses. So it's not surprising the school is 100%.

The above point provides an interesting account of mono-cultural schools; mono-cultural schools are not a product of conscious and collective action but rather a product of the structural issues arising from broader social change within the local community. The following example develops this point further to illustrate some of the micro factors informing pupils' attendance at the local schools. The observation below highlights the broader social factors in general and the cultural capital of parents in particular in shaping mono-cultural schools. Furthermore, what the point does not support is the parental desire to be separate. In essence, they argue that if the

circumstances were right, and parents had the ‘right’ to exercise strong choice, then Muslim parents would choose mixed schools with a reputable track record of delivering good educational results.

AK8: 89 You see I went to West school I work and I live in the local
90: area. So I have seen the school change. When you read
91: the papers and it says that Muslim parents choose to send
92: their kids to West. In reality nobody wants to send their kids to this
93: school. It’s personal circumstances that lead people, most of the time
94: I would say it’s to do with parents’ circumstances. Parents will be
95: reluctant to send their kids to a faraway school because they might not
96: have the means to transport them. Also, if you have a large family
97: bus journey is very expensive business. I also feel that it’s an issue
98: with confidence; you see all the Bangladeshi live in this area, people
99: have a sense of confidence - there is always a fear factor especially you
100: know, are concerned about sending children to all-white school
101: because of fear of racism or you know prejudice against Muslims.

As noted above, school choice is motivated by the desire for educational excellence; if schools are able to deliver this, then wider cultural and religious factors are negotiated in light of these changes. Parental understanding of choice did explore some of the reasons, or the logical thought process, behind this desire for educational excellence. What surfaces is the understanding that the British educational system fully understands and values the principles of multiculturalism. Moreover, they recognised that the educational system in the UK is based upon an economic model of schooling. That is to say, the objectives of the schools are to ensure that children are educated to fulfil an economic function within a free-market economy. Parental discourse viewed schools as secular institutions which transmit knowledge for the purpose of economics, and not for cultural or religious objectives.

This economic perception of education meant that parents were less worried about cultural or religious exposure within state schools. This is perhaps one of the reasons why Muslim parents were interested in sending their children to an outstanding school so that they would be exposed to a positive and dynamic learning environment. There is an acknowledgment that even faith-based Christian schools will not coerce or proselytize their children into Christianity. Rather, they felt the school would value, and if need be accommodate, their child's religious and cultural needs. This argument broadly supports wider academic research by Weekes-Bernard (2007:35), who noted how some Muslim parents preferred non-Muslim faith schools over community schools.

It is this perception of educational institutions as multicultural spaces serving economic objectives that provides the confidence and assurances for parents to send their children to schools with a Christian or secular ethos. It was acknowledged that this perspective on education by Muslim parents gradually evolved, as more people went through the process of schooling. It was also argued that, were their child to be forced to participate in something that they were unhappy about, they had the fortitude and the political clout to address this issue through the correct civic channels. This is articulated very clearly in the following:

AF9: 72: You see times have changed, we live in a multicultural society; the schools
73: especially in Manchester with a significant number of
74: Muslim communities know about the Muslim community. My daughter
75: goes to a mainly white school - the school has a policy that allows my
76: daughter to wear the hijab and wear jogging bottoms when doing games.
77: The school is mindful of these requirements. I can say that I
78: can send my children to any school in this area and they will allow
79: her to exercise her religion. This is a blessing, I know of a school that
80: provides a space for children to do *Jumma* prayer. What else can you
81: ask for... If I had an issue with the school then, I will know who to

- 82: approach, I can either talk to the head directly or speak to my local
83: councillor. I have faith in the system, I know it's fair.

The above issue raises a crucial point which it is important to highlight: this is the idea that Muslim parents feel that their children's cultural or religious values will not be compromised by sending them to a non-Muslim school or even a Christian faith school. One of the many justifications offered was the recognition that most schools located in neighbourhoods with significant Muslim populations will operate and value the principles of educational multiculturalism. In fact, Cole's (2008) work *Every Muslim Child Matters*, has provided a detailed account of how educational needs can be met within the confines of the state education.

An important component which enhances parental confidence in the 'system' is Britain's equality legislation. The role played by the Equality Act in facilitating the process of integration is highlighted below.

- AF 13: 78: One of the many good things about this country is its law. For us,
79: the law against discrimination on religion and race is important.
80: We know that the law will not allow any school to impose a different
81: religion on our child. Children can practise their own religion, the law
82: supports and protects people's religion. We are confident
83: and happy about this. We also recognise that, as far as education is
84: concerned, our child is there to get good education. We know the
85: system of this country is fair; it gives people the right to practise their own
86: faith.

8.6 Framing Mono-cultural Schools

Parental discourse disclosed reluctance in sending their children to mono-cultural state schools due to their poor educational attainment. Muslim parents felt that the institutional policies, structures and procedures contributed towards the failure of Muslim pupils. It is argued that mono-cultural schools, like the schools in the US (Tough 2008), could raise educational

standards providing the appropriate strategies were adopted. This particular framing of the schools draws on principles that have been widely discussed by those advocating educational multiculturalism. This approach argues that higher educational achievements can be nurtured within schools providing a positive representation of Muslim history and culture is reinforced through the curriculum and teaching. This particular view is summarised clearly by the following observation:

AF13: 78: Are you surprised that those schools does not produce any results. The
79: school attracts all poor teachers after all who would want to come and
80: teach in Moortown? For me I think it's part of a bigger picture. The kids
81: that go to those schools need to be part of something, you have NO
82: BLACK OR MUSLIM teachers at the SLT (senior leadership team) my
83: question is how they are making decisions about the future of our kids.
84: The curriculum and the teaching methods are all Eurocentric.
85: Why can't the kids study Islamic, Indian history, Islamic studies etc.
86: West used to be a specialist art school, why couldn't they do art which
87: tells something about who they are? It's simple; you put a good
88: team of teachers at the top that understands the kids' culture and
89: religion I can guarantee that you will get results. At the end of the day
90: our kids are good kids - if you know how to deal with them then you can
91: get them to produce good results.

The above observation summarises the key essence of the debate relating to mono-cultural state schools, namely that educational policies which take into consideration the cultural needs of a child can be an effective tool in improving pupil attainment. In the following observation, a Muslim parent explains how the current educational policy fails to understand the cultural dynamics of Muslim pupils; the parent does so by questioning the logic behind some of the training packages for staff aimed at helping them understand the cultural backgrounds of their pupils.

AF20 7: Every year I hear that teachers from Fartown will be going to Bangladesh
 8: or Razewood teachers going to Pakistan. What is the point in going to
 9: these countries? Why not just step outside their school and go into the
 10: local neighbourhood? These kids are British Muslims, most of them were
 11: born here; they have not gone abroad, what is the point in travelling
 12: thousands of miles when you can just step outside the school. All these
 13: teachers that go on this jolly live in posh villages and drive into our
 14: communities and drive back again. It never occurs to them that these kids
 15: live in OLDHAM NOT PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH. This is how far
 16: removed the leadership team is in these schools. No wonder you have
 17: failures. It's a joke, it makes me angry!

The idea of disconnection between the school, educational policy and the lived realities of Muslim children whom it attempts to serve is further reinforced by the following:

AF17: 52: I went to the school to deliver drugs awareness session to Fartown,
 53: the thing that struck me was that these teachers did not have any clue
 54: about the cultural backgrounds of the students, now I'm
 55: not saying anything about religion but the social class that
 56: these people came from. Perhaps the most worrying thing was that
 57: these people did not care. To most of the teachers it's simply a job,
 58: as long as they are getting paid and enjoying their
 59: holidays that's what matters.

Teachers' often apathetic attitude toward the education of Muslim children was a strand within the parental discourse. The lack of Muslim teachers in general and Muslim teachers at the SLT level in particular was cited as an example of potential contributing factors towards the underachievement of Muslim children. It was felt that teacher empathy and ability to display a detailed understanding of the socio-cultural and religious needs of children is absolutely vital in nurturing the educational spirit amongst young people. This point was further clarified by a behavioural mentor working in a mono-cultural state school, through sharing his experience of occasionally taking R.E lessons in school. He showed how, even after the end of his lesson, children continued to ask him questions about various aspects of Muslim history and culture. He

uses this example to demonstrate how these children have an eagerness to learn about issues with which they have a cultural connection. He goes on to add that this interest in Islam is largely been brought about by the media attention on Islam and Muslims. Many felt that the unprecedented attention paid to Islam and Muslims in the media has allowed the Muslim community to think about their identity in great detail. Thus, it is not surprising that even children in secondary schools are always willing to listen to anything about Islam or Muslim identity.

