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'Prevent'ing Education:

Anti-Muslim racism and the War on Terror

Shamim Miah

Post-racism and schooling dichotomy maintains the there is a fundamental disconnect between the racial rhetoric of the state and the experiences of many racialised minorities. By establishing a historical precedent for this dictum, this chapter highlights how the securitised governance of minority groups, within the context of education and schooling, has led to a pathological discourse of Muslim pupils. It further highlights how framing of Muslims, at a national and an international level through counter terrorism and de-radicalisation, informs the experiences of anti-Muslim racism within the context of schooling. It concludes by arguing how experiences of racism are increasingly becoming a normative experience, especially in light of the War on Terror.

Introduction

Since the events of the 2001 riots, 9/11 and the terrorist attacks in London in 2005, we have witnessed in Western Europe an 'end of multiculturalism' (McGee 2008) and a policy debate on integration of Muslim communities within a heightened security context. These policy debates on racialised minority groups have coincided with the emergence and popular appeal of a 'new British fascism' (Goodwin 2011) in the form of British National Party (BNP), English Defence League (EDL) and the Infidels of Britain.

This chapter will focus on the dichotomy between the rhetorical discourse of 'post racism', and the securitised governance of racialised minority groups within the context of education and schooling. It further demonstrates how the national meta-discourse of Muslims as a 'pariah group' as informed through the 'Bush years' (Imtiaz 2009) shapes the experiences of anti-Muslim racism within schooling. The first section 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 securitised 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*' by problematizing and pathologizing Muslims. The second section will draw on empirical data and highlight how the framing of Muslims at a national level informs the experiences of anti-Muslim racism within the context of schooling. It concludes by arguing that, since the publication of the MacDonald Enquiry into Murder in the Playground over 20 years ago, the experience of racism continues to shape the experience of Muslims in the UK.

Post-racism and Schooling

Ongoing discourses on post-racism and schooling are borne out of international events, as noted in the collected articles published in this volume. Post-racism functions when there is a disconnection between the racial rhetoric of the state and the racial experiences of many racialised minorities. Precedents for these types of dictums manifest themselves in the debate on 'racial justice' and desegregation following the landmark case of *Brown V. Board of Education* in the US. As Bell (2004) notes, despite growing levels of segregation and inadequate levels of public schooling for most Black pupils, *Brown* is still considered, fifty years later, as the Holy Grail for racial justice.

Post-racist public policy manifestation is a strong feature in the policy framing of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, which resurfaced in January 2012 following the sentencing of David Norris and Gary Dobson who were responsible for the murder of Stephen Lawrence. . The Lawrence Inquiry was seen by many, including the *Daily Mail*, as a 'damming report on race murder [that] will change Britain' (cited in Gillborn 2008:125). Drawing upon the Critical Race Theory tradition (Delgado and Stefancic 2008), Gillborn (2008) sees the Lawrence Inquiry as a *contradiction-closing case*, whereby 'occasional symbolic victories' are used to indicate that meaningful change has occurred, when in reality very little change has taken shape. So, despite the optimism and the focusing of public attention on institutional racism, racism within the police and the public duty to promote racial equality, brought about the

Lawrence Inquiry, the experiences for many minority communities are less informed by the rhetoric emanating from the Lawrence Inquiry and more by the legacies of the War on Terror. For example, following the London bombings of 2005 there has been a conscious racial profiling of young Muslim men, which was publicly defended by the Chief Constable of the British Transport Police and supported by the then minister at the Home Office, Hazel Blears MP (Gillborn 2008). Within the context of education three post-racist dichotomies are evident, despite the changes promised by the Lawrence Inquiry. Firstly, we have witnessed an increase in racist incidents within schools in the UK; in response to a Freedom of Information request, it was disclosed that 88,000 incidents of racist bullying were recorded in British schools between 2007 and 2011. Some areas, such as Oldham, Luton, Croydon and Middlesbrough, saw an increase of 40% or more over the period 2007/08 to 2009/10 (Talwar 2012). Secondly, despite occasional success stories of ethnic minority achievement in educational league tables, racial inequality is so profoundly embedded in the educational system that some educational sociologists are talking about '*locked-in inequality*', i.e. a situation where the levels of inequality are so deep that the removal of existing barriers will not create a level playing field (Gillborn 2008). Finally, we have seen the discourse of integration and counter-terrorism, whereby certain groups are pathologized and put under greater scrutiny within a security context.

