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**7/7 Bombings and the Dilemma of the British Muslim Minority on
Identity and Integration**

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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master Degree in Anglophone Language, Literature,
and Civilization.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this humble work

To my father Ammar for his inspiration, trust and love.

To my mother Aisha for her sacrifice

To my sisters Somia, Sara and Samia

To my brothers NedjmEddine and ChamsEddine

To my entire family; grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins

Asma

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this study

To my father Djahid for his inspiration, tenderness and encouragement

To my mother Hakima for her sacrifice

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To my family; grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins

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Abstract

This dissertation discusses the British Muslim dilemma on integration and identity after the 7th July 2005 bombings. It examines the future of British Muslims within Multiculturalism discourse and how the bombings have worsened both processes of Muslims' integration and identity formation. The dissertation shows the implication of the bombings on the British Muslims' daily life. It focuses on the challenges that the British Muslim community went through after attacks. Islamophobia and hate crimes against Muslims have increased considerably in the aftermath of the attacks. British Media negative portrayal of the attacks, Muslims and Islam has further extended the gap between Muslims and the British society. The Muslim communities have become more alienated and separate from the mainstream population. Consequently, British Muslims are neither able to form a stable identity nor fully integrate into the society despite their willingness to do so.

Résumé

Cette thèse aborde le dilemme des musulmans britannique sur l'intégration et l'identité après les attentats du 7 Juillet 2005. Elle examine leur destin dans le discours du multiculturalisme et la façon dont les attentats ont aggravé le processus d'intégration et la formation de leur identité. La thèse montre l'implication de ces bombardements sur la vie quotidienne des musulmans britanniques. Elle met l'accent sur les défis que la communauté musulmane britannique a subi après les attaques. L'islamophobie et les crimes de haine contre les musulmans ont considérablement augmenté à la suite des attaques. La représentation négative des attaques, des musulmans et de l'islam par les Médias britanniques a étendu l'écart entre les musulmans et la société britannique. Les communautés musulmanes sont devenues plus aliénée et séparée de la population en général. Par conséquent, les musulmans britanniques ne sont ni en mesure de former une identité stable, ni d'intégrer entièrement dans la société en dépit de leur volonté de le faire.

ملخص

تناقش هذه المذكرة مشكلة الاندماج و الهوية للمسلمين البريطانيين بعد تفجيرات 7/7 و تأثيرها السليبي على حياتهم اليومية. كما تبين مصير المسلم البريطاني ضمن برنامج التعددية الثقافية الذي اثر سلبا على عملية اندماج المسلمين و تشكيل هويتهم هناك. كما تركز هذه المذكرة الأكاديمية على دراسة التحديات التي واجهها المسلم البريطاني بعد هجمات 7/7 هذا ما أدى إلى ارتفاع معدل الخوف من الإسلام و العنف ضد المسلمين. كما أدى الوصف السليبي للهجمات و الإسلام و المسلمين من طرف الإعلام البريطاني إلى توسيع الفراغ بين المسلمين و المجتمع البريطاني و مما أدى أكثر إلى جعل المجتمع المسلم أكثر عزلة و انشقاق عن المجتمع البريطاني. نتيجة لذلك و بالرغم من استعداده لم يستطع المسلم البريطاني تشكيل هوية ثابتة أو الاندماج كلياً ضمن المجتمع.

List of Abbreviations/Acronyms

CIA	Commonwealth Immigrants Act
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
EUMC	European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia
FOSIS	Federation of Student Islamic Societies
ICM	Independent Communication and Marketing
IHRC	Islamic Human Rights Commission
MCB	Muslim Council of Britain
MET	Metropolitan Police Service
MPAC	Muslim Public Affairs Committee
PET	Preventing Extremism Together
RRAs	Race Relation Acts
UKACIA	United Kingdom Action Committee on Islamic Affairs
UP	Urban Program

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Introduction

This study is about the British Muslims dilemma on integration and identity after the 7/7 London bombings of 2005. It investigates the impact of the bombings on both processes of Muslims integration and identity formation in the United Kingdom. After these terrorist attacks, the ability of Muslims to lead a normal life in Britain became a difficult task.

The purpose of this study is neither to find out the extent of integration of British Muslims nor to decide or judge their identity. It aims at investigating the main challenges that hinder the Muslim minority's integration into the British society. Debates on the 7/7 events indicate that the British Muslim community has become a suspect community since the attackers came from a Muslim background. Consequently, they struggle to fit in the society because they encounter an increase in discrimination, racism and anti-Muslim prejudices after the attacks. Additionally, Islam and Muslims are depicted negatively by the Media. The latter plays a significant role in shaping public opinion through providing subjective and incomplete interpretations of Islam and negative stereotypes of Muslims.

Britain is a diverse society. It encompasses different faiths, cultures and ethnicities. The early mass waves of Muslim immigrants to the UK date back to the post WWII era. The need for immigration was mutual; Britain needed immigration to fill its post war labor shortage and immigrants from the former colonies rushed to the country searching for better opportunities of work or escaping the bad social, political and economic conditions. Most Muslim immigrants came from the South Asian subcontinent and other parts of the Arab world. Like all minorities, the Muslim immigrants faced racism, discrimination and segregation. To fight such problems, Britain adopted a set of policies to guarantee order, justice and cohesion between the immigrants and the mainstream population. In 2011, the Muslim population in Britain totaled 2.71 million Muslim.

British Muslim minority represents a specific case when integration is concerned. The 9/11 attacks on the United States had serious consequences on the Muslim communities in America and Europe, including Britain. The association of these events to Islam led to an exaggerated fear and hatred towards Muslims. The Muslims' situation got worse after the terrorist attacks on the London public transportation system on July 7th 2005. The attacks signaled a dramatic change for the Muslim communities in Britain. The pressure on Muslims increased especially after the passage of counter-terrorism legislation that sought to contain the Islamist threat. The Muslim community was classified under a generic category of a suspect community. Therefore, the process of their integration into the British society became a more difficult task.

Unlike the United States, the terrorists behind the London bombings were not outsiders; the bombers were British citizens, born and raised on the British soil. Consequently, Britain sought to examine the causes that led to such attacks. A state of emergency against terrorism was declared in the country. Counter-terrorism policies were needed to enhance security measures against any further attacks inside Britain. As the perpetrators were Muslims, Islam and Muslims were highly affected by these security measures.

The London bombings resulted in many negative outcomes on the Muslim community. Hate crimes, stereotypical representation of Muslims in the media, Islamophobia, and online hate speech were among the consequences. Such outcomes further hindered the integration of the Muslims in the society. Harassment represented an example of the violent consequences of the bombings on Muslims in general and particularly on women who wear hijab and bearded men who wear turbans. The whole community became guilty by association. Since the terrorists were Muslims, the whole community became a target for revenge.

The issue of identity became even harder after the attacks. Young British Muslims, precisely, struggle with their identity. The construction of one's identity in a foreign country is generally a difficult task; British Muslim identity is no exception, since they live in a non-Muslim society. Young British Muslims face a dilemma in constructing their British Muslim identity because the two identities do not resemble each others. Young British Muslims seem to experience a tension between their inherited culture and that of the mainstream society especially in the aftermath of the July attacks. Identity and integration became a challenging task. Integrating the twin identities of being both British and Muslim put them in a real dilemma.

The research primary aim is to find out whether the 7/7 bombings have negatively affected the processes of the Muslim minority's integration and identity formation in Britain. Following the terrorist attacks of July 7th 2005, the ability of Muslims to lead a normal life in Britain became a difficult task. This study aims at investigating the main causes that hinder the Muslim minorities' integration in the British society. It will try to analyze how the 7/7 bombings have complicated the daily life of British Muslims. Issues such as the depiction of Muslims in the British media, racism and discrimination, Islamophobia, anti-Muslims hate crimes...etc are going to be key elements that the research will focus on. The research will also focus on the challenges that Muslims have to go through after the 7/7 attacks and concentrates on the notion of identity. This study will investigate the identity dilemma of Muslims in Britain is a key point. The impact of the counter-terror legislation passed in the aftermath of the attacks will also be analyzed.

This research aims at answering the following questions: Have the London Bombings affected the situation of the Muslim community in Britain? What are the problems that Muslims have to put up with in the aftermath of the bombings? To what extent does the counter-terror legislation affect the Muslims in Britain? How did the British media deal with

the events, and how were Muslims and Islam portrayed? What are the challenges that Muslims encounter while attempting to integrate in the British society? Why do British-born Muslims have problems with their identity? Is there a struggle between Muslimness and Britishness?

A considerable amount of literature on the Muslim minority in Britain after 7/7 attacks is available. The events were a key point of research by pundits, journalists, governmental committees and different think tanks to name but few. The attention was mostly focused on tracing and studying the causes that led to such terrorist attacks in Britain and whether the British policy of multiculturalism eventually failed.

“British Muslims in Numbers: A Demographic, Socio-economic and Health profile of Muslims in Britain drawing on the 2001 Census” is a report made by the Muslim Council in Britain. It provides a detailed demographic, socio-economic and health profile of Muslims in Britain. It compares between the census of 2001 and 2011. The researchers opt for 2011 census since; it was the first time when religious affiliation was given an importance to be included in a census. It analyses the number of the Muslim population, their place of birth, geographical distribution, and their representation in the parliament. It, also, examines issues of identity and English language mastery as related to youth. In addition, the report discusses the issue of inequality and discrimination in housing, health, and education...etc.

Daren Thiel, in his review entitled “Policing Terrorism: A Review of the Evidence” explores the different policies and legislations that were adopted by the British government as a response to the 7/7 bombings. Thiel analyses the Counter-Terrorist Policies and its major forms. He explains the notion of terrorism and its threat and the government’s reaction. The review investigates the level of the current threat and the nature of UK counter-terrorism policy.

“Muslims in Britain” is a report by Humayun Ansari, an academic specializing in the field of ethnic studies, racial equality, and historical and contemporary Islam. Ansari questions Britain’s commitment to minority rights. He focuses on the rise in the number of attacks on Muslims in Britain and the increasing threats to their civil liberties in the name of security measures. The report shows that Muslims in Britain are facing a huge increase of aggression and violence. Ansari also illustrates how the British media has presented Islam and Muslims in a negative way.

In a book entitled *Believing in Britain: Spiritual Identity of Britishness*, the author Ian Bradley shows the attempts of the British government to call for Britishness and urge for a common and national identity. He adds that all minorities should cooperate with the government to prevent the prevalence of extremism and radicalism in the country so that they can ensure integration of these minorities, including Muslim, into the British mainstream society.

The research relies on the descriptive method. It is useful in describing the 7/7 bombings and their consequences on the Muslim community in Britain. The method makes use of surveys, statistics, and censuses. The analytical approach is also used to investigate the impact of these events on the ability of Muslims to integrate into the British society. The research examines a large range of academic studies, reports, theses, books, and articles that deal with this particular minority in order to determine the state of Muslims in the UK. The qualitative approach is used because this research tries to assess the attitudes, perceptions and opinions of the Muslim minority about itself and the society at large, on the one hand, and those of the British society towards minorities after the attacks on the other hand.

