Durham E-Theses

Manchester Muslims: The developing role of mosques, imams and committees with particular reference to Barelwi Sunnis and UKIM.

AHMED, FIAZ

DURHAM UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Manchester Muslims:

The developing role of mosques, imams and committees with particular reference to Barelwi Sunnis and UKIM.

Fiaz Ahmed

September 2013

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Manchester Muslims: The Developing Role of Mosques, Imams and Committees with particular reference to Barelwi Sunnis and UKIM

Fiaz Ahmed

Abstract

Using ethnographic data from the Pakistani Muslim community in Manchester, I argue that the role of mosques, Imams and mosque committees has taken place in an environment of conflict in which Pakistani Muslims have struggled to construct a Muslim identity. In part, the British Pakistani Muslim community has established and maintained a religious identity through the negotiation of faith practice in schools, halal meals and the construction of purpose built mosques. These phenomena reflect the growing confidence of a British Muslim identity which must be understood in the context of debates surrounding 'multiculturalism', 'integration', 'exclusion' and 'recognition' of identity. In addition to understanding the development of religious identity in Manchester, I also examine the radicalisation of a certain section of the Muslim youth and government responses to this perceived threat. I examine the ways in which Manchester Muslims, especially those connected to mosques engage with state political institutions and how they perceive 'secularism'. I offer a typology of the political behaviour of Muslims in relation to participation in the political process. Finally, I argue that a lack of conflict resolution training and an implicit belief in Manichean dichotomies of conflict has fragmented relationships among mosques and Imams in Manchester which has exacerbated the position of British Pakistanis in particular and British Muslims in general.

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF MAPS

Acknowledgements and Dedication

1   INTRODUCTION

"...in order to realize its creative potential, every human society must discover its proper equilibrium between isolation and contact with others" (Eriksen 1993: 145)

This thesis is about trying to understand how Muslims have interacted with mosques and imams and their perceptions of the roles performed by them. The current research is about understanding the expectations of Muslims and non-Muslims from mosques and imams as well as the expectations from imams and mosque committees of Muslims and from British institutions. The thesis is about trying to understand the role and place of mosques and imams in British society. The need to understand mosques, imams, and the Muslim community has taken on a renewed importance since the horrendous incidents of 9/11 and 7/7. My own interest in mosques and imams, however, predates these incidents.

I have been involved with mosques in some form or other from my childhood. When I first arrived in England the nearest mosque was approximately three miles from where we lived. My dad who had arrived in England in 1962 as an economic migrant wanted me to learn to read the Quran so he sent me to the only mosque in Oldham in the early 1970s in Churchill Street. Quran classes were and still are a regular part of British Muslim childhood, which entails daily visits to mosque after school. I remember catching the train form Werneth to Mumps train station, which was only a few minutes journey to the Churchill Street mosque. Within a few months, a new mosque opened very close to the existing one, in fact a few streets away. Once the new mosque opened, my dad said that I should go to the new mosque. I had no idea why another mosque was opened so close to the first one and it was only many years later that I became aware that there were ideological differences between the two mosques that prompted the creation of another mosque. More recently, I was

provided with an account of the creation of this mosque that had something to do with the imam's attempt to bring his brother from Pakistan as an imam. This experience suggests that the creation and the role of mosques is not a simple process. Mosques have been built in close vicinity to one another, which has meant that rather than travelling several miles to attend a mosque Muslims have the choice of attending several mosques in close proximity.

One of the imams, at the mosque in the area we lived in during my teenage years, started to interact with the youth who regularly played football in a school playground literally on the doorstep of the mosque. The imam, a Deobandi, began by inviting us to pray in the mosque at the *Jamaat* (congregation) time,while inside the mosque the imam invited us to participate in *darse* (study of) *Quran* or *darse Hadith*. The imam tried to form a youth study group that met regularly for *darse Quran* and conducted a question and answer session. The imam then invited learned scholars from Manchester to speak to the youth group to encourage the youth to take part in regular activities at the mosque and attend programmes that took place across the country. This was my introduction to Islam and the practical rituals to be performed by a Muslim.

My introduction to mosques and imams in Britain is not too disimilar to the stories of other British Muslims of coming to understand, or *misunderstand*, an Islamic way of life (Raza 1991). In one way or another, British Muslims have had to interact with mosques and imams to learn Islamic values, perform religious ceremonies in relation to births, marriages, and deaths or the supplication for a new house or a new business. In almost all significant parts of the Muslim life in Britain the imam and mosque has played a pivotal role. Jocelyne Cesari sums this up by stating that,

> The mosque is central to Islam's urban visibility and is the centre of Muslim communal life. It is not only a space for prayer but also a 'community centre', where pre-existing networks of solidarity come together and where various rituals that mark Islamic family life - marriage, circumcision, death - take place. Thanks to zakat, or religiously-mandated alms-giving, the mosque is also a place where those who are in need of financial aid can seek help. The cost of a burial (or repatriation to a country of origin) and money for rent and travel can all be financed through the mosque or by a special collection undertaken by the members of the congregation. (Cesari 2005: 1017-1018)

Mosques play a vital role in Muslim life in Britain in shaping Muslim identity but there remain questions about why mosques have this elevated status in some Muslims lives whilst other British Muslims see them as ancilliary (Werbner 2002). In this thesis, I argue that the exemplars for a mosque are produced from narratives from the time of the Prophet of Islam. The experience of migration and a perception of an enclave status have caused British Muslims to deconstruct and reconstruct roles and relationships around mosques that both reinforce an Islamic, Muslim identity and potentially form a challenge to a Pakistani identity (Khan 1998).

1.1   Arrival of Economic Migrants from Pakistan

The Pakistani Muslims predominantly arrived in Britain as migrants in search of economic security. The initial assumption was that they would work in Britain, make enough money to return 'home' (Dahya 1973; Saifullah-Khan 1976a). This assumption was to turn into, to borrow from Muhammad Anwar, a 'myth of return' as Muslims began to settle in Britain through the purchase of homes, establishing shops to provide halal food and construction of mosques to cater for theirreligious needs. (Anwar1979; Joly 1987; Lewis 1994; Nielsen 1992; Rex 1996; Scantlebury1995; Werbner 1991; Kalra 2000). The earlier living patterns and mosques reflected the theme of this transitory phase, a phase reflecting an intention to return to the country of origin. Lodgings were overcrowded, where migrants shared not only rooms but also beds according to the day/night shift worked. The obligation to perform congregational prayers was the initial impetus to look for a place where Muslims

can offer collective prayers. The types of mosques were makeshift houses converted for praying, with a minimum of expense. Anwar concludes of this earlier period that,

> "Many wish to go back but in reality economic circumstances are such that the majority are unlikely ever to return. There is also a possibility that the cultural and familial bonds with Pakistan may weaken with the second generation" (Anwar 1979: 222).

The desire to return to a 'homeland' received a severe blow when the British government began to tighten the laws on immigration through the The Commonwealth Immigration Act 1962, The Commonwealth Immigration Act 1968 and Immigration Act 1971 (Vertovec, Peach et al. 1997). These Acts limited primary immigration thereby limiting immigration to those who were to join their spouses with children under sixteen. In effect, economic migration from South Asia was completely closed.

When families joined the single male economic migrants, the needs of the Muslim migrants changed. In their earlier period, a household accommodated only males but when wives joined their husbands, it became difficult to maintain the aspect of purdah (separation) in a house full of males (Saifullah-Khan 1976b & 1976c: 224-245; Shaw 1988:34-36). The need to buy or rent a separate house for the family became an urgent necessity. Therefore, Muslims with families either purchased or rented houses. When all male migrants lived together, they shared all the costs for food and lodging, but once the family arrived, the previously shared costs were to be met by the sole male breadwinner. This created a new financial burden that also resulted in a reduction in remittances back 'home' (Shaw 1988: 83). Most of the income was spent on maintenance in Britain rather than for remittances to the country of origin. The migrant worker whose sole aim was to make money and return to his homeland now had to focus on arranging accommodation for his family, provide food and clothing for the family, and take care of the educational needs of his children in the country that he migrated to and also provide for the family

back in Pakistan. It became increasingly difficult to provide for the family in Britain and save money with a view to settlement back in the country of origin, and consequently attention became firmly focused on the adopted country.

The Muslim migrant was no longer a 'migrant' whose presence in Britain is of a temporary nature but a citizen of Britain who had been granted the right to settle and participate fully in British society. It seems that Muslim migrants who did not envisage a time when they would call Britain their home but with the passing of time and the specific British legislation, found settlement thrust upon them as result of the changing circumstances (Joly, 1995: 33; Husband 1994: 79-80; Vertovec & Rogers 1998: 89)). This was a time for deep reflection for most Muslim migrants, who had to think about whether their future lay in the country of origin or in the country of residence. The situation that developed as a consequence of the changed circumstances led to the process of settlement of the Muslim migrants within Britain. Apart from purchasing a house, Muslim migrants had to think about the future educational and religious needs of their children.

The duty of maintaining a family's religious and educational needs prompted Pakistani Muslims to look more seriously at creating mosques and importing imams who together with the family would ensure a moral upbringing (Mogra 2007). Lewis says

> "The establishment of mosques and supplementary schools indicated a shift within the migrants' self-perception from being sojourners to settlers. The investment needed for a mosque and an imam to lead prayers and teach children, both reflected and precipitated community formation" (1994: 56).

Lewis suggests that the formation of mosques signalled two developments in the status of Muslim migrants. Firstly, that Muslims were not a temporary phenomenon and secondly it heralded the formation of a 'Muslim community'.

1.2 Living in a Democratic Society

Many British Muslims in implementing 'democracy' in the mosque do so by referring to the example of the Prophet of Islam and the role the mosque served during his lifetime. They argue that the Prophet's mosque became the institution where major issues were consulted upon and decisions made and implemented. The thesis will show how a tendency among many young British Muslims to refer back to a 'utopian' past, the period of the Prophet and the four Caliphs, to create a 'utopian' future. In a similar way the thesis will show how those who oppose the idea of democracy in mosques also use the life of the Prophet and the statements of the Quran in relation to how mosques should be maintained. There is a sense of going back to the origins of Islam to construct a new future role of the mosque. In light of this the thesis begins by taking a brief look at the establishment of mosques in early Islam and how that has impacted on the development of mosques and imams over the many centuries.

In Britain early Muslims viewed themselves as being in a similar position to the early Muslims of Makkah who migrated to a new city, Madina, and began to construct institutions to practice and preach their religion. Some early migrants to Britain, amongst them students and businessmen began to establish mosques in line with the *sunnah* of the Prophet of Islam, the prime example of this in Manchester is the Victoria Park Mosque that predates the post war mass economic migration from South Asia and in particular Pakistan. Therefore, it would seem that the mosque over time became the focal point for Muslim migrant activity whether religious or social but the development of mosques and its role has not been a straight forward a process. There are many factors that must be taken on board when studying mosque.

To the 'outsider' and to many Muslims the mosques may appear as homogenous institutions and in many cases are referred to simply as a religious institutions providing 'sacred space' for the worship of God. The thesis critically examines the view that mosques are homogenous and that one mosque is the same as any other. Mosques are heterogeneous in not only their building styles but also in their organisational structures, their practice of Islam and its congregation. Using specific examples from five mosques in Manchester, I illustrate some of the extraordinary diversity exhibited across mosques. For example, both a terraced house and a purpose built mosque are known as mosque and 'Islamic Centre'; the two are very distinct buildings which share the title, 'Islamic Centre', and function as mosques but that does not mean that they share a common vision of the details of what it means to be a Muslim or what is, or is not, Islamic.

1.3 Ethnicity and Biradari

Ethnicity has been a major factor in the development of the Muslim community and its creation of mosques in Manchester. Lyon's study of Bhalot, Pakistan found that caste and quam are significant social categories in Pakistan (Lyon 2004: 141). Modood, commenting on the plight of the British Muslims in the early 1990s in the wake of the Rushdie Affair, said that the people involved with mosques were only 'one generation' removed from their rural origins (Modood 1990). This meant that issues of ethnicity and biradari were quiet prevalent among Pakistani Muslim migrants on arrival to Britain. The pattern of chain migration where people from same family or same biradari began to arrive into the same locality in Britain further strengthened biradari and ethnic ties (Werbner 1989: 302). Among Pakistani British Muslims ethnicity seems to have played a more influential role in development and organisation of mosques than biradari but that is not to say that biradari does not play any role at all. The impact and influence of biradari in Britain is dependent upon size and concentration of settlement and also whether migrant status or British born.

In earlier British literature caste was linked with the idea of pollution, those of the higher castes were pure and the untouchable castes were deemed impure. Wint defined caste in its simplest form as "a group of families whose members can marry with each other and eat in each other's company without believing themselves polluted" (Wint 1947: 41). Hocart (1950) perceived caste and kingship as competing institutions of power which compete with one another for supremacy, the 'ruled' and the 'ruler'. Individuals are able to play such institutions off against one another and moderate the power of either. Similarly, biradari and sect are both organisations which manage resource accumulation and distribution which is a critical tool in the implementation of power (Quigley 1993). As such, they may tend to moderate one another as individuals and negotiate the competing demands of each organisation (Lyon 2004).

Biradari amongst British Pakistanis is a fairly salient feature which holds different meanings for different people, particularly in relation to the generational gap. Biradari is sometimes used to denote an extended family network, a notion of brotherhood, a patrinlineal relationship of origin and is usually translated as caste in English (Eglar 1960; Lyon 2004). Origins of the caste system in Pakistan are linked to the Hindu caste system but one major difference is that whereas caste in India is heavily influenced by purity and pollution the notion of biradari in Pakistan is dominated by an idea of superiority (Maron 1957). Most of the castes found in Pakistan are also found in India amongst the Hindus, apart from the Sayyids. The Sayyids represent direct blood lineage to Prophet Muhammad. Lyon (2004) identifies two conceptions of Pakistani kinship which are relevant to transnational families. Firstly he discusses the concept of gharwale or co-resident kin which includes not only the nuclear family but also the extended family including grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins. Secondly, family also has a genealogical aspect of biradari that extends beyond the co-residency concept. Lyon argues that biradari

relationships are associated with normative expectations and obligations. Both these concepts have a strong influence on the development of the Pakistani communities in Britain (Shaw 1988; Werbner 2002).

Biradari plays a role in mosques as a check on sectarian conflict (see Declan Quigley 1993 on kinship, caste and kingship). There have been times in Manchester when the imam's failure to attend a janazah (funeral) of a particular person because of sectarian allegiances caused friction in the committee. The committee members believed the imam had dishonoured their biradari by not paying respect to the deceased regardless of sect. The imam in some cases has had to pay the price of sectarian allegiance by facing removal from mosque if respect is not shown to the members of once caste, particularly the immediate family. The biradari card has not only been played by the committee but has also been successfully used by the imams to successfully negotiate conflict situations. It must be stressed that this type of behaviour is not necessarily the norm in British mosques but it takes place in exceptional circumstance.

Mosques in Britain are predominantly split along ethnic lines mainly due to the issue of language as many mosques struggle to determine the appropriate place for particular languages, whether to use English as a means of communication or to use the language of the country of origin of the congregation or a combination of the two, given the continued arrival of new spousal migrants and especially the elderly who established these mosques. For example, the use of Urdu language in mosques attracted criticism from those arguing for mosques to concentrate on the youth for whom English has become their main language. It is imperative to account for the cultural origins of the mosques to understand the many functions that mosques perform in Britain.

A prominent Deobandi imam who has been in this country for over thirty-five years argues that a balance needs to be struck where the Urdu language is retained and taught to children as well as using English language to communicate with the youth. His argument rests on the premise that most of our religious literature is still only available in Arabic, Urdu or Persian and by changing over to English only we will lose access to an enormous source of Islamic literature. His argument is that only when we have managed to translate the key texts into English can we think about changing from Urdu to English but for the time being we have to teach Urdu to our children in order to preserve our religious heritage. He equates the loss of Urdu language to loss of Islamic heritage as access to Islamic heritage for the time being is through Urdu.

Hussain, who came to Britain as a 5 year old boy in 1961, an active community worker recalls a time during his youth when he had to negotiate access to the Sunni mosque for the Shia community because until 1977 there was no Shia place of worship in Manchester. He said that a Sunni mosque imam refused to allow the janazah of a Shia. The Shia group came to Hussain to inform him that the imam was not willing to allow the janazah. He says that he called the imam and asked permission to allow the janazah to take place. The imam after a bit of a discussion agreed, mainly because he knew Hussain's father quite well, and the janazah of the deceased Shia Muslim took place in a Sunni mosque. However, this is no longer an issue as a number of Shia places of worship have been created in Manchester to cater for their religious and social needs.

Din who arrived in Britain in the 1970s explained why biradari is important when it comes to marriage arrangements. He says "we marry our girls in the same biradari because it makes it easy for them to adjust in a household that has similar traits". In mosques the familiarity of language, the familiarity of religious practices and a close network of

family/biradari creates a feeling of being at home in a particular mosques. The fact that the mosques is so similar to the mosques back home and has the same language helps to put at ease new comers to the mosque with the familiar cultural traits. This has influenced British Muslims efforts to transmit desired relationships and values across generations which include individuals who have grown up in Britain (Scourfield et al 2012). This is far from straightforward and constitutes a strongly contested arena which, in some cases leads to violent conflict within mosques (Werbner 2002). Although ethnicity is an important factor in the development of mosques in Manchester but it is not the only factor.

Predominantly biradari has played a significant role in the choice of marriage partners for many British Pakistanis who mostly try to marry within their biradari network (Werbner 2002; Shaw 2000). Biradari has been used as a political tool in elections in Pakistan and the British Pakistanis and Pakistani Kashmiris in Britain have used biradari for political mobilisation especially in places where due to chain migration certain biradaris seem to have high concentration (Purdham 1997; Lyon 2004; Sokefeld & Bolognani 2011)). In these areas biradari has been used to select and deselect candidates (Purdham 1997). In many cases this has shown a rift between the youth who concentrate on the person being selected and her/his abilities whilst some from the older generation have seen biradari loyalty and unity as the main force in political mobilisation (see Fazal's example in chapter 9).

Biradari has a strong influence in kinship and marriage amongst most of the first generation British Pakistanis. Although anthropologists differ in their understanding of the term however there is a widely held consensus about its importance. Dahya (1973) identified how caste stopped people from taking sweeping jobs in the earlier settlement of Pakistanis in Britain. He also highlights how betrothals tied the man to his village and

caste. One of the earliest researchers to highlight the important role of biradari in this context was Saifullah Khan who described biradari as an 'extended kin group' (1977). She argued that Mirpuris in Bradford sustained a network of biradari relations that provided 'financial and psychological assistance' (Saifullah Khan 1979: 45). Dahya argues that the, "Whole complex of ethnic institutions manifests the community's wish not merely to express but also to defend and perpetuate their traditional social forms … (Its) refusal to surrender its ethnic identity" (1974: 94-95).

Mosques, imams and committees have gone through a process of religio-cultural transformation in which cultural and religious values interact to affect the development of roles and functions. Some people who seek to maintain cultural and religious values inherited from the country of origin try to organise mosques in ways that provide continuity of cultural heritage whilst others wish to adopt the cultural values of the new country of residence or birth whilst at the same time maintaining religious beliefs that define them as Muslims. This second group has set in motion a debate on the makeup of Islamic, ethnic and cultural values. Can one remain a Muslim whilst adopting British cultural values? The core of this thesis examines the boundaries that exist within a seemingly coherent community. These are fluid boundaries that incorporate factionalism and conflict, while simultaneously enabling individuals to assert greater control over identity construction and expression.

1.4 Mosques and Migration

The mosque has played a key role in Muslim societies starting from the inception of Islam when Prophet Muhammad established the *deen* (way of life) in the 5th century AD. The Kaba in Makkah is believed to be the first House of Allah on Earth and is referred to in the

verses of the holiest Book in Islam, the Quran[1], as '*al-Masjid al-Haram*', 'The Sacred Mosque', (Quran: 2:144, 2:149, 2:150, 2;191, 2:196, 2:217, 3:96,b5:2, 8:34, 9:7, 48:25, 48:27). One of the first institutions established after the *Hijra* (migration) to Madina by Prophet Muhammad was a masjid (mosque), known today as Masjid Quba, at the place where Muslims awaited his arrival. The establishment of this mosque is very significant for present day Muslims not only because it is the first mosque established after the *Hijra* but also because Prophet Muhammad encouraged all Muslims to visit Masjid Quba and perform two *rakat nafl*, considered equal to performing an *umrah*[2] *(religious pilgrimage)*. To this day, Muslims who visit Madina for pilgrimage also visit Masjid Quba to perform two *nafl* to follow the Prophet's *sunnah*.

After a short stay Prophet Muhammad then continued on to Yathrib, now called Madina, where he established one of the most sacred mosques in Islam, the *Masjid-i-Nabawi* (The Mosque of the Prophet). According to Muslim scholars *Masjid-e-Nabawi* is one of the most sacred mosques in Islam where one prayer is equal to 100,000[3]. All Muslims who go for hajj or *umrah* consider it important to visit *Masjid-e-Nabawi* when in Madina the mosque from which Islam spread in all corners of the world.

Masjid-e-Nabawi became the focal point for the emerging Muslim community of *ansars* (Helpers) and *muhajireen* (Migrants). The Prophet Muhammad's residence was next to the mosque but all dealings with dignitaries were carried out from the courtyard of *Masjid-e-*

---

1 http://quran.com/2/144; http://quran.com/2/149; http://quran.com/2/150; http://quran.com/2/191; http://quran.com/2/196; http://quran.com/2/217; http://quran.com/3/96; http://quran.com/5/2; http://quran.com/8/34; http://quran.com/9/7; http://quran.com/9/19; http://quran.com/9/28; http://quran.com/17/1; http://quran.com/22/25; http://quran.com/48/25; http://quran.com/48/27

2"Whoever makes ablutions at home and then goes and prays in the Mosque of Quba, he will have a reward like that of an 'Umrah." This *hadith* is reported by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and Hakim al-Nishaburi

3 http://www.usc.edu/org/cmje/religious-texts/hadith/bukhari/021-sbt.php#002.021.285
Sahih al Bukhari, Volume 2, Book 21, Number 282: Narrated Abu Huraira -Allah's Apostle said, "One prayer in my Mosque is better than one hundred thousand prayers in any other mosque excepting Al-Masjid-AI-Haram."

Nabawi. Key announcements relating to latest develpoments were relayed from the pulpit of the Prophet's mosque. It has been reported that even social events like wrestling and displays of swordsmanship were performed in the mosque courtyard. The mosque performed quite a broad platform of activities for Muslims and on occasion non-Muslims were allowed to pray within *Masjid e Nabawi* (Rasdi 2006; Jazeel & Ghani 2012). Over time as other institutions and buildings developed the mosque and its role underwent transformations which parallel those of British Pakistani Muslims in Britain transforming from migration to settlement.

Mandeville argues that rather than seeing mosques simply as places of prayer they must be seen for the socio-political functions they serve as a 'space which mediates between diasporic communities and the wider society' (2004: 117). He says that in this sense they "operate as point of interface" between Islam and the wider society, "a window through which the former views (and constitutes) the latter" (ibid.). He further goes on to state that "The diasporic mosque hence operates as an effective example of the blurring between public and private which occurs in translocality" (ibid.).

The choice of mosques and sectarian affiliation was driven by the local contexts. Victoria Park Mosque, the first purpose built mosque in Manchester that was originally established in 1948 in a semi-detached property on Upper Park Road forms a vital/pivotal centre for British Pakistani Muslims and must therefore take centre stage in any discussion of Manchester's Muslim communities. The Barelvis are the single largest sectarian group in Manchester (King 1997: 136). Although there are Deobandi and Shia mosques in Manchester but they do not form the bulk of the Muslim population. The establishment of the Victoria Park mosque in late 1940s gives it a historical 'status' that no other mosque in Manchester can claim (Webner 2002: 29). By 1995 there were 19 mosques within a radius

of 5 miles from the city centre and most were Pakistani Barelwi mosques that had split from Victoria Park Mosque (Werbner 2002: 249). It was almost 20 years later that any other purpose built mosque was created in Manchester, the Ibadhur Rahman Trust's North Manchester Jamia Mosque, and this was in fact originally an offshoot from Victoria Park mosque. Three of the largest Barelwi mosques in Manchester together can accommodate up to 10,000 worshippers. Predominantly the worshippers at these mosques are of Pakistani origin. The table below shows that fifteen of the mosques in Manchester are Barelvi which is the largest single denomination in number of mosques for any one sect. The Deobandis / Tablighi Jamaat have nine mosques in Manchester, whilst there are seven Shia 'mosques', four student mosques, three Ahle Hadith / Salaafi mosques and two UKIM mosques. This highlights that whilst there may be many other sects within Manchester but the most important in terms of numbers and influence is the Barelvi not least because of the nature of mosque developments which I expand on in chapter five but suffice it to say that the nature of expansion has not been amicable to say the least. It is through internal conflicts within the Barelvis that we find the most germane answers to the development of mosques in Manchester, particularly in the last two decades. Whilst the earlier history of mosque development in Manchester was sectarian conflict within Victoria Park mosque however, since the late 1970s the mosque has stayed in Barelwi control with very little Sunni-Deobandi-Wahhabi conflict within the mosque on the face of it. Apart from the random outburst by imams against the Wahhabis there has been a fairly peaceful environment on that level. The major conflicts within the Victoria Park Mosque have been around issues of control of the mosque committee within the Barelwi groups, which at times have been impacted strongly by biraderism and regionalism.

The selection of imams was partly a consequence of my personal network. British Muslims have faced increasing scrutiny and criticism since the late 1980s and particularly since 9/11.

This has made the principle actors involved in mosque organisation understandably suspicious of unknown individuals. Since I have a known sectarian affiliation myself, it was more challenging to access other sects, such as Deoband or Shi'a. Although these communities are an important part of the Manchester Muslim tapestry, an anthropological analysis demands a certain level of intimate trust which would have necessitated considerably more time than was available. Furthermore, accessing such disparate sects may have served to compromise my privileged position of trust within the Barelwi and UKIM organisations. Comparative studies are inherently more complex and challenging than those that focus on a more singular community (see Lyon 2004 for an account of his aborted attempt to carry out a Punjabi-Pathan comparison in late 1990s; See also Archambault 2007 where she received no response and had to rely on personal contacts).

1.5   Exclusion, Integration, Recognition, and Segregation

'British Muslim' has been accepted as an identity label with pride by most British Muslims (Modood 1997). I argue here that British Muslim youth have come to construct arguments based on early Islamic narratives to counter what they perceive to be the tainted culturally laden Islam of their parents generation. It is on these grounds that British Muslim youth challenge their parents in relation to religious and cultural values. Muslim youth argue that they accept the religious beliefs and values of Islam but do not see these as synonymous with the cultural 'baggage' of their parent's country of origin. In other words, they do not lose their Muslim identity by adopting British cultural values as long as they do not conflict with what they would argue are more doctrinally compatible religious values. Marriage is a particular flashpoint of tension between generations, in which young people argue that Islam allows them the freedom to choose their life partners (Shaw 1988; Modood et al 1994; Jacobson 1998). Negotiations around the roles of imams and mosques in Britain are not immune to such generational shifts. Youth brought up in Britain seek

mosques that are not constrained by Pakistani culture but instead driven by what young people see as a more 'authentic' Islam founded on the principles established by the Prophet. The thesis argues that Manchester Muslims are engaged in a vibrant debate that is redefining the role that the imams and mosques play in British society.

1.6 Ontological Insecurity and Double Bind Theory

The arrival of Pakistanis as economic migrants placed them in a predicament of how best to negotiate their stay in Britain whilst maintaining their Pakistani identity. Over time Pakistanis became conscious of the threat to their identity and in a response to maintaining their identity they began to form Pakistan societies, import imams and establish mosques as a response to their perceived 'ontological insecurity' (Bateson 1973). Ontological insecurity sets in when two cultures confront one another not as equals but when the powerful culture demands the minority to adapt and assimilate. The minority culture is faced a number of options to tackle this predicament.

Pakistani Muslims found themselves in this predicament when they arrived in Britain. They were faced with set choices in the face of ontological insecurity. They were faced with the dilemma to decide whether to remain steadfast to their Pakistani identity, or assimilate into the majority culture or to blend the ideas of the majority and minority culture to create a new identity. The first choice involves a deliberate attempt to isolate from the majority culture to preserve their Pakistani identity as immersing into mainstream society that posed the risk of erosion of their identity. Their second possible choice was based on the idea of preserving what they deemed as crucial to their identity from their Pakistani culture and blending that with British cultural values that did not counter essential part of the Pakistani identity. The final choice is to adopt wholesale the British culture and assimilate completely. The thesis explores how the Batesonian model of ontological insecurity helps us understand the choices made by Pakistani Muslims and how

they negotiated their way to a British Muslim identity with which they feel confident and empowered.

1.7 Thesis Overview

In Chapter 2, Methodological Issues - Ethnography of Manchester Muslims: Mosques, Imams and Muslim Communities in Multicultural Britain, I discuss methodological and ethical issues encountered throughout the research. The strengths and weaknesses of participant observation and interviewing have been well rehearsed elsewhere. However, I will discuss these specifically within the context of 'insider' anthropology.