Framing Muslims: Politics of Anti-Muslim Prejudice

Islam is often presented as being diametrically opposite to the West, as is evident from the way in which Muslims experience schooling in Britain within an intense hyper-racialised political environment. 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 (Said 1978/1997; Daniels 1991; 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. The framing of the 'other' or the non-European is, for Said (1978/1997) and Tibawi (1964), largely associated with the colonial positioning of the non-European as an 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. The current treatment of Muslims, as discussed by Beck *et al.* (2002), Fekete (2008, 2009) and Kalra and Kapoor (2008), is seen as part of a continuation of the colonial legacy and the racialised political treatment of minority communities in Britain. Furthermore, drawing upon the writings of the founders of the modern nation state, such as John Locke, Friedrich Hegel and John Stuart Mill, Goldberg (2002) has demonstrated the centrality of race in the development and emergence of the modern nation state. Three central themes emerge from the above literature: firstly, the importance of locating anti-Muslim prejudice within a wider historical setting; secondly, the recognition of power dynamics in understanding racialised minority groups; and, thirdly, the influence of the state or the racial state in 'producing and reproducing racist ends and outcomes' for racialised groups (Goldberg 2002: 113).

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, often labelled as anti-Muslim racism (Kundnani 2007) and Islamophobia (Runnymede Trust 2004; Marranci 2004; Allen 2010). Both notions reflect 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 racism[1], which builds upon colonial and orientalist schemata, is best used to explain the phenomenon of 'new racism' in this current context, as a term that 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). Anti-Muslim racism in its present form sees the current portrayal of the Muslim problematic arising from 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 (Poynting & Mason 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 (Kundnani 2007).

Recently there has been an attempt to undermine, delegitimise and marginalise the experiences of Muslim communities by dismissing their genuine fears of Islamophobia in Europe as 'hysterical to the point of delusion' (Malik 2009). It has often been argued that, far from experiencing discrimination, Muslims have in fact been privileged, benefiting from special treatment brought about through multicultural civic policy (Malik 2009). This banal view of racism within the Muslim experience can be rejected by contesting the idea that Muslim identity is based on choice whilst racial identity is involuntary, the underlining assumption being that it is the Muslims who are responsible for their own marginalisation.

Islamophobia came to public attention following the publication of *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* by the Runneymede Trust (1997). The report defined Islamophobia as

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[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'. I have preferred to use the term anti-Muslim racism throughout this chapter. The reason for this is based upon the observation that most young people interviewed for this chapter chose to use 'racism' as a way of understanding and explaining their experiences. Most were unfamiliar with the terms Islamophobia and anti-Muslim prejudice.

'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 Runneymede Trust places anti-Muslim prejudice within its subtext[2]. The report articulates the 'hatred of Islam' by exploring the *Closed and Open View of Islam*[3] and a detailed assessment of anti-Muslim prejudice in British society, including 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.

> (Runneymede Trust 1997:1)

The Runneymede 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' (Runneymede 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 that it is not an unfounded prejudice against Islam, but rather one

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[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 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 being seen as natural/problematic.

whose 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'. This is further supported by Fekete (2009) who has demonstrated how the political discourse on Muslims in Europe often accuses 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) 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).

New Labour, Schooling and the De-radicalisation Imperative

> By analysing the role of 'race' and ethnicity in policy discourse, we are able to trace a dynamic and often complex link between issues of racism and key policy pronouncements. We are able to critically deconstruct policies that claim (often explicitly) to be unconnected with 'race' whilst simultaneously granting legitimacy to a particular racist definition of 'us' (the 'real' British, the heart of the nation) as opposed to 'them' (outsiders- such as 'alien' ethnic minorities – and the enemies within).