This study is divided into three chapters. Chapter one deals with the historical background of immigrants in Britain. It investigates Muslim immigrants since 1950 and discusses the

demographic profile and their socio-economic characteristics. It tackles the issue of racism and discrimination before the 7/7 attacks. Chapter two explores the 7/7 London bombings. It provides a detailed description of the bombing and analyses the government's response to the attacks. Besides, it investigates the motives and circumstances behind the bombings. The second chapter also describes the consequences of the bombings on the British Muslim community. Chapter three makes a deep analysis of the Muslim minority's dilemma on integration and identity formation.

Chapter One

The Muslim Community in the UK

Islam is the fastest growing religion in Great Britain. Islam and Muslims are becoming a visible part of the British cultural, social, and political landscape. The history of Muslims' presence in Britain can be said to have already started in the twelfth and thirteenth century for trade purposes. They first came as seaman and sailors. Muslim's immigration as a process started in the seventeenth century when Ottoman merchants travelled to England for economic reasons. The number of these merchants rose during the nineteenth century as they decided to settle there permanently. The Muslim minority groups are diverse in terms of their geographical, cultural, social, linguistic, and political affiliations. The biggest part of Muslim population in the United Kingdom came from South Asia, particularly from Pakistan, Bangladesh and India.

Immigration started to be noticed in the UK in the twentieth century. Mass immigration was brought up for economic reasons as both immigrants and Britain needed it. In the aftermath of the WWII, Britain needed working hands for its factories and economies and immigrants lived in bad conditions back home, so they sought a refuge in the UK to help their families back home or bring them to Britain if possible. This led to the establishment of the Muslim communities in Britain. By 2011, Muslims constituted 4.8 % of the UK's population, making Islam the second largest religion in the isle. Though the number of Muslims in Britain was high, their situation was not stable.

Muslims have experienced discrimination throughout their presence in Britain because of their religious and ethnic origins. They are mainly concentrated in areas of multiple deprivations, living in houses designated as unfit or in serious disrepair. They experience "disproportionate rates of unemployment, illness and disability" ("Muslims in Britain" 8). The

Muslim community came under the spotlight in the early eighties. The Iranian revolution of 1979, the images of the burnings of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* in 1989, Khomeini's call for the death of Rushdie, and the Gulf war draw the public attention to the Muslim communities. Islam came to be perceived as a dangerous, irrational, violent and fanatical religion (4). The 9/11 attacks on the USA in 2001, however, was a turning point event that attracted the world's attention to Muslims. It antagonized the western popular mind towards Islam and Muslims. The events were immediately followed by an American declaration of a war on terrorism.

1.1. A Historical Background about Muslim Immigration

The first permanent Muslim "settler" communities were established in the middle of the nineteenth century in Manchester, Cardiff, Liverpool, South Shields, and the East End of London. Apart from sailors, the Muslims who came included merchants, itinerant entertainers, servants, princes, students and a small group from the professional classes. The vast majority came from the British colonies or protected territories, such as British India, the Aden hinterland, British Somaliland, Malaya, and the Yemen ("The Muslim Presence in Britain..." 3-6).

In the 1850's the Liverpool Muslim Institute was the first Muslim institution to be established in Britain. It included a prayer room, an orphanage, a press and a school. Such institutions were created for Muslims who were living in a hostile environment, as the British society was becoming inhospitable towards them starting from Prime Minister William Gladstone; who was antagonized by the atrocities committed by the Ottoman Turks on their Bulgarian Armenian subjects (3). The Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking was Britain's first built mosque, constructed in 1889 ("Britain's First mosques"). The establishment of the Shah Jehan mosque

was considered as a turning point for Muslims, not only in Britain but also in the whole Europe. This led to the rise of the number of converts to Islam.

Immigration to Britain significantly increased during the mid-twentieth century. After WWII, millions of people were displaced due to internal conflicts in their countries, economic crises, poverty and political persecution. Arrival to Britain increased as many people sought new lives and work opportunities after the war. The Muslim population also grew in the decades following the war. Some of them decided to bring their wives and children to Britain when their situation would get better, while others preferred to return later to their homelands. The majority of the Muslim diaspora coming to Britain after the war arrived from South Asia; particularly from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and East Africa (“Muslims in Britain: Background... 5). They were ex-soldiers of WWII who decided to settle in Britain after the end of the war. Muslim immigrants arrived also from East Africa particularly, Kenya and Uganda, in addition to a smaller groups coming from the Middle East, North Africa and Cyprus (Siddiqui).

The Second World War can be regarded as a turning point, if not, the real starting point in the history of the Muslim immigration to Britain. Immigration, during this period, reached its peak. Muslims, like other immigrants, were pulled by the economic boom that Britain witnessed after WWII. There was an urgent need for laborers. So, Britain supported immigration to satisfy its needs. The historical connection of Britain with its ex-colonies stimulated Muslim workers to migrate to Britain. Simultaneously, Muslims coming from the South Asian subcontinent were pushed out from their home lands as a result of the hostile environment that they have been living in, as well as due to the lack of opportunities in the socio-economic sphere (Anwar 129).

The decolonization movements in the British Empire resulted in economic, political and social unrest leading Muslims to flee from their countries of origin. Once in Britain, the first

Muslim immigrants accepted to work under any conditions. The native workers refused long working hours with low payments (Emmer, and Lucassen). Thus, the British government welcomed immigrants coming from its former colonies and the newly formed Commonwealth states in order to reduce labor shortage and help Britain repair its economy.

As immigrants started to sweep the country, the British government enacted different policies regarding immigration. The very first legislation concerning modern immigration was passed to stop random entrance to the country. The Aliens Act of 1905 was passed to allow the entrance of only the people who can support themselves. Following the WWI, the British government introduced a new law of immigration which is the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914. This act granted the Secretary of State the power to regulate immigration and the deportation of aliens. It was amended in 1919 to extend the authority of the Secretary of State to enact any law during the war. The new amended act was called the Aliens Restriction Act or Amendment Act of 1919 which operated until 1948 (Duncan and Tatari 185). In 1948, the British government enacted a new immigration policy which is The 1948 Nationality Act. It granted immigrants of former British colonies and of new formed Commonwealth the right of entry to the country and also the citizenship (Law et al. 4).

It is true that Britain used immigrants as a workforce in the immediate years after the WWII, but their presence was accompanied by discontent from the part of the white British population; forcing the UK government to act. The British government passed the Commonwealth Immigrants Act (CIA) in 1962. It was “in response to a perceived heavy influx of immigrants” that the conservative Party government “tightened the regulation, only permitting those with government-issued employment vouchers to settle” (“On the Law Side”). In reality, this act aimed to reduce the mass immigration from the new Commonwealth countries. By 1964, the British government prevented the coming of

unskilled workers (Siddiqui). This act meant that the Muslim minorities in the country were not able to bring their families to the isle.

1.2. Muslims in the UK: Demographic Profile

The statistics of the number of Muslims in Britain are carried by The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB). MCB is a national representative Muslim umbrella body with over 5000 affiliated national, regional and local organizations, mosques, charities, and schools. The MCB was an effective part in the inclusion of the religion question in the census of 2001. The MCB census used data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The below statistics were reported by MCB.

Muslims' numbers are changing in Britain due to immigration, conversion and birth rate. In 2001, Muslims reached 1.55 million; which represents 2.7 % of the total population of the UK. Between 2001 and 2011 the Muslim population grew to reach 2.71 million in 2011; which represents 4.8 % of the population in England and Wales, and another 81,000 across Scotland and Northern Ireland ("British Muslims in Numbers" 16).

British Muslims represent numerous ethnicities and cultures. They are generally South Asian (38% Pakistani, 14.9% Bangladeshi, 7.3% Indian and 7.5% from other Asian backgrounds). The Muslim South Asian ethnicities form nearly 68% of the total population. There are 32% of non-Asian Muslims. 47.2% of the Muslim population is British-born (22-24). According to the census of 2011, Islam is the second largest religion in the United Kingdom (25). The following table provides the ranging of the religions in the 2011 Census. It gives the total population of each religion and the percentage it represents:

Table 1.1 Religions in the 2011 Census.

Religion	Total population	Per cent
Christian	33,243,157	59.3
Muslim	2,706,066	4.8
Hindu	816,633	1.5
Sikh	423,158	0.8
Jewish	263,343	0.5
Buddhist	247,743	0.4
Any other religion	240,530	0.4
No religion	14,097,229	25.1
Religion not stated	4,038,032	7.2
All	56,075,912	100

Source: Census 2011. ONS Table KS209EW

1.2.1. Geographical Distribution

The majority of the Muslim population is concentrated in four regions; London, West Midlands, North West and Yorkshire and the Humber. The table shows that the largest number of Muslims is living in London representing 37.4% of the Muslim population, followed by West Midlands, North West and Yorkshire and the Humber. These areas are considered as the most noticeable regions where Muslims reside. It is likely to find constituencies with 20% or more Muslims. Such constituencies have a parliamentary representation for both Muslims and non-Muslims. The following table contains the regions that are the most populous with Muslims:

Table 1.2 Muslim Population by Region.

Region	All	Muslims	Muslims as % of the population	Muslims as % of overall Muslim population
London	8,173,941	1,012,823	12.4	37.4
West Midlands	5,601,847	376,152	6.7	13.9
North West	7,052,177	356,458	5.1	13.2
Yorkshire and the Humber	5,283,733	326,050	6.2	12.0

Source: Census 2011. ONS Table Q208EW

1.2.2. Age Profile

The British Muslim population is much younger, on average, than the non-Muslim population. According to the census of 2011, 33% of Muslims are aged 15 or under as compared to 19% of the mainstream population. Just 4% of Muslim adults are aged 65 and older and 16% of all UK adults are aged 65 and older. The average age of Muslims is 25 years compared to the population as a whole which is 40 years (28). These statistics entail that the Muslim population is much younger than the others.

1.2.3. The Civic Life of the Muslim Communities

According to the 2011 census, the majority of the Muslim population is able to speak English well, while only 6% of them have a poor proficiency in English. They are likely to have problems of communication in their daily life (35). Muslims comprise 4.8% of the British population and 8.1% of all school children, aged from 5 to 15, are Muslims. In Birmingham for example, young Muslim population forms 86% of the school age population

(37-38). Muslims send their children to school in order to guarantee their awareness and education.

Compared to other young adults from other religions, young British Muslim adults are mostly married. The majority of them opt for marriage instead of cohabitation. The 2011 census shows that the majority of Muslim households are consisted of married couples and their children (approximately 260,000 Muslims). The proportion of couple households (35%) is significantly higher compared to the British households (15%). This variance is affected by “the cultural and religious values of the Muslim community” (35-38). Islam forbids cohabitation of unmarried couples and urges capable young men to marry. The values of Islam are likely to shape the Muslims practices.