Chapter three introduces the readers to the history of the Muslim presence in Britain and specifically in Manchester. I look at the transition from thinking of the Muslim presence in Britain as a temporary phenomenon into permanent residency (Dahya 1976; Anwar 1979; Shaw 1988; Werbner 1990). The adoption of British citizenship further consolidated the idea of permanent abode as Britain began to be viewed as home and the country of emigration became a place of nostalgia for 'visiting' relatives rather than returning 'home' (Lewis 1994). In this chapter I also examine the range of challenges confronting British Pakistani Muslims that differ from their country of origin and the various ways these have been addressed, or not, as the case may be. After more than four decades of significant Muslim presence in Britain, there seems to be no unity on key issues faced. Determining the start of the new Islamic calendar month, for example, illustrates some of the complex debates that take place within British Muslim communities. In this chapter, I look specifically at conflictual issues that have divided the British Muslim community.

In Chapters four through to nine I present original fieldwork data on the challenges facing British Pakistani Muslims and the ways that people have sought to negotiate a 'new'

British Muslim identity. Chapter four provides a brief introductory history of the settlement and development of Pakistani Muslims in Manchester. I interweave original migration and settlement accounts with demographic and geographic data to provide a chronological representation of the religious and political presence of British Pakistani and other types of Muslims in Manchester.

Chapter five provides historical analysis of the phases of development from the earliest mosques through to the more recent mosques in Manchester which reflect the developing British Muslim identity. I show through primary data some of the ways in which identity is constructed and reconstructed through a process of arguments and debates both within Muslim communities and between Muslims and non-Muslims. I look how conflict and specifically lack of training in conflict resolution has resulted in the fracturing of the community through the emergence of a variety of new mosques in Manchester. I demonstrate that development of mosques is not necessarily guided by the increase in the size of the Muslim population but is better understood through examining the internal conflicts within and amongst mosques committees and imams resulting in fission and fusion in process of creation of a variety of mosques.

Chapter six deals directly with the impact that mainstream British society has had on the organizational structures that is prevalent in mosques in Manchester. In this chapter I continue with a more detailed examination of the internal workings of mosques. I examine how Pakistani Muslims use the discourse of democracy and apply it to mosques organisation. Attaining charitable status requires mosques to follow certain rules and regulations stipulated by the Charities Commission. For example, charities are required to hold regular meetings and regular elections in which presentations of the activities and funds of the mosque are presented for scrutiny. Such changes bring about a number of

unexpected consequences for social relations within the organisations. While there are clearly some generalisable patterns discernible from these data, they equally demonstrate considerable diversity and variability in perceptions and practices.

Chapter seven analyses the role of the imams in the mosques and in the wider community. Specifically, in this chapter I chart the relationship between imams and mosque committees. I do this through data produced from five mosques in the Manchester area. I illustrate how imams perceive their own role, how the congregation perceive the imams role and assess if there is consistency in what is expected of the imams. In this chapter I specifically focus on the relation of the imams and the committees and its implications for mosques and the wider British Muslim community. One of the tensions that arise in many mosques is the categorisation of employer/employee. Such classifications are far from neutral and may have profound implications on the dynamics of the mosque and the surrounding community. The status and role of the imam in relation to mosque committees is contested with each viewing the other in subordinate terms, though of course this varies greatly depending on how different imams view their over arching goal in office.

Chapter eight analyses some of the concerns surrounding the training of British imams, especially in light of the changed attitude towards Muslims in Britain since the violent attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States and July 7 2005, in London. The latter, in particular, has impacted on selection and training of imams since the attacks on London's public transportation system were carried out by 'home grown' British Pakistani Muslims. The chapter provides data analysis of the concerns that British Muslims have in relation to imam training in Britain. I briefly discuss the debates surrounding the training of imams in France, Netherlands and Britain as a way of understanding possible trajectories for imam training.

Chapter nine focuses on British Muslim participation in the British public sphere. I briefly summarise the political situation in relation to Muslims in Britain in general and in Manchester in particular. I look at attempts by Muslims to participate in the state electoral political process. I specifically look at the influence of imams and mosques in Muslim efforts to engage with state political processes. This raises a controversial and contested set of debates around ideas of 'secularism'. By analysing the data collected I construct a typology of attitudes of British Pakistani Muslims towards engagement in British political process. What emerges from these data is at the very least that British Muslims are present across the political spectrum.

Werbner in her seminal work on Pakistani British Muslims in Manchester suggests that modern Islam is 'fascinating and remarkable' because of the dissent and debate that takes place between Muslims (2002: 17). I cannot but agree. Islam is thriving in Britain, in part because of the vibrant and engaged discussions between committed and sincere Muslims who do not interpret or understand Islam in exactly the same way but who nevertheless seek to forge common cause with their fellow Muslims.

2 METHODOLICAL ISSUES

2.1 Participation / Observation

Everyone undertakes the act of observation, either consciously or unconsciously. A spiritual leader, Bashir Haider Sabri, from Mamukanjan in Pakistan, illustrated the difference between conscious and unconscious observation through a story about his disciple, Babar. Babar who had been coming into the Hujra Sabria (a room where the spiritual leader held talks with his disciples) for many years, but if he was asked to tell us how many wooden beams were on the ceiling, the spiritual leader said he was confident that Babar would not be able answer. The reason the saint gave for this was that no matter how many times Babar came into the room, he did not come into the room with the purpose of finding out how many wooden beams were on the ceiling. Babar came for a different purpose therefore his attention was always focused on what he came in the room for without ever paying any attention to the wooden beam on the ceiling. Though he had seen the ceiling and knew it existed, but it was not the object for which he came into the room. The spiritual leader went on to say that this example demonstrates the difference between the seekers of spiritual guidance who come with a clear purpose and those who are unclear about their purpose. He argued that to gain spiritual guidance one must first make a conscious decision about what one wants to gain. In the same way the objectives of research have to be identified and defined before the researcher can begin carrying out observations. The saint said that if he asked Babar about the number of wooden beams on the ceiling he would tell us exactly by looking and counting the number.

Using the analogy that the saint provided demonstrated how we can understand research methodology. The point of the saint's talk is very informative for the purposes of ethnographic research. It highlights the fact that although people observe this does not

mean that they are consciously observing everything or that everybody is getting the same data from the observation. One may notice a few people walking down the road but only some people will notice what type of clothing is being worn. A person who is fashion conscious might note the clothing that people wear and may even notice the brand. Another person might just note people walking past. People see and remember what they consciously observe. The lesson for ethnographic studies is that one cannot encompass everything so one must first define what it is that one wishes to observe and why (Selltiz 1965: 206).

2.2   Defining Ethnography

Attempts to define ethnography too narrowly risk obscuring important differences in approaches that have been adopted over the years by different anthropologists. Ethnography is generally recognized to rest upon *participant observation*, a methodology whereby the researcher spends considerable amount of time observing and interacting with a social group (Herbert 2000: 550). How we define ethnography has a bearing on the outcome of the ethnographic study. Hammersley & Atkinson (1994) argue that 'for some it refers to a philosophical paradigm to which one makes a total commitment, for others it designates a method that one uses as and when appropriate.' They go on to define ethnography in practical terms as 'forms of social research having a substantial number of the following features'. The features identified are 1) Strong emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena, rather than setting out to test hypotheses about them; 2) Tendency to work primarily with "unstructured" data, that is, data that have not been coded at the point of data collection in terms of a closed set of analytic categories; 3) Investigation of a small number of cases, perhaps just one case in detail; and 4) Analysis of data that involves explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions,

the product of which mainly takes the form of verbal descriptions and explanations, with quantification and statistical analysis playing a subordinate role at the most.

Selltiz *et al* used this as the founding principle of participant observation. They state that after determining the purpose of the research the researcher is confronted with four broad questions:

(1) What should be observed?
(2) How should the observations be recorded?
(3) What procedures should be used to try to assure the accuracy of observation?
(4) What relationship should exist between the observer and the observed, and how can such a relationship be established? (Selltiz, 1965: 205)

All four are crucial questions that determine the strength and the weakness of participant observation research. All participant observation benefits from addressing these four questions. Within a wedding ceremony, for example, there are a great many activities taking place. One researcher cannot fully observe the full spectacle of a marriage ceremony. The researcher needs to break down the research into what is practically manageable and observable. The researcher needs to make a decision as to whether to observe the bride and bridegroom at all times or the guests and how they behave when they congratulate the married couple, or perhaps the type of clothes people wear to a wedding. Just one event has many facets and the task of the researcher is to narrow down the scope of what is to be observed and documented.

2.3   Closed World of Mosques and Imams

How do we study the world of mosques and Imams in Britain? The world of the mosques and *darululooms* has seemed to be a 'closed' world where attempts to gain access are viewed with suspicion and trepidation. Attempts to access the world of the mosques and imams have on the whole failed (Gilliat-Ray 2007). Being an 'insider', a Muslim, I found

that my own integrity was questioned and on occasion I was asked explicitly to justify why I was undertaking this research. Many people who felt the community was already 'under siege' were curious as to how the research would be used and whether it would have any negative repercussions on the world of the imams, mosque committees and mosques in general (Ahmed 2003). These were questions that I asked myself on many occasions during my research. I wondered if the research would benefit British Muslims through invoking a process of introspection. Would I be able to do justice to the research by providing an objective analysis of the world of imams, mosque committees and mosques? I also considered whether the extent to which this research might be of use to non-Muslims by providing an insight into the hitherto 'mysterious' world of mosques and imams.

In choosing the method of study one has to be careful, as some methods are more suitable for a particular type of research others for other type of research. For example, when we wish to find out details about someone's personal life the most appropriate method might be in-depth interviews. One cannot observe the past life of a person the only way to gain that information is through interviewing the person in detail. The interview may be standardised, semi-standardised or non-standardised (Fielding, 1999b: 136). Each type of interview serves its own purpose. In order to assess the role of the Imams and the mosques in a multicultural society the semi or non-structured interviews seemed to be ideal. Interviews provide information directly from the respondents themselves, although the questions may determine to a certain extent the bias of the research. Obviously interviewing has its limits as with any other research. Clearly, interviewing on its own would not have been suitable for this research. Without participant observation interviews alone were not sufficient to provide adequate data.

2.4 To Record or Not to Record…

Whyte (1993) in the study of 'Street Corner Society' found that the most difficult part of the research was the recording of information. He recalls that he would hurry to the lavatory to record the information before he forgot. Whyte said that recording information in public would have aroused suspicions that would have placed the research in jeopardy. He said that recording information became a bit easier when he was elected the secretary of one of the gangs. Under the pretext of writing minutes for the meeting Whyte was able to record the events as they occurred unnoticed by the gang.

In my attempts to record the research during the interviews I initially used an audio recording device that I placed on the table in front of the interviewee. I noticed that whilst some people understood but most were apprehensive about the use of the recording device and in some cases politely asked why the interview had to be recorded and still in other cases they only agreed to be interviewed if I did not record the interview. When I was not able to use the recording device it was challenging to document exactly what was said and most of the time one had to rely on memory. Writing while interviewing had two negative impacts: firstly I got more absorbed in trying to document what was being said and neglected to look at the interviewee to see their facial expressions and engage them in a discussion. Sometimes it just became routine standardised interview which for an ethnographic study like mine was not much use; secondly, my note taking seemed to become a continuous distraction for the interviewee. This resulted in a lack of interaction between me and my interviewee and accumulation of data that was not very useful.

Audio recording had positive and negative aspects. When I was able to record the interviews, I had the full contents of the interview at my disposal and this helped bring back visual memories of the interview. The recording provided the tone of the

respondent's interview, whether the interviewer was in a friendly tone or giving an angry response. The drawback of the audio recording device was that it placed the interviewee on alert that words were being recorded thus the interviewee became more cautious in his responses. In some cases the respondent tended to become defensive by giving short answers and not engaging in a meaningful discussion of the issue under consideration. These were people who were apprehensive about the research, who were concerned that this research would end up placing Muslims in a bad light. However, some of these people opened up enormously once I managed to build a rapport with them.

2.5   Getting Inside

Nigel Fielding argues that

> "ethnography is often a debunking exercise, especially when, as in sociology rather more than in anthropology, it is used to shed new light on the darker corners of our society" (Fielding, 1999c: 156).

Ethnographic research is concerned with getting inside a culture to understand it. Ethnographers believed that to understand the different communities and their cultural practices it was necessary to live in that community and to a certain extent live in that culture or tread the cultural path. They have tried to adopt the possibly apocryphal Native American proverb about never criticize a man until you have walked a mile in his moccasins.

Islam until the oil crisis of 1974 rarely figured in British culture and media (Said 1981: 33). Islam has predominantly been presented by the media as having 'confrontational relationship' with the West (ibid: 39). Poole has in fact argued that media's coverage of Muslims has significantly increased the "igonorance with regards to Muslims living in the UK" (Poole 2002:186)   The world of the mosques and the Imams are alien to the British public and perceived through confrontational image that the media has presented of Islam.

The dominant image they have is the one presented through popular mass media. The balance of reality and sensationalism in the mass media is open to scrutiny (Richardson 2004: 30 & 127). No research yet has been able to get inside the mosques and have direct access to the Imams, apart from Barton (1986) who studied the Bangladeshi Tawakali mosque in Bradford and Lewis' (1994) who gained access to the Bradford imams in early 1990s. However, I argue that to fully understand and appreciate the role played by mosques and Imams it is crucial to move away from politically engineered media representations of mosques and imam and do that by gaining more detailed and intimate access to the world of the mosque in Britain. Goffman suggested that:

> "any group of persons - prisoners, primitives, pilots or patients – develop a life of their own that becomes meaningful, reasonable and normal once you get close to it, and … a good way to learn about any of these worlds is to submit oneself in the company of the members to the daily round of petty contingencies to which they are subject." (Goffman, 1961: ix-x)

The method of participant observation that Goffman advocated seems logical but it is not always possible to gain access to the communities or subjects in question. In some cases the researcher may gain some formal access but significant numbers of the people within the community might refuse to cooperate. So it is not enough to have superficial access. In a very real sense, one must become an insider, even if only partially and only temporarily (Lukens-Bull 2007).

One of the key points of ethnographic study is the claim that they are able to gain access to the 'natural' setting. Malinowski says that the goal of ethnography is "to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world" (1922:25). Armchair theorists rely on the literature and what others have said about the people. The armchair theorist engages with the subjects of research at a distance. The result is that armchair theorists talk *about* subjects whereas the ethnographers strive to allow the subjects to speak

for themselves. Ethnographers attempt to understand their rationale for the rituals and customs in their lives.

In the study on ethnic identities by Modood *et al* the researchers allowed the subjects to provide reasons for the acceptance or rejection of arranged marriages (Modood *et. al.,* 1994: 64-80). In this kind of research the participants are given a chance to speak for themselves. The researcher tries not to impose his or her own understanding of arranged marriages and their implications. The participants themselves present aspects of good or bad as well as the definition of arranged marriages. Members of the community are allowed to provide their own 'justifications' for their culture without the fear that the researchers will try to impose their own interpretations on the subjects of the research. The task of the researcher is to try to understand from the others perspective rather than impose his or her own culturally bound normative values. Ethnography is concerned with the appreciation of the culture or the group of people (Fielding, 1999c: 156). Ethnographic research method is therefore a 'sympathetic' mode of data collection.

Spradley says that the participant observer has to adopt the role of the willing student who is eager to learn (1980:4). The informants or the key members of the research become the teachers. The task of the participant observer is to learn from these key people. To learn fully the participant observer must be willing to play the naïve person who wishes to learn more and who knows nothing. The researcher must take nothing as understood. The researcher must come clean and say that he wants to learn about the community or culture. However, this is not as straight forward as it sounds, especially if you are already part of that community, as I discovered during my fieldwork. I noticed that in some responses to my questions the respondents would say "You know what I mean" implying that because I am a Muslim I should know this. I discovered that in some cases they were looking

towards me for endorsement of their view point. If I say 'I don't know what you mean' you risk looking dumb. Therefore during my fieldwork I had to explain to them that although I had views on these matters but the research is about their views and therefore they must answer these questions without saying "you know what I mean". However at all times the researcher must show sympathy towards the respondents otherwise it would become difficult to gain the trust and cooperation from the key people. The researcher will initially arouse suspicions but these suspicions have to be put to rest before any useful data can be collected. In most cases the key 'informant' or the 'gatekeeper' is the person best placed to end the suspicions.

The fact that I grew up in Greater Manchester helped me to establish contacts with the mosques in Manchester. I relied heavily on personal contacts to create the first introductory step into the mosques. My close family members were also instrumental in helping me to establish personal relationships. My brothers had been quite actively involved with the UKIM setup at the Northwest level. The people at UKIM mosques were very welcoming when I mentioned my elder brother's name and his involvement in UKIM. I was closely acquainted to a fairly prominent UKIM figure in the Northwest who was very supportive of my attempts to study the role of mosques and imams in Britain.

2.6   Ethnographic Methodologies among Mosques

For the purpose of investigating the role that mosques, imams and mosque committees have played as party to the formation of British Muslim identity ethnographic research method is ideal. Jacobson (1998) uses ethnographic methodology as a tool for data collection in her research on second generation British Muslim identity. She argues that she chose in-depth interviewing as the central method of data collection:

> … because 'identity', the primary concept under investigation, exists as an *abstract concept* not only to the social scientist but also to the social actor. Thus it seemed necessary to ask the subjects explicitly about how they define the groups to which they belong and their position within those groups. Furthermore, as it is through social action that an identity takes shape and is manifest – for example, a 'religious identity' may manifest itself, in large part, in religious practice – it was vital as well as inquiring about attitudes and values in the research interviews, I should ask about patterns of behaviour and past experience (1998:47-48).

Initially I relied heavily on interviews to ascertain the views of the respondents to particular questions that I deemed were essential to determining the role of Imams and the purpose that mosques serve in Britain. Interviews therefore provided much of the targeted information while participant observation provided much of the evidence for the information produced through interviews. Interviews can be seen as 'artificial' rather than 'natural' settings (Selltiz 1965; Fielding 1999b). Through use of participant observation methods I was able to see for myself the actions of the Imams, mosque committees and those who attend mosques.

Overt observation is straightforward, however, the drawback of overt observation is that people who are the subjects of the study may become guarded about themselves and behave atypically. The overt observer influences the interactions which may distort the representation. Observing activity in mosques also overtly places the researcher in the front line of criticism. An intruder recording the activities of a mosque is certain to arouse suspicion amongst the congregation and the Imam. The congregation and the Imam want to know more about the research. In general, ethnographic research does not have a very good reputation amongst South Asian Muslims in Britain today. This may stem from a colonial legacy of ethnographic research, though there was very little ethnographic research carried out prior to the independence of Pakistan and India. It may also relate to a generalised anxiety and fear about outsiders creating associations between political violence and Islam.

31

Covert observation provides the researcher the chance to study a natural setting with minimum disruption but there are ethical issues in this type of research. In any research ethical concerns are of paramount importance and have to be taken onbaord. Undercover surveillance has been undertaken by the police to gain evidence to convict known criminals. In recent years, especially since 9/11 and 7/7, police have used covert operations in mosques to track activities of imams and mosques.

Following the debates surrounding *The Satanic Verses* and the implications of 9/11 and 7/7, Imams have been depicted as 'fundamentalists' and anti-modern (Runnymede Trust, 1997). Because of this, many imams and committee members have become suspicious of researchers knocking at their door. The imams are also curious and want to know who is interested in their work (Nielsen 2005). One of my major tasks was to gain the confidence of Imams and mosque committees. I had to find a trusted person who could reassure the Imams and Mosque committees about my work and my character. No matter how many times I provided assurances they still would not trust me as they would trust an 'insider'. Therefore I felt that it was important for me to establish a close relationship with someone from within the mosque. This task was exacerbated by the diversity of the mosques and Imams I chose to study. Mosques vary in terms of their ethnicity and schools of thought. Mosque committees and congregations heavily dominated by Pakistanis are different from mosque committees and congregations dominated by Bengali or Gujarati Muslims. All work differently and cooperation between them has been very good. In gaining access my insider status though helpful was on its own not enough order to gain access therefore I had to find a 'gatekeeper'.

2.7 Studying Oneself

Anthropology as a discipline began back in 1884 and for a long time has been dominated by Euro-American academics (Jackson 1987: 2). Anthropology has been associated with the study of the exotic other but around the period of the World War II anthropology at home began to take root but it was not until the 1960s that it began to be practiced at home (Van Ginkel 1998: 261-264). Several reasons have been provided as to why the discipline of anthropology that deemed it a *rite de passage* to conduct fieldwork abroad turned inwards to study own culture. One of the most common reasons cited is the restrictions placed by many governments not to allow fieldwork to be conducted in their countries (Fahim & Hermer 1980; 644-650). One possible reason for these governments to restrict Western anthropologists to conduct fieldwork in their countries may be due to its association with colonialism (Lewis 1973: 581-602; Levi-Strauss 1966: 125). However Jackson argues that it is "the failure of sociologists, in recent years, to explain their societies" that he views as the significant reason for gaining "hope that micro-studies by anthropologists might do better" (1987: 7). Others viewed anthropology at home as a means of rejuvenating the profession (Messershmidt 1981). Messerschmidt also states lack of funding to conduct fieldwork in exotic places as a reason for anthropologists returning to anthropology at home (1981: 196-7). In more recent times terrorism and related conflict in many countries has made it virtually impossible to undertake any kind of meaningful fieldwork (Werbner 2010).

Jackson's assertion that anthropology is a study of all humankind and not just of the exotic people encouraged anthropologists to revisit their view that anthropological fieldwork could only be carried out to study the other (Jackson 1987). Levi-Strauss however held the view that to allow natives to study themselves is not anthropology but history and philology because anthropology is the science of culture as seen from the outside (1966).

He however did state that as the other "is resembling more and more that of the Western world" implying that exotic cultures are disappearing and that might be a threat to the continued existence of the discipline (Levi-Strauss 1966: 125). While Levi-Strauss held that anthropology was the study of other cultures. Manlinowski was someone who advocated that anthropology begins at home. His suggested that we start to know ourselves first, and only then proceed to the more exotic primitive societies (Malinowski 1938: xii).

The fact that I was someone born in Pakistan who grew up in Britain and is studying the Pakistani Muslim community in Britain places my study in the anthropology at home category of social anthropology. Home in itself is a relative term that has physical as well as social aspects as Reis states that gender, age and life events are constituents of "at homeness" (Reis 1998). Whilst anthropologists are generally deemed to be conducting fieldworks in exotic cultures but are anthropologists who conduct fieldwork in their own communities not doing anthropology but are doing history or philology? The fact that I have attended mosques for more than forty years does that make me ineligible to conduct anthropological work just because I am studying my own community. I would however, agree with Jackson that anthropology is the study of all humans, to restrict the profession of anthropology only for those who conduct fieldwork away from home is to wish for the early demise of the discipline.

Kirtsoglou studying the Greek culture and being Greek herself says it entailed a process of 'deconstruction and denaturalisation' of her own experiences (Kirtsoglou 2004: 21). In similar fashion, I found myself going through a process of deconstruction and reconstruction of my own thoughts and experiences. The fact that I was involved with mosque committees my perspective of the role of the imam was from the perspective of the committees, this gave me an opportunity to see the perspective of the other in this

dichotomy of imams and committees. My view of imams and committees was from a client patron perspective (Lyon 2004). In some cases the imam is the client of the mosque committees whilst in another sense the 'office' of the imam gives the imam the role of the patron and the committees and the congregation are the clients. Although I have been actively involved with mosques but once I began my fieldwork I realised how unfamiliar I was with the wider world of the mosque. As Kirtsoglou says "as a researcher I often felt I did not fully belong" to either of these two worlds of imams and committees but instead I was looking on as an ethnographer trying to "capture what was unfolding" me (Kirtsoglou 2004: 22).

Seeing the sincerity and openness of my respondents I was emotionally moved at how they accepted me as part of their social worlds and opened their hearts to me. Even today when I listen to some of the interviews I am emotionally moved by many of the candid and open responses that people gave to my sometimes very personal and probing questions. Without the cooperation of these people it would have been impossible to undertake this research. However, cooperation was not always forthcoming as in some cases this placed me in an ethical dilemma of hiding who I am and continuing with the research as a covert participant observer[4] or to declare my intentions to carry out the research and risk being refused.

Lukens-Bull says he "participated in Muslim rituals and Muslim life and was assumed to be Muslim, which gained me invitations, interviews, and generally enabled my research". He goes on to pose the question was this ethical. In similar fashion I found myself at times questioning how much information about myself should I divulge to the community to enable access to mosques. For example when I go to Barelwi mosque do I tell them

---

[4] See Ronald Lukens- Bull's (2007) article entitled 'Lost in the sea of subjectivity: the subject position of the researcher in the anthropology of Islam' for an interest discussion on the ethical dilemma for the researchers to hide their true identity.

whether I am Deobandi, ahle Hadith, Shia or a Barelwi? I am aware that if I said I am a *Barelwi* I would stand a better chance of accessing the Barelwi mosque. In the end I decided that I would not divulge my school of thought unless they already knew from connections. I am sure this may have cost me a chance to get into some of the mosques that ended up turning me away but I feel more comfortable in the knowledge that I did not deceive my respondents by claiming an identity that I did not ascribe to. The research also became a process of self-reflection, who am I and whether what and how I was conducting research was ethical. However, in the case of Lukens-Bull he argues that he did not claim that he was a Muslim but he went along with the 'assumptions' of others who perceived him as a Muslim, because he performed the religious rituals with them, without deeming this unethical (2007: 177). However, in my case my participation in mosque activity was not based on creating any kind of assumptions about my being Muslim but that I am a researcher interested in documenting and understanding the world of the mosque.

3 SEGREGTATION, INTEGRATION, EXCLUSION AND (Mis)RECOGNITION

3.1 Introduction

During the 'Rushdie Affair', many argued that Britain was a 'secular' country where religion should play no part in the public domain. An analysis of these claims will be undertaken looking at the discourse surrounding the issue of British secularism and their impact on British Muslims (Modood 2012). Through an analysis of these arguments, we can better understand the emergence of a British Muslim identity that has been transformed through 'adversarial' contact with sections of the host community, giving succour to radical extremist groups within British Muslim communities (Khan 2000). Through an examination of the historical and social patterns that have shaped relations between Muslim and non-Muslim populations in Britain, this chapter examines the complex phenomena surrounding segregation, integration, exclusion, recognition and misrecognition (Modood 1998; Phillip 2001; Meer 2010).

The early phase of these Muslim communities was dominated by exclusion from mainstream society. Economic migrants were only concerned with their places of work and rest. Anwar has said that the migrant's life was 'encapsulated' by his desire to make money and return 'home' (1979:185-212). As a result, he deliberately excluded himself from socialising with mainstream British society (Liddington, Bradford Metropolitan et al. 1988: 35-36). This continued until the single male economic migrant was joined by his family which necessitated interaction with the wider society to deal with matters concerning the welfare of his wife and children.

Most of the Muslim migrant workers in the Manchester area were employed in the textile industry (Werbner 1990a). The decline of the textile industry affected South Asian

immigrants disproportionately because of the high percentage of South Asians working in textile firms (Werbner 1990: 12; Vertovec 1998: 89; Kalra 2000). With the closure of textile factories, South Asian Muslims had to turn to other sources of employment (Werbner 1980; Kalra 2000). After having been made redundant, many did not possess the skills to move on to other jobs. Their ability to retrain for other professions was substantially hindered by their weak spoken and written English. The government failed to consider the impact of this decline on the Asian communities who were dependent for their livelihood on the textile industry and were disproportionately affected more than the host white labour force (Werbner 1990: 13). During the earlier period neither migrants themselves nor the state felt the need to learn English as their work environment was predominantly South Asian[5] (Pakistani). They were not required to learn English at work and they lived in lodgings with other Pakistani migrants. The decline of the textile industry forced both the state and the migrant community to consider how they would integrate into the mainstream society.

A pattern of 'chain migration' developed, whereby young men informed each other about employment possibilities in Britain (Anwar 1979; Werbner 1979; Shaw 1988; Vertovec 1997: 169; Kalra 2000). Chain migration had profound implications for the future development of Muslims in British mainstream society. Muslims inhabited areas where the possibility of employment was the greatest and were able to communicate with other Muslims who were more familiar with the intricacies of the British system. As a result of chain migration it appears that some areas are a close 'reflection' of the villages from their country of origin thereby replicating familial and biradari structure of their villages (Shaw 1988: 22-24). A person from their own village or biradari mostly sponsored those who

---

[5] When I say South Asian I mean predominantly Pakistani both East and West before the creation of Bangladesh.

came to Britain. This largely created a culture of patron/client relationship for those migrating to this country on those who sponsored them (see Lyon 2004 for a discussion of the pervasiveness of these types of networks in rural Punjab, especially).