Muslim parents acknowledged that the educational provisions in mono-cultural state schools did not produce high-calibre students. The reasons for this were twofold. First, the schools did not fully embrace a multicultural vision of schooling. Secondly, due to the mono-cultural make-up of the pupil cohort, some teachers developed apathy towards teaching. One of the reasons for the parental desire for mixed schools was not because they provided multicultural education but because mixed schools in affluent neighbourhoods had greater levels of accountability demanded by ‘pushy’ middle-class parents to ensure that success was achieved. This point is further articulated below.

AF14: 15: Schools in mainly Muslims areas can get away with anything, people
16 don’t know how to complain or influence policy. The school will have a
17: token uncle on the governor’s body. Things are different in the school
18: that my child attends; if the school is seen to slack there would be
19: parents banging at the head’s door. Having accountability to the local
20: community is important. In this school there is only 20% Muslim
21: children, the school will have no option but to work hard to ensure
22: ALL the kids also do well. In the previous mainly Asian school that my
23: child went too, the teachers could not give a damn, to them all the kids
24: were losers so what is the point. In this school the teachers have to
25: work hard, if they neglected any of the children the results of the
26: overall group would be questioned.

8.7 Muslim Faith Schools and Integration: Nurturing Cultural Identity

The intersectional nature of the Muslim discourse on integration was a dominant theme highlighted in the above observations. Parents realised the importance of the cultural recognition of one's identity within the public domain. Cultural identity was not viewed as something which should be kept within the private domain; rather, they recognised the role cultural identity can play in the process of integration. Parents felt that a child needs to have a strong cultural identity; this, they feel, will allow them to have a strong foundation, confidence and motivation for the future. If students are deprived of this learning, it is argued, that they will experience ambivalence towards their own heritage, and also the overall values of British society. An educational system which nurtures a person's cultural identity will help facilitate the process of integration. The importance of recognising this distinction is highlighted below.

AF14: 17: When you drive around the streets in Burnley you see all the plastic
19: gangsters thinking that they are part of some hip hop movie. It is very
20: worrying. They have no sense of self or any direction that is why they're
21: behaving in the manner that they do. It is clear that if these children
22: had a strong sense of self or the schools provided a good foundation
23: about their religion - this would help them... I can give you
24: so many examples of how children that live in this area with good
25: knowledge of religion are making positive contributions through
26: voluntary work. I believe that a strong sense of self helps you go
27: places. I am a simple person but I'm sure if you look you will find
28: evidence for this. That is why I don't object to parents sending kids to
29: Muslim schools because at least they get to learn good manners and
30: have a positive identity.

The above observations summarised the objective behind choosing a faith school. Parents did not wish to send their child to Muslim faith schools to maintain a separate or parallel life; rather, they felt it would facilitate the process of integration through good character. In order to maintain the balance between religious obligation and collective civic duty, some parents sent their children to a Muslim faith school during the day and then to the Brownies in the evening. This is further articulated below:

AF8: 30: We have a young daughter and we have placed her in an Islamic school,
31: this decision was not easy we thought about it long and hard. So it was
32: difficult, the area that we live is all-white. In this school she attends is
33: 100% Muslim but the thing is that there are children from different
34: cultural backgrounds such as Algeria, Arab, Pakistani, and
35: Bangladeshi etc. So she has a very strong sense of the Muslim identity, and I
36: think that is important for her future, but we realised that this did not
37: do anything in the short term as far as getting to know the wider
38: community. After a long thought we decided to send her to the
39: Brownies so that she gets the integration. This has been our rational
40: choice; this we feel gives her full experience of diverse Muslim
41: communities and also the local non-Muslim community.

The above highlights the importance of the dilemma facing some Muslim parents: the importance of Muslim children developing a good understanding of the internal diversity of the Muslim community which covers the experiences of the global ummah, while at the same time recognising the importance of understanding the local non-Muslim community. It is clear from the above observation that the question of diversity plays an important part in the wider thinking process of educational upbringing.

The importance of recognising one's cultural difference as a way of directing positive future prospects was further highlighted below. It is highlighted in the following example, by

drawing upon the respondent's family experiences and how sending their child to a Muslim girl's school did more for the process of integration through nurturing positive self-confidence.

AF8: 6: My brother sent their children to the Muslim Girl's School. The girl's
7: school is in Manchester and did not have a sixth form college. So he sent
8: them to local Sixth Form College. They did not experience any
9: problems in integrating with the non-Muslim students. We are hoping
10: by sending our daughter to the same Muslim school and also the same
11: Sixth Form College, hopefully our daughter would do the same. We
12: think that this strategy will work with our own daughter. This has been
13: the upbringing of my father. He taught us and I always take this principle
14: with me. Always make sure that you have a strong sense of
15: who you are, but at the same time do your best to integrate with the
16: wider society. One of the main reasons why my brother and I have
17: decided to send our children to Muslim faith school is not to be
18: separate instead we feel that having a good sense of who you are
19: helps you connect and integrate with British society.

The above principle of sending children to Muslim faith school based upon the idea that this will help them integrate into wider society is further reinforced by the works of Short (2002). For Short (2002), faith schools 'enhance pupils' academic attainment, self-esteem and sense of cultural identity and that the result of such enhancement is the strengthening of inter-communal ties (Short 2002: 560).

In the case highlighted below, further evidence can also be seen to emerge in support of the above argument. In this case a parent compares his experience of sending his son to the Manchester Muslim School for boys with that of students who attend mixed state schools in Oldham.

AF18 102: In Oldham there is clear evidence of segregation, look at the schools
103: also the neighbourhood, it won't take you long to figure that out. I have
104: only one child. I am a taxi driver so I'm not that very well off. But we

105: decided to send him to the Muslim Boys School in Manchester. I tell
106: you it was not that easy - I drove him down every day and picked him
107: up. This was a good experience he was able to learn and have a
108: good understanding of his faith. More importantly he had the chance to
109: mix with different Muslims from different parts of the world such as
110: Arabs, and White Muslims etc. He would not have had that chance to
111: meet with these types of people living in Oldham. Now he is at the
112: Sixth Form College he has a mixed set of friends mainly white kids.
113: Compare that with the other Pakistani and Bangladeshi kids they all
114: stick together. So I feel that the experience of attending a Muslim faith
115: school did him a world of good. The question is all the other Muslim
116: kids went to either to a school with 100% Asians or a mixed school yet
117: they still stick together. I think my son's experience has helped him
118: integrate into Britain. He is a strong Liverpool fan, we travel together up
119: and down the country and even go and watch matches outside the
120: country.

Both of the above observations (AF 8 and AF 18) demonstrate the importance of framing Muslim faith schools not as a separatist discourse but rather as an experience that will help children integrate in the future. This idea of faith schools as institutions that delay the process of integration is an important and crucial theme that was highlighted by a number of parents. Moreover, the importance of 'seeing' how this process works within immediate and extended families provides a useful route for parents who are concerned about the cultural and religious identity of their child and at the same time are conscious about the importance of integration. The fact that none of the faith schools within the Manchester area is voluntary-aided or grant-maintained means that parents who want to use the idea of 'delayed integration' (Meer 2007) can only do so if they have the financial means. Many parents expressed an interest in the option of sending their child to a Muslim school, but financial circumstances and the number of children in

the household meant that the option of sending all of their children was not a realistic or viable financial option.

8.8 Conclusion

There are a number of parallels between pupil and parental discourses on schooling. Perhaps the important feature of this is the way in which religious identity and the need to belong to a wider community of believers is seen as essential features of self-construct. Parental interviews confirmed how integration is seen as a natural and a gradual process, resulting from the desire to succeed but also to be *seen* as succeeding. This recognition and affirmation of integration is an important mechanism through which status is gained within the community. Parental discourse explored the distinction between maintaining the importance of *‘asabiyya*, whilst rejecting the problematic idea of hyper-*‘asabiyya* based upon un-critical tribal solidarity. This broadly supported existing research in the UK (Weekes-Bernard 2007) and America (Cashin 2004).

Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis demonstrated the political capital invested in ensuring that certain areas with high concentration of Muslim communities have ethnically mixed schools. These schools were seen as a liberal ideal which would not only reduce social disorder but also seen to lead towards greater stake in Britishness (Cameron 2011). Parental choice in schooling is seen as a contributing factor in maintaining ethnic school segregation (Dench et al 2006; Weekes-Bernard 2007) in some English towns. Empirical evidence presented in this chapter saw parental discourse on schooling reject the notion of self-segregation and accept the importance of recognising the intersectional nature of class, religion, race and educational achievement of a

given school in determining parental choice. Evidence presented in this section rejected the self-segregation thesis and the idea that Muslim communities develop conscious racial boundaries with a willingness to create their own ghettos (Philips 2005; Carey 2008; Nazir-Ali 2008; Ali 2010). Instead, it highlighted integration as a lived experience and it further supported the thesis developed by Simpson (2008) and others (Finney & Simpson 2009) that Muslim communities are best described as shifting geographies of ethnic settlement, signified by the movement out of traditional areas into more mixed and diverse neighbourhoods.