1.2.4. Inequalities

Muslim population in Britain suffers from racial inequalities. The census of 2011 reports that 10% of the Muslims’ neighborhoods are considered to be more “deprived” than others in the country. 46% or 1.22 million Muslims do not enjoy an acceptable living condition, and 1.7% or 46,000 Muslims live “in the 10% least deprived” areas (46). Thus, the situation of the British Muslims is made worst as they do not have a decent life. The percentage of home ownership among Muslims is smaller than that of the whole population with only 15% for Muslims and 31% for the overall population. A higher percentage of Muslims (30%) live in “privately rented” houses compared with 18% of all British (50). Muslims are significantly less likely to be home or land owners due to their economic status.

1.3. Racism and Discrimination

The growing number of immigrants coming from the Commonwealth countries led the British government to introduce many immigration policies. Immigrants’ issues such as admission, residence, nationality, and anti-discrimination were debated by the Home Office

under the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). The latter was helpful in promoting equality and standing against racial discrimination. This indicates that the British government attempted to find solutions to inappropriate behaviors against its new subjects including Muslims.

Tahir Abbas, a professor of Sociology and faith studies, reports that the South Asian Muslim groups in Britain “are more likely to be living in the most inferior housing stock, possess the poorest health, underachieve in education, and are ‘underemployed’ or more likely to be unemployed in labor market” (*Muslim Britain: Communities ...*10). This shows that the Muslim communities did not go through easy circumstances while trying to live and integrate in the British society. British Muslims increasingly felt themselves marginalized; viewed with distrust and hostility.

Regrettably, immigrants were not able to integrate into the host society since the latter do not have the predisposition to accept them. Racism was a part of the white race’s history, their hatred of what is not white shaped their way of thinking, and they became encoded not to accept what they considered ‘aliens’ or the ‘others’. In *British Muslims Expectation of the Government: Social Discrimination across the Muslim Divide*, the authors demonstrated that discrimination existed since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was represented on the basis of “otherness”¹. The Muslims were put in the zone of “otherness” since a long time (Ameli, Elahi, and Merali 13).

The strategies devised to adjust immigration and immigrants status in Britain were referred to as race relations, community relations, and more recently as community cohesion policies² (Bates 119). During the 1950’s, immigrants had few problems as work was available for everybody. They went under less- intimidating atmosphere. However, things started to change in the 1960’s. The problems in labor and education, and the increase of racism in immigrants’ neighborhoods became major interests for both minorities and the British government

(Vermeulen 39). The sixties signaled the deterioration of the immigrants' situation and the violent path into race riots in the British cities. Immigration and immigrants came to be considered as a burden for the government.

The 1958 Nottingham and Notting Hill riots³ necessitated the intervention of the government to regulate immigration (37). Immigration came to be considered as a burden for the British society and economy. During the 1950's, various anti-immigration campaigns broke out. Upon this situation the British government found itself in a position that obliged it to reduce the tension (38). The support of the Conservative Party's government to the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962 led the British white population to become more hostile towards the newcomers.

The Commonwealth Immigrants Act (1962) was introduced due to an anti-immigration campaign led by Enoch Powell, a British politician and a Conservative MP. Media supported Powell's campaign through portraying immigrants as "a problem, a threat, a category of unprincipled scroungers and muggers, and an object of reasonable fear, hatred and even violence" (Julios 98). In the meantime, there were governmental attempts to reduce racial and ethnic discrimination through applying anti-discrimination policies and programs that sought to uplift some of the plight of ethnic minorities.

The Labor government launched the Urban Program (UP) in 1968. Through this plan, local authorities could receive financial contributions for areas of special need. The aim of the program was to alleviate problems associated with communities in which there were high concentrations of immigrants (Jacobs 158). The labor Party was keen to improve the situation of deprived minorities though it did not openly show this to the whole population. The government feared to lose the white population's votes for the Conservative party (Vermeulen 39). The Conservative party did not seek the well-being of the minorities and considered their

situation to be normal. Conservatives claimed that the minorities' economic situation was a personal issue and did not necessitate the government's interference.

The diversity of ethnicities in Britain had made the British society a multicultural one because the newcomers came from different cultural backgrounds. The disparity between the immigrants and the native population created a kind of public tension and discontent within the British society. The White British community is known for its conservatism. They cherish their common values and culture. Such a huge influx of immigrants, some may argue, would lead them to lose these commonalities.

This situation urged the government to come up with legislation that sought to promote cultural pluralism⁴ and embrace multiculturalism as the country's policy. The aim was to assure mutual acceptance, understanding and harmony between the majority population and the minorities. A number of Race-Relations Acts (RRAs) were introduced by the government (Meer and Modood 2). The RRA of 1976, for example, aimed at prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race (Vermulen 41). Such policies were passed to fight racial but not religious discrimination. The enactment of the Race Relation Acts 1976 paved the way towards Multiculturalism (Eriksen et al. 5). This act aimed at ending discrimination and assuring equal rights for minorities in all domains.

Muslims were treated less favorably than the other minorities in employment, education and health care. This treatment was due to their customs, Islamic dress, especially hijab which was the most noticeable among them (Malik). Though the British government tried to end racial discrimination, it was not able to protect Muslims since its legislation were not on the ground of religion. Consequently, any discriminatory behavior that appeared against them was not considered as a violation of the Race Relation Act 1979.

Muslims entered the public arena through various events leading Britain to consider its Muslims as a growing threat within the country. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 turned the British attention to the British Muslim communities. The Rushdie affair of 1989 worsened the image of the British Muslims. Copies of *The Satanic Verses* were burnt in Bradford. Some openly supported Ayatollah Khomeini's Fatwa to murder Salman Rushdie ("Islamic Political Radicalism" 59). Rushdie's publication underestimated both the origins of Islam as well as the biography of Prophet Mohamed (PBUH) leading to a growing anger and a call for banning the publication among the Muslim communities ("The Muslims Presence in Britain..." 7). The reaction of Muslims was rigorously through riots and fire bombs throughout Britain. Muslims considered Britain as a pro-blasphemy country that did not protect all religions equally because it was tolerant with the distorted image of Islam represented in Rushdie's book (7-8).

While Muslims perceived the novel as offensive to Islam, Britain like other Western European countries considered it as a form of "freedom of speech" ("Muslims in Britain: background..." 10). The stereotypical images that were brought upon Muslims shaped the perception of the British white population about Muslims. The Muslim population came to realize that Britain was neither able to protect them from racial discrimination nor adjust the multi-religious society.

Right after the Rushdie affair, the first Gulf war erupted in 1991. Muslims in the war were shown as barbaric and greedy people who wanted to take over their neighbors' land. Britain's participation in the war against a Muslim country was faced by rejections from British Muslims (Ahmad 13). The United States led Britain with it to free Kuwait from Iraqi invasion. This created anger all along Britain; British Muslims condemned the act of participating in the war. However, the white population considered the British involvement in the Gulf war as a duty to protect human rights of Kuwait and retaliation against Iraq's

violation of the world order and peace. British Muslims refused the act of killing their brother Muslims in Iraq and Kuwait. The white population received Muslims' reaction as racist actions and started to question Muslim's loyalty to Britain (Peace 127). Ever since, British Muslims were put in a spiteful zone of marginalization, segregation and racism.

1.3.1 The Road to the War on Terror

September 11th, 2001 is an unforgettable event that changed the destiny of Muslims over the globe. On that day morning, a violent terrorist attack was launched on the US. Two planes crashed into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York. An hour later, another plane caused a severe destruction in the Pentagon in Washington D.C. The World Trade Centre Towers along with other building in lower Manhattan collapsed, parts of the Pentagon were destroyed, and nearly three thousand people died ("9/11 Attacks"). These attacks were extraordinarily well planned and coordinated. They were portrayed in the world's media as the most devastating act of international terrorism ever committed.

The US government accused Al-Qaeda members to be responsible for these vicious suicide attacks. It later declared a "war on terror". President Bush announced:

We will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region now has a decision to make either you are with us or you are with the terrorists. From this day onward any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime. ("Text: Bush Address to Congress").

This speech was a clear message to the whole world that any regime that attempts to provide a refuge or support for terrorists would be identified as terrorist itself.

The reaction of the US was directed to The Taliban regime which was suspected to be harboring members of Al-Qaeda. On October 7th 2001, the US along with Britain invaded Afghanistan. Then, on March 20th, 2003, they invaded Iraq with the claim of Hussein's

possession of weapons of mass destruction. The invasion of Muslim countries resulted in disenchantment among British Muslims. British Muslims were charged with anger and frustration over the US wars against Muslim countries. They went out in protests demanding Britain's withdrawal from Afghanistan and Iraq (Rehman 859-862). Though, the Afghan and Iraqi Muslims were far away from British Muslims but they were unified under the concept of *Ummah* which means that all Muslims from all over the world are brothers and sisters in Islam. The Britons assumed that "war on terror" was the best solution to end terrorism and anyone who opposed it was seen as radical, extremist, fundamentalist and merely terrorist ("Islamic Political Radicalism").

The US went too far with its policy against terrorism. It established a detention camp at the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (Rehman 860). This prison turned to be torturing Muslims who were suspected of terrorism; among them British Muslims. The British government did not react against American violation of human rights in Guantanamo (860-861). Muslims' dissatisfaction about their government increased and protests were organized to condemn acts of torture in Guantanamo prison.

The 9/11 attacks surged the need for Britain to come up with anti-extremism policies. The Home office introduced 'Preventing Extremism Together' (PET) to guarantee the British Muslims' safety. PET opened up dialogues with British Muslims to work together against the threat of extremism. It improved the Imams' advisory board to preach the notion of anti-extremism among British Muslims. It also, acknowledged the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) (Thiel 29). This attempt shows the British government's will to work with the Muslim population against terrorism.

1.4. The History of Islamophobia

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the social climate in which British Muslims were living in deteriorated. Incidents of harassment and attacks against Muslims have noticeably

increased. The distrust and hatred towards Muslims increased ever since, they were fuelled by negative stereotypes about Islam and Muslims disseminated by the media. A study conducted in 2002 by Lorraine Sheridan from University of Leicester, shows that Muslims experienced discrimination more than other ethnic minorities especially after the 9/11 attacks on the United States. Sheridan asserts:

Muslims were found to have not only the greatest risk of being victims of both implicit racism and general discrimination before September 11th, but also the highest increase in experiences of racism and discrimination since the events of that day, and, consequently, the greatest risk of being victims of both implicit racism and general discrimination after September 11th. (“Discrimination and Racism, Post September 11”).

Media portrayed Muslims and Islam in a complete negative way, using cartoons and caricatures about Islam, in addition to a wide range of articles devoted to Islam and Islamophobia (Allen 97). Though it existed as a sentiment, Islamophobia, as a term was not used. The Runnymede Trust’s report entitled “Islamophobia: a Challenge for us All” was the first to shed the light on the term. The report defines Islamophobia as “unfounded hostility towards Islam, to the practical consequences of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities, and the exclusion of Muslims” (4). The Runnymede Trust’s report asserts that the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks witnessed a radical increase of Islamophobia among the non-Muslim population in Britain.