This resulted in strong bonds of regionalism and biradarism, which has had an important impact on the initial settlement patterns of Muslims in Britain. Social life revolved around these two domains, in an attempt to create a 'home from home' (*desh pardesh* as the title of Ballard's 1994 edited volume). Marriages took place mostly within the boundaries of the biradari (Shaw 1988: 85-110). In most cases the marriage partners would also originate from the same region, for example *Jhelum* or *Mirpur* and so forth. Marriages outside the biradari were frowned upon. Current research has found that biradari remains important in Pakistani Muslim communities in Manchester but that there is widespread evidence to suggest that the pattern is changing as cross biradari marriages and also inter-ethnic marriages are also visible amongst my respondents. Two of the Pakistani Muslim women interviewed in my research are married to non-Pakistanis, but their husbands were Muslims. One of the main organiser of the mosque has daughters married to Turkish and Sri Lankan Muslims. This aspect of their lives was emphasised by the female respondents to highlight that emphasis on Islamic values transcends ethnic and biradari boundaries.

 The pattern of chain migration and the ensuing settlement patterns, of concentration in certain localities, have a significant impact on the political role that Muslims might play in local politics in the future (Anwar 1998: 17-22). Through the concentration of biradari in particular regions the phenomenon of biradari has been able to demonstrate its strength in determining the results of the 'selection' committees at local council elections. Werbner's (1979) analysis of settlement patterns of Pakistani migrants in Manchester states that 'chain migration' has occurred in Manchester. In Manchester, Pakistani Muslim population

is concentrated in inner city areas like Cheetham Hill, Longsight, and Levenshulme that have quite high concentrations of Pakistani Muslims. In these areas, we also see the development of the symbols of the Muslim presence in Manchester. The purpose built mosques, restaurants and the halal meat shops are very 'powerful symbols' of the presence of the Muslims in Manchester (Biondo III 2006:400). The 'curry mile', dominated by Pakistani Muslims[6], has become a central attraction for visitors to Manchester. A very strong Pakistani Muslim business environment has, to its credit, shown how it managed to revive the declining manufacturing industry in Manchester through the 1980s and 1990s (Werbner 1984: 166-188; 1987: 213-233). It is worth considering whether this development of Muslims has also facilitated integration into the fabric of British mainstream society.

3.2   From Segregation to Integration: Desire to be British

Muslims in Britain have been seen as pursuing both segregationist and integrationist trajectories. Even after more than half a century of Muslims residing in Britain these conflicting patterns continue. The initial period of post war migration demonstrated a clearer pattern of Pakistani Muslims not participating in the activities of the wider society (Anwar 1979), but with the arrival of their wives and children, Pakistani Muslims had no choice but to interact more widely, through schools, local authorities, and health authorities. Nielsen says that 'the presence of wives and children critically widened the scope for interaction with surrounding society, especially in education, health and social welfare' (Nielsen, 1991:43). Nevertheless, segregation has continued even as British Pakistanis expanded their integrationist activities. Shaw has highlighted the workings of *lena dena* within the biradari system as one mechanism for creating a strong sense of community

---

6 Middle Eastern Muslims have recently begun moving into the curry mile challenging Pakistani dominance of fast food business.

through the network of biradari and then around the acts of convening religious functions (Shaw 1988: 113-4; Werbner 1990; 304-326). A fundamental point in both Nielsen and Shaw's position is that the community began to recognise that Britain was becoming, or had become, their permanent place of residence. For better or worse, Britain was now *ghar* (home).

Shaw's analysis of the Pakistani community in Oxford suggests that change in the family network meant an increased activity within the Pakistani Muslim 'community' beyond the usual biradari population (Werbner 1988; Shaw 1988: 132). The arrival of families required interaction with other Pakistani Muslim families in the area, through the phenomenon of *lena dena*[7]. The aspect of *lena dena* operated at one level within the biradari and secondarily within the Pakistani Muslim community more broadly (Werbner 1981). The effect of *lena dena* was increased integration of the biradari into the Pakistani Muslim community. It did, however, increase integration of Pakistani Muslims into wider British society. Family visits amongst the community strengthened both biradari and community bonds. The practice of *Quran kwani* and *khatam* helped to shape the religious identity of the Pakistani Muslim community (Werbner 1988).

The arrival of families also created a need to maintain and transmit Islamic values. The small mosques sited in converted terraced houses were insufficient for the needs of the growing numbers of Muslims. The number and size of mosques increased rapidly from 1980s (Nielsen 1992: 44). Mosque attendance increase coincided with a decline of the textile industry that employed majority of the Muslims in Britain, along with an increase in dependent family members. The increased attendance of elderly people may be attributed to the decline of the textile industry which gave them more free time.

---

[7] Literally to take and to give. This is a form of reciprocal marriage arrangement common among Pakistanis.

In recent decades, there is some evidence that affluent members of the Asian community are moving out of the inner city areas and relocating to suburban areas (Phillips 2001). Werbner (1979) reported even in the 1970s that affluent Pakistani Muslims in Manchester were moving out of inner city areas into the more affluent suburbs of Manchester. This phenomenon requires further research to confirm the extent to which public symbols of Muslim communities are visible in these affluent suburbs. Further research in this field would provide useful evidence to establish the future residential patterns of both British Pakistanis and mainstream, 'white' English populations. It is currently unclear whether segregationist or integrationist residential patterns emerge as the more dominant in the near future. The development of mosques in more affluent areas like Cheadle Hulme and Hale may show signs of Muslim attempts integrate into more affluent parts of British society.

3.3 Struggle for Recognition - 'Black British', 'Asian British', 'Pakistani British' to 'British Muslim'

Banton argued that there were signs of mobilisation around a religious identity even in the 1970s (1979: 239). He suggested that Muslims, like Jews, will shed their culturally ethnic characteristics, but retain their religious characteristics. Anwar (1979) also predicted that the links with the country of origin would weaken even while the community clung to their religious values as it became an important binding force for Pakistanis in Britain. Nielsen, writing nearly a decade later, argued that there are signs pointing towards the development of a 'Muslim community' in Britain (1987: 387). Shaw in her study of the Oxford Pakistani community also highlighted the emerging signs of the dominance of religion over ethnicity for community mobilisation (1988: 154).

Shaw argued that biradari also played a critical role in the development of a Pakistani community in Oxford. She argued that biradari was the strong bond that held the community together. Biradari governed the boundaries of social life. Anwar although

emphasising religion as the 'binding force' for the Pakistani community, does not deny the significance of biradari (1979: 168). Writing more than two decades after Shaw, I suggest in Manchester the current evidence points to the dominance of religion over ethnic attributes and biradari as the most important driver of social boundaries.

Rath *et al*) in their comparative study of Belgium, Holland, and Britain have argued that Islam is a mobilising force among Western European migrants (1992: 102). Jacobson, in her study of Pakistanis in London, highlighted the boundaries of social life signified by the norms and values obtained through the understanding of religion (1998:128). Both Jacobson (1998) and Shaw (1988) have stated that culturally ethnic and biradari based norms are being challenged by the second generation of British Muslims through their understanding of Islamic values (Shaw 1988: 178-180; Jackson 1998: 143-47). Shaw and Jackson's research largely seemed to confirm Banton and Anwar's earlier prediction that Muslims would 'shed' some of their culturally ethnic characteristics whilst retaining Islamic characteristics.

Tariq Modood (1988) raised the question whether Asians were comfortable with the 'ascribed' label of 'black' before the issue of *The Satanic Verses* engulfed race relations in Britain. He argued that to label all minorities as black:

> … sells short the majority of the people it identifies as black. In particular it has the effect of imposing a professional-political consensus on the Asian community that was formed by those largely outside it and at a time when Asians as a community were barely participants in debates on race (1988: 397).

Modood argued that black identity was based around the notion of 'black pride' and that this concept of identity was problematic for Asians. He argued that it was not easy for Asians to feel connected to the idea of 'black pride' that had at its roots in Afro-Caribbean culture. He further argued that Asians needed to feel proud of their own culture, rather than subsuming it for political expediency within an Afro-Caribbean cultural umbrella. In many

ways, Asians felt they had more in common with the indigenous white culture of Britain than the notion of 'black pride'. Modood's (1988) argument set in motion a debate surrounding the pitfalls of using a collective label that did not represent all of the constituent groups included within it.

Samad says that some Pakistanis and Bangladeshis accepted the collective label 'black' as long as it provided the necessary funding from the local authority for the community projects (1998: 62). In his view, the label of 'black' was not problematic as long as the financial needs of the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were being met. Samad says that financial assistance was even extended to teaching of Quran classes in mosques under the guise of 'community languages'. Samad suggested that Indians initiated the challenge to the collective label 'black':

> Within the Asian community however, the general perception was the notion of being 'black' had led to Pakistanis becoming dominant. In reaction to this development, Indians rejected this identification and asserted their Hindu characteristics as an alternative. The subscription to 'black', Asian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi etc. was a highly instrumental feature and intimately associated with the fate of local authorities whose powers were denuded by Tory legislation (1998b: 63).

Samad (1998b) argued that amongst South Asians, Pakistanis had managed to secure a strong footing within local authorities through their attachment to the local Labour Party. The right wing attack, during Thatcher's reign, on the Labour left was designed to seize power from local authorities impacting those minority community leaders who had concentrated on influencing local politics until this time. Once power had been taken away from the local authorities, Asian Muslims felt that they were no longer able to exercise as much influence on policy. This further strengthened the view that Muslim identity was deliberately being denied.

Secular leadership dominated political representation of ethnic minorities. Samad (1998) says that the impact of the attack on the Labour left was the loss of secular leadership in the Muslim community thereby opening a contestation of leadership between secular and non-secular Muslims. This I think was indicative of the situation of 'Muslims' within the Labour Party where Labour Party 'Muslim' candidates were competing with one another using Islamic terminology[8]. Criticism of existing secular leadership was framed with reference to Islamic terminology, issues of halal meals, Islamic schools, school uniforms and religious assemblies began to dominate the discussion not on ethnic but on religious basis (Joly 1995: 139-162; Nielsen 2004: 40-61; Rex 1996: 96-113, see also Eade 1996 for the case of East London). The questions raised were based around the notion, what have councillors so and so done for the 'Muslim' community.

The defeat of the Labour left was also a defeat for the Pakistani Muslim community leaders who had until then relied primarily on local politics for influence. They had made no inroads into national politics in Britain. In 1997 the first Pakistani Muslim Member of Parliament, Muhammad Sarwar, was elected (Anwar 2001: 545). In the 2001 General Elections another Pakistani Muslim, Khalid Mahmood from Birmingham, become a Member of Parliament. In 2002 there were only two Members of Parliament in the House of Commons and both belonged to the Labour Party. By 2010 this number had increased to eight Members of Parliament with the election of three female Muslim Members of Parliament for the first time[9]. As a proportion of the Muslims in Britain, this is still a huge under representation of Muslims at national government level (Fieldhouse & Sobolewska 2013). I will elaborate on this point in chapter nine. Evidence suggests that representation of Muslims in mainstream society has been grossly neglected as a direct result of the

---

8 I use quotation marks to differentiate that the candidates primarily, were contesting elections on behalf of the Labour Party. The use of the word 'Muslim' was for the Muslim community consumption.
9 http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/mehdi-hasan/2010/05/muslim-majority-labour-england

frames of reference used in the race relations' debate (Modood 1994; Fieldhouse & Sobolewska 2013).

Modood (1994) argues that Asians were marginalized under the 'black pride' identification because Asian norms and aspirations towards Afro-Caribbean pride were not the same. Black people who were proud of their Afro-Caribbean roots were meant to represent Asian people with no connection to Africa. Modood (1988) argues that the acceptance of 'black' by Asians means 'the acceptance by Asians of an Afro political leadership' (ibid: 399). The creation of the black section in the Labour Party did not benefit Pakistanis but inadvertently affected Pakistanis since the political agenda was 'black' rather than Pakistani or Muslim led. In total four Members of Parliament were elected under the 'black' banner. Three were from Afro-Caribbean origin and one East African Asian (Anwar 2001: 544). In reality, the impact of the creation of a 'black section' in the Labour party was to further marginalize Muslims from British national politics.

The move towards British Muslim identification would suggest that the notion of funding, though relevant, was not the main driving force behind the shift in identification. Even if Samad (1998) is right in his argument, he fails to take into account the shift towards black pride that negatively affected Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. The net effect of this was that Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims were alienated from mainstream society and remained relatively powerless. This became strikingly evident during the Rushdie Affair when Muslims were politically impotent and friendless and struggled to have their concerns addressed (Modood 1990: 143; Werbner 2002: 134-152).

The collective identity marker 'Asian' may have been an improvement on black identity but it was still too wide an identification to be useful as a political tool. The disparities between the socio-economic differences amongst Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian and

Chinese communities were made apparent by the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (Modood et al: 1997). Pakistanis and Bangladeshis feel more pride being Pakistani or Bangladeshi, respectively, or feeling pride in their religious identity, than in any general sense of 'Asian' identity. The shift towards a British Muslim identity is closely linked to a desire to be proud of one's identity, which was a shift away from Asian identity.

Nielsen argues "the pressure imposed on Muslim organizations by European official legal, political and bureaucratic expectations is such that Islam has to become an ethnic identity" to gain recognition (1991: 53). Nielsen demonstrates the intentions of the British government to deal with racial or ethnic rather than religious organisations. The state was willing to recognise Muslims as Black Muslims, Asian Muslims, Pakistani Muslims, Bangladeshi Muslims, and Indian Muslims and so forth but not as 'Muslims' or even 'British Muslims'. Identities had to include an ethnic label to be acceptable. Modood (1999) has argued that the pressure being applied by the race relations' machinery was of trying its utmost to undermine the development of a specific 'Muslim' identity.

3.4 Defining Muslims

British Muslim identity although not an essentialist identity, is not a postmodern 'anarchic' identity. A Muslim identity has certain critical components required to fall within the boundaries of Islam. Problems arise, however, when identities are contested, where a group claims to be Muslim but other groups reject or deny the claim. The case of the Ahmadiyya is pertinent example. Ahmadiyya claims to being Muslim are rejected by the majority of Muslims in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia who are considered as non-Muslims[10] (Lewis 1994: 98-99). The MCB issued a statement which directly challenges the notion

---

10. The Pakistan government in 1974 declared that the Ahmadiyya as a non Muslim minority in Pakistan.

that Ahmadiyya are Muslims[11]. In this situation, the final arbiter is the system of basic beliefs necessary for a person to be a Muslim.

Anwar's definition of a Muslim is based on the five pillars of Islam when he states that 'the person who *believes* in these five imperatives of Islam is treated as a Muslim, for all practical purposes' (1979: 158, emphasis added; also see Geaves 2004). The five pillars that Anwar mentions are considered the practical foundation upon which the religion of Islam is constructed. There is a core set of beliefs known as *iman mufasal*, that a Muslim must share in order to be accepted as a Muslim. Muslims must believe in Allah, in His Angels, His Scriptures, His Prophets, the Day of Judgement, Predestinaton, and in the resurrection after death. A person not believing in any one of the beliefs of *iman mufasal* remains outside the fold of Islam. However, the non performance of any one of the five pillars of Islam does not mean that the person is no longer a Muslim. Belief and practice are, therefore, considered separately. A person can be perceived as a Muslim even if he has committed a *gunnahe kabeera* (grave sin) of not performing the basic practical rituals of Islam, however, should he or she declare a lack of belief in any of the faith articles he or she becomes a non Muslim. Malik defines a Muslims as

> "A Muslim might not pray or fast and might even become an agnostic, but he might still support Islamic social norms and campaign for Jihad against the U.S. occupation of Iraq or the Israeli occupation of Palestine" (Malik 2004: 76).

A person is still perceived as a Muslim even if he has committed a *gunnahe kabeera* (grave sin) of not performing the basic practical rituals of Islam but the minute he declares that he does not believe in any of the faith articles he becomes a non Muslim.

In order to belong to Islam one must believe in the oneness of God. A belief in more than one God would automatically place a person outside the Islam. Similarly, we can argue

11. A letter sent to the Times on 27 July 2003 was sent by the then secretary of Media for MC, Inayat Bunglawala stating that Ahmadiyya were considered as non Muslims by the Muslim world. http://mcb.org.uk/media/27_7_03.php - Accessed on 29/04/2013.

that a belief in all the Prophets and the finality of Prophet Muhammad is also an essential part of belonging within the boundary of Islam[12]. On this basis, it could be concluded that Islamic identity has certain essentialist belief components. Nevertheless, how this identity is practically portrayed or played out in society varies around the world (Ahmed 1993). Furthermore, this type of identity does not mean that Muslims cannot live side by side with polytheist religious groups, or groups with different Prophets or who do not believe in the Prophet Muhammad. The Quran, the book that informs Muslim behaviour, categorically states that "There is no compulsion in religion" (al-Baqarah 2:256). The Quran also tells Muslims to accept the fact that there will be people who believe in God and there will be those who deny the existence of God. The Quran teaches Muslims how to live in a tolerant society where believers and non-believers co-exist, "The truth is from your Lord; so whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve (al-Kahf 18:29). The Quran goes further by teaching Muslims about the way they should conduct a dialogue with non-Muslims when it says "Say: O disbelievers! I worship not that which ye worship; Nor worship ye that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which ye worship. Nor will ye worship that which I worship. Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion" (al-Kafirun: 109:1-6). Therefore, what we are witnessing is an emergence of an identity that is content with itself and its surroundings, whether they are religious or secular. It is clear from these Qur'anic verses that the Muslim vision of society is of multiple cultures and beliefs coexisting peacefully.

A more fluid socio-cultural identity manifests itself in different locations and at different times through a process of social interaction. Muslims adapt to new circumstances, incorporating British cultural values with Islamic beliefs to construct a manifestly

---

12 A Quranic verse declares the Finality of the Prophet Muhammad see Sahih International – "Muhammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and last of the prophets. And ever is Allah, of all things, Knowing"(Surah Al Ahzab: 40)

transformed 'visible' Muslim identity, which may be different from the one their parents or predecessors portrayed. This identity will involve the deconstruction of ethnically acquired cultural traits to reconstruct what they perceive as a British Muslim identity taking on board British cultural norms and characteristics (Barthe 1969).

Jenkins has argued that identity is socially constructed through "ongoing processes of social interaction within which individuals define and redefine themselves and others throughout their lives" (1999: 20). This is a view that has been previously presented by Mead (1934) and Cooley (1962 & 1964). Jenkins sees identity as a synthesis the "internal-external dialectic of identification" (ibid.). Jenkins further argues that core of his argument is "that the external or categorical dimensions of identity are... centrally important" (ibid: 23). Jenkins defines identity as "each individual's reflexive sense of her or his own particular identity, constituted *vis a vis* others in terms of similarity and difference, without which we would not know who we are and hence would not be able to act" (ibid: 30).

3.4.1 Looking 'right': Hybridisation and Competing Patterns

An example of a hybridised mixture of British and Pakistani cultures is the 'role' and 'appearance' of the imam. Imams in Pakistan mostly wear *shalwar kameez* with a waistcoat over it and have fairly full-length beards. Many imams also wear long cloaks over their *shalwar kameez* (Lewis 1994: 129). When they come to Britain, they see that this dress style is unusual. They must then decide whether to retain the appearance from Pakistan, as most have done, or to modify according to local norms. The imam at *Minhaj-ul-Quran* mosque, Allama Shahid Babar, who had recently arrived from Pakistan (less than a year ago when I spoke to him) was well qualified, possessing an MA in Islamiyat (a seven year Islamic course for *alims*) from Minhaj-ul-Quran International University in Lahore. In the *Minhaj-ul-Quran* mosque in Manchester, he wore an English style two-

piece trouser coat suit. When leading the prayers he had no hesitation in wearing trousers, although on Fridays he wears his traditional attire. His beard was of shorter length than other South Asian imams. Many mosques in Britain might not employ him as an imam because of his appearance, but clearly he represents a collection of compromises and adaptations in response to two competing sets of cultural patterns.

The elderly people mainly attend the five daily prayers in the mosque and they are the ones with 'fixed' ideas about an imam's appearance. Deviance from their expectations provokes criticism. Initially, a few people who were 'bold' enough questioned the imam, cautiously, about his dress and the length of his beard. A small number of people stopped attending the mosque altogether, instead choosing to go to another mosque in the vicinity because the appearance of the imam did not fit with their perceived image of an imam. Once, a guest imam came to the Minhaj ul Quran mosque, he had lived in Britain for decades, was invited to lead the *Taravih*[13] prayers during the month of Ramadhan. He raised questions about the size of the permanent imam's beard. He said that he felt uncomfortable reading *farz* prayer when the resident imam leads the prayer because his beard was too short. The hafiz e Quran was happy to lead the *taravih* prayer but did not feel comfortable performing his *farz* prayers behind the permanent imam. He was of the opinion that an imam cannot lead a prayer if the length of his beard is short. The imam who complained about the beard managed to gather support for his view from other imams in Manchester for whom the size of the beard is a defining feature of an imam. These imams were not concerned about Allama Shahid Babar's awareness of the concerns of Muslims in Britain or perhaps they felt that the length of the imam's beards was of more crucial significance to Muslims in Britain. Fortunately, for this hybridised 'deviant' imam, the Minhaj ul Quran mosque committee that employed the permanent imam had no such problems with the length of an

___

13. Taravih is a special night prayer that only takes place during the month of Ramadan.

imam's beard. I have used this incident to demonstrate the different perceptions of the appearance of the imam and acceptance of his identity given the transformed visible image. An imam is meant to guide a congregation about religion but here some members of the congregation with rigid ideas about the appearance of an imam tried to impose a particular symbol on the imam.

3.5 Emergence of the 'Radicalisation' and 'Extremists' Discourse

The emergence of fundamentalist and extremist organisations in Britain came on the heels of a shift towards political Islam, beginning with the Iranian Revolution, and its rejection as an ideological alternative to the hegemony of Liberal Capitalism and its claims of the end of history (Fukuyama 1992). The debates taking placing in Iran provided the rhetoric for the extremist organisations in Britain. In Britain, the failure of government bodies to appreciate and show some semblance of sympathy for the hurt and insult felt by Muslims by the publication of Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* was in many ways the catalyst for the emergence of fundamentalists and extremists among British Muslims (Khan 2000: 31; Modood 1990: 156). The rise of organisations like the Hizb ut Tahrir, Al-Mohajoroun, Islamic Party of Britain, and 'Muslim Parliament' (Muslim Institute) were strengthened by the mishandling by the government of the Rushdie Affair. Rex in fact argued that even a 'sympathetic' hearing might have been enough to dampen the 'hurt' and 'insult' felt thereby providing legitimacy for the moderate point of view (1996: 240). The failure to accurately judge the situation was partly due to the history of the Crusades, colonialism and the race relations in Britain (Asad 1990; Said 1978; Modood 1990; Khan 2000). Muslims have long been perceived by colonialists as the 'exotic other' in European

societies (Said 1978) [14]. The relationship has been of a "relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" which allowed the depiction of the other due to a "pattern of relative strengthen between East and West" (Said 1978: 133). The 'other' was now amongst them as one of 'them' in the shape of British Muslim.

Race relations in Britain are centred on a crude notion that the indigenous British people are 'white' and everybody else is 'black'. The Race Relations Act made it illegal to discriminate against black and ethnic minority people, but the law did not prevent discrimination against religious minorities (Davie 2000: 122). In the case of discrimination against Muslims, it used the notion of indirect discrimination, a lesser offence to direct discrimination. The Race Relations Act had been able to provide protection for the members of Jewish and Sikh religions but the perception among British Muslims was that it ignored other religion (Ibid; UKACIA 1997).

The Runnymede Trust Report (1997) on 'Islamophobia – a challenge for us all' was one of the first initiatives to take stock of the 'Muslim' presence in Britain and the existence of 'Islamophobia' in Britain. The Report's objectives were to assess the claims of 'Islamophobia' in Britain and suggest a way forward from this impasse. In this aim, the report also assessed how far Muslims were included in the 'inclusive society'. The Report was then to come up with some recommendations in light of their findings. The Report identifies two declared aims of Britain's public policy, firstly 'social inclusion' and secondly, 'cultural pluralism' and sensitivity. In order to fulfil these twin aims the government acknowledges that it has to tackle the issues of 'discrimination' and 'disadvantage' (1997: 31). What can be deduced from the Report is that the government is aware that the problems of 'discrimination' and 'disadvantage' are the barriers to an

---

[14] Of course Saïd wasn't just talking about Muslims, but about the tendency to essentialise and reify others. The Orientalising he describes can be seen in relation to the ways that scholars have written about the Chinese, the Japanese or anywhere in Sub-Saharan Africa where the populations may not be Muslim.

inclusive society and as such must devise policies that are conducive to an inclusive society. The policies designed to accommodate and integrate minorities must in all fairness address these two issues, which the government claims they intend to fulfil.

Many questions were raised by the responses from the state to Muslim appeals against inequality and discrimination (Modood 1993). Muslim responses argued for the extension of the fifteenth century blasphemy[15] law to cover other religions (Modood 1993: 514). They argued that if there is an existing law on the statute books to protect a religion why it could not be extended to include other religions. The refusal of the British establishment to take the religious concerns of Muslims seriously illustrated the contrast in the two viewpoints and to some it highlighted the use of double standards when the issue concerns Muslims. Legislation to combat religious discrimination was sometimes opposed because 'religion' lacks a clear definition, however, Hepple et al (2000) identify other legal precedents where a working definition of religion is applied. They further highlight use of legislation prohibiting religious discrimination in Australia, New Zealand and even closer to home Northern Ireland already has such legislation. This type of apparent double standards displayed by the government in many ways acted as a catalyst for the radicalisation of a section of the Muslim communities to put in their claim of 'conspiracy theories' that the West is only interested in 'preventing the emergence of a specifically Muslim socio-political formation' (Muslim Parliament 1992).

Reflecting on Muslims in Britain before the Rushdie Affair, John Rex suggested that 'militancy and the politics of violence are not on the agenda as far as the Muslim's dealing with domestic or British issues is concerned' (1990: 215). This reflects the opinion that the Muslims were not adopting extremist or fundamentalist positions that would result in mass

---

[15] For more details on the Law of Blasphemy see the Report on Religious Offences in England and Wales. This available online at http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/ld200203/ldselect/ldrelof/95/9501.htm

riots and violence. In fact many at the time said that 'if the West Indians had any equivalent of the mosques they would both be more likely to gain employment and less likely to riot' (ibid.). Werbner argues that, "Although the British Muslim community has suffered from high levels of unemployment during economic recessions, and from racial harassment and discrimination, it is nevertheless a law abiding community" (1994: 99). Overwhelming evidence shows that the path that Muslims wanted to follow was a non-confrontational and non-violent path. The fact that some have ended on is a path of confrontational politics which may be attributed to the policies adopted by the state and its refusal to 'recognise' the existence of a specifically British Muslim identity (Rath, Groenendijk & Penninx 1991; Modood 1998; Khan 2000).

Overall, the policies give the impression that British Muslims are somehow the 'other' who have yet to prove their loyalty to Britain (Werbner 2000). Rath et al argue that Western Europeans 'see in Islam a danger that must be banned from society or at any rate controlled' (1991: 102). The example of John Patten writing in a national newspaper telling British Muslims how to conduct their affairs in Britain is a very basic representation of this attitude to 'control' and 'tell' Muslims how to behave in Britain (Patten 1989; Asad 1990: 456). Asad argues that this type of behaviour from the British government reflects their colonial past which they are having difficulty in letting go of. He argues that British government needs to realise that colonialism has finished and that these British Muslims are an integral part of Britain and not the colonial 'other' (Asad 1990). Nielsen argues that,

> "Any adaptation of lifestyles, attitudes and thought patterns must take place among the minority groups and only minimally, if at all, among the majority. Their cultural traditions and preferences can be tolerated so long as they do not impinge on the life of the majority. The natural tendency of newly-arrived communities to strengthen their internal links is reinforced by the majority community's tendency to minimise links with them, with the result that they easily become neutralised by

encapsulation – they are *treated* as foreign bodies and therefore they *are* foreign bodies" (emphasis original, 1992: 154).

It is this facet that the presence of minorities is tolerated and not welcomed that is at the heart of the problem. Minorities are not made to feel at home, they are always being made aware of their 'foreign' status and their foreign origins even when they are third generation Muslims in Britain. This situation is in contrast to the situation in United States where migration was not tolerated but migrants were in fact welcomed as fellow citizens into a 'melting pot'.

Rath et al argue that 'Muslims in Great Britain appear to face more difficulties in achieving forms of recognition' (1991: 112). They argue that some practices, which are lawful in the country of origin, are illegal in the country to which Muslims have migrated. They argue that in some cases those applying the law have been fairly accommodating as in the case of laws governing ritual slaughter of animals (1991: 106). Many have argued that Muslims only enjoy this right because of the strong presence of the Jewish community who also ascribe to the ritual slaughter of animals (Kaye 1993; Vertovec 1997: 171). The analysis of the politics of religious slaughter of animals provided by Ronald Kaye highlights the plight of Muslims to enjoy the privilege of eating halal meat in Britain not because of their own political strengthen but because of their willingness to forge a partnership with the Jewish community on this issue. The article is quite enlightening on the political positioning of the two communities in Britain. Muslims, though strong in numbers, are seen as politically weak whereas the Jewish community has a strong political standing in Britain and collaboration of the two faith communities on this issue ensured that the provision of halal meat continues in England (Kaye 1993).