(Gillborn 1995: 20)

The above observation by Gillborn (1995) provides an insight into a growing body of evidence that has articulated the intricate relationship between race, racism and educational policy and practice. Whilst the above quote is taken from Gillborn's early books on racism

and schools, it nevertheless captures the current sentiments surrounding Muslims and educational policy by highlighting the way in which racism is produced and reproduced over a period of time by the state. Given what we know about the nature of the racial state (Goldberg 2002) it thus was not surprising to note that, following the 7 July, 2005, London bombings, British Muslims increasingly became racially governed through *soft* and *hard* approaches. 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 under 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 entitled *'Learning Together To Be Safe'*, which was launched after the sentencing of Hammad Munshi - the youngest Muslim to be sentenced under the UK Terrorism Act. Munshi, aged 15 at the time, was arrested in , Dewsbury West Yorkshire on his way home from school 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 consist

of schools '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'.

The CONTEST strategy (HM Government 2006), which is the government's over-arching counter-terrorism policy, provides compelling evidence of anti-Muslim prejudice, especially given the discursive framing of Muslims as an essentialised problematic group. The CONTEST strategy has four central themes: Prevent; Pursue; Protect; and Prepare. *Prevent* focuses on stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting violent terrorism, and is considered the spearhead of counter-terrorism work (HM Government 2006). *Pursue* responds by stopping terrorist attacks through prosecution, intelligence and increased international cooperation. *Prepare* places emphasis on vulnerability and risk assessment by the emergency services. *Protect* strengthens the civic infrastructures such as border control and public transport systems. Whilst these strands appear to function independently, some would regard them as interconnected. For example, many have argued that the Prevent and Pursue strands of the strategy are interconnected, or simply put, 'Prevent is Pursue in sheep's clothing, implying that Prevent provides a cover for the active pursuit of suspected terrorists' (see CLGC 2010: 8, Evidence 172). The revised CONTEST strategy (HM Government 2009), otherwise known as CONTEST II, further intensified the grip on Muslim communities by extending surveillance and disciplinary measures to target any verbal expression of dissent, in practice targeting any Muslim seen to be articulating illiberal views or sentiments. This curtailment of any space for open debate was legitimated through an integrationist agenda, leading to a synthesis of the counter-terrorism and integrationist strategies:

> we will also continue to challenge views which fall short of supporting violence and are within the law, but which reject and undermine our shared values and jeopardise community cohesion – the strong and positive relationships between people of different ethnic, faith and cultural backgrounds in this country. Some of these views can create a climate in which people may be drawn into violent activity.
>
> (HM Government 2009: 88)

The degree of scrutiny and the micro-managed nature of public policy vis-a-via the Muslim community is historically unprecedented. Indeed, such a view has even been expressed from the unlikely quarters of the National Association of Muslim Police, who reported to the House of Commons Select Committee (CLGC 2010) that:

> Never before has a community been mapped in a manner and nor it will be…
> The hatred towards Muslims has grown to a level that defies all logic and is an affront to British values. The climate is such that Muslims are subject to daily abuse in a manner that would be ridiculed by Britain, were this to occur anywhere else.
>
> (Davies 2010, cited in Husband and Alam 2011:102).

The government's '*Learning together to be safe*' specialist tier guidance changes the role of teachers, making them potential agents of the state whose function is not to educate but rather to provide security surveillance, monitoring and feeding back problematic behaviours to the security agencies. Kundnani (2009) has 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). Furthermore, Dodd (2009) has discussed 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) further 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".