The first non-Muslim recognition of the term Islamophobia was in 1994 by the publication of The Runnymede Trust report entitled “A Very Slight Sleeper: the Persistence and Dangers of Anti-Semitism”. The report stressed that Islamophobia was a new form of racism (Allen 13). It was only after the Runnymede Trust Report that the term Islamophobia entered the

common language and dialogues of the British people and the political spaces. The main reason for the prevalence of Islamophobia in Britain was not only the acts of terrorism performed by Muslims, but also, it was believed that all Muslims share radical thoughts that would lead them to be terrorists.

All in all, the process of immigration changed the British society leading the government to adopt Multiculturalism. Despite the introduction of immigration policies that aimed to guarantee order and equality among the whole population, the British government was not able to adjust the diversity of the whole British society. The diversity of the British society made it vulnerable due to the escalation of discrimination, racism and segregation against minorities.

The Muslim minority in Britain was affected by the world events that drove the world's attention towards them, for example the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Rushdie Affair of 1989, and the Gulf Wars. The most significant event that changed the world's perception of Muslims and Islam was the 9/11 attacks in the US. Ever since, the British society became hostile towards its Muslim community. Their situation was hardened by the rise of Islamophobia.

Chapter Two

The Repercussions of the 7/7 Bombings on the Muslim Community

Muslims were present in the UK for at least 300 years that were tainted with experiences of racism and discrimination. However, after the 7/7 attacks, there was a significant increase in discrimination, negative stereotyping and even physical violence toward Muslims. The Muslim population in Great Britain is aware of the global assumptions about Islam's relation with terrorism. They know that the entire world highly ties terrorism with the Islamic concept of Jihad⁵. Terrorism reached Britain with the London bombings of 2005, though the British Muslim population was seen as a threat since the 9/11 attacks, leading to an increase of abuse against them. After the 7/7 bombings, the situation of Muslims got worse. The word Islam nowadays is associated with terrorism. The absence of a correct understanding of Islam and the lack of awareness about its teachings reinforced Islamophobia and elevated the number of hate crimes against Muslims. They became victims of revenge because of their assumed "guilt by association". Following the 7/7 bombings, there were a surge in physical and verbal attacks against Muslims, their mosques, institutions, and organizations. The bombings rendered Muslims more exposed and vulnerable than before.

2.1. Background of the Attacks

On the early morning of July 7th, 2005, four young British Muslims conducted a series of coordinated suicide bomb attacks against the London transportation system. At approximately 8:50 am, three almost simultaneous explosions were effected on the London Underground stations. Around an hour later, a fourth bomb exploded on the upper deck of a bus in Tavistock Square. The four suicide bombers killed fifty two commuters and injured over seven hundred people ("Report of the Official Account ..." 2). The response to the attacks was immediate; the whole Underground system and the bus service were both shut down in central London ("July 7 2005 ..."). The victims were from different nationalities and religions; they were British and non-

British, Christians and non-Christians, whites and non-whites (“Report of the Official Account ...” 1). The London bombings were the worst terrorist act on the British soil since the Second World War. On July 21st, 2005, another four attempted bombings took place in London (“The July 21 failed bombings”). However, these attempts were not fulfilled.

After the attacks, the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, accompanied with other leaders at G8⁶ Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland condemned and declared the attacks to be an act of terrorism. He addressed the nation stating that the British were confronting “an evil ideology” that “must pull this up by its roots” Knowing that the task is a complicated one, Blair stressed “Within Britain, we must join up with our Muslims community to take on the extremists” (“Full Text: Blair...”).

The bombers were later confirmed to be Muslims; Mohammad Sidique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer, Hasib Hussain, and Germaine Lindsay (“7 July London bombings...”). Three of them were second generation British Muslim citizens. They were born and raised in Britain. Khan, a 30 years old teaching assistant, was born in Leeds of Pakistani origin. He was married and father of one child. Tanweer, 24 years old, was born in Leeds of Pakistani parents. Hussain, 18 years old, was from Leeds and of Pakistani origins too. Germaine Lindsay, the fourth bomber, was 19 years old from Jamaica. He moved to Britain, he was addicted to drugs before converting Islam. He was married and father of one child (“7/7 bombings: Profiles ...”). Khan, Tanweer and Hussain appeared to have met in Pakistan between November 2004 and February 2005 and spent almost three months there for training. Investigations showed that they might have contact with al-Qaeda members (“7 July Bombings”).

2.2. The Claim of Responsibility

Hours after the attacks, a group called The Secret Organization Group of al-Qaeda of Jihad in Europe posted its claim of responsibility for the bombings on an Islamic website called al-qal3a.com (Quinn). The BBC Channel provided a translation to the letter where al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden stated:

Nation of Islam and Arab nation: Rejoice for it is time to take revenge against the British Zionist Crusader government in retaliation for the massacres Britain is committing in Iraq and Afghanistan. The heroic mujahideen have carried out a blessed raid in London. Britain is now burning with fear, terror and panic in its northern, southern, eastern, and western quarters. We have repeatedly warned the British government and people. We have fulfilled our promise and carried out our blessed military raid in Britain after our mujahideen exerted strenuous efforts over a long period of time to ensure the success of the raid. (“Statement Claiming London Attacks”).

The letter was the first evidence that al-Qaeda adopted the attacks. The statement clearly emphasized that the attacks were a sort of vengeance for Britain’s crimes and its military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda praised the perpetrators of the attacks and labeled them as “heroic mujahideen”. It is clear from the statement that al-Qaeda has spent a long time preparing the attacks.

Later on September 1st, 2005, other concrete evidence was released through a videotape broadcast by the Arabic television channel al-Jazeera. The leader of the bombings, Mohammed Sidiq Khan pointed out that the motivation behind the attacks was the abuse encountered by Muslims around the world stating: “Your democratically elected governments continuously perpetuate atrocities against my people all over the world. And your support of them makes you directly responsible, just as I am directly responsible for protecting and avenging my Muslim brothers and sisters” (Report of the Official Account...” 19). Khan’s video was aired together with a statement of the deputy leader of al-Qaeda Ayman al-Zawahri.

2.3. Islamic Radicalism in Britain

Although the 7/7 attacks were cruel and left great number of casualties, there is no doubt that they were the outcome of various reasons. Islamophobia, Britain’s engagement in the war against Islam, minorities’ social exclusion, lack of leadership, and the misrepresentation of Islam

and Muslims by the media led to the spread of radicalism and extremism in Britain. These factors were among the motives that led some radicals to terrorize the country. The attacks brought a crucial question to the fore: why would young British people blow themselves and kill their fellow citizens?

In “Islamic Radicalism in Britain”, the author argues that British Muslims felt themselves inferior and discriminated by the British society which considered them to be a “problem community” (Kfir 102). In the words of the head of MI5, Dame Eliza Manningham-Buller, argues that more and more people are “moving from passive sympathy towards active terrorism through being radicalized or indoctrinated by friends, families, in organized training events here and overseas, by images on television, through chat rooms and websites on the internet” (“Extracts from MI5...”).

Some commentators pointed at how the negative portrayal of Islamist terrorism helped in the marginalization of Muslims in Britain and increased the atmosphere of tension and hostility towards them. Retired senior judge Baroness Butler-Sloss argues that the way the government and the media portrayed the issue could leave some feeling “that they are not part of British society”. Sloss adds: “There’s a real danger with the rhetoric that it is turning certain groups, particularly the Muslims, into feeling ‘other’, feeling that they are not trusted, feeling that they are not part of British society”(qtd. In Harris).

The British government tried to decrease the tension between the Muslims and the mainstream British society. The Muslim community did not believe in their authorities despite the latter’s attempts to improve “inter-community relations”. Andleen Razzaq, a Muslim teacher, stated that “The government doesn’t talk to young people...At a community consultation meeting I went to, there were only three youths. The government only talks to older Muslims” (Barkham, Curtis, and Harker). The statement of Razzaq implies that young British Muslims do not believe in their authorities; thus, they do not converse with the

government. This means that the absence of belonging leads some Muslims to feel worried about becoming targeted by the government and may be arrested for long time without accusation or effective supervision over the process.

Anti-Muslim sentiments increased distrust between Muslims and White population. The prevalence of Islamophobia in the country arose the feeling of anger and alienation that led some young British Muslims to adopt Islamic radicalism. In one of the cases, a young British Muslim, suspected of being a terrorist, was shot by a police officer. The shot was later declared as intentional. In a press interview Mr Abdul Kahar, the victim, explained the action of the officer as an unjustified fear of Muslims. He states “I believe the only crime I had done in their eyes was being Asian with a long beard” (Walker, and Fickling). This shows that Muslims were identified by their appearances. The white community perceives Muslims in a racist manner. Such incidents paved the way for radical thoughts to prevail. Some young British Muslims were overwhelmed by such radical thoughts, they believed that protest would not change their situation and that only violence would make a difference.

British foreign policy had a strong effect on the emergence and spread of violent Islamism in Great Britain. Though British Muslims opposed Britain’s involvement in the war against Afghanistan and Iraq, the British government increased its presence in these countries and provided the United States with a continuous political and military support. The British Muslim community felt that Islam was under the siege of the West, Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, and Chechnya being among the examples. The British Muslims’ resentment to their government’s foreign policy was caused by the oppression that faced Muslims all over the world (Alam). Khan, the ringleader of the 7/7 London bombers, openly stated that the West would be a target for similar attacks. “Until we feel security, you will be our targets”, and this fight would never stop unless the Western governments stop violence against his people (“London bomber: Text in full”). Thus, foreign policy proved to be a key reason for the rise of Islamist radicalism in Britain. Western

invasions of Muslim countries were used as a reason to urge young Muslims to join a holy war (Jihad), for the sake of Allah.

2.4. UK Counter-Terrorism Policies after the Attacks

Following the attacks on the London public transportation system in 2005, the British Muslim community became a suspect community. The fact that the perpetrators of the bombings were Muslims made the resultant counter terrorism policies, partially if not fully, directed to Muslims.

In the wake of the bombings, the Commander of the Metropolitan Police Service (MET), Sir Ian Blair, and the President of the Association of Chief Police Officers ACPO, Ken Jones, were in a meeting with the Government Ministers to find out solutions for the terrorist threat they were facing and the best ways to stand against it (Thiel 30). The suggestions proposed were highly endorsed by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair. Among them, the proposal of extending the period of detention for suspected terrorists to 90 days without charge. However, the House of Lords refused Blair's 90 days detention proposal ("Peers throw out..."). Thus, the bill was not a matter of consensus especially because its constitutionality was under question.