Whilst there have been other cases where the position taken by the British government has not been so accommodating and has resulted in existing legislation being changed to deny the requests of the minority community. The most interesting example quoted by Rath et al is the law concerning polygamous marriages. Immigration of second spouses was allowed until 1988 when the Immigration Act of 1988 changed the situation whereby second spouses were not allowed to enter Britain (ibid: 107). The most illuminating aspect of this change is that it was changed because of the Muslim presence in Britain. Rather than accommodating Muslim views on polygamous marriage, the British government changed existing legislation preventing Muslims from using this legislation. In a country where polygamous arrangements are widespread, the minority community that accepts polygamous marriages may view the change of legislation less accommodating.

The Muslim community has also been accommodated within mainstream British society through planning permission for places of religious worship. Nielsen analyses the responses of the local authorities for planning permission for mosques and argues that there are no set criteria to approve planning permission for mosques (2004: 56-61; see also Reeves et al 2009). Nielsen says that a lot depends on the interpretation by the individual LEAs of the regulations governing planning permission. Different local authorities adopt different approaches, where one LEA may be sympathetic to the cause of Muslim minorities, another might be unsympathetic. His research shows that initially some LEAs were very rigid but as the Muslim community grew more confident, the attitude of the LEAs also became more sympathetic to Muslims' needs. Gale and Naylor's conclusion is 'that the approach of local state bodies is still characterized by indifference to multiculturalism and to the creation of urban multicultures in particular' ((2002: 405). The presence of Muslim councillors at local level has also acted as a check on planning

permission[16]. The LEA's approach has demonstrated streaks of 'confrontational' rather than an accommodating approach (BMMS September 1994 Vol. II, No. 9, p. 24).

Khan (2000) says that the presence of Muslims in Britain is best viewed historically. He argues that it is the 'confrontational contextual framework' that best explains the relationship between minorities and the dominant mainstream communities of their adopted countries (2000: 29). Khan argues, "The inevitable social and cultural impact of inequality within this majority/minority dichotomy is what determines the nature and basis of minority integration" (ibid.). He says British Muslims face the challenges in the 'level of public accommodation and recognition, as well as the acceptance of Muslim social and religious values by a seemingly irreligious and secular Britain' (ibid: 30). Khan goes further by arguing that "Over time these issues have led to resentment of and hostility to Muslims, while the interaction of Muslims with majority society has led to Muslims becoming alienated" (2000: 38).

Although Khan paints a negative picture of the historical relationship of Muslims with the 'West', he concludes on a more positive note. He says that the relationship of the majority community with the earlier generation of Muslims was different to the relationship they face with the younger generation. Khan says that the younger generation of Muslims expect that their Britishness will 'involve acceptance of their Islamic identity by the mainstream' (2000: 41). He says the younger generation, unlike their parents, is unlikely to accept a 'subservient' relationship with mainstream British society (Khan 2000.). This confidence and assertiveness from the younger generation with an Islamic identity will be 'problematic' for dominant mainstream British society. Khan concludes by asking for a more sensitive approach from the dominant mainstream society in 'managing equally

---

[16] For example in Oldham, the chief planner refused permission but the local area committee, which included Muslim councillors, overruled him and granted permission for a building to function as a mosque.

58

assertive religious and cultural communities'. He says, "The sensitivity with which Muslim assertiveness is managed and accommodated will undoubtedly strengthen pluralism and may involve a re-evaluation of the nature of the accommodation offered to Muslim minorities" (Khan 2000).

Significant steps were taken by Downing Street during the Labour government to integrate Muslims into the political system. Members of the Muslim community were invited to Downing Street for festive occasions and for consultations. Both Blair and Brown Labour governments, in a drive to support a pluralist society, appointed Muslims to the House of Lords. All parties now send messages of goodwill on Islamic festivals to the Muslim community. Unfortunately, these efforts are sometimes undermined when senior members of the cabinet make statements that are not conducive to an inclusive pluralist society.

The sensitivity and re-evaluation that Khan (2000) is asking for does not seem to be forthcoming in light of the riots of 2001 in the Northern towns. More recent initiatives seem to demonstrate that the British establishment has again begun to formulate policies and laws that are seen as a direct infringement on the liberties of the British Muslims. The response to the riots of 2001 in the Northern towns was seen as unwarranted criticism of the British Muslims. Ann Cryer and David Blunkett have both emphasised the need for British Muslims to 'learn' English and speak it in their homes, as if lack of knowledge of English language was the cause of the riots (The Daily Telegraph 13 July 2001; The Gaurdian July 27, 2001). Most research has shown that the younger generation of British Muslims communicate with each other in English (Kundani 2001). Over fifty percent of Britain's Muslims are born in Britain (Census 2011). It was the younger generation that was involved in the riots and not the older generation who lacked fluency in English. It is not conducive for senior politicians to make statements that make the younger generation

of British Muslims feel detached from the mainstream British society. This is exactly the kind of insensitivity that Khan (2000) wants the British government to avoid assisting the accommodation and integration of British Muslims into mainstream society.

If the extremist elements amongst Muslim communities want to highlight situations where the government has acted unfairly or insensitively towards Muslims there are no shortage of examples (Modood 1993). Government efforts to integrate and accommodate Muslims have been fraught with inconsistencies. The state needs to open access to mainstream British society for British Muslims in order to encourage an integrated and inclusive British society that the Runnymede Trust Report (1997) advocated.

Shaw (2002), in trying to understand why young British Muslims might support the Taliban, says that after the destruction of the Twin Towers in 2001 British Pakistanis feared reprisals. She wrote that she had seen mosques being locked during prayer time for fear of attack. Some imams who fear a backlash against British Muslims from the West have distanced themselves from *jihad*, *Taliban* and *al-Qaeda*. Many more have moderated their sermons to distance the community from the events in Afghanistan. Since the 11 September 2001 and 7th July 2005 bombings, Muslim women wearing headscarves have been spat at on the streets, and at least one imam was also attacked. Shaw says, "These are local manifestations of a general increase in harassment, abuse and assault against Muslims in Britain: much low-level harassment goes unreported, but the number of reported attacks since 11 September was four times higher than for a typical year" (Shaw 2002: 5.). In this environment of fear on the part of British Muslims, the government has after an enormous amount of stalling introduced legislation in December 2003 that outlawed religious discrimination in employment. However, the anti-terrorist legislation introduced during this period had direct bearing on the Muslims in Britain, who could be detained under the

new Terrorism Act without being charged (Birt 2005; Rehman 2007; Klausen 2009; Thomas 2010; Abbas 2011). In effect, the government introduced legislation that further strengthened the hand of the extremist and fundamentalist sections of the British Muslim leaders. One imam in my research said that he does not speak about the issue of Iraq for fear of reprisals from the British government. He had members of the British intelligence services visit him at home enquiring about speeches of some of the imams in the locality.

There is growing evidence that suggests that the rise of the 'extremist' and 'fundamentalist' elements amongst the Muslim communities could well be attributed to the negative and unsympathetic responses from the liberal intelligentsia to Muslim concerns. Muslims have always had to put up a fight to gain any concession from the authorities. If the responses to Muslim calls had been moderate and not condescending then the moderate sections of Muslim communities would have had the upper hand and would have been able to stifle the more radical and extreme sections of the Muslim communities. The net effect of the response from the liberal establishment was a hardening of the position on the Muslim side, thereby strengthening the hand of the extremists and undermining the efforts of the moderate Muslims who had been working for decades to create an amicable understanding of the concerns of the Muslim communities in Britain. The response from the government and CRE legitimised the extremist claims that moderates were not working for Muslims but were in fact working for the government. They argued that the main concern of the moderates was to maintain their personal status and secure funding for their projects without regard for the Muslim communities. What the liberal establishment failed to understand was that the claims of hurt felt by the Muslim communities were not claims by the extreme wing of the Muslims but in fact were claims of the majority of Muslims. Muslims felt genuinely hurt but the liberal establishment showed no sympathy or regard for Muslims.

Modood argues that Muslims not only felt let down by the establishment but also felt they were let down by the Asian secular intelligentsia. They felt that secular Asians had not done their bit to protect the Muslim community. Modood argues that as a result of this perceived failure of the secular intelligentsia to protect Muslims we would see a growth in fundamentalism within Muslims. He further argues that although fundamentalism would increase but it would continue to be no more than an 'ideological fringe' (1990: 156). I would contend that the existence of the 'extremists' and 'fundamentalists' is quite damaging to the future of Muslims in Britain, in that they will always be available for the ever-willing media to present the radical face of Muslims (Vertovec 1997: 171-172). Mainstream Islam will always be overshadowed by radical Islamic views because of the media bias that is more interested in the radical ideas about Islam. One way of rectifying this situation would be if the British government policy finds room to accommodate the recognition of British Muslims in mainstream British society. The British society has to come to terms with the religious presence of British Muslims by recognition through legislative parity. A debate on the secular nature of Britain has to accommodate for the existence of religious sections of the British community / minorities (Modood 1999).

3.6   Conclusion

Choudhury, Davie, Modood and Suleiman argue that the state must address the issues facing marginalised communities, particularly Muslims, in religious terms. In this chapter I have examined the literature on the marginalisation and exclusion of Muslim religious discourse from mainstream British society as a crucial factor in the growth in extremist movements. In turn the religious extremists through their actions provide the radical secularists ammunition to argue for banning of religion from the public sphere.

In addition, social scientists have persistently neglected the development of a 'genuine' religious identity in the shape of British Muslims. It is for this reason that the work of the mosques, madrassas and imams in Britain has been largely ignored. The Muslim community boasts over fifteen hundred mosques in Britain and each mosque has at least two imams employed. With this neglect goes the voluntary work of the mosque committees who have built these institutions from scratch with their hard earned money to retain their religious identity. Unless we begin to rectify the imbalance between religious and the secular domains we might not be able to create a harmonious society that is at peace with itself. Whether one is for or against the role of religion in public we ignore religious communities at our peril.

Having analysed the literature available surrounding British Muslims I turn to an in depth empirical analysis of Muslim communities in Manchester to understand the ethnic and religious make up of Manchester.

4 MANCHESTER'S MUSLIMS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I examine the development of the Pakistani Muslim community in Manchester. Initially, Pakistanis viewed themselves as migrants whose time in Britain was temporary. By the 1970s, this impermanent migratory population was transformed into a vibrant and confident British Muslim community at ease with its religious and national identity in Manchester. An examination of demographic, political and economic data on the metropolitan area suggests very clearly that Manchester's Pakistani Muslims constitute an essential part of the city. An important mechanism for the establishment and maintenance of the Muslim community has been the construction of mosques which have shaped the particular kinds of religious identities that have emerged.

Muslims in Manchester have a history of interaction with Britain stretching back to the fifteenth century through to the colonial period and the era of slavery (Anwar 1979; Halliday 1992; Lewis 1994; The Runnymede Report 1997; Matar 1998; Werbner 2002; Ansari 2004). The present research is primarily concerned with post war immigration to Britain form South Asia, especially Pakistani Muslims. Historically, migration was driven by economic reasons which influenced Muslim settlement in Britain (Anwar 1979; Werbner 1990; Vertovec & Rogers 1998). Werbner dates the presence of Pakistanis[17] in Manchester from 1927 when the first Punjabi Muslim arrived in Manchester (Werbner 1979: 376-89). Muslims intended to return to their respective countries after they had accumulated enough wealth to buy property in their country of origin (Joly 1995: 33). Anwar says that, "[t]hey did not intend to enter into British society and become

---

[17] Pakistan was created on 14 August 1947 but what Werbner means is from the Punjab that is now in Pakistan.

acculturated" (1979:21). Muslims were in a state of transition for they had not yet made Britain their 'home'.

During 1940's, there were approximately 70 Muslims in Manchester. They purchased a semi-detached house to be used as a mosque catering for Muslims from Egypt, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Syria (Santlebury 1995: 428). The minutes of meetings from the East London Mosque note that in October 1942 Jamiat-ul-Muslimeen visited Manchester to establish a Manchester Branch of their order. Indeed, Victoria Park Mosque is still officially known by the name Jamiat-ul-Muslimeen (Ansari 2011:332).

4.2 Muslim Population

Between those early days of tens of Muslims in Manchester to the more recent present, there has been a sharp rise in the number not only of Muslims in general, but of Pakistanis in particular. Before 2001, it was possible to estimate the numbers of Muslims through an elaborate and complex method of using the percentage of Muslims in the country of origin and using that to estimate the possible size of the Muslim communities in Britain (Nielsen1995: 41; Rex 1996: 218-219; Modood et al 1997: 297-8; Vertovec & Peach 1997:13-21; Brown 2000: 87-101). The need to develop complex methods of estimating the size of the Muslim population in Britain is no longer an issue since the inclusion of question on religion in the 2001 Census. The inclusion of the religion in the 2001 Census was driven in large part by British Muslims, who considered themselves marginalized in policy decision because no accurate data was available on the number of Muslims in the country, pushed for a question on religion in the census. However, the inclusion of the question on religion could not have been possible if it was not for the support extended to Muslims by prominent members of the Church of England.

The religion question is not compulsory therefore there is an element of estimation involved in the total number of any given religion in the country. Although Muslims were the driving force behind the inclusion of question on religion however there were some Muslims who argued against having a question which meant that there were some efforts to persuade Muslims not to answer the question. This probably had a negligible effect on the outcome of the census figures on religion. Another factor that raises questions about the accuracy of the numbers of Muslims is related to definitions of Muslim. For example the Ahmadiyya are considered non-Muslims by the majority of Muslims from Pakistan[18] and Saudi Arabia, however, they identify themselves as Muslims (Lewis 1994: 98-99). Therefore, the number of Muslims returned in the census includes individuals whose Muslim status may be contentious within broader Muslim communities.

From the 2001 Census onwards, however, we have more reliable estimates of the total number and percentage of British Muslims in the Manchester area. *Figure 1* shows a dramatic increase in the population of Muslims in Manchester according to the 2011 Census since the 2001 Census. During this time, the population of Manchester increased by 19%, the third highest percentage rise in any local authority in England and Wales. Although Manchester is not in the list of top ten cities with Muslim minorities in terms of size, it is very close (see Figure 4.1). The 2001 Census showed that approximately 2.8% of the population in England and Wales identified themselves as Muslims (Dobbs (ONS) et al 2006:20). According to the 2001 Census there were approximately 35,806 Muslims in Manchester. The largest ethnic minority in Manchester was the Pakistanis who numbered 23,104 (Census 2001). The second largest ethnic minority after Pakistanis was the Black Caribbean's who numbered 9,044 and the Black Africans numbering 6,655, together these

---

[18] Ahmediyya have long had problems in Pakistan. As early as the 1950s, their legal status as Muslims was challenged by politicians. In the 1970s, The Pakistan government of Zulifiqar Ali Bhutto legally classified Ahmadiyya as a non-Muslim minority.

two constituted a total number of Black people in Manchester at 15,699. The 2001 Census numbers showed that Islam had become the second largest religion not only in Manchester but also in Britain.
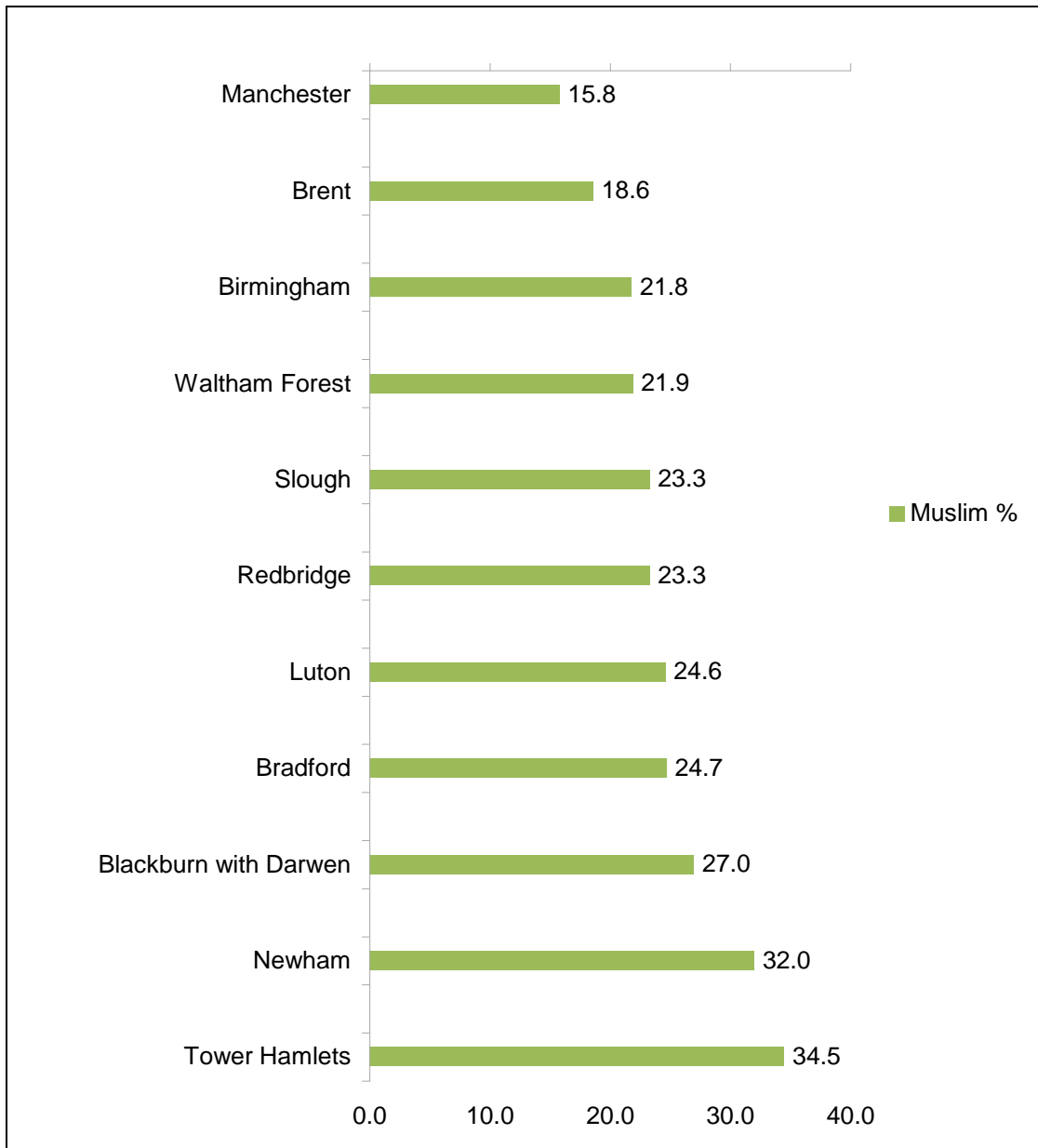
Figure 4.1 Ten Towns with Highest Percentage of Muslims Population according to the 2011 census

Figure showing religious makeup bar chart with categories: No religion (14.8%, 25.1%), Christian (71.7%, 59.3%), Muslim (2.8%, 4.8%), Other (2.8%, 3.6%), Not stated (7.7%, 7.2%) comparing 2001 Census and 2011 Census.
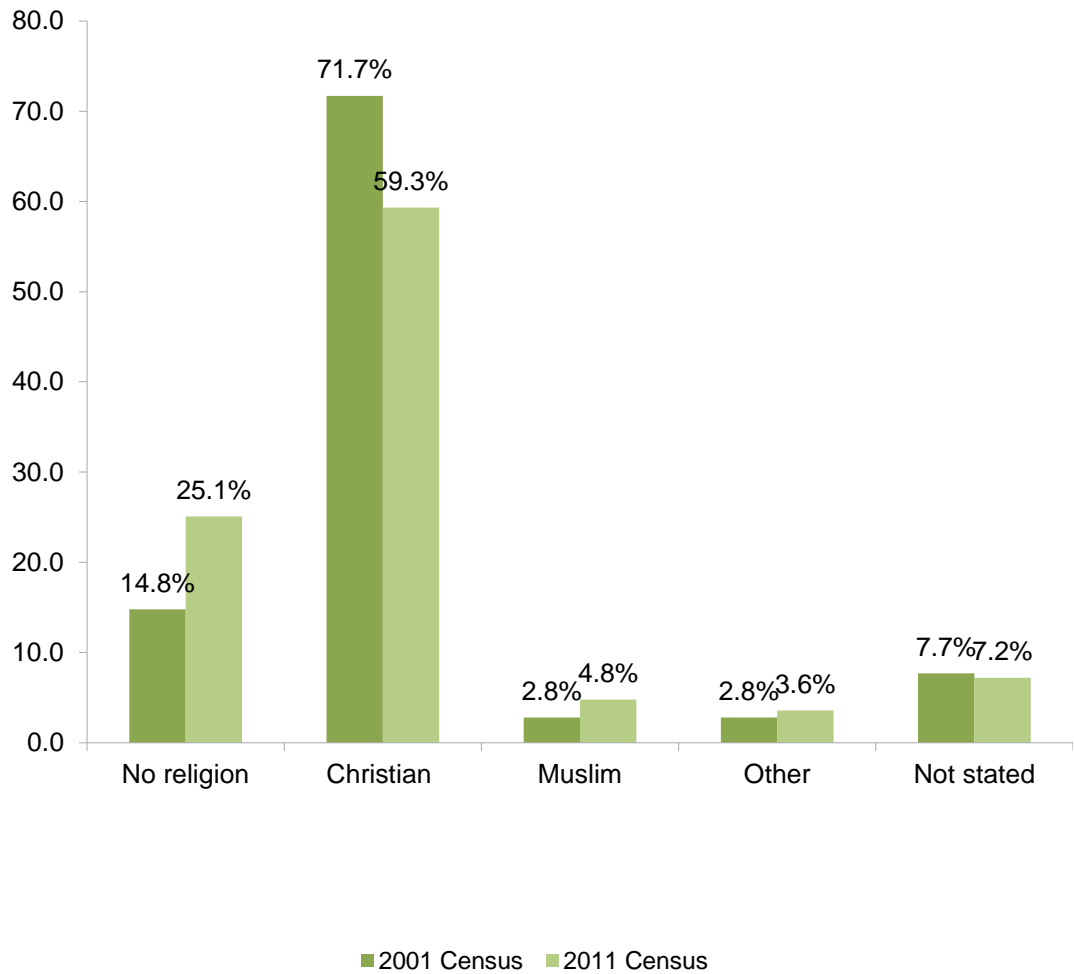
Table 4.2 The religious makeup of England and Wales in 20011 Census.

The religious data from the 2001 Census together with the data in the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities showed that Islam had become an established part of Britain by becoming the second largest religion (Modood et al 1997:297-298). Although the number of Muslims has shown an increase, the general trend for religion from 2001 to 2011 shows a decrease. Figure 4.2 shows how the number of people reporting themselves as Christian has gone down from 71.7% to 59.3% (see Figure 4.2).

	England & Wales Numbers	England & Wales %	2011 Census Numbers – Manchester	2011 Census % - Manchester
Christian	33,243,175	59.3	245,247	48.7
Buddhist	247,743	0.4	3,879	0.8
Hindu	816,633	1.5	5,452	1.1
Jewish	263,346	0.5	2,613	0.5
Muslim	2,706,066	4.8	79,496	15.8
Sikh	423,158	0.8	2,292	0.5
Other Religion	240,530	0.4	1,889	0.4
No Religion	14,097,229	25.1	127,485	25.3
Religion not Stated	4,038,032	7.2	34,774	6.9
Total England & Wales	56,075,912	100	503,127	100

Table 4.1 The religious makeup of Manchester, and England & Wales in 2011 Census – Numbers and Percentages

Manchester Muslims are distributed across ethnic groups and religious schools of thought[19]. The diverse nature of Manchester Muslims is reflected in the many languages spoken and the distinct ethnic cultural backgrounds. Mosques that are dominated by Pakistanis tend to use Urdu for religious teaching. Similarly, Bangladeshi mosques use Bengali language as the medium of religious teaching.

---

[19] When I use the term 'religious school of thought' I am referring to what is commonly termed religious sects. These are known as Maslak in the Pakistani Muslim community.

	Proportion of Total population	Proportion of ethnic group	Proportion of religious group	Total Population (Numbers)
White British Muslim	0.1	0.1	4.0	63,891
Other White Muslim	0.2	8.3	7.4	117,713
Mixed Muslim	0.1	9.7	4.1	65,592
Indian Muslim	0.2	12.6	8.3	132,566
Pakistani Muslim	1.2	91.9	43.2	686,179
Bangladeshi Muslim	0.5	92.4	16.5	261,380
Other Asian Muslim	0.2	37.5	5.8	92,761
Black African Muslim	0.2	20.0	6.1	97,109
Other ethnic group Muslim	0.1	26.0	3.8	59,675

Table 4.2 The percentages of Muslims by Ethnicity 2001 Census in England and Wales

In Arab majority mosques, the medium of religious teaching is Arabic. Many mosques have begun to us English for the *juma khutbah* and teaching Islamic studies to children attending after school classes at the local mosques. The use of English is limited because of the inability of imported imams to speak and understand English to a sufficient standard.

	2011 Census Numbers	2011 Census %
Christian	245,247	48.7
Buddhist	3,879	0.8
Hindu	5,452	1.1
Jewish	2,613	0.5
Muslim	79,496	15.8
Sikh	2,292	0.5
Other Religion	1,889	0.4
No Religion	127,485	25.3
Religion not Stated	34,774	6.9
Total Population of Manchester	503,127	100

Table 4.3 The number and percentage of religious groups in 2011 Census for Manchester

4.3 Mosques in Manchester

One of the most potent signs of Muslims in Manchester is the flourishing number of mosques in the city. *Muslims in Britain,* a website collecting information about mosques, reports fifty-eight mosques in Manchester[20].

However, some mosques have been recorded twice, for example the Faizan-i-Islam mosque. There are also some mosques that are absent from their records. A search of mosques in Manchester on the Muslim Directory website reveals a rather shocking and inaccurate figure of 108 mosques. This includes places of worship at airports, schools, etc. but it also has entries of mosques that are outside Manchester. In Manchester there are currently forty-nine mosques of different denominations, ethnicities, shapes and sizes.

---

[20]Website last accessed 24/082013 - http://mosques.muslimsinbritain.org/show-browse.php?town=Manchester

71

Mosques reflect the development of the Muslim community in Manchester. They may be understood as a microcosm of Muslim communities more broadly. They reflect the religious schools of thought and the ethnic origins of Manchester's Muslims. Most mosques reflect the religious landscape of South Asian Islam, and 'import' imams from their country of origin[21] (Siddiqui 1995: 6). The different schools of thought, Barelwi, Deobandi, ahle Hadith/ Salaafi, Tablighi Jamaat, UK Islamic Mission (Jamaat i Islami), and Shia have all developed mosques to provide religious and spiritual guidance.

1	Al-Furqan Centre (MSICT)	Sunni	Arab / Somali
2	Manchester Islamic Centre (Didsbury Mosque)	Sunni	Arab
3	Al-Jamia al Karimia Trust	Barelwi	Pakistani
4	Masjid Ghamkol Sharif	Barelwi	Pakistani
5	DM Digital - Masjad (Jamia)	Barelwi	Pakistani
6	Faizan-e-Islam Educational & Cultural Organisation	Barelwi	Pakistani
7	Ithad-ul-Muslemeen (United Muslims)	Barelwi	Pakistani
8	Jamia Rasoolia Islamic Centre	Barelwi	Pakistani
9	Khanqah Naqshbandiah Mosque	Barelwi	Pakistani
10	Manchester Central Mosque (Victoria Park)	Barelwi	Pakistani
11	Markaz dar ul Ehsan	Barelwi	Pakistani
12	Minhaj-ul-Qur'an International / Farghana Institute	Barelwi	Pakistani
13	North Manchester Jamia Mosque & Ibadur Rahman Trust	Barelwi	Pakistani
14	Qadria Jilania Islamic Centre	Barelwi	Pakistani
15	Shair-e-Rabbani Islamic Centre and Mosque - City Centre	Barelwi	Pakistani
16	Shere-Rabbani Mosque	Barelwi	Pakistani
17	Suyuti Institute and Sultan Bahu Centre	Barelwi	Pakistani
18	Salaam Community Association	Black African	African
19	Al-Hedayia Mosque	Deobandi	Gujarati
20	Al-Quba Mosque & Shahporan Islamic Centre	Deobandi	Bangladeshi
21	City Jami'a & Central Mosque / Jamaia Islamia of Manchester	Deobandi	Pakistani
22	Dar-us-Salam Mosque and Islamic Centre	Deobandi	Bangladeshi
23	Islamic Academy Of Manchester	Deobandi	Pakistani
24	Masjid Bilal	Deobandi	Pakistani
25	Masjid-e-Imdadiah	Deobandi	Gujarati
26	Masjid-e-Noor	Deobandi	Gujarati
27	Zakariyyah Masjid and Madrassah	Deobandi	Pakistani
28	Eccles and Salford Islamic Mosque	Mixed	Mixed
29	Muslim Youth Foundation	Mixed	Mixed
30	Al-Sunnah Mosque	Salaafi	Mixed

---

[21] http://www.teachislam.com/dmdocuments/History/Muslims%20In%20Britain.pdf - accessed 01/02/2013.