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), which further reinforced links between racialised anti-Muslim discourse and security, with the support of £4.7 million to work with local authorities and schools. A further £950,000 of regional funds was also allocated to embed the aforementioned *Learning Together to be Safe* toolkit within schools. Furthermore, the revised Prevent Strategy (HM Government 2011) gave the Channel Project a strategic and central role in the fight against terror. The Channel Project is the government's multi-agency risk management initiative; it has been strongly criticised by Kundnani (2009) and others, who submitted their objections to the Preventing Violent Extremism Select Committee (House of Commons 2010) on the grounds of its possible human rights infringements, given that young students are referred to the police simply for expressing controversial opinions. This is succinctly summarised by the following:

> There is strong evidence that a significant part of the Prevent programme involves the embedding of counter-terrorism police officers within the delivery of local services, the purpose of which seems to be to gather intelligence on Muslim communities, to identify areas, groups and individuals that are 'at risk' and to then facilitate interventions, such as the Channel programme.

> (Kundnani 2009:6).

Despite the serious criticism of the Channel programme, the new revised *Prevent Strategy* (HM Government 2011) further integrated the *Channel Project* within the government's child protection and safeguarding policies.

Schooling and the War on Terror

This section will draw upon the links between the macro political discourses on Muslim communities and, most crucially, the on-going War on Terror to demonstrate how both national and international positioning of Muslims and Islam informs the experiences of anti-Muslim racism within the school environment. It will be further made clear how 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. This section will draw upon focus group interviews with Muslim young men, aged 15 and 16, in youth clubs and community centres in Greater Manchester and Lancashire. In total 7 focus group interviews were conducted, each focus groups had 5 to 6 respondents.

Imagining the 'other': It's you Muslims killing our soldiers

The national debate on the Muslim problematic has often been associated with the on-going military campaign led by the USA, the United Kingdom and their allies. The intense effects of these campaigns on the 'Muslim conditions in the West' have been succinctly elucidated by Imtiaz (2010) in his collections of highly thought-provoking short essays and stories. In his commentary on the impact of the 'Bush years', he rightly notes how 'it's difficult to remember the Bush years except as one long, enduring, painful moment that will not go away. At various moments, different aspects of it rise to the surface to heighten the pain and these may then go away but the pain nevertheless remains' (Imtiaz 2010:138). The implications of the Bush years for racial experiences are evident within the experience of schooling for Muslim pupils, where the rhetoric used to extend the war on terror is often used as a repertoire of abuse in the classroom.

In the focus group interview carried out with 15-year-old Muslim boys attending a secondary school in the North West of England, their responses exemplified how international events shape the way in which Muslims are 'excluded' from particular activities in schools. It is important to note how micro narratives or stories that are told informally through various school activities play a crucial role in essentialising the 'other'. Muslim pupils are able to pick up these narratives to inform their understanding of hostile spaces within the school environment. Certain spaces or extra-curricular activities are avoided by Muslim pupils because of the implicit messages conveyed by members of staff. In the following focus group discussion, the students clearly show how the teachers running a School Cadets Team (SCT) reinforce a particular reading of the War on Terror by portraying 'all Muslims' as being responsible for 'killing our British soldiers'. In the following observation, Muslim school pupils demonstrate how 'stories' informed by the War on Terror are used in schools to reinforce the idea of enlightened insider and demonised outsider. It is also interesting to note how by extension 'all Muslims', regardless of nationality or ethnic group, are seen as one monolithic problematic group.

> Recently with all that's been happening in Afghanistan, with the bodies of soldiers coming to the England for burial, things have been very bad. You ask anyone they will tell you the grief we get….We are not from Afghanistan, we were born here, and yet they think we are all the same. This obviously affects what happens in school…We joined the SCT; we thought it would be fun, but we had to leave really quickly. With what's happening in Afghanistan and the British soldiers and stuff, people that go there [SCT] they get told stories about all these [Muslim] Talibans killing 'all our' British soldiers; that's having an impact. People turn against us, things become very bad - you don't know. We had to leave very quickly, there was racism and I mean TOO MUCH RACISM, that's why we left.