Parental choice of school was presented as a complex inter-sectional process between race, class and faith. It demonstrated how class consciousness (Abbas 2004) and levels of *parentocracy* (Brown 1994) of Muslim parents allows mixed schools within affluent ‘middle-class’ areas to be considered as most popular school choice; this is because ‘integration or living in an integrated community is practically the only route black people have to escape concentrated black poverty (Cashin 2004). Thus, Muslim suburbanization was characterised by the motivation by the aspiration to exit the “hood”, which was represented by rising crime and failing schools.

Parental discourse on Muslim faith schools accepted the idea of integration through faith (Jay 2005). It also noted that parents felt the need for their children to be in a mixed school environment; they recognised the need for group solidarity whilst rejecting the idea of *hyper-asabiyya* as found in state mono-cultural schools. This section supports the pupil discourses on mono-cultural schools as a *deficit model*, at the same time confirming the importance of nurturing cultural identity as a way of encouraging integration (McLaughlin 1992; Meer 2009; Jay 2005).

Part 4: Chapter 9: Political Framing of ‘Integration’: Muslim Deconstruction

9.0 Introduction

The previous two sections of this thesis were concerned with exploring the interconnected nature of Muslim discourse and education. Both of these sections demonstrated how integration was viewed as lived experience. In addition, they highlighted the importance of considering religion and group solidarity whilst debating integration and schooling. The meta-narrative used by both parental and pupil discourses rejected the idea of ‘self-segregation’, and further questioned the construct of binary opposites in framing the debate on integration.

This chapter explores Muslim responses to the public framing of integration; it provides a critical reading of this public debate by lending support to Kundnani’s (2007) idea of integration as a form of anti-Muslim racism.

9.1 Integration as Anti-Muslim Rhetoric

The public debate on integration is seen by many respondents as a political construct that is used by the media and politicians as a tool to refer to minority communities in general and Muslim communities in particular. Integration is viewed within this context not as a process that minority communities undergo over a period of time but rather as a way in which Muslim communities are ‘framed’ (Fekete 2008).

The major theme arising from the parental interviews was that the idea of integration was used as a political tool ‘to beat Muslims’. This notion of integration as a ‘political tool’ was a major theme arising out of the parental discourse. Muslim parents viewed the debate on integration as counterproductive; many even saw it as an extension of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice. This is clearly articulated by the following:

AF1: 43: Like I say, the term integration is used to stir up racial hatred and really
44: it is a term that is used by the media and the political class to BEAT
45: people with. Integration is a very good story for the press because it
46: has become a noted issue. If you look at integration the automatic
47: thing that comes to your mind is (.1)<Islam> and the way in which
48: people dress. So I would say that integration is a BIG BIG BIG
49: PROBLEM.

Many Muslims realised that the ‘problem’ of integration as manifested in the public realm did not reflect the lived experience of Muslim communities on the ground. That is why many considered that the objective behind the popular discourse on integration was not to motivate or encourage Muslims to be active citizens but to continue to demonise and essentialise the Muslim community. These attitudes were based upon the idea of Islam being obscurantist and essentially different (Said 1979, 1997; Sardar 1999; Malik 2009). This has led many

Muslims to draw the conclusion that the public debate on Muslims and integration is hampering the process of integration and ‘pushing’ Muslims to adopt a ‘rejectionist’ stance on Britishness. Moreover, this has led many to believe that the discourse of integration is essentially a rhetoric that aims to further marginalise Muslims in a reified white, Anglo-Saxon, protestant, secular society.

Muslim parents recognised that the public framing of integration is often conducted in opposition to the Muslim world-view. They argued that the debate is structured in a way that puts Muslim communities in one camp and the British secular identity on the other. This particular bipolar framing of Islam and the West is considered by many to be deeply problematic, as it pushes Muslims to choose a cultural identity based upon the idea of loyalty. The case of Jack Straw and the *niqab* issue was cited by a number of respondents to further reinforce the point:

- AF 18: If you recall the Jack Straw case, everyone knows that the *niqab* within
19: the Muslim community is hotly contested. You will get a majority
20: opinion that says that *niqab* is not necessary in the West. This is a
21: scholarly opinion but you know that the vast majority of the Muslims
22: would say that people should not wear the *niqab*. But the way in which
23: Jack Straw made the comment and how the media and other
24: racist scum came to support Jack meant that Muslims were pushed to
24: support the Muslim women wearing the *niqab*, even if they didn’t
25: agree with it. As a matter of principle you have to, at times you have to
26: put your differences aside.

Another respondent from neighbouring Manchester, drawing upon the recent *niqab* debates in France, echoed similar sentiments. She reminded her listener that, despite a small number of women wearing the *niqab* in France, it was projected as a threat to secular republican values. The point is made using very strong emotions:

AF2: 17: On the niqab issue in France I have very strong views, my wife does
 18: not wear the niqab, and neither does anyone of my family members.
 19: But like many others I took great offence at what I saw in France partly
 20: because it felt like an attack on all the Muslims and on our civil liberties.
 21: You see in these circumstances you have no options but to defend the
 22: niqab, you see the niqab issue is just a mask to cover the hatred for
 23: Muslims.

The above discourse on integration supports the works of Marranci (2004). According to Marranci (2004), Islam in Europe acts as *transruption* to the Judaeo-Christian secular heritage. The function of Islamophobia in Europe ‘stems from the defence and resistance against the possible effects of real multicultural contacts between Islamic values and European–Western ones’ (Maranci 2004:105). The conceptualisation of integration sees Islam as a socio-political threat to the Western secular values; it consists of ‘any series of contestory cultural and theoretical interventions which, in their impact as cultural differences, unsettle social norms and threaten to dismantle hegemonic concepts and practices’ (Hesse 2000:17).

Hesse’s (2000) and Marranci’s (2004) idea of *transruption* is evident in the public debate in some Western European countries, such as the case of the minarets ban in Switzerland, or the outlawing of the *niqab* in public places in France. For the Muslim discourse, these political events act as important themes of debate, which influence the way Britishness, loyalty and acceptance is debated. This is further evident in the following observation:

A7: 18: Islam is seen as challenging the West, Muslims are blamed for all the
 19: problems in society, any overt or covert signs of Islam are seen as
 20: problematic, but are also seen as challenging the fabric of British
 21: society. There are so many examples - some of them are well-known,
 22: but at a local level, every year during the local election period there is
 23: always a scandal involving Muslim men and vote-rigging. It is projected
 24: as Muslims putting an end to British democracy. Instead what they
 25: should be open and balanced and say these are individuals that are
 26: trying to play the system. I can’t see these people that do this acting in
 27: the name of Islam.

8.2 Integration and Historical Memory in Shaping Prejudice

The Muslim community discourse draws upon the historical treatment of other minority groups in the UK, particularly the treatment of Jewish, Irish and black immigrant communities. The current political rhetoric against the Muslim community was seen as a manifestation of historical forms of prejudices experienced by other minority communities (Curtis 1968, 1997; Meer 2008; Bhattacharyya 2008).

Integration has always been a ‘hot political’ issue; in fact, the idea of integration as a political tool has a long socio-cultural history. This has been highlighted by a number of academic studies covering the extensive literature of anti-Semitism, racism and anti-Irish prejudice (Curtis 1968, 1997; Hall *et al.* 1978; Frankel & Zipperstein 1992; Gilroy 2002). More particularly, Meer (2008) has shown how the concept of integration in the context of the Jewish experience in the nineteenth century focused on the question of Jewish loyalty to Jerusalem; in the same way, the contemporary question of Muslim loyalty is framed around the *Tebbit Test*.³⁰

The history of anti-terrorist legislation, especially that used against Irish dissidents wrongly convicted of IRA terrorism, such as the Guildford Four, was cited as experience within the parental discourse in order to draw parallels between the current situation of Muslims and past experiences of the Irish community. The high-profile role of Gareth Pierce, who defended the Guildford Four and other leading Muslim suspects charged with terrorism, including the

³⁰ The *Tebbit Test* was an expression developed by the Conservative politician, Sir Norman Tebbit, in April 1990. Tebbit suggested that immigrant communities in Britain should have strong loyalty to the country they have migrated to, and not the country that have migrated from. Tebbit used the analogy of cricket, particularly looking at which side immigrant communities support as a way of measuring loyalty. He further argued that a large proportion of British Muslims would fail to pass this test.

Guantanamo inmate Moazzam Begg (2006), has played a crucial part in placing the ‘Muslim struggle’ within the broader Irish experience.³¹

The current Muslim experience of anti-Muslim prejudice is located within a continuum of old forms of hatred; the reason for this is summarised by the following narrative. It demonstrates how the sheer size of the Muslim population, combined with the twenty-four-hour news broadcast media, means that the attention focused on the Muslim community takes an unprecedented form.