31	Makki Mosque & Madrassa Salaafia	Ahle Hadith/Salaafi	Pakistani
32	Markaz As Salafi Bi Manchester	Salaafi	Mixed
33	Anjuman e Hamidi	Shia Bora	
34	Al-Hussain Masjid	Shia'a	Pakistani
35	Al-Masjid al-Noor	Shia'a	
36	Jamia-tul-Muntazir	Shia'a	
37	Al-Raza Foundation	Shia'a	
38	Manchester Islamic Institute	Shia'a	
39	Jaffaria Islamic Centre	Shia'a Ithna	Pakistani
40	Manchester Metropolitan University	Student	Mixed
41	Manchester University -North Campus	Student	Mixed
42	Manchester University - South Campus McDougall Centre	Student	Mixed
43	Salford University	Student	Mixed
44	Selimiye Camii	Sufi	Turkish
45	Islamic Foundation Saifia	Sufi	Pakistani
46	Shahjalal Masjid & Islamic Centre	Sufi / Fultoli/Barelvi	Bangladeshi
47	Nimatullahi Sufi Order Centers (West Didsbury)	Sufi /Namatullahi	
48	Jamia Khizra Mosque	UKIM	Pakistani
49	Madina Masjid UKIM & Levenshulme Islamic Centre	UKIM	Pakistani

Table 4.4 Complete List of Mosques in Manchester

Table 4.5 shows there are currently forty-nine mosques in Manchester. Fifteen mosques classed as Barelwi school of thought. This number includes the Minhaj ul Quran mosque that rejects the classifications of Deobandi and Barelwi, and instead identifies solely as Sunni. I have categorised the Deobandi and Tablighi Jamaat mosques together as Deobandi because they are identical and have one origin. At present there are nine Deobandi/Tablighi Jamaat mosques in Manchester. In 2000, seven of the eight Deobandi/Tablighi Jamat mosques were makeshift mosques and one purpose built mosque in the process of completion, however, currently there are three purpose built mosques representing this school of thought. There are seven Shia mosques of varying denomination and ethnicities. I have classified the Salaafi / ahle Hadith mosques as Salaafi's who have three mosques in Manchester. The ahle Hadith Makki mosque is also in the process of construction which has received support for the project from the local authority. There are two UKIM mosques, one of which is purpose built (Khizra mosque) and I was informed that there were plans to convert the other, Madina mosque, into a

purpose built mosque. The remainder I have categorised as 'other' which includes Arab, Somali, etc. There are two mixed denomination mosques. I have included the Eccles and Salford mosque as mixed because the imam reportedly follows the Salaafi school of though, but the congregation is mixed and at one stage they had a Barelwi imam, maulana Sardar Ahmed Qadri. There are four Sufi mosques of different ethnic backgrounds. There are four student mosques. The University of Manchester, UMIST (University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology)[22], Salford University[23] and Manchester Metropolitan University have provided premises for Muslim students to perform their obligatory prayers and other religious activities. The Islamic Societies of the particular universities maintain the student mosques.
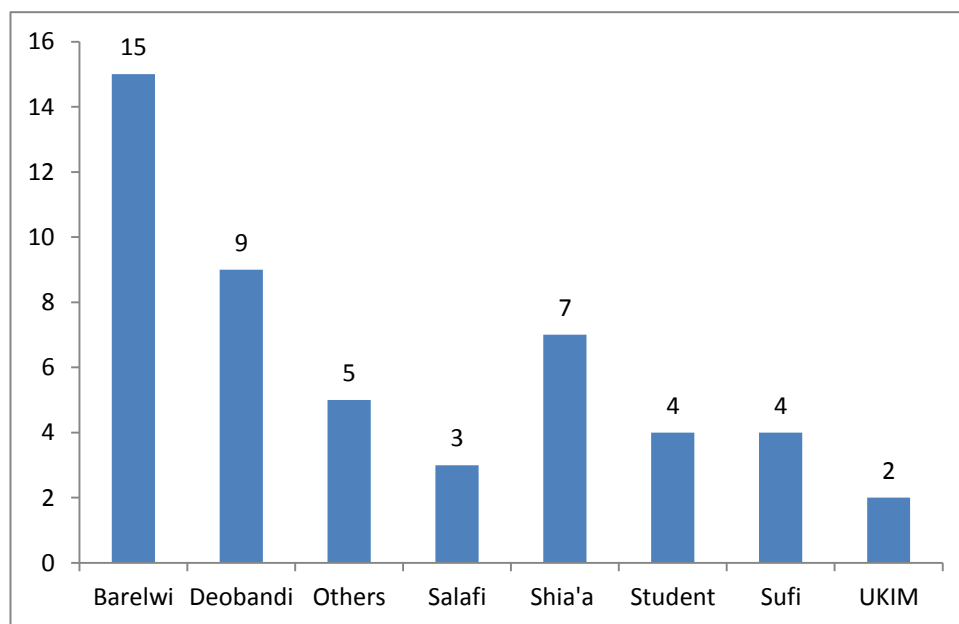
Figure 4.3 Showing the Mosque Denomination and Numbers.

The Manchester Metropolitan University for many years did not provide a permanent place of worship for Muslim students. Initially room was made available for Juma prayers. One of the presidents of the Islamic society of MMU informed me that for a number of years

---

[22] Since the merger of the University of Manchester and UMIST the prayer rooms are classed as North campus UMIST) and South campus (University of Manchester).
[23] I am informed by my source that there are plans to create the first purpose built student mosque at the Salford University campus. The mosque is an ambitious project to create the first ecomosque on a British university campus. I discuss the progress and plan for this mosque in Chapter Seven.

Muslim students had been lobbying to get a permanent place of worship but Manchester Metropolitan University had repeatedly refused because there are other mosques in close proximity. One respondents said that it was not demands from local Muslim students for prayer facilities that changed MMU's position but rather a desire to recruit lucrative Muslim students from abroad. Whatever the reason, there is now a permanent place for prayers on the ground floor of the Cavendish Building on the All Saints Campus.

4.4   Manchester Imams

The imams from mosques in Manchester play an important role in the social ceremonies of the Muslim communities in Manchester. When a child is born most Muslims, call an imam to read the *azan* in the ear of the newly born baby. The purchase of a new house is followed by a religious 'ceremony' or *khatam* that is usually performed by the imam. The marriage ceremony is normally solemnised by the imam with a 'marriage *khutbah'*. When a new business is set up an imam or a *pir* is often asked to pray for the success of the business venture. At death, the imam leads the funeral prayers. In effect, one could say that through the 'office' of the imam the mosque is there to provide guidance throughout the life of the individual.

In their desire to preserve their religious heritage, Pakistani Muslims imported imams from South Asia (Siddiqui 1995). The community had few options at the time, as there were no imams in Britain who could fulfil their religious requirements. The institutional structure for training imams began in 1975 when the first *Daruloom* was established in Holcombe near Bury (Birt & Lewis 2003). The *darse Nizami* course at the *Daruloom* is of seven years duration, so the first graduates to come out of this *madrassa* were not ready to assume their role until 1982. As there were no *darulooms* or *madrassahs* to train imams this left the mosques committees no option but to import imams from South Asia. This method worked

quite well until the children born and bred in Britain, whose mother tongue was English, began to express dissatisfaction with foreign born and trained imams.

Tariq Modood characterises the people who controlled the mosques committees as a "semi industrialised, newly urbanised working class community that is only one generation away from rural peasantry" (1990: 145). Their language was Urdu or Punjabi and they felt that their children must also retain these languages in order to preserve their cultural heritage. Although none of the imams in this research denied the importance of English, I have met imams who have argued that the use of English language in mosques is unimportant. Imams with this view are a rapidly diminishing minority. During the research, one of the imams who at the beginning of my research did not feel the need to use English language was heard in a later meeting talking about the importance of communicating with the kids in English. As the imams from South Asia encounter the culture of the British Muslims, they adapt to accommodate the needs of British Muslims. However, in most mosques, Urdu is still taught to fulfil a cultural requirement. All the mosques in this research had Urdu classes for the children. In one mosque, the imam placed great stress on teaching children Urdu. He argued that through the language the children could maintain their links to the culture of their ancestors.

4.5 Different Schools of Thought

The table 6 shows all the mosques in Manchester it also shows the different schools of thought and the ethnic community with which it is associated. Whereas the schools of thought divisions are rigidly adhered to, in many mosques there is a visible hybridised ethnic presence. For example, the Pakistani dominated management committee runs Victoria Park mosque but the congregation has a very mixed flavour. Many different ethnicities use the mosque on a regular basis. There is a visible presence of students from

universities during the *juma* prayers. The committee felt the need to introduce a part of the *juma khutbah* in English because of the fact that among the multiplicity of ethnicities English is becoming the common language. The mosque has to provide the *juma khutbah* in three languages, Arabic, Urdu and English. Many schools of thoughts deem Arabic as the compulsory part of the *juma Khutbah*, in order to fulfil this compulsory requirement the imams has to deliver part of his *juma khutbah* in Arabic. The use of Urdu language is for the large section of first generation Muslim migrants whose first language is either Urdu or Punjabi. Finally, the use of English language to deliver the *Khutbah* serves the multiplicity of ethnicities for whom English has become either their first language or the common language among them.

4.6   Sectarianism in Context

Sectarian conflict prior to creation of Pakistan focussed on Sunni – Shia divisions that remained reasonably minor with skirmishes around the month of Muharam. The conflict between the mainstream Muslims and Qadianis predates Zia's reign as the Qadianis were declared a non-Muslim minority in 1974 at the time of Zulfiqar Ali Bhuttos democratic government (Saeed 2007). The Deobandi- Barewli conflict has its origins in the mid to late nineteenth century. However, since the Islamisation process under General Zia ul Haq (1977-1988), sectarianism seems to have become more pronounced and violent whilst at the same time it has gained an international dimension with the freedom fighting jihadis fighting the Soviets and the Iran-Saudi Arabia nexus becoming prominent (Abou Zahab 2002; Birt 2005; Talbot 2005; Blom 2011). The Islamisation process has brought into focus not only Shia-Sunni sectarianism but has broadened to include Barelwi-Deobandi-Wahabi nexus within the Sunni fold of Islam. A brief background to the Barelwi-Deobandi Sunni schools of thought would help in understanding their differences and augment our understanding of the development of mosques along these lines within Britain.

4.6.1 Deobandi Reformist Movement

The development of the reformist movements in many ways was an attempt to answer many of these questions. From fighting the 'enemy' out there they turned their attention inwards towards Muslims and away from the colonisers to look within themselves for the reasons for the declining power of the Muslims (Lewis 1994: 36). Some ulema quickly began to organise themselves to provide Islamic education for the Muslims viewing the lack of Islamic education as the reason for decline and out of this thought process originated the reformist movement of Deoband. Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi, maulana Rashid Ganghoi, maulana Mazhar Nanautawi and maulana Muhammad Munir Nanautawi had all fought against the British raj in 1857 and their taking part in this venture links them to the Jihadist Sayyid Ahmad of Rae Bareilly (Metcalf 1982; Geaves 1996).

The Deoband Darul Uloom was founded in 1867, 10 years after the 1857 Mutiny. Deoband is approximately 90 miles northeast of Dehli. The idea for the Darul Uloom came about as a result of discussions between mualana Qasim Nanautawi, Zulfiqar Ali, Fazl Al Rahman and Haji Muhammad Abid that took place in the old Chatta masjid in Deoband. The Darul Uloom began its life with one teacher and one pupil in the old Chatta masjid (Metcalf 1982). From participating in Jihad against the British Empire this group of ulema reassessed their position on how to retain Islamic values and keep Muslim consciousness alive in their weakened situation. The group decided to focus their attention solely on the educational plight of the Muslims of India and established Madrassas to teach Islamic values to the masses. The Madrassa at Deoband was established as a prototype to be replicated in many other cities of India. The Deoband Madrassa opened from the old Chatta masjid but soon had to move to Qazi Masjid and then to the Deoband Jamia Masjid due to its success. By 1869 the venture had to expand therefore they purchased the land near the old Chatta masjid on which the original madrassa was built. The same site is to

this day the centre of the Deoband reform movement. The British bureaucratic style of educational institutions was being emulated by the founders of Deoband (Metcalf 1982).

4.6.2 The Tablighi Jamaat

Tablighi Jamaat was founded in the 1920s by maulana Muhammad Ilyas (Haq 1972). He studied at the Darul Uloom Deoband until 1908. He also taught at the Mazahir-i-Uloom in Saharanpur until 1910. In 1916 he came back from Hajj to his home town to teach in his father's madrassa in Nizamuddin, South Dehli. The mosque and the mdarssa are now the headquarters of the Pans Islamic Tablighi Jamaat in India and worldwide. Maulana Ilyas' vision differed from the Deoband vision of the ulama as the reformers of the *deen* as he argued that you did not have to necessarily belong to the professional ulama to reform Muslims[24]. The thrust of his arguments was that every Muslim was responsible for helping other Muslims to become aware of their Islamic identity and what that entailed. As with the Deoband movement the Tablighi Jamaat were not primarily concerned with the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam but their main concern was to revive the Islamic values of the lapsed Muslims. Maulana Ilyas' main aim was to create a grassroots organisation of Muslims who would work tirelessly for the revival of Islamic values. He created a network of preaching team that would go out into villages and cities to preach the basic fundamental Islamic beliefs and values. These teams would be organised and despatched by the central leadership of the organisation that would coordinate the voluntary activities of the '*tablighi*' teams that do *gusht*.

The group can consist of a minimum of three people and a maximum of ten. The teams are organised in fairly structured way consisting of an *Amir* (group leader), a *Mutakallim* (speaker), and *Rahbar* (a guide). The Amir is the one coordinates the activities of the

---

[24] For a comprehensive account of the Tablighi Jamaat and its founder Maulana Muhammad Ilyas see Haq, M Anwarul (1972). *The Faith Movement of Mawlānā Muhammad Ilyās*. London: Allen and Unwin.

Tablighi group by selecting a *Mutakallim* and *Rahbar*. The Amir usually checks the speech that is to be delivered by the *Mutakallim* and guides on the content and style of presentation. The *Mutakallim's* mission is to motivate the members of the congregation to perform similar duties so that they in time will form their own groups in their localities to undertake the task of *tabligh*. The *rahbar* on the other hand has the duty to organise the practical aspects such travel, food, accommodation, etc. Each person in the group pays for their own expenses. Mostly accommodation is usually organised in the madrassas and mosques, private accommodation is mostly avoided. The emphasis is on humility and piety through which the group members set an example for others to reform their ways to bring humility and piety in their lives. This model of organisational structures and the emphasis on humility and piety was replicated around the world by the Tablighi Jamaat.

4.6.3   Deobandi and Tablighi Jamaat in Manchester

The Tablighi Jamaat presence in Britain dates back to 1946 when Tablighi Jamaat scholar Zakir Hussain arrived part of a mission Britain. In Britain the Deoband School replicated their mode of education by being one of the first organisations to open a full time residential madrassa, Darul Uloom Al-Arabiyyah Al-Islamiyyah in Bury. Maulana Yousuf Motala a prominent figure amongst the ulema of Deoband, a disciple of Maulana Muhammad Zakariya Kandhlawi of Saharanpur, opened the madrassa to fulfil the educational needs of Muslims in England. It was through a sustained struggle that the building, an old hospital, was acquired in 1976. The madrassa was a full time residential school that taught using the traditional curriculum and methods that were first perfected in the Deoband madrassa in India.

In Manchester the first signs of the Tablighi Jamaat begin from 1962 (Metcalf 1996). Haji Nazir who came from Jehlum in 1966 narrated a story of a *Jamaat* coming to the Victoria Park mosque in 1967. He mentions that a Hafiz Patel came to Victoria Park mosque to do

tabligh and on departure he looked for his shoes and to his astonishment his shoes had been taken by someone. During the *jamaat's* stay in Manchester they stayed at the Victoria Park mosque. The Jamaat members felt that there was a lot of hostility to their presence in the mosque. Haji Nazir suggests that it was after this that Hafiz Patel said that they should open their own mosque. The Tablighi Jamaat masjid[25] was initially set up in the front room of Haji Nazir's house and later in 1968 they purchased the first Tablighi Jamaat mosque in Manchester on 22 Clarendon Road which they named the Zakariya Mosque.

The Gujarati Muslims who came as economic migrants, some directly from Gujarat in India and some who migrated initially to Africa and then from Africa migrated to England in the 1960s. The Indian Gujarati Muslims initially settled in Trafford Park. Some individuals came in the 1950s but most of the community arrived mid-1960s to mid-1970s. A Dr Chunara, an Indian Gujarati Muslim, and a Pakistan married to an English lady seem to be some of the first Asians in this area of Trafford Park. Both of these families lived on Fourth Avenue. Sometime later Hashim Patel arrived who purchased a house there. Most of the earlier settlers were of agricultural background having very little education to gain professional paid work. Most of them worked in Salford in a textile mill with a few people working in Trafford Park in a box making factory. They predominantly undertook labour intensive work and most worked in night shifts as the unsociable hours of work were not taken up by the indigenous workers.

4.6.4   The Al Hidaya Masjid
Wherever the Gujarati Muslim community settled they have in most cases set up a mosque and a madrassa and Trafford Park settlers were no different. In 1968 the settlers set up a mosque and purchased 102 Second Avenue to convert into a mosque. This operated for approximately two years but a lack of planning permission due to complaints by

---

[25] Haji Nazir says that it was not called a masjid but a musallah which says is the proper term for make shift prayer space, Masjid is only used for purpose built buildings.

neighbours forced them to relocate in 1979 into a property on Third Avenue which was given planning permission. The original name for this organisation was the Trafford Park Muslim Society. In the mid-1970s the Indian Muslim community in Trafford Park decided to move to Old Trafford a neighbouring area of Trafford.

Mr Sayyid ul Assa arrived in Trafford Park in 1968. He lived in his '*hum zulf*'s (their wives are sisters) house'. At one stage, he says there where eighteen people living in this three bedroom house. He remembers going for eid prayer in Victoria Park mosque. He says that "mostly we prayed eid in a Church that had a large hall which we used". He does not remember the address but says the Church was located just off Third Avenue, between Fourth Avenue and Third Avenue. There is a St Anthony's Church on Eleventh Street which matches his description of the location of the church. He also remembers that they prayed eid in different houses and juma prayer were also conducted in different houses. He says "we prayed juma prayer in six different houses, before purchasing Second Avenue". However he also remembers going for *taravih* prayer in Victoria Park mosque.

The Al Hidaya mosque Gujaratis were from Baroch and the masjid Noor Gujaratis were from Surat. Conflict within the Al Hidaya masjid management committee resulted in a tussle that saw a group of them splitting off to create the Masjid Noor on Stamford Street not too far from masjid Al Hidaya. The split was on the basis of regional differences as Abu Bakr Chunara explained "They just wanted their *own* mosque (emphasis added)" They did not move out of the area as most Indian Gujarati Muslims lived within this area and therefore it was not viable to open a mosque in another area.

4.6.5 Masjid Noor – The split From Hidaitul Muslimeen
The Masjid Noor was supported by Gujarati Muslims who initially migrated to Malawi and then in 1978 migrated to Old Trafford. Mr Chunara says "[For] Gujarati people,[the] first thing we do is find a mosque or madrassa". In 1978 they purchased the old Cooperative

hall on Stamford Street for business purposes to set up a shop however, what they did not realise until they had purchased it was that the property came with restrictions on usage. Commercially it could only be used as a shoe shop. The location, however, was deemed to be unsuitable for a shoe shop. They decided to turn this property into a mosque which became the original masjid Noor. The mosque started off with only 8 people.

Their enquiries in relation to opening a mosque were received very favourably from the owners of the freehold building who not only agreed but became flexible on the terms of loan repayment. After renovation work the mosque was opened in 1978. Abu Bakr Chunara of Gujarati background is chairman of the mosque. This dilapidated cooperative hall remained a mosque for over twenty years until the committee decided that it was time to move towards constructing a purpose built mosque. Mr Chunara informs me that all funds raised for the mosque were from within Britain. He says "My parents and relatives started by giving a £1,000 each. On the first Friday we had 8 people".

The purpose built mosque project took two and half to three years to complete. For fund raising Abu Bakr Chunara says "We used to go on Thursday and come back on Sunday night. We went to different mosques every Friday for donations". He says that they bought a car and travelled to London on Thursday and returned to Manchester on Sunday to return to work on Monday morning. He says that they collected from around 170 mosques in and around London. They then adopted the same approach but this time they targeted mosques in Birmingham and Leicester. He says "It goes without saying that the Manchester Muslim community donated generously towards this project". The work on the purpose built mosque began in 1999 and was opened to the public by 2001. The total cost of the project was £897,000. The mosque can now accommodate approximately 1500 worshippers. However during *eid* prayers they make arrangements for two *Jamaats* as all worshippers could not be accommodated in one *Jamaat*.

4.6.6 Imadadiah Mosque

The Imadadiah mosque was set up by maulana Iqbal Rangooni's father, Haji Ibrahim Bawa. Haji Ibrahim Bawa came to Britain in 1972 and was employed as an imam in Gloucester. Hafiz Iqbal came to Britain in 1977 gaining a place as an imam in the Islamic Academy of Allama Khalid Mahmud. In 1985 a disused factory was purchased by Haji Ibrahim Bawa said that he did not want to do door-to-door collections and used personal savings to purchase the disused factory. The planning process was very protracted process that took approximately 15 years before they were able to gain planning permission. The mosque officially opened in 2002 nearly two decades after initial purchase. Maulana Iqbal Rangooni says that the main aim was to purchase large premises for the Gujarati Deobandis who had moved from Trafford Park but due to problems with planning permission they were not able to open until 2002 by this time the Al Hidaya Mosque had moved into a larger premises and the Noor Mosque was close to completion of its purpose built project. Although the Imamdadiah mosque premises was bought in 1985 with a view to having a large premises in the Old Trafford area but by the time it opened the other mosques had grown in grandeur and become larger.

Maulana Iqbal Rangooni is a prolific writer having written around twenty books. While commenting on the increase of sectarianism in Britain he states that 1979/1980 is a key period when sectarianism gained momentum in Manchester. He says that around this time few imams who were fanning sectarianism arrived in Manchester. He did not provide any names but I would hazard a guess and say that he was referring to the Barelwi ulama, Allama Nisar Ahmed Baig and Allama Qamar uz Zaman Azmi who arrived in Manchester in 1979. He also recalls taking part in the famous Sheffield *munazara* (see below).

4.7 The Barelwis

Francis Robinson describes the Barelwis as ascribing to "a custom-laden Islam which was closely tied to the Sufi world of the shrines where believers sought the help of saints to intercede for them with God" (1988: 8). The Barelwi school of thought that represented the vast majority of Muslims in South Asia developed as a response to the reformist agenda of the Deobandi movement. Barelwis saw themselves not so much as reformist or revivalist but as defenders of the traditional version of Islam. Barelwi school of thought centres on the ideas of Ahmed Riza Khan (1856-1921) of Bareilly, India. The name Barelwi stems from the area from which Ahmed Riza Khan originates, Rae Bareilly in India.

The major differences between the Barelwis and Deobandis centre on the emphasis placed on the status of the Prophet (ibid: 9). The ideas of *Noor*[26] and *Bashar*[27] have become the cornerstones of the difference between the two schools of thought. Barelwis while not denying that the Prophet is a *Bashar*, place more emphasis on the *Noorani* aspects of the Prophet. *Bashar* signifies the similarities between the Prophet and other human beings whilst *Noor* signifies the difference between ordinary human beings and the elevated status of the Prophet. The Barelwis argue that the Prophet was created from the 'Light of Allah' (*Noor Allah*). The Deobandis argue against this for fear that the Barelwis will corrupt the concept of *Tauheed*, Oneness of God, by making the Prophet a *sharik*, a partner in the sovereignty of Allah, and a belief in any partner of Allah is deemed *shirk* (act of associating partners with God).

The other difference is the Barelwi belief in the intercession by the Prophet and saints (auwliya). The Barelwis use the Prophet and saints to intercede on their behalf. *Ilm ul*

---

[26] Noor literally means light and in this context it means 'light of Muhammad' (Noor –i- Muhammad).
[27] Bashar means 'human'.

ghaib[28] (knowledge of the unknown) is another point of divergence between the Deobandis and Barelwis. Another significant marker of the difference between Barelwi's and the Deobandi, Tablighi Jamaat and Ahle Hadith has been the celebration of *Milad*. *Milad* is the celebration of the birth of the Prophet. On *Milad* the Barelwis hold special gatherings at mosques and in homes reciting *na'ats* in praise of the Prophet. Many families have started to celebrate *milad* in their homes by inviting friends and family and making different types of food and having a *khatam*. In Manchester, there is a growing trend amongst the Barelwi women to hold *milad* celebrations in their homes, where women-only arrangements are made.

4.7.1 Barelwis in England

The Barelwis in England did not have a representative national umbrella organisation until the last period of the Labour government when the British Muslim Forum was created partly as a bulwark against the Muslim Council of Britain who had showed signs of dissent with the government's foreign policy particularly the war in Iraq and on the way the organisation has claimed to be represent the Barelwis at a national level. Amongst the Barelwi's the *Pirs* have proved to be very influential. Lewis has highlighted the contribution of Pir Maroof Hussain Shah in Bradford (Lewis 1994). Werbner (2003) has highlighted the influence of the Pirs in Birmingham. The Barelwi *Pirs* are quite powerful, as their stance on the issue of deciding the exact day for the celebration of *eid al Fitr* and *eid al Adha* has demonstrated (see below). In Bradford Pir Maroof Hussain is quite influential on the development of mosques in Bradford and also has been involved in helping establish mosques in other towns of northwest. Pir Habibur Rahman Mehbbobi has also constructed a substantial mosque but does not have the same level of influence as the other Pirs in Britain. Birmingham and Midlands is a stronghold for the *Pirs* in Britain with

---

[28] This was the title of the famous Barelwi- Deobandi *munazara* in Sheffield.

Sufi Muhammad Abdullah Khan establishing the largest purpose built mosque and Pir Fiaz ul Hassan Sarwar Qadri representing the renowned sufi saint Sahi Sultan Bahu whose shrine is in Garh Maharaja a town and Union council of Shorkot Tehsil in the Jhang District in the Punjab province of Pakistan. Pir Alluadin Siddiqi of Nehrian Sharif established Noor TV and with that his influence among Barewlis in Britain and Pakistan has increased many folds.

4.7.2   Barelwis in Manchester

Until late 1970s there was very little Barelwi presence in Manchester with the Shah Jalal mosque the only mosque representing Sunni Barelwis. From mid 1970s Maulana Ibrahim Khushtar began to get involved in the Bellott Street Mosque which was at the time controlled by UKIM. He is probably the first Barelwi imam to begin work in Manchester to promote the 'Barelwi' school of thought. This was closely followed by Allama Qamar uz Zaman Azmi who was initially affiliated with Pir Maroof in Bradford began to come to Manchester on regular basis to deliver darse Quran at the Shah Jalal Mosque and certain other places in Cheetham Hill. Allama Hamid Ali Shah from Blackburn did not move to Manchester but was a regular visitor to Manchester. At this stage there was no Pakistani Barelwi mosque in Manchester.

The Bellot Street mosque Ibadhur Rahman Trust was the first Pakistani Barelwi mosque after they managed to oust the incumbent UKIM committee and take over control. At this time UKIM purchased a building on Cheetham Hill Road. Allama Azmi was employed as the permanent imam at the Bellott Street mosque. They operated from Bellott Street until mid-1980s when they purchased the land at Woodland Road where they constructed the second purpose built mosque in Manchester. By this time Allama Azmi had distanced himself from Pir Maroof after a conflict within the World Islamic Mission between Pir Maroof and Shah Ahmad Noorani. Pir Maroof became the head of the Tabligh ul Islam

and Shah Ahmad Noorani became the head of the World Islamic Mission. Allama Azmi joined the World Islamic Mission and was appointed the General Secretary.

Maulana Habibur Rahman, from the Jamaat-i-Islami background remained as the imam at the Victoria Park mosque from 1965 until 1970 when he resigned under excessive influence of the growing Arian business community. From 1970 until 1979 the Victoria Park mosque predominantly remained under Deobandi control, particularly Allama Khalid Mahmud and his supporters the Chairman Abdul Rab Alavi and Choudhry Azmat. This scenario drastically changed on 11 November 1979 with the takeover of Victoria Park Mosque by the Barelwi supporters. The committee appointed Allama Nisar Ahmed Baig as the chief imam in November 1979 Victoria Park mosque which ushered in a decade of, sometimes violent, sectarian and biradari conflict. Allama Baig arrived in Britain in 1978 at a mosque in Bury that was going through Deobandi – Barelwi conflict but after one and half year he was appointed as the chief imam by Choudhry Sarwar of Star Hosiery who was the chairman of the Victoria Park mosque. It seems within few months of Allama Baig's arrival Choudhry Sarwar became unhappy with Allama Baig's way of operating, deeming it as too divisive. As a consequence Choudhry Sarwar was deposed as the chairman by Allama Baig's supporters. Having control of Manchester's Central Mosque placed Allama Baig in an influential position to make his mark on sectarian development in Manchester. It seems Allama Baig for over a decade successfully negotiated sectarian strife through effective manipulation of biradari rivalry within Victoria Park mosque.