The British government officially launched the Terrorism Act in April 2006. Its aim was to end any kind of suspected terrorist acts or behaviors. The act introduced major provisions. Firstly, the act allowed the police forces to hold suspected terrorists and increased the pre-charge detention period from 14 to 28 days. Secondly, it permitted the prosecution of people who praise or celebrate the 7/7 bombings, honor terrorist attacks, figures or organizations, or join a terrorist group. Additionally, the act allowed the ban of terrorist organizations such as Hizbut-Tahrir and Al-Muhajiroun ("Terrorism Act 2006").

The Terrorism Act 2006 was intensely criticized as a violation of freedom of expression. The leading human rights lawyer Geoffrey Bindman describes the law as a "dangerous inroad on freedom of speech"; he claims it could be used against people who resorted to violence against a repressive regime. The Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn, also stands up against the glorification ban of

the act claiming it is “misguided” and “absurd” (“Terrorism Act 2006”). The rejection of this act by these intellectuals and others entails that they law may lead to severe violation of human rights.

The Counter-Terrorism Act 2008 added new terms to the previous one. It allowed pursuing suspects after detention, having fingerprints of the suspects, and rising the period of detention from 28 to 42 days (“Counter-Terrorism Act 2008”). The new amendments gave the Police forces and the Intelligence Services more power over suspects especially Muslims.

The government passed its counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST in 2011. The aim of this strategy was to “reduce the risk” to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism. This strategy, would “address all forms of terrorist threat” to the UK and its interests whether it originates inside the UK or overseas (“CONTEST: The United Kingdom’s...” 40). The strategy was organized around four work streams, each comprising a number of key objectives. Pursue aimed to stop terrorist attacks; Prevent aimed to halt people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; Protect would strengthen Britain’s protection against a terrorist attack; and Prepare’s objective was to lessen the impact of a terrorist attack (4). The CONTEST strategy tried to cover all the terms of national security.

The CONTEST strategy included the Prevent program; which is a key component of the British counter-terrorism strategy. It encompasses three themes that target all forms of radicalism and terrorism in the isle. The three themes resemble and are a continuation of the terms of the previous terrorism acts. Prevent aims to encounter the radical ideologies spread through internet that would easily manipulate youths. It also seeks to save people from becoming terrorists. Moreover, it collaborates with national sectors and institution such as education, health, mosques...etc. to spread awareness about the danger of participating in terrorist activities (“Prevent Strategy” 6-8). CONTEST and Prevent are in constant development. The British government, conscious of the danger of terrorism, attempts each year to improve its counter-terrorism legislation.

2.4.1. The Impact of the UK's Counter-Terrorism Policies on British Muslims

The Counter-terrorism measures highly affected the Muslim communities in Britain. In 2011, Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) published a report conducted by Durham University. It was entitled “The impact of Counter-terrorism Measures on Muslim Communities”. The authors interviewed a number of Muslims and non-Muslims in particular areas of the UK in order to expose the impact of counter- terrorism legislation on Muslims. The report shows that the British counter-terrorism policies were widely designated for the Muslim community more than the other communities. It revealed how the British government strongly focused on Islamist radicalism forgetting the other social problems faced by the same targeted community such as; drugs, gangs, unemployment and racial discrimination.

The report's findings prove that the British legislative and executive systems are racist, because their forces targeted mainly British Muslims. The report claimed that the counter-terrorism policies were thought to be “counter-productive”. They angered human rights organizations such as EHRC since they failed to protect human rights and increased racial tension between the White population and Muslims as well as increased resentment and hatred for Muslims. In addition, Muslims felt they were treated as suspect community since most of the “stop and search” operations were made upon Muslims; explained the interviewees (Choudhury and Fenwick 3-5).

The 96 interviewed Muslims of the study referred to three particular oppressive laws in the counter-terrorism legislation which were Schedule 7, Section 44 (S44) and Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE) or Prevent Program. The first law was implied in ports and airports. Muslims were stopped and searched in ports and airports on the basis of their religious profile. They claimed that the questions that police asked are related to their religious activities like how many times they pray, where they pray and if they know any organization that support radicalism (6-7). Muslims felt that they would always be seen as a suspect group because of their religion.

The second oppressive law that doubled the suffering of Muslim communities in Britain was S44. This law was implemented in streets where Muslims were stopped and searched by police in particular areas. The routine practice that was performed on Muslims created a state of distrust, hatred, and resentment towards the police services. According to this report the use of S44 exceeded half million stop and search cases since 2001 (6-8).

The PVE was applied in schools; mosques, neighborhoods, health institutions to prevent any form of radical thoughts from taking ground. If anyone would sense that a person could have different ideologies from the mainstream population, he would be accused of radicalism and would be turned into police or intelligence services (9). Some of the arrests came as a result of information provided by the community (Casciani). The PVE, consequently, was not welcomed by the Muslim community, an opinion made clear by deputy head of the Muslim Council of Britain, Harun Khan, who told the BBC that Prevent was further alienating the people that the government was trying to reach in the first place. Mr Khan said: “Most young people are seeing [Prevent] as a target on them and the institutions they associate with”. He added that people needed a “safe space” where they could “speak freely without being labeled as extremists” since the government “only wanted to engage with people whose views matched their own” (“Muslim Council says...”). In fact, this law tyrannized a whole community as Muslims who would express some thoughts, considered as intolerable by the government, would be accused of terrorism once they express them.

2.5. Consequences of the Attacks on young British Muslims

The 7/7 bombings were a turning point for the British Muslim community. The consequences of the bombing impeded the process of Muslims’ integration into the British society. Media bias, Islamophobia, and hate crimes⁷ were among the major repercussions of the attacks. Media is the mirror of the society, in the case of British Muslims, this was not true. It added the sufferance of British Muslims by representing them negatively. Media bias increased the fear of Islam and

Muslims in Britain, to the degree that Muslims became victims of terror and violence by extremist white population.

2.5.1. Media Bias

Media is a key factor that shapes public opinion and covers events and realities. It is considered as one of the most important means that directs people's attitude towards specific issues. Abbas explains that young British Muslims believe that Media is responsible for their continuous rejection in the British society. He assumes that Media is the "evil demon" that damaged their image worldwide. British Media use a language that describes Muslims in a negative way. It distorts the meaning of some Arabic words such as the word "Jihad" which is represented as an aggressive act of terror against the west. However, the real connotation of this word is different from their representation (*Muslims Britain: Communities ...* 12). The use of such language led the British white population to frame a negative image about British Muslims and the Muslim community as a whole.

The British Media concentrated its headlines on Muslim conflicts, wars, crises ...etc. Headings about the bombings were repeatedly reported. Since 2005, Islam and Muslims were portrayed in a complete sharp manner(Masood 56). In many of its reports, programs, and articles, British Media misrepresented them through providing negative stereotypes; describing them as zealots, fanatic, threat, extremist, fundamentalist, suicide bombers...etc. (Shahram, and Smith 4). This shows that British media only opted for issues dealing with extremism, terrorism, and radicalism when discussing Muslim-related problems.

The impact of Media representation of the Muslim community was highly influential. A 2008 report about the portrayal of Muslims in the British Media was published by Cardiff School of Journalism. Entitled "Images of Islam in UK: The Representation of British Muslims in the National Print News Media 2000-2008", the report conducted a survey upon 974 newspaper

articles, an analysis of images used in these articles, and a number of case studies of narratives about Muslims.

The survey found that the British Media coverage of Muslims reached its high levels directly after 2005. 36% of Muslim-related stories dealt with terrorism and its threat. This increase is explained by the attacks on the London public transport system. Media focused on showing the differences between Muslim and western' religion and culture as a problem, this is represented in 22% of the overall stories. The type of these stories deepened the sense of dual separatism of Muslims and the mainstream population; both sides tried to separate themselves from each other (Moore, Mason, and Lewis).

The coverage of the 2005 bombings focused not on the event itself but on the Muslim community as the main threat related to terrorism in the land. This report confirms the stereotypical use of language when dealing with Muslims. It indicates that 26% of the British press stories described Islam as "dangerous, backward or irrational". While, only 2% of the overall stories included positive connotations about Islam values (Moore, Mason, and Lewis). Muslims suffered from a big misunderstanding; they are perceived as a threat, something very strange, different and difficult to understand by the British society.

British Media do not represent the Muslim community's real attitudes towards terrorism. Though many Muslim organizations, individuals and groups do not accept international terrorism, British Media tend to ignore their opinion. In one of the weblogs named EqualiTeach, it is stated that the British Media assume that the Muslim community do not condemn terrorist organizations such as ISIS (Soyei). An example of such responses is a member of MCB; ShujaShafi who stated that "Violence has no place in religion, violence has no religion" (qtd. In Fox). In addition to another statement by 100 religious leaders who produced a video denouncing the Islamic State, they claimed that they need to "come together to emphasize the importance of unity in the UK and to decree ISIS as an illegitimate, vicious group who do not represent Islam in any way" (Soyei).

British Media seemed to tackle issues that gave a distorted image of Islam. It focused on extremist thoughts and ignored the voices that represented the reality of Islam.

The misrepresentation of Islam in the British media and the negative perception of Muslims in the UK went hand in hand with the growing resentment and hatred of Muslims due to their religion (Moore, Mason, and Lewis 4). The British media contributed to the practices of discrimination and violence against Muslims through its stereotypical representation of Islam and Muslims.

2.5.2. Islamophobia and Hate Crimes

Islamophobia was always part of the British society; however, it was not visible as it took the form of racism and discrimination. It is just after the 9/11 and the 7/7 bombings that Islamophobia became prevalent and widespread within the British society. In other words, recent years witnessed the transformation of Islamophobia from racial discrimination into violent activities against the Muslim communities. These incidents served as catalysts for the upsurge of Islamophobia and hate crimes towards Muslims in Britain. Islamophobic acts took the form of vicious crimes committed against mosques, Islamic centers, Muslim organizations, Muslim women wearing hijab or niqab, and bearded Muslim men wearing distinctive Islamic clothes.

In the aftermath of the 7/7 attacks the number of violent incidents against Muslims increased. The word “Islam” or “Muslim” represented fear and threat; the two terms had a deep irreversible impact on the society (Allen 84). The MET in London indicated that directly after the attacks, the number of faith hate crimes against Muslims rose. This made the British Muslim community feel excluded, suspected, and at risk. MET recorded many cases of verbal and physical assaults against Muslims and even those who look like Muslims like Sikhs and Hindus (“The Impact of 7 July 2005...” 14).

The BBC News presented a number of figures three weeks after the London Bombings, in which there were 269 hate crimes in comparison to 40 in the same period of 2004. The MET Assistant Commissioner Tarique Ghaffur, claimed that such anger and hostility against Muslims have never been seen (“Hate Crimes Soar...”). In addition to that, the Police reported 86 faith hate crimes in London only. A spokesman for the Muslim Safety Forum, an umbrella group which works with the police, reported that the wake of the London bombings witnessed waves of attacks, harassment, and hate filled speech against Muslims (“Islamophobia, 2007 Hate Crime Survey” 8).