AF6: 56: Integration has always been a hot political issue, if you look back at
57: history you will find that it has always been a political issue, because
58: whenever you have had large-scale migration into UK by people
59: coming from overseas to settle in any given land whether this be UK or
60: many other countries you will have cultural clashes. You will also get a
61: set of myths that will contribute towards those clashes. You will have
62: myths that will generate hate, whether they are the myths of the Jews
63: sacrificing the children of the Christians which is a famous myth
64: that grew and which was used to persecute the Jews. Or if it’s the myth
65: around the modern age around Islam advocating the forced
66: marriage of women. So these are myths that can be used to whip up
67: fear or strife or social tensions. The reason why we have so many
68: myths around Islam and Muslims today compared with the past I would
69: say is the prevalent nature of the mass media and also introduction of
70: various new media.

The above example demonstrates how integration is used by political and media sources as a way of talking about minority groups. Parental discourses, as demonstrated above, see the Muslim communities as ‘*folk devils*’; there is a long history of ‘*folk devils*’ being used to generate moral panics (Cohen 1980; Alexandra 2000).

³¹ For a detailed example of this see, the following interview of Gareth Pierce by Moazzam Begg <http://www.cageprisoners.com/our-work/interviews/item/117-moazzam-begg-in-conversation-with-gareth-pierce>.

The above experiences of anti-Muslim prejudice (Malik 2009) in the form of political and media discourses (McCreary *et al* 2007) are seen as an important factor shaping the Muslim view of integration. The current tensions around Islam in the UK, following the events of 9/11 and 7/7, has deeply politicised the Muslim community. Some parents felt they were being ‘pushed’ into a corner and forced to take a ‘*stance*’. Taking a stance requires an active role, which nurtures the collective Muslim ‘*asabiyya*’ to respond to external political events; this often requires them to take an opposite position to that of the status quo. This is further articulated below:

AF6: 18: Well the obvious question is 7/7 and 9/11, people have been pushed to
 19: one corner you will find that people have been forced to take side
 20: and take a stance. People need a common enemy; today the
 22: Muslims fit that bill. You have to act against your enemy, when
 23: the government does something against the common enemy it makes
 24: you feel safe and secure - well that’s been a part of it. When we
 25: look at stop and search we know that certain communities are
 26: targeted by the authorities.

[And]:

AK 7: 101: You see I am sick and tired of the way in which the government is
 102: lecturing us on integration, take Cameron’s recent speech on
 103: multiculturalism, integration and Britishness. I have one thing for
 104: Cameron he can shove his liberalism up his backside. I am sick to
 105: death, I have realised one thing even if we all became liberals
 106: overnight, if we all went to the pub for a swift half. They will still call us
 107: a Paki bastard. So I might as well be a Paki with principle. One thing
 108: that I know for sure if you stick to who you are, you will get respect at
 109: the end.

The above observations provide a clear account of the way in which political debates on integration are dismissed and resisted, based upon a wider framework of social acceptance and rejection. One of the key comparisons offered by a number of Muslim respondents focused on the importance of maintaining and nurturing one’s cultural identity and maintaining the spirit of

‘asabiyya. This is further articulated by the following example which drew upon the ‘Michael Jackson paradox’:

AF7: 108: You have to realise that we can never all be the same, you see Michael
109: Jackson tried changing his colour to white. My question is, did that earn
110: him more or less respect by the white community? The answer is less.
111: The point is this when he was Black he was not accepted and even
112: when he changed his colour he wasn't. He should have realised that his
113: fans liked him for what he was that was his music. So staying true to
114: who you are is very important. There is no point changing for the
115: political masters. At work there is this guy that likes to go to the pub, he
116: likes to stay away from the Muslims or the Asian community. He thinks
117: that this will get him more respect. At the end of the day people
118: should respect you and accept you for who you are. I won't change for
119: no-one

The wider political rhetoric on integration was considered by many Muslims to be one-dimensional. It involves the government in general and the media in particular ‘telling’ the Muslim community to integrate. This one-dimensional debate on integration does not provide a space for Muslims to convey apprehensions or concerns they may have over certain practices within the wider society. Respondents felt there was no room for the Muslim community to participate in the debate on integration; any genuine criticism of certain experiences is discredited in the name of ‘segregation’ and ‘disloyalty’. The following respondent argues the need for a debate on integration based upon a negotiated debate on shared values. A negotiated approach to shared values sees social values not as an absolutist dominant set of majoritarian values but as a collective and inclusive negotiated activity (Haydon 1987; Leicester 1989; Halstead 1995).

Ak15: 18: Shared values seem to be in fashion as far as the debate of
19: integration is concerned. I see this discussion to be problematic, it does
20: not help anything. I have been in this country long enough to realise that this
21: discussion is a non-starter. My socialist friends in our trade union
22: will object to Cameron's set of values. So let's not have a set of values
23: which are pushed on us, instead let's have a mature debate about
24: these values and try and mutually agree on these values.

9.3 Black Muslim Convert Discourse on Integration

The majority of the Muslim communities in UK consist of the dominant South Asian ethnic cohort. Recently, following the events of 9/11 and 7/7, the convert community in general and the Black convert Muslim community in particular have been a focal point in the media debate. The role of Jermaine Lindsay, one of the 7/7 bombers, and Richard Reid, the shoe bomber, together with the active role played by the Brixton Mosque in combating extremism have placed the Black Muslim convert community in the national spotlight (Reddie 2009). The broader appeal of the Black Muslim aesthetic within the 'Hip Hop' industry (Miah & Kalra 2008) combined with the growing academic literature articulating a Black-American cultural experience of Islam (Jackson 2005) have contributed to the importance of studying the Black Muslim convert community in the UK (Reddie 2009). In addition, unlike the white Muslim convert respondents, the Black convert experience provided a distinctive cultural reading of integration within the context of the Windrush experience. The convert discourse focused primarily on racism, and the way in which the white host society failed to accept a Black Christian community travelling to the 'motherland'. This is further articulated below:

AF4: 79: At the end of the day it's all about understanding, when our parents first
 80: came here on the Windrush, there were a lot of concerns about 'these'
 80: foreigners who came in on the Windrush. Our community faced a
 81: great deal of hostility, despite the fact that they were Christians
 82: travelling to the motherland. This continued when we went to
 83: school, we realised that all the minority communities had the same
 84: difficulty with racism and harassment. We also realised that it wasn't
 85: only the racist kids in the school that was giving us grief it was the
 86: system. We realised that it was the government that run the system
 87: and it was almost that they were stoking up fears of Black men that
 88: created a culture of resentment.

The above observation highlighted how a belief in Christianity, together with a broader conceptualisation of Britishness, was not sufficient for the Windrush community to be socially accepted. This further motivated many Black community members to establish Black Churches in the UK (Reddie 2009). The reason behind developing Black Churches, as pointed out by one of the respondents, was 'not because they wanted to display signs of self-segregation' but rather a consequence of the rejection by the mainstream host community'. Black convert responses developed their narratives of integration by drawing upon the above Windrush experiences to shape their understanding of integration. Many argued that they were in a privileged position to articulate a nuanced Muslim perspective on integration. This is clearly articulated as follows:

AF4: 18: You see we are quite lucky because we were born Christians but
 19: decided to convert or revert to Islam. When people talk about
 20: integration we know it's a joke. After all we were Christians and spoke
 21: English even our names were anglicised. But despite all this integration
 22: where did it get us! You see at the end of the day even if you behaved
 23: like the average white man - to them you are still an outsider. You will
 24: still get stopped in the street by the police. So I say you can keep your
 25: integration we know it's a con and a joke.

The above observation further captured the experience of the Black convert perspectives on integration. It showed how, despite attempting to integrate into British society, they were left with a feeling of rejection and isolation. Many argued that the question of integration should not be whether 'Muslims were willing to integrate into British society' but whether there is a

‘willingness to accept Muslims as British citizens’. It was clear that this particular group of Black Muslim converts felt that the Muslim youths had already integrated into the host community; they highlighted the prevalent consumption of alcohol and abuse of drugs, combined with various sexual activities, as examples of integration. In light of these practices, the convert Muslim responses articulated the idea of ‘dis-integration’, meaning that too much integration was having a detrimental impact on the Muslim community. The idea of ‘dis-integration’ is clearly articulated in the following observation:

AF4: 19: You see all this talk about integration and how Muslims aren’t
20: integrated is nonsense, you tell me which young people that you know
21: of is not integrated? As a parent and a youth worker I can tell what
22: young people are really up, the alcohol, the drugs and sex - these
23: practices are not from the Muslim tradition. As someone that
24: converted to Islam I can say that what we need is a debate on
25: dis-integration not integration.