In Manchester it seems the impact of pirs was not as prominent as in other parts of Britain. During Allama Baig's reign Victoria Park mosque had strong links with *Pir* Abdul Qadir of Walthamstow, but did not have a strong *pir* within Manchester itself. The other key person in the perpetuation of sectarianism in Manchester was Allama Khalid Mahmud who

had an axe to grind with Victoria Park mosque for being dismissed in an ugly manner and he also relished challenges of comparative religion whether they were inter-religious or intra-religious. In Manchester it seems that the *Pirs* have been overshadowed by the *alims* and have not been very influential in Manchester[29].

The Darululoom Islamia Ghamkol Sharif was the first Pakistani Barelwi mosque that was created as a result of the conflict within Victoria Park Mosque committee. Bashir and Zaheer ud Din were part of the Victoria Park Mosque but had associated themselves through giving bait (allegiance) to Zinda Pir whose representative in England was Sufii Abdullah in Birmingham. It seems this was criticised by the disciples of Pir Abdul Qadir resulting in a group of followers of Zinda Pir separating from Victoria Park Mosque. In 1980 they purchased a house on Hamilton Road in Longsight which they used to teach Quran to children and also hold regular *Ghiarvi* and *zikr mahafil*. This house was used for over five years before they purchased the current building in 1987 for approximately £65,000. This was a factory with vast space that could be used for regular *juma* gatherings.

The other major Barelwi mosque in Cheetham Hill, the Ibadhur Rahman Trust, does not have any links to *pirs* in Britain. It is, however, linked very closely to the World Islamic Mission of the late Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani of Pakistan. The principal imam Allama Azmi has for a long time been the General Secretary of the World Islamic Mission. He is probably the longest serving Barelwi imam in Manchester.

The Ibadhur Rahman Trust and the Victoria Park mosque have maintained their influence over the Barelwis in Manchester due to the high profile imams that have been associated with these mosques. Due to the nature of conflict within Victoria Park mosque a number of

---

[29] Pir Abdul Qadir Jilani had for some time been very influential in the running of the Victoria Park Central Mosque but over the years his influence has declined since his deputy in Manchester Maulana Nisar Ahmed Baig was ousted from the mosque, although the current Victoria Park committee is dominated by his supporters.

mosques have been established by ex-imams who have been released from the mosque due to certain controversies. Just to name a few Jamia Rasoolia of Qari Muhammad Tayyib, the Khanqah Naqshbandia of Pir Farooqi, the Al Jamia Al Kareemia of Allama Farashwi, and the Qadria Jilania of Allama Baig. The Daruloom Ghamkol Sharif has tended to keep a fairly low profile although they have a fairly large *juma* gathering. However, they have not been immune to the conflict as the Itihadul Muslimeen was established not too far from the Daruloom Gamkol Sharif by one of their ex-imams and very recently another ex-imam, maulana Shah Jahan Madni has opened a mosque on Pink Bank Lane in Levenshulme.

The Deobandis seem to have followed a similar pattern as demonstrated by the split between al Hidaya and Masjid Noor and between Imdadiah and the Islamic Academy. It goes without saying that nobody has said that there was no need for a new mosque, everyone seems to have identified a need to justify the creation of their own mosque, ranging from no mosque in the area to lack of adequate Islamic education for children but nobody has said it was due the conflict at the previous mosque.

4.8   Tha Salaafi / ahle Hadith Mosques

Jamal a revert says when he became Muslim he would ask people why they fasted he was informed it was because Allah had ordained it and they would offer no other explanation. He also recalls that many of the elderly Muslims did not even know how to do *wudu* properly and were not able explain why they did some of the things they did, like fasting. He remembers that he had purchased an English translation of the Quran which he placed on the shelf in the mosque library but every time he came back to look for it someone had removed and placed it in a discreet place. The emphasis was on rote learning of the Quran not understanding.

The main reason given for setting up the Salaafi Centre is that no other mosque catered for the Salaafi tradition. The ahle Hadith mosque of the Pakistanis existed in Longsight but it

was too far and was predominantly Pakistanis whereas the congregation of the Salaafi mosques in Cheetham Hill is mixed but predominantly Arab. Jamal says the major reason for opening the Salaafi centre was that the content of sermons of the other mosques did not appeal to him whereas he wanted to know more about *salf saliheen* (first three generations after the Prophet). The Isla that is practiced and preached in other is deemed too lax and full of innovations through localised cultural 'pollution'. Quite a few of the other mosques around that time began to physically restrain the Salaafi's from distributing leaflet outside their mosques. It seems that if they are not allowed to hold learning activities in the mosques and are not allowed to distribute leaflets they are left with the option of stopping their activities or open their own mosques, which they eventually did.

The Al-Sunnah mosque on Winterford Road in Cheetham Hill was the first Salaafi mosque in Cheetham Hill which was opened about 12 years ago. The Al Sunnah mosque is less than two huindred metres away from where the second Salaafi mosque in Cheetham Hill was opened by Libyan Muslims.The Salaafi centre on Dudley Street in Cheetham Hill was initially opened approximately 11 years ago by some Libyan Muslims. This building was purchased before the Al-Sunnah mosque was opened until a division occurred between the committee of Al-Sunnah mosque. It seems that some of the things the imam of Al-Sunnah mosque said about the *sahaba* (companions of the Prophet) were derogatory and some members decided that they could not tolerate this therefore they open up up their own masjid at Dudley Street in a disused pub.

Makki Masjid at 125 Beresford Road in Longsight was established 1989. The committee purchased a derelict industrial unit in 1987 for £30,000 and it was formally opened on 12 September 1989. In 2001 the mosque committee purchased the adjacent property, 127 Beresford Road for £65,000 to enable extension of the existing mosque. In 2007 third property 129 Beresford Road was purchased for £220,000. Figure 14 below shows the

building that has now been demolished to make way for a two story purpose built mosque complete with minaret and dome.

4.9   Shia Mosques and Imam Bargahs

The Shia sect owes it's origin to the dispute surrounding the succession of authority after the Prophet passed away (Madelung 1996). The Shias believe that Ali ibn Abu Talib was appointed as the successor to the Prophet at point of Ghadir Khumm when the Prophet said "Ali is the Patron (*mawla*) of everyone whose patron is Muhammad … O God, be a friend of whomever he (Ali) befriends and an enemy of whomever he takes as an enemy" (Madelung 1996: 253). The appointment of Abu Bakr as the first Caliph in Islam has to this day remained a point of contention between Shias and Sunnis. This division was further exacerbated during the reign of Ali and the civil that plagued his reign (Madelung 1996: 141-310). The conflict came to a climax at Karbala where imam Hussain, the younger grandson of the Prophet, and his family members were brutally murdered by Yazid in Muawiyya.

Shias belief in the infallibility of the imams is the cornerstone of their belief. Most Shias believe that there are twelve imams who are infallible and are chosen by Allah to lead the Muslims. However, divisions within Shia arise after the fifth Imam Jafar al-Sadiq between those who became known as the Ismailis who are followers of Ismail ibn Jafar, from whom the Bora Shias descend, believe in six imams and between the followers of imam Musa al-Kazim who believe in twelve imams (twelvers) (Momen 1985: 45-60). The twelvers are further divided in number schools of thought like the Zaydi, who the closest in belief to the Sunnis, the Akhbari, Usuli etc (ibid: 221). The The Ismailis are further divided into at least eight different groups: Jafari Bora, Sulaimani Bohras, Alavi Bohras, Hebtiahs Bohras, Atba-i-Malak Bohras, Progressive Dawoodi Bohras, Qutbi Bohras and Dawoodi Bohras. The Shia mosque on Stockport Road Levenshulme is one of these examples of Dawood

Boras who are followers Burhanuddin. The vast majority of the Shias belong to the fiqha Jafaria juristic school that believes in twelve imams and are the followers of imam Musa al-Kazim, for example the Rusholme fiqha Jafaria centre, Jamiat ul Muntazir and the Hussania mosque in Cheetham Hill. The Shias believe that their twelveth imam is in occultation and will appear at the end of time to kill dajjal and bring about a just rule (Momen 1985: 161-171).

It is estimated by Shias in Manchester that their population in Manchester is approximately two thousand. There are seven mosques / imam Bargahs in Manchester and the main reason given for the creation of these is the internal divisions between the Shias. The Shias have two sections in their buildings of worship, one section which designated as a mosque which is considered a place for prayers. They also have section which is commonly known as imam bargah in which majlis is held. Majlis is usually not held in the mosque but in the imam bargah one the main reasons for this being sometime during the majlis blood is spilt and blood is najas (impure) and if it is spilt in the mosque would become impure. Therefore, they divide part of the building as mosque in order pray in a pure space and imam bargah to conduct the majlis.

Altaf from the Jafaria Shia mosque in Rusholme says that "Until 1972 there was no sectarian conflict. Only when the imams came from abroad, sorry Imam is too sacred a word so not an appropriate word to describe these people, they were molvis, who wanted to create their own little pockets of influence so they started creating divisions hence the creation of Deobandi, Barelwi, Hanafi". The period he describes is the period when Allama Khalid Mahmud was appointed as the chief imam at the Victoria Park Mosque, whose specialist field was comparative religion specifically Sunni-Shia differences. Altaf recalls back in the 1970s when Allama Khalid Mahmud distributed leaflets declaring Shias

as kafirs (unbelievers). There has never been any Shai-Sunni divide out on the streets but divisions in practice and belief have existed since the conflict around the appointment of the first Caliph. Politico-sectarian circumstances in Pakistan sometimes create tensions between the communities here in Manchester. Altaf blames the rise of the Taliban phenomenon for the increased divisions within communities. He quotes a famous Taliban slogan of 'Kill a Shia go to Janah' as the type of mentality that is creating extreme divisions within Muslims. These divisions gave the far right the opportunity to exploit the divisions within the Muslims.

Aftab a prominent Shia community worker says that inter-marriage between Shias and Sunnis has existed for centuries but now the sectarian conflict has brought in question inter-marriage between Shias and Sunnis leading to rhetoric that says it is haram to marry a Shia. Aftab's father, Haji Barkat Ali, was a Sunni and his mother was a Shia. His uncles are married into Sunnis families. Aftab's father was the muezzin of Victoria Park mosque. His father converted to Shia Islam when he was told by Allama Baig that the Sunni imam Abu Hanifah the student of sixth imam Imam Jaffar Sadiq for approximately one year. He said if Imam Jafar is Imam Abu Hanifahs ustad then I will follow the fiqha Jafaria converted fiqha Jafaria.

Altaf describe how a Shia janazah was turned back from the Sunni mosque. He says the Shia community would approach me and say that they are not allowing us to conduct janazah. He would then make a call to the imam who would say 'oh beta (son) I didn't know he was one of your friends, okay bring him in". Every time there was a majlis the Shias from Manchester would travel to Bradford where there were two Shia mosques. By the mid-1970s it became apparent to the Shia community that this traveling to Bradford would not work in the long so they decided to set up their own mosque in Manchester. In

light of the divisive circumstances in Manchester the Shia community decided that they needed their own mosque/imam bargah in Manchester. Therefore in 1977 the first Shia fiqha Jafferia mosque was inaugurated at 404 Moss Lane East in Rusholme Manchester. Aftab who arrived in Manchester in 1962 at the age of five says his family put the initial money together to purchase the building for £2500.

The fact that the Shias have seven mosques is not a reflection on their size but is a facet of the internal divisions within Shia Islam. Jamiat ul Muntazir is not a mosque but is in fact a Madrassa / school of fiqha Jaffaria aqida with view to opening a full time school.

4.10 Tha Salaafi / ahle Hadith Mosques

In the sixteenth century Abd Al-Wahhab and the amir Muhammad b. Saud began the task of reforming Islam in Arabia. The aim of their campaign was to get the Muslims to repent for "having lapsed from the pure unitarianism of the early Muslims and for having espoused corrupt and decadent beliefs and practices incompatible with Islam" (Sirrey 1989: 123). The thrust of their activities was towards the ridding Muslim ummah of shrine veneration and to that effect they destroyed the tomb the Prophet's grandson Hussain ibn Ali. The movement proceeded with such that by 1805 both holy cities of Makkah and Madina were in Wahhabi hands. In the South Asian context the Wahhabis are arch enemies of the Shias and Barelwis for the alleged shrine worship. Similary once the South Asian variety of Islam entered Britain it brought with it the Sunni Wahhabi conflict (Lewis 1994: 85). The Wahhabis view the Sunni and Shia mosques as propagating a polluted version of Islam and therefore it became a necessity to establish their own mosques that would preach a 'purified' and takfeeri Islam that would eradicate evil of the 'Sunnis' and Shias (Birt 2004). The Wahhabis consider themselves as Sunnis but distinct from the Sunnis of Deoband and Barelwis.

The main reason given for setting up the Salaafi Centre is that no other mosque catered for the Salaafi tradition. The ahle Hadith mosque of the Pakistanis existed in Longsight from 1987 onwards but it was too far and was predominantly Pakistanis whereas the congregation of the Salaafi mosques in Cheetham Hill is mixed but predominantly Arab. Jamal a revert to Islam says the major reason for opening the Salaafi centre was that the content of sermons of the other mosques did not appeal to him whereas he wanted to know more about *salf saliheen* (first three generations after the Prophet). The Islam that is practiced and preached in other mosques is deemed too lax and laiden with innovations through localised cultural 'pollution'.

Quite a few of the other mosques around the late 1990s began to physically restrain the Salaafi's from distributing leaflet outside their mosques. This prohibition became more prounced after 9/11 attacks as many mosques began to fear a backlash and the distribution of inflammatory leaflets outside their mosques could land them in trouble with the law. It seems that when the Salaafis were not allowed to hold learning activities in the mainstream Sunni mosques and were not allowed to distribute leaflets they were left with the option of stopping their activities or open their own mosques, which they eventually did. However it must be stressed that an alim who regularly gives *darse* at the Salaafi Centre went to lengths to distance the mosque from Al-Muhajiroun and Anjum Choudhry. He said that he has on numerous occasions in his speeches condemned the activities of the Al-Muhajiroun and Anjum Choudhry. He said"they don't know what Islam is they are merely using political driven rhetoric that has nothing to do with Islam".

Jamal a revert says when he became Muslim he would ask people why they fasted he was informed it was because Allah had ordained it and they would offer no other explanation. He also recalls that many of the elderly Muslims did not even know how to do *wudu* properly and were not able explain why they did some of the things they did, like fasting.

He remembers that he had purchased an English translation of the Quran which he placed on the shelf in the mosque library but every time he came back to look for it someone had removed and placed it in a discreet place. The emphasis was on rote learning of the Quran not understanding.

The Al-Sunnah mosque on Winterford Road in Cheetham Hill was the first Salaafi mosque in Cheetham Hill which was opened about 12 years ago. The Al Sunnah mosque is less than two huindred metres away from where the second Salaafi mosque in Cheetham Hill was opened by Libyan Muslims.The Salaafi centre on Dudley Street in Cheetham Hill was initially opened approximately 11 years ago by some Libyan Muslims. This building was purchased before the Al-Sunnah mosque was opened until a division occurred between the committee of Al-Sunnah mosque. It seems that some of the things the imam of Al-Sunnah mosque said about the *sahaba* (companions of the Prophet) were derogatory and some members decided that they could not tolerate this therefore they open up up their own masjid at Dudley Street in a disused pub.

Makki Masjid at 125 Beresford Road in Longsight was established 1989. The committee purchased a derelict industrial unit in 1987 for £30,000 and it was formally opened on 12 September 1989. In 2001 the mosque committee purchased the adjacent property, 127 Beresford Road for £65,000 to enable extension of the existing mosque. In 2007 third property 129 Beresford Road was purchased for £220,000. Figure 14 below shows the building that has now been demolished to make way for a two story purpose built mosque complete with minaret and dome.

4.11 The Bangladeshi Mosques

In 1967 the Bangladishi community split from the Victoria Park mosque establishing the oldest Bangladeshi mosque, the Shahjalal mosque on Eileen Grove in Rusholme in a building that was previously used as the Pakistani Community Centre. This was the first

Barelwi mosque in Manchester. The owner of the building was a Bangladeshi therefore there was no conflict whenit was the building was turned into a mosque. This mosque was used for congregational prayers when the Victoria Park mosque was constructed in the early 1970s. The Dawat-i-Islami mosque on Slade Lane Longsight was established in 1994. The Bengali community first purchased the corner building which was a laundrette and around 6 years later purchased the building next door to expand the mosque. They belong to the Jamaat-i-Islami of Bangladesh school of thought. The Shaphoran Mosque on Beresford Road Longsight was established in 2000. They adhere to the Hanafi Deobandi school of thought.

4.12 Sectarianism in Britain

The years between mid-1970s through to 1990 have been viewed as the years in which sectarian conflict increased in Britain (Lewis 1994; Samad 1997; Werbner 2002). This period coincides with the Islamisation policies of General Zia ul Haq in Pakistan (Shaikh 2008; Talbot 2005; Abou Zahab & Roy 2004; Weiss 1986). Zia's period intensified and externalised the feud between Shias and Sunnis (Talbot 2005: 28; Blom 2011: 139). Zia used the Islamic elements to support his coup and the subsequent rule for over a decade in the name of Islam (Nasr 2000). The Satanic Verses issue though a solidly South Asian British Muslim controversy in the beginning was not helped by externalisation in the shape of a fatwa by the Iranian Ayatollah which did not do affairs favours for race relations in Britain (Kepel 1997; Lewis 1994; Werbner 2002) . Although the fatwa was against Salman Rushdie but it also served for an international purpose of claiming leadership of the Muslims (Birt 2005). This external influence through funding of different sects from Saudi Arabia and Iran gave rise in 'sectarian militancy' (Birt 2005: 169; Talbot 2005: 339-341; Lewis 2006: 169).

Development of mosques in Britain has a predominantly South Asian flavour which is to be expected given that the largest proportion of the Muslims in Britain originate from the South Asian continent (Lewis 2007). The early mosques from late 1960s onwards mainly developed along ethnic paths for example Pakistani, Bengali, Indian, Yemeni, Arab were further broken down into regions such as Mirpuri, Jehlumi, Gujarati, Pathan and in some cases categorised along biraderi lines as Jattan di Masjid, Ariana di Masjid etc. This division is predominantly due to a common language and a shared past in locality and biradari aspects.

From late 1970s onwards the mosques began to develop along inter and intra sectarian lines. The Barelwi mosques are divided along the different pir affiliations, Pir Maroof, Pir Allaudin Siddiqi, Pir Abdul Qadir to name just a few. The Deobandi mosques are divided in many cases along Deobandi and Tablighi mosques, also prominent was the ethnic divide in Manchester between the Indian Gujeratis and Pakistanis. Raza, a reputable imam for many decades in Britain whilst commenting on the development of mosques in the 1980s says, "The building of so many mosques does not reflect the fact that Islam is on the increase in Britain … The mosque has become an instrument of sectarianism. This sectarianism is vented against other Muslim sects." (1991: 49).

4.12.1 Peak of Sectarian Conflict in Britain 1970s & 1980s
Majority of the ulama in Britain originate from South Asia therefore, it is perhaps inevitable that some conflict has been imported to British mosques from South Asia (Raza 1991; Lewis 1994). Just as earlier sectarian conflicts between Sunni and Ahmadiyya in Britain made their way from South Asia to Britain, so have later divisions between various Sunni groups and Sunni and Shia groups.

Allama Nisar Baig recalls that when he came to Britain in 1978 most of the mosques were under the 'Deobandi / Wahhabi' imams. He says that "Sunni (Barelwi[30]) ulama felt that most of the Pakistanis belonged to their Sunni (Barelwi) affiliation but their mosques had Deobandi imams". This prompted their ulama to hold a Sunni Conference in 1979 in London on the occasion of Milad Sharif (birth of the Prophet) in which this issue would be highlighted. It was resolved during this conference that attempts would be made take back the control of these mosques by replacing Deobandi imams with Sunni (Barelwi) imams. The conference was presided over Pir Abdul Qadir of Walthamstow. Allama Baig in commenting on this period says "I am not proud of this period but something had to be done as it was unfair that most of the people were Sunni (Barelwi) whilst the imams who lead them were Wahhabi. This had to be changed and we fought for our rights for the mosques to have Sunni (Barelwi) imams".

4.13 In the Midst of Munazaras

Maulana Lal Hussain Akhtar was raised and educated in the Ahmadiyya tradition is quite prominently amongst the recollections of local Manchester Muslims. Haji Nazir says "Maulana Lal Hussain Akhtar was raised and trained in the Ahmadiyya jamaat but later became a prominent Sunni alim and *manazar* (debater)". He attributes his conversion into mainstream Sunni Islam to a dream in which he saw the Prophet of Islam saying "Lal Hussain tu murtad kyun hogay" (Lal Hussain you have become an unbeliever). This dream changed his path and he became a popular Sunni alim amongst British Muslims. Many elderly Deobandis recall how maulana Lal Hussain Akhtar's efforts to organise Muslims around the idea of *Khatam-i-Nabuwat* (finality of the Prophet) bore fruit for them as the Ahmadiyya group were ousted from Woking's famous Shah Jahan mosque.

---

[30] I use the Barelwi in brackets here because Maulana Nisar Ahmed Baig has asked not be labelled as a Barelwi but prefers the term Sunni, which is quite shift from his earlier positions when he would own the Barelwi term as witnessed by the amendment in the mosque constitution to term the mosque as a Barewli mosque.

4.13.1 *Munazara* Sheffield 1980 – 'We have won'

Many first generation Muslims have mentioned a *munazara* in memorial hall in Sheffield in which many leading Barelwi and Deobandi ulama took part. Some have fairly vague recollections of who represented both sides. They did not recall who was representing the opposing Barelwi faction but some have suggested that it might have been Pir Abdul Wahab Siddiqi. However, maulana Nisar Ahmed Baig who says he did not have an active part in this *munazara* but he remembers he was at the *munazara*. He recalls that Allama Anaitullah Shah from of Sangla Hill in Pakistan represented Barelwis and Allama Qasmi represented the Deobandis (he does not recall his full name).

Allama Baig says that *munazars* do not really provide a sound environment for debating issues. He recalls that during the *manazra* in Sheffiled Allama Hamid Ali Shah said that the audience should be rearranged according to where they stand on the matter of *hazar aur nazar*. He suggested that the audience should be separated according those who say 'Ya Rasool Allah' and those who do not. Allama Baig says "almost all of the audience moved to the part of the hall that said 'Ya Rasool Allah' and only a handful, approximately twenty-five, remained on the other side". He says this was a master stroke by Allama Hamid Ali Shah as it showed that the majority of the people in the hall were Barelwi Sunnis. This might be an exaggeration of the actual makeup of the audience but it is believable that majority of the audience would have been from Barelwi background. At the end of the *munazara* it seems both sides claimed victory and the Deobandis who had already printed leaflets of victory prior to the *munazara* circulated these leaflets nationally. A book cataloguing the events of the famous Sheffield *Munazara* has been written by a Deobandi.

Hafiz Iqbal Rangooni from Imdadiah mosque also remembers the Sheffield *munazara* which he dubbed as a 'national *munazara* on '*ilme Ghaib*' (knowledge of the unseen). He

recalls that the Deobandis were represented on the stage by mualana Zial ul Qasmi, Dr Allama Khalid Mahmud and himself. He says that he remembers that the Barelwis were represented by maulana Anaitullah Shah of Sangla Hill, maualana Hamid Ali Shah from Blackburn and also recalls pir Abdul Qadir of Walthamstow being present. Hafiz Iqbal Rangooni says the Deobandis won and pamphlets to that effect were distributed. Allama Baig said that Sunnis (Barelwis) won the *munazara* as "they were not able to answer the question on how much *ilm* the Prophet has".

It seems that later *munazaras* (debates) mainly took place between Barelwis and Deobandis on issues surrounding *hazar nazar*, *ilm-i-ghaib*, *noor aur bashar* and were locally based. Allama Khalid Mahmud the founder of Islamic Academy in Manchester seems to be a prominent figure in these debates that took place in Birmingham. Allama Khalid Mahmud having completed a PhD at Birmingham University in 'A comparison of the attitudes of Al-Bukhari and Al-Kulayni along with their co-religionists regarding the basic doctrine of Islam' seemed to aspire to debates in comparative religion.

I would argue that the conflict and creation of new mosques pattern transcends sectarian divides as it occurs both at inter and intra sectarian level and has many other factors that are at play, like biradari and ethnicity, intra leadership conflicts and the influence of businessmen who control mosques due to their financial dominance. To view creation of new mosques as a consequence of sectarian conflict only would be too simplistic and misleading as there are many other factors at play that must be taken into account to arrive at a more accurate understanding of the development of mosques in Britain.

4.14 'Hybridisation' of Manchester Mosques

The table below shows that in Manchester currently seven[31] of the mosques, Victoria Park, IbadhurRaham Trust, Khizra, Shahjalal, Masjid Noor, Al Hidaya, City Mosque and the Bora Shia mosque are purpose built mosques. Shah Jalal mosque has been in existence since the late 1960s but a purpose built mosque has been added to the existing building. These mosques portray a hybridised architecture reflecting aspects of South Asian architecture with inputs from British architecture[32] (Hillenbrand 1983; Prochazka 1986; Nasser 2003; Rasdi 2008). The planning authorities usually restrict the architectural style of the mosques (Gale 2005). As part of the planning permission requirements, the mosques have had to blend in with the existing architecture. Even with restrictions purpose built mosques have been able to create a distinct architectural style and have added variety to the existing architecture of Manchester.

All purpose built mosques started from very different types of buildings. The Victoria Park mosque started from one three storey semi-detached house in the exact place where in later years during early 1970s a project for a purpose built mosque was completed. The Ibadhur Rahman Trust mosque existed initially as a terraced property first on Bignor Road and then on Bellott Street, Cheetham Hill, both properties were terraced houses. During their growth, they used a variety of different buildings for the growing juma congregations. Dr Amanat Ali said that they used a Shia mosque for juma prayers because the Shia did not have a *juma* congregation. They also used a hall connected to a Church in Cheetham Hill for *juma* prayers.

---

[31] This number excludes the Makki mosque which is in the process of construction as only the foundations have been laid. The completion of this mosque will mean that Manchester has 8 purpose built mosque. The Zakariyya Mosque committee have been looking for appropriate land to begin their purpose built mosque.
[32] See Hillenbrand (1983) for a discussion of how Muslim flexibility in adopting the architectural style of the land they went into provided grounds for accommodation rather than confrontation with the host community.

Year	Purpose Built Mosques in Manchester	Sect	Ethnicity
1972	Manchester Central Mosque (Victoria Park)	Barelwi	Pakistani
1984	North Manchester Jamia Mosque & Ibadur Rahman Trust	Barelwi	Pakistani
2001	Shahjalal Masjid & Islamic Centre	Barelwi	Bengali
2001	Masjid-e-Noor	Deobandi	Gujarati
2004	UKIM Jamia Khizra Mosque	UKIM	Pakistani
2008	Al-Masjid al-Nur - Bora Shia	Dawoodi Bora	Pakistani / Indian
2013	Al-Hidayatul Muslimeen Mosque	Deobandi	Gujarati
2014	City Jamia Mosque	Deobandi	Pakistani

Table 4.4 Purpose Built Mosques, Year, Ethnicity and Sect

The land for the purpose built mosque was purchased from the local authority. When the project was in the planning stages, the total cost estimated as £250,000. Ibadhur Rahman Trust wanted to create an Islamic college from where Muslim *alims* gained training. The whole project had three phases. Firstly the main building was constructed where the *juma* congregation accommodates approximately a thousand people. As you enter the mosque into the hallway on the right hand side is a *wudu khaana*[33], a bit further along to the left is the office, which is used by the imam and the trustees and used as a library and straight

---

[33] Wudu Khaana is the place where worshippers perform their ablution before entering the mosque for prayers.

ahead is the main hall used for *juma* prayer. On Friday the imam is visible as soon as one enters the hallway of the mosque. An extension to this was added by creating a second floor to accommodate another five hundred people. This extension is not on top of the main prayer hall which houses the distinctive golden dome. The first floor extension is on the section, which accommodates the hallway, the office and the wudu place. The second phase of the project was a large building, adjacent to the existing mosque, which has a spacious hall that accommodates approximately a thousand people. The third phase of the mosque project is to accommodate a student hall of residence. Currently it is used as classrooms for children who attend after school Quran classes. After nearly two decades, the cost of the total project has gone over one and half million pounds. Currently I have been informed there are plans to further extend the mosque which will thereby make it the largest mosque in Manchester. In a recent juma prayer that I attended in December 2012, I heard the imam making an appeal to raise the funds to begin the new project. Inside the mosque on right hand side of the front wall they displayed a chart showing collection in the shape of a *musallah* symbol. One musallah symbol represented £1,000 of donations collected for this new project. The chart on the front, on the mehrab wall, shows that half of the required funds have been collected.