The table below is published by Human Rights First, a leading human rights advocacy organization based in New York City and Washington, DC since 1978. It shows the rise in hate crime incidents following the London bombings, compared with the number of incidents in the year preceding the 7/7 attacks.

Table 2.1 The number of hate crime incidents between 2004 and 2005.

	Number Incidents 2004	Number Incidents 2005
July 4-10	11	68
July 11-17	22	92
July 18-24	20	67
July 25-31	9	79
August 1-7	7	60
August 8-14	9	35
August 15-21	10	28

Source: Metropolitan Service Police MET (2005)

The table gives the number of incidents that Muslims faced after the bombings. Few days after the attacks, there were cases of physical attacks on Imams, fire bombs thrown through windows, pigs’ heads being put in the entrance of mosques, death threats, hostile messages, and insults. On July 8th, 2005, an anti-Muslim group threw fire bombs at the Al Madina Jamia mosque in Leeds and others threw stones at the Jamia mosque in Totterdown, Bristol. On the same day, in Birkenhead,

Wirral, two men set fire on Shajala mosque through putting gasoline in the letterbox of the mosque leading to locking the Imam BoshirUllah in his upstairs bedroom (4).

Women were the primary targets for anti-Muslim hate crimes and harassment. They were easily identified as Muslims due to their Islamic dress. According to Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) campaign, 58% of all Muslim hate crime incidents were against Muslim women. 80% of those were visually identifiable. Some of the women who contacted the helpline provided by Tell MAMA claimed that they were harshly beaten to the ground, having their headscarves pulled off, and dog's feces thrown at their faces. A significant case was of a pregnant woman with her five years old daughter who was attacked and assaulted without being rescued (Elgot). Muslim Public Affairs Committee reported in an article entitled "Racist Hate Crime on Muslim Women Raises", that a group of 7 to 8 white men attacked a woman by pushing her to the floor shouting 'Bin Laden' ("Islamophobia, 2007 Hate Crime Survey" 8).

The 7/7 bombings were a turning point in British Muslims' lives. The fear of radicalism and extremism led the British government to develop some counter-terrorism policies in order to prevent the recurrence of other atrocities. The aftermath of the bombings witnessed a complete change in the treatment of the British Muslim community. Muslims became suspect of terrorism, Media became more hostile, and Muslim issues were discussed as problems. Islamophobia and violence against Muslims prevailed, legislations affected Muslims' civil rights; Muslims were stopped and searched in the streets, arrested without charge. Though, these measures were designed for the protection of the British society, they turned to be a threat to its security as these measures led to the further alienation of a whole new generation of Muslims who were growing up in fear and distrust.

Chapter Three

Challenges of the British Muslim Minority on Identity and Integration in the Aftermath of the 7/7 Bombings

After the 7/7 events, the British Muslims entered a problematic situation. The state and fate of multiculturalism in Britain became a controversial issue. The British Muslim situation got worse. The increase of Islamophobia, hate crimes, Islamic extremism made the British Muslims struggle with their identity. The process of integration into the British society became a difficult task for the British Muslim minorities. The impact of the attacks on the British Muslim communities needed a pacifying channel that would bridge the gap between the Muslims and the mainstream population. This task was partially fulfilled by the British Muslim organizations.

The debate about Muslim identities in the UK is a complex issue because Muslims are the most diversified community in the UK. They descend from various parts of the South Asian subcontinent and Africa and established their communities in different parts of the country. The majority of the British Muslim population has a working class background, but there are some groups who belong to the upper class. These rich Muslims know very little about Muslims living in bad conditions and experiencing religious discrimination (Rex). They are likely to create a mistaken image about successful integration of Muslim. The majority of the Muslim community suffers economic and social exclusion, so this category does not represent the whole Muslim community.

The British society as a whole needs to work harder to develop a national identity and forms of belonging to each other in order to overcome the crisis it faced after the bombings. The responsibility of restoring peace and order in the country was expressed in the

government's decision to revise Multiculturalism policy and its security measures. This would guarantee equality and community cohesion along with national identity.

3.1. The British Muslim Integration within Multicultural UK

3.1.1. The Fate of Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism⁸ in Great Britain was introduced under the aim of protecting and respecting the various ethnic groups settled down in the isle. It encouraged the celebration of diversity and dialogue between cultures. Yet, the doctrine of Multiculturalism led to the alienation of an entire generation of young British Muslims. The British government made many efforts in order to facilitate the process of integration⁹ of the different ethnic minorities. But, with the current situation of Muslims after the 7/7 attacks, the multiculturalism discourse did not achieve its aims. Multiculturalism received a heavy criticism, as being a cultural separatism that encouraged fragmentation instead of integration (Hopkins, and Gale 195). Therefore, the British government called for developing a new form of Britishness¹⁰ within the discourse of multiculturalism.

Many scholars debated the concept of Multiculturalism and its fate after the London bombings. Tariq Modood, a professor of sociology at Bristol University, states that "Britain's multicultural model is held responsible for the London bombs in July 2005" ("Remaking multiculturalism after 7/7" 1). Multiculturalism, then was blamed for the bombings. He added that Muslims would be able to integrate into the British society through a new concept of multiculturalism that is based on freedom of cultures, strong sense of belonging, and national identity (1).

Multiculturalism came under attacks after the 9/11 events in the US and the 7/7 bombings in London. These incidents arose the feeling of resentment and hatred between the British white population and Muslims. This fact led the British government to rethink multiculturalism. The attacks that were committed by home-grown radical Muslims; born and raised in a multicultural environment led many analysts, observers, intellectuals, and politicians to confirm the failure of multiculturalism and accuse it as the main reason for the bombings. Others believed that the

discourse of multiculturalism should be reviewed and accompanied with integration (“Remaking multiculturalism after 7/7” 1-2). The huge gap that was left by multiculturalism created misunderstanding and intercultural clashes between both sides. These incidents altogether with the increasing number of asylums, especially from Muslim countries obliged Britain to revise its multiculturalism discourse.

The British government also questioned its policy of multiculturalism and decided to support national identity, ensure the notion of Britishness and promote integration within multicultural UK. In a speech to an invited audience in Downing Street, Prime Minister Tony Blair stated:

When it comes to our essential values- belief in democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, equal treatment of all, respect for this country and its shared heritage- then that is where we come together, it is what we hold in common; it is what gives us the right to call ourselves British. At that point, no distinctive culture or religion supersedes our duty to be part of an integrated United Kingdom. (“Radical Muslims Must ...”).

In this speech, the British Prime Minister explains the importance of the British cultural heritage and values. He claims that all British citizens should come together in order to protect principals of the British national identity. He emphasizes that Britishness should come above all the other cultures and religions. He ensures commonality and urges all minorities to adopt the common British values. Blair’s speech marks to some extent the failure of multiculturalism.

Following 2005, some British politicians started to criticize the discourse of multiculturalism and called for national identity. In January 2007, Gordon Brown declared multiculturalism as “an excuse for justifying separateness”. He stressed the notion of Britishness and national identity rather than separatism. Later in February 2011, Prime Minister David Cameron argued that the doctrine of multiculturalism “has undermined our nation’s sense of cohesion because it emphasizes what divides us rather than what bring us together” (Hasan). Both politicians deny the

effectiveness of multiculturalism in Britain since the attacks were an evidence for the doctrine's failure.

3.1.2. The Role of Muslim Leaders: A Pacifying Bridge for Successful integration

Multiculturalism discourse paved the way for Muslim institutions to emerge as a medium between the Muslim community and the British government as well as the Muslim community and the mainstream population. The duty of the Muslim organizations, political representatives, and religious institutions was to bridge the gap between the different poles of the British white society and the Muslim community. They were responsible for combating extremism and minimizing the distance that resulted from the counter-terrorism legislation.

The British Muslim community struggled to be listened to. The state government was not able to debate Muslim issues. It needed a representative body with which it would negotiate Muslim issues in an attempt to solve their problems and meet their needs. According to Professor Modood, following the famous Satanic Verses affair, the UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs (UKACIA) was created to defend Islam and Muslims. Ever since, the Muslim organizations started to emerge. The most notable Muslim organization was the MCB, the successor of the UKACIA. This organization had a major involvement in dealing with British Muslims' affairs. The MCB was successful in achieving a quite descent position in the political arena reaching a successful political integration (Inge 8). The emergence of such organization means that the issues, needs, and rights of British Muslims would be fought for.

Dr. Sophie Gilliat-Ray, a Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at Cardiff University, considers chaplaincy as the most representative body of the British Muslim community in UK. She claims that chaplaincy was a bridging body for Muslims to integrate into the society. Muslim chaplains are religious groups who work in Britain's prisons, hospitals, military and educational institutions. This group encouraged British Muslims, especially youngsters to

integrate since it gave them opportunities to express themselves in public and help them in constructing their identity and improving their education and work career. Moreover, they worked hard to strengthen interfaith relations to fight extremist thoughts (10). The role of chaplaincy shows that some Muslim leaders took the responsibility to guide Muslim youths and to oppose violent extremism.

After the 7/7 bombings, the British government needed a way to address its Muslim community. One of the British government bodies, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), considers the Muslim community as a part of the British society. “With Muslim communities”, the Acting Director General of the Communities Group in this department, David Rossington says “our aim is to help build cohesive, empowered and resilient communities and, specifically, to help empower those communities to challenge violent extremist ideas” (Inge 9). Rossington’s words indicate that the British government was ready to cooperate with the different communities in the country, including Muslims, in order to achieve a united nation that would come together to fight extremism.

The government was not only interested in connecting the different communities together, it also tried to help them integrate into the society. DCLG focused on three major areas. Firstly, it aimed at improving Muslim religious institution and leaderships through aiding mosques to develop their governance standards. Such programs included combating supporters of radicalism, the support for the development of an effective community leadership through organizations such as the foundation of Young Muslims Advisory Group and the National Muslim Women’s Advisory Group. DCLG also attempted to improve the socio-economic situation of the British Muslim communities through introducing set of programs to achieve its goals (9). The introduction of such activities on the behalf of the British government implies the willingness of the British government to improve the Muslim community’s situation and encourage its integration.

3.1.3. The Process of Integration

The British society is considered as the most diverse society in the world. Its diversity constitutes the British national identity which is based on the diverse cultures, faiths and ethnics that coexist in the society. The minorities came under the duty to integrate in the British society to guarantee order, equality, and peace between all minorities and the British mainstream population. The British Muslim minorities were the most noticeable group who face problems with integration (Bisin et al. 1). The post 7/7 era created a challenge for British Muslim to integrate into the society.

The 7/7 attacks had an immense effect on the British society as a whole. It was a wakeup call for the UK. The British government became aware of the urgency to build up a united nation under shared national principles and values. Integration then, became the only solution to create a common base that would gather all different ethnics under one umbrella. Minorities welcomed the call for integration and have the same interest as the government to create an integrated society (“Viewpoints: what should be...”).