9.4 Integration as Gradual Process

The idea of integration was based upon a firm understanding and realisation that integration is a new topic of discussion. The Muslim community in the UK is a relatively new community, which migrated after the post-war boom. The nascent nature of the community is further demonstrated by the fact that many first-generation Muslims are still active, even though they are ageing and rapidly decreasing in number.

Many argued that the political discourse on integration attempted to enforce an immediate process of change on the Muslim community, which other communities, such as the Jewish and the Irish communities, had generations to achieve. It was clear that a strong commitment to integration is a relatively new idea, which had its inception following the

summer riots of 2001 (Sardar 2010), in fact, prior to the events of the northern mill town riots, a number of local authorities were very content to maintain high levels of residential and school segregation (Ritchie 2001). In fact, many parents put forward the idea that, had the history of the first decade of the 21st century been different and the events of 7/7 and 9/11 not taken place, the debate about Muslim integration would not have been so prevalent. To reinforce this point about the shifting priorities of integration and segregation, the following observer evaluates the way in which the idea of self-segregation is publicly debated:

- AF7: 21: I have difficulties with self-segregation; when I applied for a flat, this
22: was before the riots, I was given a house in Coldhurst. When my
23: brother was of school age he was given a primary school with all
24: Bengali's, similarly with the secondary school. How can the council
25: then turn around and blame us for being segregated. I'll give you
26: another example; the council help set up a Youth Association
27: specifically for Bangladeshis, the council even funded many
28: projects that reinforced a sense of Bangladeshi national identity. Look
29: at them now: the hypocrites blame us for being segregated. At the
30: end of the day it's a big political game they play, we are just disposable
31: pawns.

The above example demonstrates how the Muslim community has become politically active and politically mature following the key landmark events of the last decade. Muslim community discourse demonstrated a strong critical assessment of and political maturity towards the government policies relating to integration and segregation. Many saw the political and the policy rhetoric of integration fostering a sense of uncertainty about government agendas. Many even considered the political attention on Muslims as a positive step, given that that it has politically mobilised a generation of Muslims. This point is clearly articulated by the following:

- AF10: 17: One thing you have to say is that the last decade has been a testing
18: time for Muslims and at the same time it has also been a blessing. You

19: see God works in mysterious ways. The Muslim community is a highly
20: politically literate community following the war on terror. The BBC no
21: longer controls our opinion, we consult a range of sources when it
22: comes to Muslim issues...You can't say that years of government
23: counter-terrorism strategy, the Prevent initiative and the policies on
24: stop and search is not going to have an effect on the community. You
25: must be daft to think that. An entire generation of Muslims are now
26: politically astute. If the government is going to think that we are going
27: to dance to its tune its got another think coming. At the end of the day
28: which Muslim living in the UK does not want to integrate. If
29: they didn't, they should be on the plane back to Dar al Islam. You have
30: to give the community the space and more importantly TIME to
31: integrate; all the rhetoric of integration is going to have the opposite
32: reaction.

The above final remark regarding providing a 'time and more importantly space' for the community to integrate is an important feature in the way in which the Muslim community frames integration. It is only through a process of inevitable gradual change that the community is going to develop. External socio-political and cultural interference will only undermine the direction of this trend. In fact, it was clear that the parents felt that, within a short period of time, the Muslim community had gone through significant changes compared with other minority groups.

9.5 Conclusion

Chapter 8 considered parental discourse by examining the concept of integration as a social category. It was particularly interested in the ways in which integration was talked about in general and within schooling in particular. This chapter was concerned with exploring parental discourse as a political category of integration. Two key themes were explored in this chapter.

The first was the idea that the political framing of integration constituted a form of anti-Muslim rhetoric (Kundnani 2007), which was predicated upon the assumption that Islam and Muslim communities acted as a *transruption* to Judaeo-Christian secular heritage of British political landscape (Hesse 2000; Marranci's 2004) The starting premise of this discussion revolved around the idea of a disconnect between the political rhetoric of integration and the lived experiences of Muslim communities, who felt they had either integrated into the British society or saw the idea of integration as a gradual inevitable process (Cessari 2004). Given this observation, Muslim parents argued that external political intervention especially by political and media actors only undermined the process of integration bringing about counterproductive results, as it forces Muslims to take an oppositional stance toward Britishness.

Second, rhetorical framing of integration and Muslims was seen to draw on historical memory from the current guise of anti-Muslim racism to anti-Irish sentiment (Curtis 1968, 1997) anti-Semitism (Meer 2008; Bhattacharyya 2008) and racism against the black community (Hall *et al.* 1978; Gilroy 2002). In doing this the Muslim parents located current trends of anti-Muslim prejudice within a continuum of old forms of prejudice. The current political manifestation of the debate on integration, revolved around the idea of integration as a 'political tool which is used to beat Muslim'. Thus, integration was viewed not as a cultural process that minority communities

undergo over a period of time but rather as a way in which Muslim communities are ‘framed’ (Fekete 2008).

Parental discourses on integration, within this chapter viewed the concept of integration as an analytical category and not as a cultural process. The objective behind the political discourse of integration was not to promote a greater sense of Britishness or patriotism. Parents felt that the framing of integration revealed dormant prejudices against the Muslim communities, parents often described ‘integration’ as a political tool which is used to ‘beat’ minority communities in general, and in recent years, the Muslim communities in particular. The politics of integration was seen as a wider European phenomenon of anti-Muslim prejudice which was encouraging a sense of Muslim solidarity based upon the experience of marginalisation - the idea of Muslim group solidarity or *‘asabiyya* is further discussed in light of Ibn Khaldun’s sociological framework in the following chapter.

Part 5: Chapter 10: Interpretation of Findings: Khaldunian Sociology

10.0 Introduction

There is a plethora of books on the topic of integration and Muslim communities in Western European societies. In light of a review of these books, chapter one of this thesis noted the scarcity of empirical studies exploring what integration means to Muslims and what role it plays in framing the debates on schooling.

Parts four and five of this thesis have attempted to bridge this gap by exploring the pupil and parental discourses on integration and schooling. The pupil focus groups highlighted three dominant and ambivalent narratives of integration and mixed schooling. Firstly, Muslim pupils tended to view schooling as a dialectical multicultural experience where ‘people can get to know each other’. Secondly, pupil narratives in light of experiences of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice used the idea of group solidarity or *‘sticking-together’* as a dominant meta-discourse. Finally, the perception of mono-cultural schools recognised the potential impacts on language and future employment prospects while at the same time appreciating the positive experiences, especially in faith school contexts. These positioning of schooling and integration help deconstruct the binary opposites of the mono-cultural and integrated school policy imperatives. The parental focus groups also examined the notion of integration in schooling through the idea of embourgeoisement and also the desire to achieve integration through faith. The dominant theme, arising from both of the focus groups and the one-to-one interviews, is the importance of *‘asabiyya* to fellow Muslims, along with the rejection of the principles of hyper-*‘asabiyya*.

This section will discuss the concept of *‘asabiyya* in light of Khaldunian sociology. The first section will provide a brief overview of Ibn Khaldun’s work on group solidarity by applying a careful reading of the *Muqaddimah*, together an examination of the social, political and moral typologies of *‘asabiyya* as discussed by Rabi (1967). The second section intends to apply the concept of *‘asabiyya* to the pupil and parental discourses on integration.

10.1 Ibn Khaldun and Group Dynamics

Contemporary discourses on group dynamics are usually associated with negativity or hostility; a quick survey of the perception of group dynamics within the black (Hall 1978; Gilroy 2004) or Muslim community (Alexandra 2000) reveals how both of these groups have been associated with hyper-masculinity and gang culture respectively. In fact, this follows a particular trend in the study of group dynamics within social psychology. As early as 1896, Le Bon (1896) discussed the idea of the ‘group mind’ to refer to the way in which groups carry a ‘collective mentality’, which allows them to act in irrational ways (cited in Brown 2000). In addition, Zimbarde (1969) argued how group behaviour allowed individuals to carry out crimes, such as riots and revolutions, because it allowed members to separate individualised actions through a ‘cloak of anonymity’ (ibid.). More recently, Brown (2000) has also confirmed the above observation, by demonstrating how group behaviour or any forms of group unity grounded upon common, mutual or collective purpose or action have often received a negative press. He argues how group behaviour is often associated with ‘social un-desirable aspects – de-individualisation, prejudice, social loafing and group think, rather than more positive aspects of team spirit, intergroup cooperation, group productivity and collective problem solving’ (Brown 2000:xiv).