The above observation focuses on how stories about 'us and them' drawn principally from the War on Terror have created a hostile cultural environment within the confines of the school. It demonstrates how Muslim pupils can often feel vulnerable and insecure as a consequence of international events because they have an impact upon what happens in

schools. Some students were even reluctant to attend school the next morning if a national or international story had been discussed in the national media. They feared the backlash or the subtle racist remarks that they would experience in the classroom or walking along the corridors. These fears that the students were articulating were not 'imaginary' but were rather informed by previous experience. The pupils provided countless examples of anti-Muslim racism by teachers and fellow pupils. These experiences of racism were not just confined to the school premises but continued during the journey to and from school. In the following account, a Yemeni Muslim student from Manchester shares an experience inflicted by a member of staff.

> The other day I was messing about in class, we can't understand the teacher so we all mess about. So the teacher told me to leave the room, so I did, and the teacher followed me out. He then got hold of my tie, and in a very angry voice called me a **scruffy Arab**… I didn't think nothing of it, this is not the only time something like this has happened.

The following example raises two important points: first, Muslim pupils can experience complete powerlessness in the face of racism; second, and more importantly, racism can be a normalising presence, especially given the fact that incidents of racism on school premises are not addressed. Pupils feel there is no point in taking matters any further, particularly in view of the similar treatment they endure even from senior members of staff. A clear picture emerges from the focus group interviews: anti-Muslim racism is not a series of isolated incidents but rather reflects how the logic of the pathological 'other' has permeated the institutional fabric of the schools. Pupil testimonies revealed how teacher-pupil relationships had been transformed in light of the counter-terrorism policies, and pupils experienced subtle changes in the way in which some members of staff interacted with Muslim pupils. Muslim pupils were often wary of talking to teachers in case they were 'spies' or informants for other agencies. It was clear that issues of religious and political extremism were widely discussed

in schools, often through direct intervention such as in the form of classroom discussions and theatre performances, or in a more covert form through outreach work with young people. An example of direct intervention, included within CLG's (CLG 2010) case-studies of best practice, is *The Muslimah: Make a Difference* drama performance. This drama, delivered to secondary school pupils, uses the medium of theatre as a way of exploring terrorist activities and emphasising Muslim women's duty to prevent violent extremism. This approach is an extension   of *'Watch over Me'*, an interactive DVD accompanied by teacher resources and aimed at secondary schools; it was supplied to every secondary school in England as part of the DoE's school Prevent strategy (HM Government 2011). Perhaps the most worrying feature of counter-terrorist work is the covert work carried out by public sector workers, such as youth workers, outside formal school hours, who historically have played a 'supportive role' for young people. This aspect of Prevent is alarming not only because it breaches notions of trust but also because it uses trust and loyalty as devices to support counter-terrorism.   This approach has infiltrated the most mundane of activities, such as games of football played among groups of school friends. By the CLG's (2010) own admission, 'work with young people is the most important focus...since it is this group that are felt most susceptible to becoming attracted to extremism' (CLG 2010: 24). One of the features of successful work with young people, according to CLG (2010), is high levels of trust based on long-term engagement, which can be developed through a 'respectful listening mode of interaction' (CLG 2010:25).

 The impact of Prevent on schools is clearly evident in the Department of Education's own assessment in March 2010, which noted how 61% of local authorities' children's services were actively engaged with Prevent work (HM Government 2011:69). This is also confirmed by Ipsos MORI in 2011, which highlighted how over 84% of schools 'knew at least something about their role in preventing violent extremism' (ibid.).

The suicide repertoire: You're gonna blow me up?

One of the major motifs of racial hostility following the War on Terror was the angry Muslim male. In recent years the caricature of Muslims as intolerant, violent and misogynistic suicide bombers has become a dominant iconography in the media representation of Muslim communities. The image of the Muslim suicide bomber has come to dominate the public image of young Muslim men; this is often either based upon a political reading, through the lenses of the Palestinian struggle, or through the theological lenses of the concept of *jihad*. The image of the suicide bomber in the UK came to dominate the popular imagination following the London bombings of 7/7, through the names of Muhammad Siddique Khan, Shahzaad Tanweer, Germain Lindsay and Hasib Hussain. The implications for Muslim students in Leeds and the neighbouring areas, from where these men came, were intense. This particular image of the angry irrational Muslim, with the default position of a person prepared to cause mass casualties, is a caricature often found in the experiences of Muslim young men. An impression often articulated by the students we interviewed and most often condoned by teachers has come to be a defining experience of schooling. In a discussion with students from a secondary school in one of the towns near Leeds, they explicitly articulated the routine nature of this experience, highlighting how the image of a suicide bomber is used to mock the Muslim 'other'. Simple matters of disagreement, or just mere presence, provide opportunities for insult:

> The big stereotypical view of us Muslims in school put it plain and simple is that we're terrorist. The white students think we're terrorist, but I also think the teachers also think the same. We know that the white teachers and the kids don't like us. It doesn't take a genius to figure that you know… For example we'll be in class, like the other day we were talking about something in history and this white guy said something and said something which I did not agree with him so I told him I think you wrong. And suddenly he jumped up and said OK you're right otherwise **YOUR GONNA BLOW ME UP'>.** Or, I'll give you another example, it will be like, you'll be walking down the corridor in school, you know minding your own business, and a group of white students would say 'tick tick   tick tick' - like a bomb going off.

It is important to note how the above account focused particularly on gendered experiences of anti-Muslim prejudice; it was principally Muslim young men who complained of being caricatured as suicide bombers. The racial imagery of the suicide bomber is seen to be closely associated with notions of masculinity, which are often considered to be senseless, hyperactive and, above all, prone to the use of violence to convey a point of view. This particular construct is central to racial mythology, which has evolved from the problematic young black male of the 1980s (Hall 1978, Gilroy 1987) to contemporary notions of 'dangerous brown men' (Bhattacharyya 2008). The recent racist caricature of Muslim masculinity is based upon a development of much older myths, which have been central to orientalist literature (Said 1978). For Bhattacharyya (2008), contemporary racial mythology has evolved from the "demonised figure of 'dangerous black man' [to]   become   the 'dangerous brown man', an adaption of early racial mythologies that may refer to the same groups of men but that enables the inclusion of more recent racialised anxieties" (Bhattacharyya 2008:96). This point is further supported by Alexander (2000), who has demonstrated how "Muslims have then ironically become the new 'black' with all the associations of cultural alienation, deprivation and danger that came with this problem" (Alexander 2000:15).

Conclusion

For Muslim pupils, racist experiences, in the climate of 9/11 and 7/7, were increasingly seen as a fact of life, a normalising presence or even a rite of passage that Muslim pupils inevitably had to undergo. The War on Terror not only manifests itself in foreign policy, but also permeates the educational system via the militarisation and securitisation of schooling. School experiences came to reflect the political mood of the wider society; they were a casual reflection of what was articulated by politicians whilst

talking about domestic counter-terrorism or the War on Terror, or *failing to talk* about other international events such as the Palestinian oppression. National and international events would often inform or dictate the type of racist abuse or physical attacks experienced by Muslim pupils; for example, following the events of 7/7, racist abuse adopted the motif of the 'angry suicide bomber' or, following the deaths of servicemen or women in Afghanistan, it would be clouded in the 'Muslim Taliban'. Racism in this context was not seen as a product of a few disruptive children, but rather as a product of a much wider and more deeply ingrained social and institutional phenomenon. The interconnected nature of wider political events at national and international levels and the increasing levels of anti-Muslim racism at a grass-roots level are confirmed by wider empirical studies. For example, Noret (2007) has shown how levels of antagonism towards Muslims increased following the events of 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq. Furthermore, the above observations of racism are also confirmed by academic studies. For example, Crozier & Davies' (2008) study on Muslims' experiences of schooling highlighted how the question of safety was paramount for Muslim parents and pupils. Their study also made it '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). The impact and the legacy of the Prevent policy have a deep and profound impact on the experience of schooling for Muslims. The implications of which not only impacts the children of the 'Bush years', but a generation of Muslims as they come of age.

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