Blair’s call for integration in December 2006 raised many questions on the type of integration he intended to introduce. The term integration might imply the meaning of assimilation¹¹; however, assimilation in the UK seemed to be impossible because of multiculturalism adopted in the country (Mason 857). As stated in the article “Integration, Cohesion and National Identity: Theoretical Reflections on Recent British Policy”, the chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips claimed that integration should not be treated as a synonym to assimilation. He added that the responsibility of integration did not only require the cooperation of minorities but also the host society to guarantee mutual understanding among them (860). The concept of assimilation means to adopt the British way of life leaving behind all forms of personal, cultural, and ethnic beliefs. For that reason, the

British government supported integration of the minorities, with respect to their cultures, instead of assimilation.

Modood claims that integration is seen as a two-way process of social interaction where both multiculturalism and common national identity work together for successful integration of the different minorities in the country (“Multiculturalism and Integration...” 4). In his book *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity and Muslims in Britain*, he claims that to achieve the integration of these minorities, the British government was developing a “multicultural Britishness” (“Remaking Multiculturalism after 7/7” 1). This new model would pave the way for the minorities to adapt in the British society and to successfully integrate.

The diversity of the British society was accepted from the early coming of immigrants to the isle. Therefore, the call for integration would mean that a certain sense of multiculturalism should be reserved and that it should be accepted by the mainstream society to facilitate minorities’ integration. Modood, also emphasizes that “multiculturalism is still an attractive and worthwhile political project ... This, however, does not mean that those calling for integration do not have a point; multiculturalism and integration are complementary ideas” (“Remaking multiculturalism after 7/7” 2). The statement of Modood implies that what the British society needs is not assimilation model but integration within multiculturalism. He believes that the British minorities including Muslims face the challenge to fully integrate into the British society due to its diversified nature. So the minorities’ integration would be achieved within a multicultural environment

Researches were made to find out whether the British Muslim minorities have the willingness to integrate into the British society or not. A survey was conducted by ICM Research and broadcast for the Channel 4 documentary in April 13th 2016. The survey was entitled “What British Muslim Really Think”. It found that more than 100.000 interviewed British Muslims “sympathize” with the perpetrators of the attacks. It, also found that 23% of

the interviewed British Muslims preferred to follow the Islamic values and to live an Islamic life separate from that of the mainstream population's. This shows that "part of the British Muslim community is becoming a separate nation within a nation" (Kern). It seems that despite the government's measure for promoting integration into the British society, parts of the Muslim community believe in their own value and were not ready to give them up.

The findings of the survey left an impact on a number of British Muslims. Some rejected the results claiming that the areas where the survey was conducted did not represent the whole Muslim community in Britain. The MCB also denounced the survey as not academic and that it worsened the situation from all sides (Kern). This means that there was a part of the Muslims community who were willing to integrate and support Muslims integration within the society. The MCB represented a large scale of the British Muslim minorities. So, the rejection of this survey showed that a large number of Muslims in Britain refused to acknowledge themselves as a separate community. As a response, the director of Independent Communication and Marketing (ICM) Martin Boon claimed that the survey is reliable since it has investigated Muslims who live in areas that constitute more than 20% of the population (Kern). The different opinions about this survey show that there is a divide among the British Muslim communities' opinion on the issue of integration.

The Muslim integration process is, in fact, hindered by a number of causes that resulted from the attacks. One of the most visible factors that impede the full integration of Muslims is the rising of the terrorist atrocities committed by UK born Muslim extremists. Islamophobia nowadays continues to raise fear and hatred towards Muslims making them unable to fit in the society. In addition, Media negative portrayals of Muslims as an enemy within the country has created an uncomfortable atmosphere for Muslims leading them to feel that they are not part of the British society and has hardened even more the process of their integration.

Another factor that makes Muslims' integration a more difficult task is the socio-economic situation of Muslims in the country. Muslims seem to be the most noticeable minority with the highest rate of unemployment, poor education and segregation forming an obstacle for the full integration into society (Helanova 22). This shows that the bad conditions where Muslims live influence their process of integration. The perception that Muslims do suffer social exclusion may foster their alienation and raise their feeling of disconnection.

Many researches came to the conclusion that British Muslims face a dilemma in their process of integration. They seem to have the willingness to fully integrate with the British mainstream society. However, they are not ready to give up their Islamic teachings. British Muslims who are willing to be involved in the society adopted some of the British common values such as the language and loyalties to the country and its symbols. Consequently, the British Muslims are to some extent integrated into the British society since they use the English language, celebrate British ceremonies and respect the symbols of the country. They adopt some of the British national values since Britain is their homeland.

Successful integration of Muslims into a British, American, Australian or any western context cannot be guaranteed. Most of these western countries are either occupying a Muslim country or intervening in its domestic affairs. Therefore, the sense of Islamic Ummah boosts the feeling of discontent among these Muslims toward their countries. Consequently white Britons, for example may perceive these Muslims as disloyal to the British emblem ("Multicultural British Citizenship..."). This problem may lead both sides to mutual rejection; both would separate from each other due to the lack of trust and cooperation. Modood explains that what is impressive about British Muslims is their ability to challenge their dual loyalty. They were confident, dynamic and refuse to give up on either sides ("Multicultural British Citizenship...").

3.2. Compatibility between Muslim identity and Britishness: Is it feasible?

The issue of identity is a problem for British Muslim, especially those who are born and raised in Britain. The first generation of Muslims maintained their religious and cultural norms hidden. They aimed at gaining money and returning back to their homes of origin. Therefore, the quest for their identity was not of a much importance. However, the second and third generations who grew up in Britain struggle to define themselves as either British or Muslims. They face a cultural- clash where the norms of their homes are different from those of the society. This situation is the result of the multicultural discourse that supports diversity, distinctiveness rather than similarity and unity (Haw 371-72). Since multiculturalism encourages the various minorities to celebrate their cultural differences, unity and similarity cannot be fulfilled.

The concept of identity is a key priority for integration. The number of Muslims is rapidly increasing in the UK. This growth goes along with the issue of Muslim identity. Muslims in Britain form a minority within a majority, so they struggle to define themselves successfully (Hussein). Like other minorities, British Muslims come under the same conditions while living in a larger society. The question of belonging became part of their daily lives.

Following the London bombings, the British government urged the whole society to come together to protect the country from radicalism and extremism. It called for coming together under a common goal of adopting a British national identity. In August 2005, Hazel Blears, the Home Office Minister, claimed that the government should follow the US plan and rename its ethnic minorities as ‘British Asian’ or ‘British Muslim’ rather than an ‘Asian’ or a ‘Muslim’ (Bradley 7). Nevertheless, representatives of the Muslim Parliament and the MCB rejected and opposed this plan and perceived renaming minorities by their ethnic background to be a racial and discriminatory act (“Leeds MP Rejects Government...”).

3.2.1. Britishness

British identity or so called Britishness refers to the belonging of a British citizen to the United Kingdom either a Christian, Jewish or a Muslim...etc. It is based on the loyalty to the monarchy as well as the queen. The British national identity is considered as one of the strongest identities in Europe. With the massive change that Britain went through, British national identity became questionable as the discourse of Multiculturalism was introduced. Britishness calls for common values, culture, customs, and language. It acts as a unifying force that connects the society; however, this was not possible because the British society is a multicultural one (Cook 8). The concept of Britishness necessitates commonality, yet Britain is a multicultural society. So, Britishness becomes a debated issue in the country.

3.2.2. The Concept of Ummah

The debate on the Muslim identity is mainly associated with the concept of Ummah and its impact on the general perception of Muslims around the globe. The concept of Ummah as put by some scholars is an 'imagined community'. It is described as a whole nation that share common religion and beliefs (Malik 71). Muslims are aware of being part of a larger faith community. Their loyalty and feeling of belonging to the global Muslim community is criticized by some people to impede the integration of Muslim minorities into their host societies (71). The concept of Ummah is called for by some extremist groups especially al-Qaeda (Zaidi). This implies that many white Britons would create negative connotations to the concept by associating it to terrorism. Furthermore, Abbas indicates that while debating the concept of Ummah, notions of us and them are highly centered on (*Islamic Radicalism and Multicultural...* 116). Critics point at the above explained views when claiming that the concept of Ummah hardened Muslims process of integration.

3.2.3. Being a Muslim in the UK

Being a Muslim means a person who practices his religious activities. Ansari, an academic specializing in the field of ethnic studies, racial equality, and historical and contemporary Islam defines 'Muslim' as a term which "has been applied to those for whom Islam is considered to have some significance in the ordering of their daily lives" ("Muslims in Britain" 33). So, the definition of Muslim identity is associated with religion. The British Muslim identity is difficult to note since it does not only incorporate Islam or Britishness as the only factors that constitute the Muslim identity, it also includes their ethnicity, class, education, gender and other factors.

Muslims in the UK are not able to define themselves clearly. Their perception of themselves is mainly affected by their complex experiences which result from the prevalent religious discrimination, public rejection and islamophobic treatments. Therefore, British Muslims are likely to be sensitive toward the issue of identity. Cornell and Hartman define identity as "human creations, existing only in the ways that we come to think about ourselves and others" (qtd. In Mainstone 92). The authors refer to identity as the perception of oneself and the others which means that identity is relational; it is formed through the relationship of the individual with the others.

Unlike other minorities, particularly Muslims, the mainstream white population does not face problems with identifying itself as British. The question of belonging is more encountered by young Muslims born and raised in the UK especially after the 7/7 bombings. Muslim youth are more likely to face religious, ethnic discrimination, and islamophobic hate crimes. These treatments lead them to ask themselves who they are and where they belong if not into Britain. Their religious identification became more problematic as the bombers were young British Muslim citizens.

The construction of Muslim identity differs at the level of gender too. The Muslim male identity is constructed through mainly the issue of strong masculinity. Louise Archer, a Professor of Sociology of Education in the Department of Education & Professional Studies at King's College, London conducted a study on young Muslim men. She found that Muslim men tend to build a strong identity so that they would easily come up against discriminatory behaviors, stereotypes of "weak passive Asian". They consider this strength of masculinity as a way to fight back against the negative treatments they face (Choudhury et al 24). British Muslims are always very sensitive over religious issues especially males. They believe that their strong identity would minimize the racial discrimination of everyday life. This strength would facilitate their integration into the society.

The Muslim female identity is hard to be built as women are seen mostly to be dependent on men. They are considered as submissive, oppressed in a Muslim male-dominated world. Muslim women are recognizable for their Islamic dress which makes a part of their Muslim identity (Hopkins and Gale 95). Jack Straw has commented on women's veil and stated "wearing the full veil was bound to make better, positive relations between the two communities more difficult. It was such a visible statement of separation and of difference" (Straw). Straw's view on hijab (veil) shows this Islamic dress as a mark of separateness rather than integration. Yet, Muslim women veil does not form a barrier for their success to build a strong identity.