The Khizra mosque in Cheetham Hill was set up after a split in the Ibadur Rahman Cultural Association which was later to be known as Ibadhur Rahman Trust. Those who split from the Ibadhur Rahman Cultural Trust went on to construct the Khizra mosque. Khizra mosque was housed on Cheetham Hill Road in an end terraced house. The purpose built mosque was in fact to be a community centre but the Khizra Mosque executive decided to build a mosque on top of the community centre. The ground floor is the community centre that was built with funding from Manchester City Council and the first floor is the Khizra mosque built with funding from the local Muslim community. The

mosque can accommodate over five hundred people. The community centre is used for youth sports and social activities.

Masjid Noor was initially housed in a cooperative store on Stamford Street in Old Trafford. When I began my research a project was initiated to construct a purpose built mosque. The purpose built mosque is situated adjacent to the existing building on Stamford Street. The first phase of the mosque has been completed and now the committee has plans to extend the mosque facility by adding a second floor to the mosque. When the outer shell was constructed and work was being undertaken on the interior due to shortage of funds, the project was developed at a slow pace. If the management had funds, the project could have been completed a lot earlier. The fact that many worshippers were able to see the progress on a regular basis when they came for juma prayers worked as a motivating factor in attracting funds from the *juma* congregation. The mosque is currently complete and thriving with worshippers.

The multi million pound purpose built mosques in Manchester are an indication of the growing confidence of the Muslim community with their religious identity. Apart from the student mosques that are housed within the Universities, all other mosques in Manchester are conversions from old churches that are no longer in use, or run down factories or houses where walls have been knocked through to create prayer halls. The Minhaj ul Quran mosque was a hotel in its earlier days and then used as a student hall of residence before it became the Minhaj ul Quran Central mosque of Manchester. Most of the mosques are located in areas that have a strong presence of a Muslim community in the vicinity. The Faizan-i-Islam mosque is slightly on the edge of the residential community located in an industrial unit.

4.15 Types of Mosque Organisational Structures

Nielsen (1991) argues that to understand the process of settlement of Muslims in Britain we should look at the formation of organisations. The identification of these groups is insightful for a meaningful discussion on integration or segregation into mainstream British society. Nielsen identifies three forms of group organisations: Firstly groups that arose out of the community and its own perception of need; secondly groups that are extensions of organisations and movements in the country of origin; and thirdly groups set up by governments or government related agencies (Nielsen, 1991a:43). In Manchester, the first two are quite apparent while the third type is difficult to see among the mosques in Manchester.

In Manchester, there are mosques that grew out of the community to cater for the needs of the local community. Under this category comes the Victoria Park mosque in Manchester, the first mosque in Manchester. Initially the mosque was converted from two semi-detached properties and developed into a multi-million pound purpose built mosque. This mosque initially grew from within Manchester without any links to organisations from outside Manchester. Victoria Park Mosque is an organisation that grew out of the needs of the community of the small number of Muslims in Manchester in late 1940s. It went through phases when many tried to link the mosque to international organisations originating from Pakistan, but most of these attempts were unsuccessful[34].

There are also mosques in Manchester that are an extension of organisations or movements from abroad. In this category fall the mosques that belong to United Kingdom Islamic Mission (UKIM), Tablighi Jamaa*t* mosques, Deobandi mosques and more recently Minhaj-

---

[34] Allama Khalid Mahmood tried to link the mosque to the Deobandi school of thought, maulana Habib ur-Rahman from the Jamaati Islami and Allama Nisar Ahmed Baig tried to link with the Barelwi group of Abdul Qadir Shah from Walthamstow.

ul-Quran mosques. UKIM has distinctly chosen a name that will not link it to the Jamaat-i-Islami from Pakistan, whilst Minhaj-ul-Quran has retained the same name as its parent organisation from Pakistan. In reality, both have very strong links to their parent organisations. The Tablighi and Deobandi mosques have links to their country of origin but are not as stringently controlled from outside as are the UKIM and Minhaj-ul-Quran.

The third type that Nielsen describes, those organisations that are set up by the government or government related agencies, are less visible amongst mosques in Manchester. The possible reason why we do not see any mosques in this category is the failure of the establishment to recognise that mosques can play a part in public life. In Bradford, during the 'Honeyford affair', Bradford City Council realised 'it was not sufficiently in touch with Pakistani or Muslim opinion' and as a result helped to organise the Council of Mosques (Rex 1996b: 234). Rex and Samad have both suggested that the creation of the Council of Mosques in Bradford was to assist the religious leaders to express their opinion at the same time quelling the opinion of the 'militant youth' (Rex 1996b: 234; Samad 1992: 512). Manchester City Council developed no such initiative.

Many mosques in Manchester are affiliated to umbrella organisations such as UKACIA, which later evolved into the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB). One of the interviewees in this research highlighted that there was a relative absence or only minor representation of *Barelwi* mosques in the MCB structure. There are mosques affiliated to MCB but the UKIM and *Deobandi* mosques dominate the organisational structure. Samad says that UKACIA emerged as a 'confederation incorporating nearly all the various currents' with the exception of 'Imam and Mosques Council and the Muslim Institute' (Samad 1998b: 68). MCB is not therefore a fully representative organisation of Muslims in Britain but it is at present perhaps the most visible umbrella organisation. As a result, there are good

chances that MCB, given time, becomes an influential 'mouthpiece' for Muslims in Britain, but this depends on what they are able to deliver for the Muslim communities in Britain.

The development of mosques and the subsequent employment of imams imported from their country of origin also reflected a desire to maintain links with the country of origin. The linkages of Barelwi, Deobandi, Tablighi Jamaat, Ahle Hadith, Jamaat-i-Islami and Minhaj-ul-Quran mosques and the employment of imported imams are all indications of a strong desire to maintain strong links with the country of origin. In my view, this is having a negative impact on the young Muslims in Britain who do not seem to be happy with the link with the country of origin and as a result are turning to organisations like *Hizb ut Tahrir* and *al-Muhajoroun* who use English language to deliver their message.

4.16 Importance of Origins

From Nielsen's typology of Muslim organisations, it could be concluded that he is inferring that the origins of the organisations determine, to a large extent, the behaviour, and ideology of that organisation in the host country. Organisations that are an extension of a parent organisation from abroad are inevitably influenced by the ideology and policies of the parent organisation. Nielsen says that, "Settlement in Europe has not entailed the cutting off of relations with the country of origin… Local developments thus retain a direct effect on the immediate interests of the migrated communities" (1991a: 48). Rex (1996) and Neilsen (1991a) both argued that because of *Jamaat-i-Islami*'s political credentials UKIM, an organisation that stems from *Jamaat-i-Islami*, to be politically more active in Britain. Rex says that the 'political challenge' comes from *Jamaat-I-Islami* linked organisations in Britain than the *Deobandi* or *Barelwi* organisations (1996b:227). Following their logic, *Minhaj-ul-Quran*, an organisation that has a political wing in Pakistan, to be involved in the political domain. *Minhaj-ul-Quran* comparably a recent

addition to the Muslim religious landscape in Manchester and as such has not been as effective politically as UKIM. One of the reasons for this is their premature entry into Pakistani politics under the banner of Pakistan Awami Tehreek, at the end of 1989 and their disastrous failure in the ensuing elections. Minhaj ul Quran left the political field and began to concentrate on its educational projects in Pakistan[35]. This may have been the reason why it has not been prominent as a political actor in Britain. However, the brave fatwa that he gave against suicide bombings has been well received by both Muslim and non Muslims (Tahir-ul-Qadri 2010).

The Rushdie Affair partially justifies Rex's hypothesis that UKIM presents the greatest political challenge. UKIM were the first instigators of the action against *The Satanic Verses* (Modood 1990: 154). UKIM advocated lobbying politicians and publishers through letters and petitions requesting that the book be withdrawn due to the offence caused to Muslims. The most active and vociferous during this period were, however, not the *Jamaat-i-Islami* but in fact the *Barelwi* and the *Deobandi* mosques. Modood argues that it was the special reverence that *Barelwi*s hold for the Holy Prophet of Islam that led to the Rushdie Affair being taken to the streets and the controversial book burning incident in Bradford, without regard for the negative implications of this act (1990:150-1). Modood rightly points towards the passionate beliefs of the Barelwis regarding the status of the Holy Prophet, but one fact that cannot be denied is that all Muslim sects, whether Sunni or Shia, were united in the condemnation of *The Satanic Verses*. All of the different sects were visible amongst the protesters in the mass demonstrations in Hyde Park in the summer of 1989. In the history of British Muslims, this particular issue managed to unite virtually all Muslim organisations on one platform. Those people who attended the

---

[35] However, Muhammad Tahir ul Qadri has recently returned to political activity in Pakistan with one of the largest gatherings in Pakistan's history on 23rd December 2012.

massive rally at Hyde Park were able to see for the first time that ulama of all sects were on the same platform and singing from the same hymn sheet! This unity amongst Muslims was a unique occasion in the history of British Muslims.

UKIM is a small minority among Muslims in Britain and the Barelwis seem to be the largest group followed by the Deobandis (Modood 1990: 150; Rex 1996: 222). It seems that if the latter two are able to organise their activities they could be far more influential due to their large numbers than the UKIM who lack support among the masses. The Rushdie Affair demonstrated that if Barelwis and Deobandis were able to join forces by getting together for the 'common good' they form one of the strongest minority groups in Britain. Going by numbers, Muslims are the single largest minority in Britain and the second largest religious group, second only to Christianity, ahead of black people, but have been denied 'recognition' as a minority by the establishment under the guise 'we are a secular state' (Modood 1998; Census 2001). This particular point is very significant, as it changed the whole perspective of Muslims from being Black, Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani or Middle Eastern to identifying themselves as British Muslims. The Rushdie Affair can also be seen as the most significant incident that managed to change the perspective of Muslims about how they identified themselves.

The origins of the organisations also determine to a certain extent their behaviour in Britain. Some organisations are more political in their outlook because of the ideology they inherited form their parent organisation, whilst others will work along more spiritual lines, like the Barelwis and Tablighis. Another important factor that has strong repercussions for how Muslim organisations develop in Britain is their relationship with the wider society and how that society views these organisations. The imposition of prescribed identities and the ability to adapt and absorb the impact of this sociological process leads to the

emergence of transformed identities. The issue of the 'ever elusive moon' is an issue that illustrates clearly the mind set from the country of origin. In many ways, the origins of the organisation determine the responses to the issue and this also demonstrates how those dissenting are perceived.

4.17   The Ever 'Elusive' Moon

Before moving onto who represents Muslims at a national level I want to illustrate with an example of the type of issues facing the umbrella organisations, in particular the issue concerning the sighting of the moon. In mid 1990's, an attempt was made to form the Council of Mosques in Manchester (Scantlebury 1995: 429). One of the people interviewed, for the current research, was the president and founding member of that organisation. He confirmed that the Council of Mosques is currently a redundant body. The Council of Mosques in Manchester decided to take on board the issue of 'celebrating the Religious Events on the at least on the same day and jointly when possible' (ibid: 429). I am informed that the issue that rendered the Manchester Council of Mosques redundant was the issue of the sighting of the moon for Eid to ascertain the day on which such religious festivals occur. Those who are familiar with this issue will realise that almost every year this issue creates problems for Muslims in Britain. The problem is compounded in the Northwest, especially Greater Manchester, where there is greater division on this particular issue than in other regions of southern England. Two of the largest mosques in Manchester, *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust and Victoria Park mosque, belong to the Barelwi school of thought. Maulana Qamar-uz-Zaman Azmi, a strong and charismatic personality, throughout his tenure as the head imam has constantly refused any kind of compromise on the issue of sighting of the moon. He argues that the words of the hadith support 'sighting' of the new moon therefore the criteria for the beginning of the new month should be the sighting of the new moon. Victoria Park mosque has had immense pressure placed on it to

come to some kind of a compromise on this issue. In light of the pressure to compromise, I feel that if these two mosques made a compromise on this issue Muslims in Britain could celebrate *Eid* on the same day. Although I agree with Samad that this is not an 'insurmountable' controversy but one must not under estimate the strength of feelings on this issue given how long it has remained unresolved (Samad 1992). Even an organisation like Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) has not plucked up the courage to tackle this issue for fear that it might result in divisions within MCB that might damage the unity of MCB. Lord Nazir Ahmed has attempted to resolve this issue by hosting a meeting of the ulama at the House of Commons, but it seems that his attempts have not been able produce a resolution to this problem.

Though the sighting of the moon issue is not directly the issue that divides these sects in their country of origin but it does highlight the pattern of division that Nielsen (1991a) and Rex (1996b) see as sectarian influences that are an extension from their country of origin (1996b:220-6). In South Asia the sighting of the moon was not a sectarian issue as the *roeat-e-hilal* committee, a national body appointed by the state, declared the start of the month[36]. This issue was symptomatic of the division between Barelwi, Deobandi and Ahle Hadith in Britain. All the sects have adopted a stance different from the other on the sighting of the moon. Any compromise on the issue is seen as compromising their loyalty to the sect. The development of a federation of Sunni Mosques in Birmingham has adopted a formula for the sighting of the moon that is closer to the Saudi formula (Joly 1995: 42). The federation of Sunni Mosques has the majority of Barelwi mosques from Birmingham (Rex 1996b: 222). This has placed immense pressure on the Barelwis outside Birmingham and London to rethink their stance on the sighting of the moon to get their act together on

---

[36] I am aware that in recent years the sighting of the moon has resulted in certain regions of Pakistan celebrating eid or the beginning of the month Ramadan on different occasions along sectarian lines. Whether this is the influence of the strong presence of Taliban or the influence of Saudi involvement is not clear.

this issue. Many lay Barelwis, and some from the other schools of thought, in Manchester use the situation of the Birmingham Barelwis to question the motives behind the reluctance of the two main Barelwi mosques in Manchester to accept the formula used by the federation of Sunni Mosques that includes Barelwi mosques.

Without going into too much detail I suggest that the position of the different ulamas revolves around what is the best way to determine the start of the new lunar calendar month. One group of ulama, the Barelwis, argue that the Prophet suggested that on the 29th day of the month Muslims should look for the crescent of the the new moon and if they see the crescent they should begin the new month and if not they should wait and begin the month on the following day. The complication in Britain is that the weather remains cloudy for most of the year and it is not easy to see the crescent. In order to counter this it was suggested that Muslims should seek information from the nearest Muslim country and align their lunar calendar with the nearest Muslim country. For some time during the early period the Deobandi, Tablighi Jamaat and UKIM went along with this notion of asking the nearest Muslim country for this information. What happened is that many times the information from these countries arrived at very inconvenient times when some have read their *Taravih* prayers and the committee had informed everyone that tomorrow would be the last day of Ramadan. The information came late in the night making the announcement for *Eid* impractical. It is due to this inconvenience that the initial division on the issue began to emerge. At this stage many amongst Muslims began to look towards alternative countries to ascertain this information, amongst them was South Africa and Saudi Arabia.

The Deobandi, Tablighi and ahle-Hadith ulama strongly moved towards Saudi Arabia stating that the day after Haj is eid ul adha and because Saudi Arabia has announced the date for the haj therefore Muslims should follow their calendar in celebrating eid ul adha.

114

According to Barelwi and some Deobandi ulama the problem was that Saudi Arabia had on occasions announced the beginning of the new month even before there was any possible chance of sighting the moon[37]. Once this situation emerged one group tilted towards Saudi Arabia's lunar calendar whilst the other group in disputing the validity of the Saudi information began to cite the verses of the Quran and hadith in relation to the cycle of the lunar month. The Barelwi ulama strongly purported the view that the Prophet had advised Muslims to sight the crescent before starting the new month therefore the criteria for determining the new month should be the physical sighting of the new moon crescent. The Barelwi ulama's further argued that if it was difficult to sight the crescent in the cloudy conditions of England then 'we must use scientific calculations to determine when the crescent would be visible to the naked eye'.

What I wanted to highlight here is that although this issue in Manchester is divided along sectarian lines the issue itself is not strictly sectarian. The reason for suggesting this is that we know that there are many Barelwi mosques and ulama who celebrated *eid* and begun the month of Ramadan with the Regents Park Mosque in London. Similarly there many Deobandi ulama who have chosen to accept the Barelwi argument of scientifically determining the visibility of the crescent of the new moon. It seems that there are other factors to do with power and status that are preventing the resolution of this issue[38].

The difference of opinion surrounding the sighting of the moon has implications for how Muslim organisations interact with one another and also how they interact with non-Muslim institutions. Many of my interviewers confirmed that the issue of the commencement of the new calendar month confirms the acrimonious state of Manchester

---

[37] See the following website for articles in relation to the sighting of the moon and related issues – Accessed 04/06/2012 – 1. http://www.moonsighting.com/ - 2. http://www.moonsighting.com/articles/moon_uk.pdf

[38] A new issue that has arisen concerning the timing of Sehri end times has caused further divisions as we have at least one mosque in Manchester that end of sehri time at 01.45 whilst other mosques time was 02.38 and some event later than this.

Muslims on this matter. Many of the respondents felt so strongly about the effects of the division on this issue that they feel that this has a negative impact on the psyche of the young Muslim children growing up in Britain. They felt that two Muslim children in the same school celebrating *Eid* on separate days raises question marks for the 'Muslimness' of Muslims in Britain. Young Muslim children will grow up with an image of a divided religion whose figures of authority are unable to agree on a simple issue of celebrating *eid* on one day. It shows a sense of weakness, whereby Muslims are perceived as unable to decide on a unified day to celebrate *Eid*. The perception is not from the 'other' in the community but from within the community. This issue also demonstrates that there is no one organisation that has the authority to issue a decree that all the Muslims in Britain will follow (Lewis 2004; Peter & Arigita 2006; Turner 2007).

4.18   Conclusion

The increase in the size of the Muslim population has placed increased demands on mosques and imams. In order to accommodate this increasing need for religious instruction the Muslim community has spent enormous amounts of funds to create new and better looking mosques to support the needs of the Muslim communities. This growth in numbers has also meant that there is greater need for well-trained imams to provide religious instruction.

The Muslims in Manchester have had to deal with issues that they did not perceive they would have to deal with, one of the major examples of this being the division surrounding the sighting of the new moon to celebrate special occasions like *eid ul fitr* and *eid ul adha*.

5 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF MOSQUE DEVELOPMENT AND BRITISH MUSLIM IDENTITY

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explore the different phases that mosque development has gone through to arrive at the status that it has among the British Muslims. I demonstrate how the idea of the mosque in Britain began as a 'temporary' idea when mosques began life in someone's front room and gradually developed into permanent defining feature of the British architectural landscape in which mosques costing millions of pounds began to appear (Nasser 2005; Biondo III 2006). I explore how the idea of a student campus based eco-mosque costing millions of pounds is being floated incorporating environmentality friendly energy saving ideas. The Ecomosque project will not be funded by the university but the Muslim students from that university with the help of other Muslim organisations will raise the funds. I demonstrate that the transition of identity from Pakistani migrants to Pakistani Muslims, British Pakistani Muslims and to its most recent form as British Muslim has had an impact on how mosques developed through the changing designs and conceptions of the mosque.

The study of Manchester mosques demonstrates that mosque development has gone through phases of development that mirror the development of British Muslim identity. It is a well established fact that most Pakistani Muslims came here as economic migrants with a view to improving their financial situation in Pakistan (Anwar 1979; Shaw 1988; Werbner 1990; Kalra 2000). The aim of the migrants during this early phase was to make enough money to have a decent life in Pakistan eventually going back 'home' in Pakistan.

It is clear from studies conducted earlier that during the early phase they did not perceive Britain as their 'home' therefore their life was structured around the notion of temporality. The establishment of institutions in Britain was not widely evident during this period. Their life revolved around work as many people during this period worked seven days a week and in many cases worked in excess of 14 hours. The focus was which factory would pay them a better wage and which factory would allow younger workers from the age of fourteen. They were not too concerned with social lives or working conditions in which they worked as long as the amount they earned was good they would overlook everything else. Many worked in the night shift as it paid more than working during the day and similarly multi shifts paid better than single shift[39] (Kalra 2000:113).

Similarly during this period they were not too concerned with their living conditions either. It seemed that many people shared houses, bedrooms and beds. The beds were used in shifts when one person went to work the other person who had finished his shift used the same bed. In a two up two down house you could have more than ten people living in the house. One of my respondents, Nazir, said to me that he lived in a two bed room house where the large bedroom had three double beds which were used on a day night shift rota, in effect accommodating six people but it seems that some of the beds were used where two people slept on the bed at the same time. In this house the second bedroom only had one double bed which was used by two people. One of the downstairs rooms was also used as a bedroom which had two double beds. In this house four people slept downstairs, seven people slept in the large bedroom and the small bedroom had two people, in total thirteen people lived in this two bedroom terraced house. This house was considered fairly 'luxurious' it had a separate kitchen and an upstairs bathroom.

---

[39] The term multi-shift refers to three shifts first one started from 6.00 am to 2.00 pm, the second started from 2.00 pm to 10.00 pm and finally the night shift from 10.00 pm to 6.00 am. The shift work alternated every week. Single shift work was one you only worked one of these times every week.

The purpose of this description is to give a feel of how migrant Pakistani Muslims perceived their living space as a temporary residence where they had to live until they had earned enough money to go back to their '*apne kaar Pakistan*' ,'home' back in Pakistan. My argument is that they used the same logic when it came to establishing mosques during this period. The Muslim community started their mosques from somebody's front room holding congregational prayers and teaching recitation of Quran to its current stage when they are devising multimillion pound purpose built mosque projects.

During this early period not many bought houses as they were deemed as unnecessary given the 'fact' that they would only be staying in Britain for a temporary period. The money was saved to send to the country of origin. It is in Pakistan that the development of properties began to take shape during this period. Many people having saved their money sent remittances to Pakistan to build better houses and buy land (Werbner 1980). Many decided to buy land so that when they returned to Pakistan they would have land to cultivate to earn a living. Britain was seen as a temporary abode of residence away from home and religious performance was also going through the effects of this temporary phase.

Religiosity among my older respondents on first arrival was minimal they were not too conscious of their religious identity. Most were not in a position to reflect on their religious identity as this was not deemed as a matter of urgency in their new found state. What I mean by urgency here is that identity did not figure as a significant part of their early phase in Britain. In this phase if anyone hurled any racist discriminatory abuse most Muslims would ignore it initially through not knowing what was said due to language and those that knew the language ignored it on the basis they are not going to stay here forever. Priority during this phase of migration was making money not shaping an identity.

There was a very small minority of Pakistanis who were conscious of their religion and their religious obligations. One such person who came to Britain in 1965 had a fairly strong religious background having gained his education from one of the famous *darululooms* in Gujranwala, Pakistan. He was by profession a teacher whilst in Pakistan. When he came to Britain he was informed by his brother and uncle that it would be difficult to practice his religion in this country. He remembers in particular how they mentioned that getting halal meat was a problem. He says that he was '*bahot parishan*', very concerned and anxious that he would not be able to practice his religion and that he would not get halal food. He approached the only mosque in Manchester, Victoria Park Mosque, at the time and informed them of his qualifications. My respondent tells me how Abdullah Kasas, who at the time was the President of the Jamiat ul Muslimeen the organisation running the mosque, was very pleased to meet him and offered him the post of the imam of the Victoria Park mosque. He says he was the first properly qualified imam in Manchester who was able deliver his sermon in English in the 1960s. He is grateful to Allah that he was fortunate enough to get involved in mosques as an imam and to this day he carries on his duties at the Madina mosque although he is now 83 years old!

Special religious occasions like *eid ul fitr* and *eid ul adha* were celebrated but at a very minimal level. For example some of my respondents said they did not celebrate *eid* during this period because in some cases they did not know it was *eid* and in some cases because they did not get time off work to perform the *eid* prayer. One of my respondents said that once he did not perform *eid* prayers because his employer said that his wages would be docked if he went out for *eid* prayers. But in many cases the employers would allow them to go for a couple of hours to attend the *eid* prayer and then come straight back to work. In some cases Muslims made *eid* prayer arrangements in either a hall, church halls or in parks etc. They did not have a permanent place of worship for the reason that they perceived

their stay in Britain as a temporary phenomenon. Financially they were fairly insecure and as a consequence very little attention was paid to establishing mosques. During this period their main concentration was on consolidating their financial status in a short space of time to enable them to return to their homes where their families were eagerly awaiting their return.

5.2   First Mosque in Britain

One fascinating fact about the first purpose built mosque in Britain was that there was elaborate discussion of the first mosque in Britain to claim the prestige of heritage of Islam in Britain (Ansari 2004; Geaves 2010; Gilliat-Ray 2010c). However none mentioned the purpose built mosque created in 1761 at Kew Gardens (Avioglu 2011:139). The mosque was constructed solely as an appreciation of the Ottoman architecture by the British monarch. The premises never actually functioned as a mosque only serving an aesthetic purpose. It seems that this mosque was later demolished although many of the other buildings constructed at the time to illustrate the variety of architectural beauty of the time still remain intact at Kew Gardens.

For a sometime it was believed that Glynrhondda Street mosque in Cardiff was the first mosque in Britain[40] [41](Gilliat-Ray 2010c). It seems much was made of this 'myth' to claim the prestigious title of the first mosque in Britain because of this it was well publicised. Gilliat-Ray says that this 'evolution of a myth'[42] was a result of a missing digit whilst transcribing the records held at the 'Register of Religious Sites', held at Birkdale in Southport. The digit missed in transcription led to the assumption that the mosque was created some time in 1860. It seems that at the time Glynrhondda Street did not exist and

---

[40] http://english.bayynat.org/muslimcommunities/britan.htm -   Accessed 17/07/2013. "Muslims in Britain: The journey for the quest of the self".

[41] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2_Glynrhondda_Street   - Accessed 17/07/2013 - "Glynrhondda Street"

[42] For detailed discussion on the evolution of the 'myth' see Sophie Gilliat-Ray (2010) 'The first registered mosque in the UK, Cardiff, 1860: the evolution of a myth. Contemporary Islam (2010) 4:179-193.

the actual Glynrhondda Street mosque was created much later. Gilliat-Ray (2010c:183) states,

> "... that sequence number '8149' in fact related to the following entry: "Tabernacle, Rosemarket, Pembroke, Congregationalists [independent is crossed out], 1858, July 5". However, sequence number 78149 is for: Religious Cultural Centre (Abu-Hurairah Centre), ground floor and first floor, 2 Glynrhondda Street, Cathays, Cardiff, Muslims, 17th October 1991".

In 1889 the Muslim Institute was created by the prominent Muslim convert William Quilliam in Liverpool (Geaves 2010). Quilliam was a solicitor by profession who became the first British Muslim to carry the title Shaikh Al Islam on British Isles (Ansari 2004; Geaves 2010). He had made provision for a mosque where regular Friday Juma prayers took place.

Figure 5.1 Muslim Institute that accommodated a mosque, orphanage and Education system was established by William Quilliam in Brougham Terrace Liverpool.

In the South Muslims had constructed their first 'functioning'[43] purpose built mosque in Woking, the Shah Jehan Mosque, in 1889 by Dr Gottleib Wilhelm Leitner (Ansari 2004; Avioglu 2011:140). Most of these developments were prior to economic migration that took place post second world war. Most of the people involved in the creation of these earlier mosques were not necessarily economic migrants. In fact most were economically well off who perceived the mosque as a feature of the British landscape hence the architecture of the Shah Jehan mosque which built with a generous donation the Queen of Bopal, Begum Shah Jehan[44]. The Muslim Institute in Liverpool was founded and maintained by a British born convert who considered the mosque a permanent feature of British Muslim life. During this period what we find is that there were Muslims in Manchester, in small numbers, but no permanent place of worship was established prior to the First World War (Halliday 1992; Werbner 1990; Scantlebury 1995; Seddon 2012).

Figure 5.2 Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking - First fully functional purpose built mosque in Britain established in 1889.

---

[43] I use the term functioning just to separate it from the first purpose built mosque in Britain at Kew Gardens which was not a functioning mosque.

[44] **The Shah Jehan Mosque** *by Syeda Z. Hamdani.* **http://www.timetravel-britain.com/articles/london/mosque.shtml** - Accessed 22/10/12.

5.3 Contested Belonging - Post World War II Mosques

The fact that Pakistani Muslim migrants were preoccupied with their economic status does not mean that no mosques were created during this period. What we do see is that the Victoria Park Mosque existed before the mass economic migration of post World War II (Werbner 1990: 37; Scantlebury 1995: 428; Seddon 2012; 16). Werbner states that the Victoria Park Mosque was "located in a property initially bought by the Syrian community" (1990:37). Scantlebury says "In the late 1940s there were approximately 70 Muslims in Manchester, businessmen and students, from a number of countries: Lebanon, Syria, Pakistani, Iraqi, Egypt and India. They purchased a semi-detached house in Upper Park Road and carried out alterations on it to provide mosque facilities (1995:428). Seddon states "... two mosques were established by the Manchester Syrian Arab Muslim community. The first the Central Mosque in Victoria Park, was established in the late 1940s..." (2012:16)[45]

It seems there is a certain element of contestation of who the mosque belongs in the above three versions and the version presented on the Victoria Park Mosque website and the version narrated to me by Maulana Habib ur Rahman who was the imam of the mosque between 1965 to 1970. The website states

> "In 1948 a meeting was arranged at Manchester University to discuss purchasing a property for the mosque. A semi detached house at 22-Upper Park Road, Victoria Park, Manchester was then bought for £2,250. Jamiat ul Muslimeen was already in existence and had £550 on account. A sum of £1,000 was kindly donated by Mr Ahmad Dawood (Dawood Textile Pak). Mr M.Hanif and Mr M.Ismail, both from Memon families, contributed £750 and £500 was collected from the rest of the Muslim Community. A sum of £550 was spent to make a room for prayer, a room for meetings and a room for sports"[46].