The Khaldunian imagination of ‘*asabiyya*’ sees group cohesion not only as highly desirable but also as natural and essential for any civilisation (Fromhertz 2011). This idea, as already noted in chapter three, encompasses a classical Islamic world-view, which is supported by a number of traditions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (saws), such as the often-quoted authentically collected sources: ‘stick to the group and beware of being separate’ (Tirmidhi, no date) and ‘the group is a mercy and separation is torment’ (Hanbal no date). For Ibn Khaldun, ‘*asabiyya*’ provides a source of social identity; it plays a crucial role in defining the way people conceptualise their world and, most importantly, how the ‘out-group’ is perceived. Ibn Khaldun further articulates the importance of group solidarity by drawing upon the famous story of Joseph and his brothers in the Quran:

They said to their father: ‘If the wolf eats him, while we are a group, then, indeed, we have lost out’. This means that one cannot imagine any hostile act being undertaken against anyone who has his group feeling to support him.

(Ibn Khaldun 1998 Volume 1: 263)

10.2 Rabi’s (1967) Typology of ‘*Asabiyya*’

Fromherz (2011a), in a recent paper presented at Cambridge University, argued that Ibn Khaldun’s writings should not be seen as theoretical principles that transcend time and space; rather they should be interpreted as political tools used by Ibn Khaldun to pursue his political objectives. This view is widely contested and rejected by a number of writers; among those discussed in this thesis are Gellner (1981) and Ahmed (2003, 2005). More recently, this view has been challenged by Ravetz (2011), who has used Khaldunian sociology as a way of understanding the *Arab Spring*.

Following the same scholarly tradition, Rabi (1967) assesses the impacts of *‘asabiyya* as a sociological tool in understanding the nature of group solidarity. Rabi (1967) extracts the following three themes associated with Khaldunian sociological theory to help explain the politics of group dynamics.

- *‘asabiyya* as a social force
- *‘asabiyya* as a political force
- *‘asabiyya* as an ethical and moral principle

Social force

The central tenant of *‘asabiyya* is based upon a social bond between people of shared kinship or cultural ties. The social bond, with its emphasis on fellowship, partnership and association, gives energy and momentum to group solidarity. Moreover, the inevitable power of association, affiliation and attachment to the group is crucial for the strength and longevity of the group (Ibn Khaldun 1958). For Ibn Khaldun, group solidarity is a product of the social environment, with group solidarity playing a vital, tenacious and powerful function, first in rural communities then in urban societies. This point is further reinforced by Rabi (1967) who states:

Its function as a social bond and a coordinating power is, then, an attribute of a particular stage of group development which again proves one of the assumptions reached in discussing Ibn Khaldun’s method. That is to say, that his analysis shows a tendency in favour of giving priority to the same way of living, as an important factor in determining the shapes, circumstances, and roles of *‘asabiyya*.

(Rabi 1967:67)

The function of *‘asabiyya* acts as a form of unity and consensus for group dynamics; it also helps by providing the group in question with clear objectives and a sense of direction. For Rabi (1967) *‘asabiyya* as a social force has two distinctive objectives. Firstly, it nurtures solidarity and

vigour to one's own group as a result of the aforementioned ties; secondly, it unites people by mere force, to compromise the conflicting '*asabiyyas*, to form one great and powerful group' (Rabi 1967:65). Ibn Khaldun argues that the absence of coordinated cooperation and group solidarity may give rise to disintegration, internal division and discord between groups, which may often lead to bloodshed and violence.

Political Force

Ahmed (2005) views the concept of '*asabiyya* as a vehicle for political action; this is confirmed by Fromhertz (2011), who has argued that '*asabiyya* is a driving force for history, and most importantly, the mechanism through which the fates of empires and political dynasties are determined. Lawrence (1984), in a detailed study of the *Muqaddimah*, has also recognised the intricate relationship between the practice of '*asabiyya*, the nature of power and Islamic ideology. Moreover, Rabi (1967) has shown how '*asabiyya* is principally a vehicle that is used to 'establish political power either within the limited group or over the whole community' (Rabi 1967:61).

All political action encompasses a principle, cause or a set political objective that a group is intending to achieve. '*Asabiyya* plays a crucial role in achieving these objectives through the process of group solidarity. Moreover, during times of political upheaval, '*asabiyya* can also play a vital function in defending the group against external forces by reinforcing and stabilizing the influence of religion within the group.

The success of the political demands made by groups is largely determined by the harmony, consensus, and cohesion of those groups. If the '*asabiyya* is strong and versatile, the group is likely to be successful in achieving the desired political goals or objectives. One of the

key aspects of achieving political goals is based upon the idea that strong '*asabiyya*, will enable the group in question to state certain claims and demands. Ibn Khaldun (2005), in the following observation, further reinforces this point:

...group feeling produces the ability to defend oneself, to offer opposition, to protect oneself and to press one's claim...people whose group feeling cannot for its own defend them against oppression certainly cannot offer any opposition or press any claims.

(Ibn Khaldun 2005:111)

Moral Value

Rabi (1967), drawing upon the works of Ibn Khaldun, makes the distinction between two types of '*asabiyya* – the pre-Islamic and Islamic forms of '*asabiyya*. The pre-Islamic concept of '*asabiyya* is based upon blind, unconditional support for a group, which often means carrying out actions without due regard for ethical considerations or the 'justice of its cause' (Rabi 1967: 49). For Ibn Khaldun, pre-Islamic forms of '*asabiyya* are a product of *Jahiliyya*, or pre-Islamic ignorance, which is antithetical to the Islamic world-view (al-Mubarakpur 1995; Lings 1998). The pre-Islamic acts of *Jahiliyya* are contrasted with Ibn Khaldun's understanding of the primordial nature of humans, who are innately inclined towards righteousness; this is summarised by the following observation:

In view of his natural disposition and his power of logical reasoning, man is more inclined towards good qualities than towards bad qualities, because the evil in him is the result of the animal powers, and in as much as he is a human being, he is more inclined towards goodness and good qualities.

(Ibn Khaldun 1958:291)

The principle that Ibn Khaldun uses to navigate between pre-Islamic and Islamic ideas of *‘asabiyya* is judged by its objectives or consequences of human action; for Rabi (1967), the exercise of power and the pronouncements of group feelings of solidarity should be determined by their objectives. If these are conducted in compliance with religious principles associated with the common good or even meaningful secular objectives, then *‘asabiyya* is acceptable. Rabi (1967) further concludes that ‘in this way, Ibn Khaldun was able to utilise the idea of *‘asabiyya*... to differ categorically and purposefully from those reflected by the old tradition. It is in this sense that his idea of *‘asabiyya* can be considered as a constructive moral concept’ (Rabi 1967:68).

10.3 *'Asabiyya* and Pupil Discourse on Schooling

This section will attempt to provide a theoretical interpretation of the key findings on Muslim discourse on schooling in light of the Khaldunian sociology of *'asabiyya*. It aims to do this by applying the typology of *'asabiyya* as understood by Rabi (1967). The first section will focus on the pupil discourses on integration and schooling, whilst the latter will evaluate the parental discourses.

Two key themes emerged from the pupil discourses on integration. Firstly, the meta-narrative of *'sticking together'* within the context of mixed schooling is based upon the principles of group solidarity based upon religious identity. The second theme associated with pupil discourse focused upon the idea of 'getting to know each other' as a moral imperative. Both of these ideas will now be discussed in light of Rabi's (1967) typologies of *'asabiyya*.

Pupil discourse as social 'asabiyya

The concept of *'asabiyya* is best used to explain and understand the idea of *'sticking together'* within pupil discourse. As noted, *'sticking together'* was a dominant and recurring theme in most of the focus group interviews. In light of the interview data, it was clear how the idea of *'sticking together'* emerged as a social category which nurtured *'asabiyya* through the sense of 'group solidarity, loyalty and group consciousness' (Daood 1967 in Ibn Khaldun 2005: :xIi).

One of the key features which shaped '*sticking together*' was based on the notion of 'commonality', which was grounded in a strong social bond nurtured by a range of variables, including humour, shared experiences and, most importantly, religion.

Ibn Khaldun clearly demonstrates how one of the social features of '*asabiyya*' is that it provides group protection against external threats, be they actual or perceived. In fact, '*asabiyya*' was used by Muslim pupils to challenge and resist racism and anti-Muslim prejudice in schools from both teachers and pupils. Moreover, '*asabiyya*' in the form of '*sticking together*' provided a stable base for group solidarity and pursuing of a collective purpose; in the absence of '*asabiyya*' Muslim pupils in mixed schools expressed strong feelings of isolation and were vulnerable to anti-Muslim prejudice.

Pupil discourse as political 'asabiyya

The discourse of '*asabiyya*' in the context of schooling can be seen to play an important role in the daily lives of Muslim pupils. The idea of '*sticking together*' was clearly visualised as a process aimed at achieving certain objectives. One of the most important objectives that the act of '*sticking together*' was seen to achieve is group protection against external threats, both in school and also whilst travelling to and from school. This observation is supported by Ibn Khaldun, who has argued that group solidarity 'produces the ability to defend oneself, to offer opposition, to protect oneself' (Ibn Khaldun 2005:111). The specific comments made by the young Yemeni Muslim (see 6.6) demonstrates clearly how '*asabiyya*' based upon religion plays an important role in achieving group protection. Furthermore, the experiences of young Muslims in the Manchester focus group interviews also pointed to '*asabiyya*' as a way of generating support and feelings of stability

The pupil experiences revealed how the crucial events of 7/7 and 9/11 have created a sense of uncertainty and instability in schools. The pupil discourse clearly demonstrated how *‘asabiyya* helped them to navigate through their schooling experience in a climate of hostility. Any attempt by teachers to break down *‘asabiyya* within schools simply wasn’t effective, as we have seen how, in the absence of these obstacles, *‘asabiyya* functions as a normalizing presence.