The spiritual meanings of Britishness and Muslimness were important for the British Muslim population. An interview conducted by Aatish Taseer with Young British Pakistani Muslims from northern England found that these young Muslims were neither able to detach themselves from their Pakistani origins nor able to relate themselves to Britishness (Bradley 20).

The 7/7 bombings have affected British Muslims' identity. Muslims are notable to say that they are British as they are neither accepted nor treated as such. Besides, they are not able to say that they are Muslims as the Islamic identity was suspected of terrorism. A survey was conducted on 466 young Muslims in the wake of July 7th, 2005 by the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS). The survey found that these students are proud to be British and Muslims; however, they claimed that the fear around them made them feel uncomfortable. They were not even able to proceed their daily lives, for example when using the public transportation. The survey showed that the number of people who feel uneasy in Britain rose dramatically immediately after the attacks (Reed 5). The 7/7 attacks made British Muslims a guilty society that cannot adapt. This led to the rise in the feelings of alienation, separateness and discrimination.

The British-born Muslims, especially second and third generations, face a challenge if not experience a struggle with their identity. A report entitled "Living apart together" conducted a research among Britain's Muslim population. The findings of the report tell that 86% of Muslims in Britain feel that "my religion is the most important thing in my life". The same report finds that 59% of Muslims prefer to live under British law compared to 28% who would prefer to live under Sharia Law (Mirza et al 5). These findings can be taken as a preliminary data to show that there is a clear majority that identifies itself as Muslim and puts religion as its priority in life and at the same time seems very satisfied with the British system; at least the British law. This shows a clear division of preference between religious and ethnic identity on the one hand and the acceptance of the society's values on the other.

British Muslims' identity is a complex construction. It is characterized by double loyalties; one refers to the Islamic Ummah, the other refers to the British Jack Union. Religion is an important element of British Muslims' identity formation. Muslims around the globe would likely identify themselves with the Ummah or Islamic family when needed. Yet, the concept

of Ummah is rather more symbolic than everyday practice. Therefore, the Ummah should not be considered as a barrier to integration into the British society, it rather aims at helping Muslims to cope with their lives in the UK and feel that they are not alone (Hopkins and Gale 182). The other element that constructs the British Muslim identity is Britishness. Some Muslims are born and raised in Britain. So, they, to some extent, adopted the British way of life. Both elements indicate that the majority of Muslims especially the young construct a hybrid identity through which they can identify themselves both as British as well as Muslim. All in all, the 7/7 bombings had negative effects on the process of Muslims' integration into the British society and their identity construction as well. Despite the attempts of the Muslim organizations and leaders to encourage Muslims integration, they were not completely successful since the Muslim community in Britain faced challenges that hindered their full integration such as media negative representation, anti-terrorism measures, Islamophobia, hate crimes, the terrorist atrocities committed by Muslims, and social exclusion. Identity does not operate separately; its construction is related to the surrounding atmosphere. Therefore, British Muslims struggle with their identity.

Conclusion

After July 7th 2005, young people experienced a challenging dilemma on their process of integration and identity formation within the British society. Muslims were directly affected by the 7/7 bombings. In this context, British Muslims' identity was affected due to their visibility. Identity is constructed unconsciously through time. It involves the combination of both spiritual and mental processes, and the context surrounding them. Identity is a significant factor that complicates integration. Therefore, successful integration requires a strong and stable identity. The 7/7 attacks have proved to be impeding both processes of integration and identity formation of British Muslims.

The Muslim community went through difficult times throughout its presence in Britain. Many British Muslims encountered different kinds of segregation, racism and discrimination. The 9/11 attacks on the USA had a significant effect on the treatment of British Muslims. This led to the escalation of discrimination into an exaggerated fear and hatred toward anything related to Islam and Muslims. Islamophobia led to a high increase in violence against Muslims in Britain immediately after the 9/11 attacks in the US. Since then, the Muslim community in Britain was seen as a potential threat to the security of the country. To face this threat, the British government introduced a set of counter- terrorism policies.

The Muslim population in Britain represents the youngest minority. Youngsters usually are exposed to the different social problems. In the case of young British Muslims, this study finds that there are a set of motives that led home grown and/or brought up British Muslim citizens to become radicals. Radicalism emerges among young British Muslims due to several factors. The discourse of multiculturalism supports distinctiveness and separateness. This has led to a clash of cultures where young British Muslims are trapped between their traditional Muslim community and the open-minded British western society. They are in a dilemma

between halal and haram, the legal and illegal. For example, drinking Alcohol is forbidden in Islam, but it is considered by some British as a non-western attitude. Moreover, the involvement of Britain in the affairs of some Muslim countries has further distanced British Muslims from the society. Additionally, the verbal and non verbal abuse against Muslims and their negative descriptions in the British media have fostered their alienation and isolation and boosted the spread of radical thoughts. All the previous factors have facilitated the process of radicalization and led to the attacks.

Belief in radical thoughts led four British Muslims to perpetrate a set of explosions on the London public transportation where 52 people were killed and more than 700 were injured. The fact that these attacks were committed by young Muslims, born and raised in a country that guarantees their freedom of worship, made the Muslim community in Britain under the spotlight. This led many scholars, observers, politicians, and analyst to declare the failure if not the death of multiculturalism. As a consequence, the British government called for the revision of this policy. It urged all minorities to integrate within a multicultural discourse as well as to adopt Britishness. That is to say, all minorities are allowed to celebrate their cultures, but with assuring the duty to come together in all occasions. Minorities are required to participate in national ceremonies such as voting, celebrating the queen's anniversary, expressing respect to the country and its symbols. Among the key findings of the dissertation is the negative treatment the Muslims suffered from in the aftermath of the London bombing. Media bias against Muslims and the noticeable increase of islamophobic and hate crime acts by British extremists are among the consequences of the attacks. These factors have negatively affected Muslims' integration and have sharpened the sense of disconnection among the Muslim community. Muslim women have become unable to walk in streets peacefully, fearing vengeful stalkers who might harass them. Muslim institutions such as mosques and schools have become targets of various violent damaging acts.

The 7/7 events influenced the British Muslims lives negatively and caused an identity crisis. British Muslims struggled to identify themselves as Muslims or British. The dilemma is centered on what comes first; Muslimness or Britishness. This study has come to the conclusion that most British Muslims consider themselves first and foremost British Muslims. Though they are considered to be the “Others” by the mainstream population, they openly show their pride to call themselves British Muslims. The British Muslim community gives priority to their Muslim identity as well as British identity because both are considered as important parts for their identity. Generally, British Muslim young people feel strong connection to their society, but many feel that they are not fully accepted as British, and frequently have to prove their loyalty to the country especially after the 7/7 attacks. They are often faced with questions that entail a choice between their religion and their British citizenship. However, a significant number of Muslims are increasingly turning towards religion and declare it to be a key constituent of their identity. Theoretically, British Muslims as citizens of the UK are entitled to equal rights as the white majority population. Yet, a key cause of their rejection by the mainstream population is the increase of radicalism among young British Muslims. As a consequence, the creation of a representative Muslim leadership that can negotiate with the government to solve the Muslim community’s problems has become an urgent need. The general public opinion about the Muslim religion has to be corrected and changed. The British people should be convinced that Islam is a religion of peace and not of violence; a task that Muslim representatives has to accomplish. Muslim leadership should also keep angry young British Muslims away from adopting radical thoughts through campaigns and by providing the correct interpretation of Islamic values in order to prevent them from being misled.

It is true that the Islamic Ummah matters for British Muslims, but being an active citizen in the UK guarantee the flourishing of the Muslim community’s socio-economic situation. So, the British Muslims need first to guarantee a descent position in their country before caring about

Muslims elsewhere. This study has come to the conclusion that the Muslim community has the capacity and willingness to integrate into the British society. It only needs time to overcome the difficulties that have ensued from the attacks. The British government on the other hand is trying to open doors for discussion and dialogue in order to negotiate Muslims' problems, claims, rights, and duties. Both the Muslim community and the British society, as a whole, need to accomplish certain duties in order to achieve a successful integration and a cohesive society living in peace, harmony, freedom and equality.

Notes

1. Otherness is a concept that is highly debated in Edward Said's *Orientalism*. According to Said, the drawn distinction between the "rational West" and the "irrational Other" paved the way for the construction of a European identity that is superior to the non-European cultures and served as a pretext for colonialism and continued dominance over the Muslim and Arab world in the post war period (Said 41- 97). For more details see Said.

2. Community Cohesion policy was introduced after the outbreak of riots in Britain (2001). The reported reason behind the riots was segregation and discrimination between the minorities and the white population. For more details see Saggar and Somerville.

3. Nottingham and Notting Hill Riots occurred at the same time where the conservative party opened the doors for immigrant workers to fill its labor shortage. For more details see "Notting Hill Riots 1958".

4. Bruce Gaarder, a linguist from the United States Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, defines the concept of cultural pluralism as "social justice... It means the co-existence, preferably in a status of mutual respect and encouragement within the same state or nation, of two or more cultures which are significantly distinct one from the other in their patterns of belief and behavior including, as the case may be, different languages". (qtd in. Pantoja et al. 128-129). For more details see Pantoga et al.

5. The concept Jihad is "often translated as "holy war," but in a purely linguistic sense, the word "jihad" means struggling or striving. The Arabic word for war is: "al-harb". In a religious sense, as described by the Quran and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, "jihad" has many meanings. It can refer to internal as well as external efforts to be a good Muslim or believer, as well as working to inform people about the faith of Islam" (Kabbani, and Hendricks 10). For more details see Kabbani and Hendricks .

6. The Group of Eight is a forum for the governments of eight of the world's largest economies. For more details see "The Group of Eight (G8)".

7. Hate Crimes "are any crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender identity" ("Stop Hate Crime..."). For more details see "Stop Hate Crime..."

8. The Oxford English Dictionary offers a broad definition of multiculturalism as the "characteristics of a multicultural society" and "the policy or process whereby the distinctive identities of the cultural groups within such a society are maintained or supported." For more details see "Multiculturalism: What does it mean?"

9. The concept of integration of immigrants has many definitions. In the broadest sense, integration means "the process by which people who are relatively new to a country (i.e. whose roots do not reach deeper than two or three generations) become part of society... Integration is perceived as a one-way process, placing the onus for change solely on migrants. As differences cannot be tolerated, they are required to disappear." (Rudiger, and Spencer 4). For more details see Rudiger and Spencer.

10. Britishness is a difficult notion to define. "There are at least three ways of approaching it: in ethnic terms, where the emphasis is on ancestry, birth and blood line; in terms of civic identity, where the emphasis is on legal and political construct of British citizenship; and through the more elusive route of myths, values and customs" (Bradley 3). For more details see Bradley.

11. Assimilation is the process by which a minority integrates socially, culturally, and/or politically into a larger, dominant culture and society. The term assimilation is often used in reference to immigrants and ethnic groups settling in a new land. Immigrants acquire new

customs and attitudes through contact and communication with a new society, while they also introduce some of their own cultural traits to that society (“Assimilation”). For more details see “Assimilation”.

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