Perhaps one of the important features of political *‘asabiyya* is the idea that *groups* have the ability to make certain demands. Once again the pupil discourses provided useful narratives to show how young Muslims would use *‘asabiyya* as a way of symbolising through numerical size of the group, to signal how racism and or anti-Muslim prejudice will not be accepted. Once again, the Manchester Muslim focus group showed how this was achieved using a very strong language of masculinity (See 6.6 and references to how Muslims will finish anyone who showed any signs of racism).

Pupil discourse as moral ‘asabiyya

Pupil discourses on schooling were associated with a strong moral dimension; group cohesion or group solidarity was talked about as a mechanism that provided support to young people. The *‘asabiyya* was not referred to as a *gang*, neither were any references made to any form of criminal acts. When references to violence were pronounced, this was done with a reactive force, whereby young people were responding to an external stimulus. In fact, what emerged was the importance of *‘asabiyya* in the process of schooling for Muslim youths.

The pupil discourses on the Muslim *ummah*, especially in light of the political events in Palestine, also demonstrated how political interest in social injustices around the world is debated through the idea of *‘asabiyya*. This particular way of talking about global injustices was

clothed in religious speech; this very much connects to what Rabi (1967: 67) referred to as moral dynamics of *‘asabiyya* with overt religious connotations.

Moral aspects of pupil discourse also took the form of religious and secular underpinning. The desire to know each other, the imperative to socialise and interact with non-Muslims and with a willingness to see social spaces as multicultural spaces of hope where interaction and exchange can take place all carried moral underpinnings. This is a clear demonstration of the recognition of *‘asabiyya* and the rejection of the notions of *hyper-‘asabiyya*. The desire to know each other further echoes March’s (2009a) work on Islamic citizenship discussed in section 3.4, pages 87-88.

10.4 *‘Asabiyya* and Parental Discourse on Schooling

The first and perhaps most important theme arising from the parental interviews was the importance of *‘asabiyya* and rejection of *hyper-‘asabiyya* whilst discussing issues associated with schooling and parental choice. Second, the Muslim parents recognised the need to nurture cultural and religious identity in their children. Finally, Muslim parents expressed a strong desire to send their children to mixed schools, thus providing them with the right balance for multicultural citizenship. Each of these themes will now be considered in light of Rabi’s (1967) typology of Ibn Khaldun’s *‘asabiyya*.

Parental Discourse as Social Asabiyya

The meta-discourse revealed the desire to move into white middle-class areas; this process signified a desire among those who had financial capital to participate in what sociologists have described as a process of embourgeoisement. The discourse of embourgeoisement recognised the importance of *‘asabiyya*, thus clearly demonstrating the desire to move into mixed areas or neighbourhoods which already had cultural diversity.

There was no desire within the parental discourse for assimilation or the appetite to abandon religious or cultural differences. Rather, parental observations revealed interesting ways through which ideas of *‘asabiyya*, based on religion, are nurtured. Two important themes of *‘asabiyya* were discussed. Firstly, the idea of *‘asabiyya* endowed the process of embourgeoisement with status and a sense of recognition for those living in mixed neighbourhoods. The intersectional nature of parental discourse was predicated upon the notions of *‘asabiyya* and class consciousness. Secondly, *‘asabiyya* played a crucial role in determining the parents’ choice of school for their children. This was made clear by the fact that parents were

keen on choosing mixed schools or schools with a population ratio that corresponded to the BME size of the borough. This, they felt, provided a correct balance in nurturing one's cultural identity, creating resistance to racism and providing an opportunity for educational success.

Parental Discourse as Political 'Asabiyya

Political '*asabiyya* was a key feature in parental discourse and was clearly demonstrated by the way in which parents framed their conversations around the choice of neighbourhood and also their choice of schools for their children. Mixed schools and mixed neighbourhoods featured very prominently within their discursive framing of integration. One of the main reasons provided for this was based upon parental desire to see their child succeed, but also to ensure that their cultural identity together with their safety were not compromised.

Expressing a desire to send their children to mixed schools was based upon the recognition that '*asabiyya* provided a mechanism for protection against racism and anti-Muslim prejudice. Parents did not like the prospect of sending their child to a school where their presence would attract undue attention. It was felt that sending a child to an entirely white school would be too much of a sacrifice of personal security. The role of political '*asabiyya* in this context provided a symbolic protection through safety in numbers rather than physical protection.

Mixed schools also provided a medium through which cultural identity is maintained and sustained; it was argued that children in mixed schools will not feel the need to assimilate and lose their cultural identity in order to feel accepted.

Parental Discourse as Moral Asabiyya

Ibn Khaldun's theory of moral '*asabiyya*' makes the crucial distinction between pre-Islamic '*asabiyya*', which was based upon uncritical acceptance of traditional values, and Islamic '*asabiyya*', which is based upon the ideas of social justice, as seen through the contemporary works on the *maqasid al-Shariah*. Pre-Islamic '*asabiyya*' accepted certain values even if these values were against moral sensibilities. Parental discourse demonstrated a desire to move in a direction that is considered in the best interest of their children and wider society. They expressed strong emotions regarding communities or schools comprising *hyper-asabiyya*. The parental discourses constantly balanced and negotiated the desire to maintain '*asabiyya*' through nurturing a strong sense of self, through ensuring that their child had a strong training in Islamic values and the desire to integrate into British society. Even those who decided to send their children to Muslim faith schools did so from the point of view of 'delayed integration' and not through the desire to live separate or 'parallel lives'. Parental discourses also revealed how strong religious values will help children to become better citizens. No contradiction was noted in the desire to simultaneously maintain a religious identity within a British national identity.

Muslim parents demonstrated the ability and flexibility to adjust to new surroundings by maintaining and sustaining the need to belong to a religious community. This point was further reinforced by the parental desire to send children to 'mixed' schools, because mixed schools allow students to maintain '*asabiyya*' and also to draw on it, for social and political benefits.^{10.4}

10.5 Conclusion

The discourse of group solidarity within the context of political philosophy is particularly crucial, especially given that some liberal thinkers (Okin 1999; Barry 2001) reject the idea of multiculturalism, with its emphasis on group rights. Instead they call for a greater emphasis on liberal individualism. They argue that a recognition of group rights within public policy discourse tends to undermine the most vulnerable and weak members, such as women and children, of minority communities.

This chapter has stressed the importance of group solidarity within the sociology of Muslim communities, by drawing upon the works of Ibn Khaldun, Rabi (1967) and others. It has rejected the notion that group solidarity as an essentially hostile and oppressive idea. In doing this it has further supported the idea of group rights as advocated by Modood (2005; 2007) in the study of multiculturalism.

The first part of this chapter provided a brief overview of Ibn Khaldun's work on group solidarity by applying a careful reading of the *Muqaddimah*, together an examination of the social, political and moral typologies of '*asabiyya*' as discussed by Rabi (1967). This chapter provided a unique theoretical contribution towards Muslim group dynamics by using the works of Ibn Khaldun. It demonstrated the importance of group solidarity, both as a textual and sociological imperative, and argued how '*asabiyya*' is a crucial source for social identity; playing an important role in defining the way people conceptualise their world and, most importantly, how the 'out-group' is perceived. The importance of Muslim '*asabiyya*', from a Khaldunian perspective did not translate into separatism or self-segregation; instead it recognised how

‘asabiyya can nurture the common good (March 2009, 2009a) even within the context of meaningful secular objectives.

The second section of this chapter provided a theoretical and sociological interpretation of parental and pupil discourses on integration and schooling based upon the writings of Ibn Khaldun (Rabi 1967). Pupil discourses on integration and schooling highlighted two key themes which were discussed in light of Rabi’s (1967) typology of *‘asabiyya*. Firstly, the meta-narrative of *‘sticking together’* within the context of mixed schooling and experiences of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice were based upon the principles of Muslim identity and group solidarity. The second theme associated with pupil discourse focused upon the idea of ‘getting to know each other’ as a moral imperative, which allowed school pupils to ‘do multiculturalism’. Both of these perceived paradoxes were negotiated through the construct of *‘asabiyya*. Similarly to the pupil experiences of integration and schooling parental discourses stressed the importance of *‘asabiyya* based upon Muslim identity, whilst rejecting the idea of *hyper-‘asabiyya*. In light of this, Muslim parents expressed a strong choice in sending their children to mixed schools, thus providing them with the right balance for multicultural citizenship.

11. CONCLUSION

The key momentous political events of the last decade, such as the 2001 riots, 9/11 and 7/7, have provided a major impetus for a number of publications that have attempted to articulate a perspective on the question of Muslim integration and segregation (Caldwell 2009; Santiosis 2004). A range of policy debates on schooling and the Muslim communities in Britain since 2001 have played an instrumental role in the ways Muslims are positioned within public discourse (Gilborn 2008; Tomlinson 2008). This thesis has explored three aims associated with the Muslim positionality. Firstly, it has examined the school policy of desegregation, as developed by New Labour and endorsed by the Conservative-led Coalition government, by focusing on four northern mill towns in England. Secondly, it has attempted to bridge the lacuna in empirical studies through an *emic* subaltern position (Young 2003), which allows Muslim communities to take ownership of their own discourse on the topics of schooling, segregation and integration. Thirdly, in order to contextualise the Muslim discourse within a broad theoretical perspective, this thesis has used Ibn Khaldun's concept of *'asabiyya* to interpret the major threads connected with Muslim group dynamics (Ibn Khaldun 1953; Rabi 1967).

The analysis of focus group and one-to-one interviews drew upon the content analytical tradition of discourse analysis (Mills 1997), based upon the works of Potter & Wetherell (2010). Discourse analysis as understood in this study saw discourse as a social construct, which can be analysed as a source of empirical data to reveal interesting insights into aspects of a person's life (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984). This approach allowed this doctoral study to provide a 'voice' for Muslims to articulate what integration means to them, especially in light of the framing of Muslims within public and policy discourse. The importance of this approach has been supported by a number of academics including Delgado (1995) and Fekete (2009).

The first section of this thesis highlighted the policy of School Academies, used by four towns in the north of England, as a way of addressing the question of problematic monocultural schools created through school merger or closure. The meta-narrative arising from the government discourse on segregation is based upon a binary approach to schools, with ‘Muslim’ monocultural state schools viewed as highly problematic and mixed schools considered as the antidote to social unrest (Davies 2009; Taylor 2009). This section concluded by arguing that the contemporary policy of desegregation aimed at tackling monocultural state schools attended by mainly Muslim students is based upon the following: (i) A ‘community-relations’ approach of tackling violent extremism through the principles of shared values, citizenship and Britishness (McGhee 2008; Kundnani 2009); (ii) a policy based upon ‘aggressive majoritarianism’, whereby prejudices against Muslims are justified in the name of security and cohesion (Gilborn 2008); and (iii) the fact that the mixed schools arising from either school mergers or the closure of monocultural schools are highly problematic especially in light of the conditions required for the social contact hypothesis (Hewstone & Brown 1986; Short 2002). Furthermore, in light of interviews conducted for this thesis, there is a possibility that segregation between schools will be replaced by segregation within schools.

The second section of this thesis explored the pupil discourses on monocultural and mixed schools, using in-depth, semi-structured focus groups and one-to-one interviews with Muslim pupils, factoring in issues such as gender, ethnic group and geographical location. The empirical data, highlighted in this thesis, ruptured the binary opposites of segregated schools as ‘bad’ and integrated or mixed schools as ‘good’ (Philips 2009; Ramadan 2009). Instead, pupil discourses used a range of repertoires to explore and examine their experiences of schools, based upon the notions of ‘mixing’ and ‘sticking together’. Muslims attending both monocultural and

mixed state schools welcomed the opportunity to ‘mix’ and to take an active role in ‘doing multiculturalism’. The idea of ‘integration as performance’ was also discussed through the Quranic lenses of ‘getting to know each other’. Muslim pupils felt that mixed schools were an ideal space that would allow them to engage with multicultural citizenship. ‘Sticking together’ was an equally dominant repertoire used within the pupil discourse to explore the centrality of group solidarity and belonging to a collective body of Muslims. The ‘collective group’ was constructed through the religious categorisation of Muslim ummah, which was largely a response to the experiences of racism and anti-Muslim prejudice within schools, combined with the depiction of Muslims within the public domain as having a problematic presence (Shain 2003; Crozier & Davies 2008)

The third section considered the parental discourse on integration, choice, and type of schooling. In order to achieve this, a range of Muslim perspectives were explored, including gender, ethnicity and geographical location. This section examined how integration is seen as a natural and gradual process, resulting from the desire to succeed but also to be *seen* as succeeding. It was clear from the evidence presented in this section that Muslim parents rejected the notion that Muslim communities develop conscious racial boundaries with a willingness to create their own ghettos. Instead, it supported a conception of Muslim communities based on shifting geographies of ethnic settlement, signified by the shift from traditional monocultural Muslim neighbourhoods into more mixed and diverse areas (Finney & Simpson 2009). Parental attitudes to residential integration were closely associated and inextricably linked with ethnically mixed schools, with parents’ desire to move into middle-class suburbia predicated on the social and economic success of their children (Brice 2009; Finney & Simpson 2009). Parental choice of mixed schooling and even Muslim faith schools is best interpreted through the

intersectionality of race, class and faith, which was constantly negotiated in the light of maintaining and nurturing cultural and religious identity with integration and multicultural citizenship (Meer 2010).

The dominant theme arising from the focus groups and the one-to-one interviews with both the parents and the pupils focused on the importance of *‘asabiyya* to fellow Muslims, and the rejection of *hyper-‘asabiyya* (Ahmed 2003, 2005). The Khaldunian understanding of *‘asabiyya* sees group solidarity or group feeling based upon religion as necessary and essential for Muslim communities (Ibn Khaldun 1958; Rabi 1967). The concept of *‘asabiyya* was central to the parental and pupil discourses. Both of these groups used it to conceptualize their understanding of social reality, albeit for different purposes.

‘Asabiyya as understood by Muslim pupils within the experience of ‘sticking together’ is based upon the following Khaldunian premise – ‘one cannot imagine any hostile act being undertaken against anyone who has his group feeling to support him’ (Ibn Khaldun 1958: vol1. 263). For the Muslim students, this premise of *‘asabiyya* was fundamental for navigating through mixed schooling, especially within a hostile environment marked by anti-Muslim prejudice following the events of 9/11 and 7/7 (Allen 2011). In light of these ‘difficult periods’, group solidarity plays a vital purpose in defending ‘the group’ against external forces by reinforcing and stabilizing the influence of religion within the group.

Pupil discourse of *‘asabiyya* revealed it to be an essentially productive and worthwhile feature of school experience. It was clear from the pupil discourse that *‘asabiyya* did not correspond to segregation: in fact, Muslim pupils rejected the idea of *hyper-‘asabiyya*. They felt that the mixed-school experience, despite its difficulties, also provided the opportunity to mix

and to get to know each other. Whilst these experiences may appear to be contradictory, it was felt that *‘asabiyya* facilitated the process of mixing from a position of self-assurance.

The most important theme arising from the parental interviews, similar to the pupil discourses, was the importance of *‘asabiyya* and rejection of *hyper-‘asabiyya* whilst discussing issues associated with schooling and parental choice. The Muslim parents recognised the need to balance the importance of nurturing cultural and religious identity in their children with the imperative of integration and multicultural citizenship. This balancing act was evident not only in parents educating their children within the state system but also in parents who chose Muslim faith schools. The meta-discourse was largely shaped by the understanding that integration within Britain can be achieved through religion. In doing this, parents did not envisage a contradiction between religious and national identity, both of these being crucial for the future of their children (Ramadan 2009, March 2009). In fact, parents maintained that religious values will help children to become better citizens.

Parental views on schooling were shaped by race, faith and class Intersectionality. The choice of mixed schools, by Muslim parents, was based upon the realization that *‘asabiyya* provided a mechanism for protection against racism and anti-Muslim prejudice. Parents did not like the idea of sending their child to an all-white school, which would put unnecessary pressures on them to assimilate (Tibi 2002, 2008) or abandon their cultural frame of reference. Parental discourses indicated a desire for educational success; this was represented by a strong investment in their children’s education which would determine a prosperous and stable future. This success could only be achieved through flexibility in adjusting to new surroundings by maintaining and sustaining the need to belong to a religious community.

By highlighting the above points, this thesis has generated new knowledge which has aided the empirical and theoretical understanding of the question of integration within the context of schooling. At the empirical level, it has furthered the complex and dynamic understandings of schooling, integration and Muslim identity - both from the point of view of the parents and, most importantly, from the pupils' perspective. This knowledge will assist in the analysis of educational policy approaches to race relations in the UK. At the theoretical level this thesis has explored key issues associated with religious identity, group solidarity and integration by drawing upon Muslim intellectual history. In doing so, this thesis has further contributed towards the growing scholarship of Khaldunian sociology in the West.

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