---

[45] The second mosque referred to here is the Didsbury mosque established in 1967.
[46] http://www.manchestermosque.org/index.php/about-manchester-mosque/history-of-mosque accessed 22/05/12.

This version does not specifically mention the role of the Syrian community in the purchase or establishment of the Victoria Park Mosque which was the main theme of the three earlier accounts.

When I asked Maulana Habibur Rahman, who was the imam of Victoria Park Mosque from 1965 to 1970, about the creation of the mosque his response was,

> I know this thing before I came to this country. Dawood Textile a famous Pakistani Muslim businessman from Karachi he bought that building for £5,000. £5,000 was a big fortune at that time. He bought this building and donated it to the Muslim community to establish a mosque and Islamic cultural centre. While this building where mosque was was known as the mosque and the Islamic Cultural centre the adjacent building was under the control of the Arab communities but we were always trying to amalgamate the two buildings to make it one building and treat the whole building as a mosque. It wassss ... 1972 that we constructed the mosque. We first demolished both the buildings then started to construct the proper mosque with minarets and domes, what we can say is a purpose built mosque. It was started in April 1972[47].

Maulana Habibur Rahman's version challenges the established version that the mosque was established by Syrian businessmen but in fact categorically states the important role played by Dawood Textiles of Pakistan even before he came to England. He recalls that there were debates about converting the second building into a mosque and the Arab community were reluctant to relinquish control of that property.

Another respondent, Haji Nazir, who was involved in mosque affairs during the 1960's said the debate was mainly about turning the newly purchased mosque in Didsbury into Manchester's central (Jamia) mosque and using the Victoria Park mosque as a small local mosque. It seems Pakistanis Muslims who had grown in number by this stage objected to this by claiming that "we all live in this area (Victoria Park) why should we then turn

---

[47] Werbner (1990) gives a photo of a prayer said at the foundation stone laying ceremony for the new Central Jamia mosque in Victoria Park and dates 12 April 1971. It is quite possible Maulana Habibur Rahman might have got the year mixed up because he says April 1972.

Didsbury mosque into the Jamia masjid of Manchester when there are hardly any Muslims in Didsbury".

I am informed by Muhammad Hayat of the Didsbury mosque that the Arab community donated the second building when plans were afoot to create Manchester's first purpose built mosque by the end of 1969 or the beginning of 1970's. The fact that Victoria Park Mosque plays a central role in Manchester's Muslim community could be the reason for the contested claims of 'ownership' of the mosque. Does it belong to the Arabs or the Pakistanis? The debate is about claims of belonging, who does the mosque belong to?

Figure 5.3 Manchester's first purpose built mosque, Victoria Park in the 1970's. The picture is courtesy of Manchester Libraries.

Muhammad Hayat informed me that the deed of Victoria Park Mosque still has Syrian names on it. He recalls that when the community planned to construct the Victoria Park Mosque the Syrian's donated the adjacent building for the sole purposes of Muslim worship. As a result of the resolution of this issue the work to construct Manchester's first purpose built mosque began and figure 3 shows the constructed Victoria Park Mosque in 1970's, a minaret can be seen on the right hand side of the photo.

126

Ghulam Mohiyuddin who has been involved with the Victoria Park Mosque since the 1970's states that there were many attempts to convince the Syrian Muslims to allow the amalgamation of the two semi detached properties. He recalls people approached Abdullah Kasas, an Arab who had been the imam of the Victoria Park mosque in the 1960s and chairman of the Jamiat ul Muslimeen, to convince the Syrian Muslims to donate the building. Ghulam Mohiyuddin suggests that Abdullah Kasas was generally in favour but other Arab members were not willing to relinquish control of the building. Ghulam Mohiyuddin says on one occasion Abdullah Kasas gave the go ahead by saying just demolish both the buildings and no one will say anything. The buildings were demolished before gaining formal permission from the Arab Muslims but once it had been demolished they gave written consent for the land to be used solely as a mosque.

The information on the Deed of 22 Upper Park Road, the original mosque building, suggests that the plot was first allotted to Mr J Denison on 24th December 1835 for a period of one year. The property that was constructed on this land was known as 'West View' (Spiers 1976:27). The building was purchased from a Miss M Brennan by the Jamiat ul Muslimeen in 1949. The first trustees of the building were Nazir ud-din, Ahmed Hakki-el-Hille, Jan Mohammed, Cassin Ali Mohammed and Rukin Din[48].

Victoria Park mosque has been transformed as result of attempts to outdo the previous committees work. An element of competiveness and intra-biradari, regionalism and business status seem to be the driving force in the expansion and development of Victoria Park Mosque (Werbner 1999: 563).

---

[48] I am grateful to Mr Ghulam Mohiyuddin for this information. He has said this information and the information on the Victoria Park Mosque website was gather though speaking to seven different people including Mr Akbar Ali OBE.

Mr Hayat informed me that Abdullah Kasas, who was his maternal grandfather, was the first permanent imam of the Victoria Park mosque. Maulana Habibur Rahman remembers that "Abdullah Kasas, may Allah Bless Him, was the chairman of Jamiat ul Muslimeen and it was he who appointed me as the imam of Victoria Park mosque". He recalls that Abdullah Kasas was a Syrian businessman who as the chairman of Jamiat ul Muslimeen had said to him that the post of the imam for Victoria Park Mosque had been advertised in Lahore Times newspaper.

The photo in figure 4 below was taken in 1938 in London of a protest organised by the Jamiat ul Muslimeen[49] against a publication of a book that they felt 'insulted' Messenger of Islam and 'disparaged' the Quran (Ansari 2011:19). Ansari has mentioned that the members of Jamiat ul Muslimeen during 1942 visited the north of England including Manchester in October 1942 (Ansari 2011:332). It is quite possible that the name Jamiat ul Muslimeen in Manchester would have come about as a result of the visits made by members to create local branches. The Victoria Park Mosque website suggests that Jamiat ul Muslimeen was already in existence before the purchase of 22 Upper Park Road and had £550 in their account which ties in with Ansaris account of Jamiat ul Muslimeen members visiting Manchester in 1942.

---

[49] Ansari (2011:18) dates the creation of Jamiat ul Muslimin London from 1934.

Figure 5.4. Jamiat ul Muslimin London protest against H G Well's book 1984 in which Muslims alleged that he made derogatory remarks towards the Prophet of Islam. The photo shows that Jamiat ul Muslimeen was active during the 1930s in London.

5.4   Second Phase of Development

The second phase of mosque development took place after the introduction of immigration laws to restrict the flow of migrants from South Asia (The Commonwealth Immigration Act 1962, The Commonwealth Immigration Act 1968, and The Immigration Act 1971). Many Pakistani Muslims fearing that they would not be allowed to call their relatives from Pakistan decided to hasten the process by calling family members to avoid the restrictions that would be introduced due the new immigration laws. It was during this period that Pakistani Muslims began to be joined by their wives and children (Anwar 1979). This development created a new set of priorities for them, which had a profound impact on Muslim institution building in Britain.

The fact that the Pakistani males now had dependent children and wives to look after meant that they faced with crucial decisions about their religious and cultural sustenance whether in the shape of living accommodation or the educational needs of their children. It

is during this period that conscious efforts began to be made to create mosques to take care of the religious educational needs of their children. During this period the mosque creation took the form of purchasing a building that would then be converted into a place of worship but more importantly during this period they would become places that would look after the religious educational needs of their children. During this period the objective was not to go for grandeur but to look at convenience and 'make do' type of facilities. The mosque during this phase would most likely be a small building. The mosque would consist of a room where Muslims could perform their prayers in a congregation and the same space would be used for the children to come after school to learn rote reading of the Quran.

Most mosques during this phase were purchased by funds collected from within the migrant Muslims as there was no financial help available for religious institutions from the central or local government bodies. Given the weak financial situation of the Pakistani Muslims it was inevitable that they would be looking not at the grandeur of mosques but developing makeshift mosques that would fulfil the bare minimum requirements for the transmission of their religious and cultural values. It would seem that the mosque was not in any way a signifier of identity but fulfilled a need of the Muslims in Britain. Sardar's (2008) critique of mosque development during this phase describes it as "... these *masjids* were built by a generation of elders more concerned with dubious piety and obscurantist modes of behaviour than grace or beauty". In relation to the Regent's Park mosque in London, which is seen as the symbol of Muslims in Britain, whenever news coverage is to focus on British Muslims the golden dome of the mosque is displayed, Sardar describes it as "London Central Mosque, designed in 1969 by Sir Frederick Gibberd (who also designed Liverpool's Roman Catholic Cathedral) and built at great expense from 1974,

resembles a gold fish tank. Its gold dome looks like a panama hat, and its horseshoe balcony recalls a recital hall rather than a place of worship" (Sardar 2008).

5.5   The Decline of Textile and the Rise of the Mosque

Another important development from 1980's onward that impacted on the creation of mosques was the decline of the Courtaulds textile industries. Most of the economic migrants in this region who worked in textile mills suddenly found themselves in a situation which they had not faced before (Kalra 2000: 138-159). Employment during their earlier period was not a major issue given the shortage of labour during that period, however, they now faced a situation where jobs were scarce and the industry in which they had acquired their skills was on the decline facing eventual extinction. This is also a significant factor in the increase in the number of mosques during this period. Most of these people until this point had spent all their lives working in textile mills now faced the harsh reality of unemployment. During this period many turned to the mosque for solace. The need for mosques and better prayer facilities increased as a consequence of the necessity of many Pakistani Muslims turning towards the mosque. The number of people attending mosques increased. It is during this phase that greater awareness of their sectarian differences also increased, the influx of imported imams further increased the sectarian divisions.

However, the trend of mosque development remained mainly as makeshift buildings but because of the increase in demand, from growing number of children and male unemployment, the buildings being chosen for mosque purposes were beginning to be bigger in size. It was during the latter part of this phase that many Pakistani Muslim migrants began to come to terms with the realisation that Britain was no longer a

temporary abode and that the institutions they were creating were not for a temporary period. Figure 5 below shows the trend line showing increase in mosque developments.

5.6 Third Phase of Mosque Development

The third phase of the development was when Pakistani Muslims consciously came to terms with the fact that Britain was in fact their home and that the return to Pakistan had now turned into a myth (Anwar 1979). With the collapse of the textile industry they began to look for alternative employment. Gaining employment in a period of high unemployment is difficult in the best of circumstances but to look for employment when you had no formal education and no formal skills other than those gained in a textile industry that had virtually disappeared. During this period many were forced to turn to self-employment in the shape of corner shops, takeaways or taxis (Kalra 2000: 160-195) and in Manchester's case growth of knitwear factories and the wholesale cash and carry businesses absorbed a significant number of the redundant Muslim labour force (Werbner 1990:17-41).

The key development in Manchester was that Pakistani Muslims had turned their attention to developing their own businesses to sustain themselves. This resulted in a certain section of the Pakistani Muslims becoming reasonably wealthy amongst the Pakistani business community, a phenomenon that Werbner terms 'chain entrepreneurs' (Ward et al 1984; Werbner 1990 Chapter two). As a consequence of this new found affluence many began to move out of the inner cities setting up homes in more affluent suburbs of Manchester. In line with their affluence, the confidence in their British Muslim identity and the conscious realisation and acceptance of the fact that they were here to stay was affirmed further through the construction of purpose built mosques that displayed the Islamic architecture

of their country of origin fused with the British architectural style (Nasser 2003). Victoria Park Mosque is a very good example of the mix of British and South Asian architecture.

The issue of belonging to a place is crucial to the development of mosques. In the period when Muslims felt they did not belong in Manchester they did not put much effort into creating permanent lasting institutions, however, when they began to identify themselves as British Muslims having accepted that they belonged here the developmental phase of mosques and other institutions took on a different symbolic meaning which is then reflected in the style and architecture of the purpose built mosques (Nasser 2005; Rasdi 2008). These institutions were now becoming the identity markers for the British Muslim communities (Biondo III 2006). Figure 5 below shows that from 1910 to 1980 there were 164 mosques established but from 1980 to 1998 the number had increased to 614 registered mosques. The number of mosques in UK by April 2013 was 1669[50] (Naqshbandi 2013).
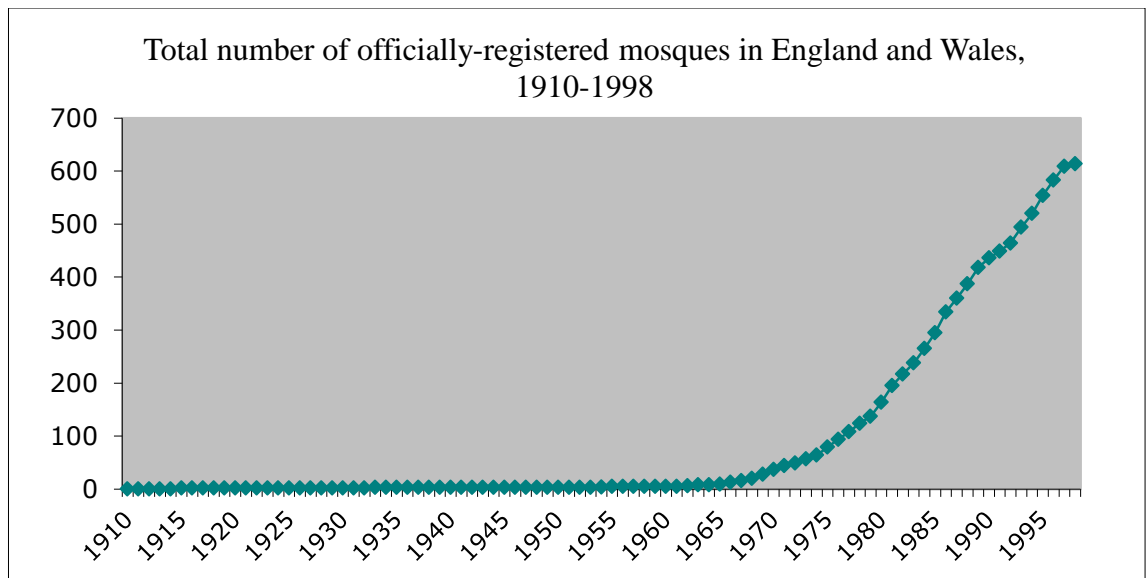
Figure 5.5. National Development of Mosques from 1910 to 1998. For details of the data see footnote[51].

---

[50] http://www.muslimsinbritain.org/resources/masjid_report.pdf - Accessed 28/05/2013.
[51] Data on officially-registered places of worship are published in *Marriage, Divorce and Adoption Statistics, Series FM2* (London: Office for National Statistics). The registers themselves are stored at the General Register Office, Smedley Hydro, Trafalgar Road, Birkdale, Southport, PR8 2HH. These data were collected by Simon Naylor from the GRO's Register of Places of Worship manuscript records, as part of the following

5.7 Victoria Park Mosque and its impact on other mosques

The Victoria Park mosque is the oldest mosque in Manchester dating back to the 1940's (Werbner 1990:37; Scantlbury 1995:428). Some of my respondents have suggested that the mosque was established in 1947 or 1948. However, I have not been able to confirm the exact date of the change of use of 22 Upper Park Road as records were not available for inspection. The Deed of 22 Upper Park Road shows the year of transfer of building to Jamiat ul Muslimeen as 1949. As stated earlier this mosque was not created by the South Asian economic migrants of the post-World War II period but in fact predates this period. Generally, the mosques created by the economic migrant population were small properties that accommodated a small number of children and a small *juma* congregation.

It is interesting that no one mentioned the mosque in Greenheys Manchester but the records show that in 1966 a 'New Mosque' was registered at 82-84 Pigott Street. The closest mosque to Pigott Street, Greenheys currently is the purpose built Ahmadiyya Mosque on Greenheys Lane, Hulme, Manchester[52]. The buildings in this area have been demolished and new residential housing has been constructed. It seems that when demolishing took place most of the Muslims from this area had to relocate in the neighbouring areas of Rusholme, Whalley Range and Moss Side.

In the Rusholme area of Manchester the oldest mosque (excluding Victoria Park Mosque) is perhaps the Shah Jalal mosque (see figure 6 below). In 1967, the Bengali speaking Muslim Community living in Manchester and adjoining towns decided to establish a

[52] The London Gazette 15/02/1966 states "A Building certified for worship named NEW MOSQUE, 82-84 Pigott Street, Greenheys in the registration district of Manchester in the county borough of Manchester, was on 10th' February 1966, registered for solemnizing marriages therein pursuant to section 41 of the Marriage Act, 1949 as amended by section 1 (I) of the Marriage Acts Amendment Act, 1958.-Date~ 11th February 1966. (234) /. *Ratclifle,* Superintendent Registrar.

Mosque. Soon afterwards the Mosque started functioning at 1A Eileen Grove[53], Rusholme, Manchester[54]. One of my respondents informs me that this building was initially used as a Pakistani Community Centre before it started to function as a full time mosque for the Bangladeshi Muslims.

Figure 5.6 Eileen Grove Mosque, Longsight

In Cheetham Hill the Ibadur Rahman Trust purchased a house on Bignor Road and then a house at 25 Bellot Street to fulfil their educational needs. This was an end terraced premises converted to a prayer hall and the same place would then be used for children in the evening to learn the recitation of the Quran. The Bellot Street mosque known as the Ibadur Rahman Cultural Association was initially set up by someone who was described to

---

[53] The Plaque on the building state 'Memorial 1910 Peoples Institute Rusholme'.
[54] Pnina Werbner (1990:37) describes this mosque as Pakistani and of 'grand proportions'. At the time Bangladesh had not been created.

me as an 'ardent Jamat i Islami follower Shaikh Hameeduddin, who was married to an English lady'. The first imam at the Bellot Street mosque was Maulana Habibur Rahman.

The Khizra Jamia Masjid was created as a result of the split in Bellot Street Mosque, the Ibadur Rahman Cultural Association. Mr Salaam and his companions purchased a building on 443 Cheetham Hill Road, Cheetham Hill. The first Khizra mosque was opened in 1977 at 443 Cheetham Hill Road. It is from this building that the Al-Hilal Project was run. The Al-Hilal project was established to provide guidance for those who found themselves unemployed and did not know what to do. The Al-Hilal project provided them with information as to their rights as British citizens. It dealt with issues ranging from Social Security benefits, educational issues and halal meat provision in schools and hospitals.

Maulana Habibur Rahman told me that before they purchased Khizra mosque, UKIM purchased a building on Wilmslow Road just opposite Willow Bank Hotel in 1976. This building was later sold and funds from the sale of this building were used to purchase the Madina Masjid on Barlow Road in Levenshulme. It seems that the Wilmslow Road property was sold around 1984 when Madina masjid was created. The UKIM purchased Madina masjid was created with vast educational project to produce imams but this never materialised.

5.8 Victoria Park Mosque - Pivot for Mosque Development

Victoria Park Mosque's status as the first mosque in Manchester and the first purpose built mosque in Manchester is well established but what is not well documented is how the establishment of the other mosques is linked to the history of the Victoria Park mosque. The establishment of the Didsbury Mosque, the second oldest mosque in Manchester is linked to the Victoria Park mosque. Victoria Park mosque which comprised one half of two semi-detached houses one of the semis belonged to Syrian Muslims and the other semi

was purchased by South Asian Muslims. In 1967 the Syrians for reasons not immediately apparent decided to leave Victoria Park mosque and purchase a building of their own in Didsbury. The building, figure 7 below, purchased was an unused Methodist Church for approximately £10,000. It is believed that some Syrian Businessmen had by this time moved to Didsbury. The committee of the Didsbury mosque did not change the structure of the church but used the main congregational hall for congregational prayer. Figure 8 below shows the interior of the Didsbury mosque has been left as it was when it was used as a church and even made use of the pulpit or ambo, as *mimbar* upon which imam stands when giving the *khutbah*. It seems the only thing they have added is mehrab (niche) from where the imam leads the prayer.

Figure 5.7 Exterior view of Didsbury mosque

What the purchase of the Methodist Church in Didsbury shows is that something happened between the South Asian Muslims and the Arab Muslims to cause the split. It could be the simple factor that the imam at the Victoria Park Mosque since 1965 was a Pakistani and the sermons and religious programmes began to be conducted in the Urdu language

thereby possibly alienating the Arabic speaking Syrians and the Bangladeshi speakers. Prior to 1965 the imam at Victoria Park Mosque was Imam Abdullah Kasas, an Arab.

Figure 5.8 Inside of Didsbury Mosque that was once a Methodist Church

The development of the Shah Jalal mosque has a similar history. The founders of Shah Jalal mosque were initially part of Victoria Park mosque but in 1967 they also decided to create their own mosque. The building chosen for this was not too far from the Victoria Park mosque at 1A Eileen Grove, Rusholme. The building had already been purchased for use as a Pakistani Community Centre. It is quite possible the reasons for the creation of this mosque might have been similar to the Didsbury mosque. Shah Jalal mosque was created by the Bengali speaking East Pakistanis. It is quite possible the issues of language and political motives of nationalist Bengalis may have contributed to this split.

My respondents have given three different reasons for the creation of these two mosques. First reason as I have touched on was the issue of language. The second reason suggested is that they wanted their recognition as Arabs and Bangladeshis. They wanted a separate platform where they could openly claim their nationalist identity. The third reason suggested was that the size of the population was growing and that there was a need to accommodate this population which could not be fulfilled at Victoria Park mosque. I would advocate that the first two reasons seem to be more actively involved in the creation of these two mosques whereas the third reason might be an attempt to put on a 'good face' to the conflict.

The development of the Khizra mosque in Cheetham Hill also has a linked history to Victoria Park Mosque. Maulana Habibur Rahman who was the imam of the mosque from1965 to 1970 when the project to construct a purpose built mosque began, was also involved in the creation of the Bellot Street mosque. His departure from Victoria Park mosque is around the same period when the Bellot Street Mosque was created. It seems that when Maulana Habibur Rahman left Victoria Park mosque he helped set up the Bellot Street mosque with his brother Abdul Salaam and other Muslims who lived in North Manchester Cheetham Hill area. I am informed that Bellot Street mosque came about as a consequence of the ideological sectarian affiliations of the people involved. Maulana Habibur Rahman, one of the earliest members of the Jamaat i Islami in Manchester states he had attended all the annual AGM's of the UKIM except the first one because he was in Pakistan at the time and Shaikh Hameeduddin, the person attributed with coining the name Ibadhur Rahman Cultural Association, were dedicated followers of Maulana Maudoodi the founder of the Jamaat i Islami of Pakistan. Bellot Street later had a further split when Maulana Ibrahim Kushtar and later Maulana Qamaruz Zaman Azmi came to Bellot Street mosque. This again was also an ideological split based on sectarian lines. Ibadur Rahman

Cultural Association became the Ibadhur Rahman Trust and remained at Bellot Street whilst Abdul Salaam and his companions separated from the Ibadur Rahman Trust creating the Khizra mosque at 443 Cheetham Hill Road. It seems both these mosques have a linked past to the Victoria Park Mosque. Khizra mosque subsequently moved to the purpose built mosque at 425 Cheetham Hill Road, which was close to 443 Cheetham Hill Road.

Figure 5.9 First Khizra Mosque at 443 Cheetham Hill Road – Photo Courtesy of Khizra Mosque.

Figure 5.10 Maulana Habib ur Rahman and Maulana Muhammad Sharif at the foundation laying ceremony of the purpose built Khizra Mosque – Photo Courtesy of Khizra Mosque.

140

The Islamic Academy on Upper Brook Street was established in 1974 by Allama Khalid Mahmood. Allama Khalid Mahmood, a Deobandi alim, who became the imam of Victoria Park Mosque after Allama Khurshid Abdullah was appointed the imam when maulana Habibur Rahman left Victoria Park Mosque. The Islamic Academy came about as a consequence of the split in Victoria Park when Allama Khalid Mahmood had to leave in a sectarian Barelwi / Deobandi dispute[55]. The Islamic Academy was housed in a historical unused church on Upper Brook Street. The Islamic Academy thereby became the first Deobandi mosque in Manchester, if we consider the Zakariyyah mosque as the first Tablighi Jamat mosque. Allama Khalid Mahmood has a very strong following amongst the Deobandi sect.

Figure 5.11 The Islamic Academy

---

[55] Allegations of sexual abuse were labelled at the imam but he was cleared of all charges from the courts.

After Allama Khalid Mahmood left Victoria Park Mosque a hafiz Abdul Baqi led the juma prayers. It seems that he did not deliver any sermons at Juma prayers but just led the congregation prayer. After Hafiz Abdul Baqi was relieved of his duties he was replaced by Allama Nisar Ahmed Baig Qadri who was appointed as the main imam. It is when Allama Nisar Ahmed Baig was appointed as the imam of Victoria Park Mosque, thereby becoming the first Pakistani 'Barelwi' sunni mosque in Manchester[56]. Since the time of Allama Baig the mosque has gone through many ups and downs but has to this day remained a Barelwi sunni mosque. However when Allama Baig left the mosque after thirteen years he for a long time did not establish his own mosque, which is rare given what happened when other imams left the mosque. He remained in Manchester and remained involved with the mosque in different ways but did not create his own mosque, harbouring a desire to make a comeback as the imam of Victoria Park mosque. It was not until 2003 that Allama Baig created his own mosque at St John's Church on St John's Road in Longsight. I will discuss this mosque later on.

After Allama Baig departed the mosque committee was dominated by the adherents of Pir Asif Farooqi Naqshbandi. They brought about their own 'brand' of Islam which was not the same as Allama Baig's. It seems that the committee that was strongly influenced by Pir Asif Farooqi appointed Qari Muhammad Tayyib as the main imam of Victoria Park mosque. Qari Tayyib however made the fatal mistake of criticising Pir Asif Farooqi's recitation of the Quran. Hafeez who was part of the elections told me that Pir Farooqi did not feel offended by Qari Tayyib's comments and agreed to correct his recitation, however, followers of the Pir felt that Qari Tayyib had insulted their Pir and decided to relieve Qari Tayyib of his duties at the Victoria Park mosque. It seems that the method used to relieve

---

[56] The Shah Jalal mosque on 1a Eileen Grove had begun in 1967 therefore it was the first sufi Barelwi mosque in Manchester. It was in the Shah Jalal mosque that Mualana Qammaruzzaman Azmi first delivered darse Quran, travelling from Bradford. Maulana Azmi permanently moved to Manchester in 1979 to become the imam of the Ibadhur Rahman Cultural Trust, North Manchester Jamia mosque.

Qari Tayyib is instructive of the fierceness of the nature of the conflict at Victoria Park Mosque. Hafeez informed me that around midnight some members of the executive committee came to the mosque and informed Qari Tayyib that he was relieved of his duties that he would have to leave immediately. At midnight these members gathered Qari Tayyib's belongings and took him to Makka Mosque in Bolton, where he was the imam before coming to Victoria Park mosque. Hafeez says that the committee did not wish to risk a conflict with the supporters of Qari Tayyib therefore the timing was crucial as nobody is in the mosque at that time thereby avoiding any immediate conflict. However, Hafeez say that this feud later on became very 'nasty, dirty and underhand' involving drugs whereby Pir Farooqi distanced himself from Victoria Park mosque.

Pir Asif Farooqi's followers set up their own mosque in Burnage the Khanqah Naqshbandiya Mosque on Kingsway. It is clear that because of the dispute at Victoria Park Mosque Pir Asif Farooqi felt it was more appropriate to create his own mosque than continue the feud at Victoria Park Mosque.

The creation of the Jamia Rasoolia mosque on Chorlton Road was also the result of a dispute at Victoria Park Mosque between Qari Muhammad Tayyib and the new mosque committee. The mosque committee did not even feel that they had to give any notice to Qari Tayyib and overnight replaced him with Maulana Zafar Mahmood Farashwi. Although Qari Tayyib was taken to Bolton he decided not to remain in Manchester and later opened the Jamia Rasoolia mosque in an end terraced building that was previously a bank amongst a row of shops on Chorlton Road, Chorlton cum Hardy.

Maulana Farashwi belonged to the same group of ulama that Allama Nisar Ahmed Baig belonged to. The result of maulana Farashwi taking his position as the main imam of the Victoria Park mosque was a long term feud between followers of Allama Baig and

Maulana Farashwi. It was felt by the followers of Allama Baig that he should have said to the committee to give first priority to Allama Baig. In one gathering I heard that Allama Baig said that it was him and Pir Abdul Qadir of Walthamstow who taught Allama Farashwi and that he had been disloyal in accepting the Victoria Park Mosque position. It would seem that it was not too long before the committee became unhappy with Maulana Farashwi and asked him to leave his position as the main imam. The departure of maulana Farashwi resulted in the creation of the mosque Al-Jamiat al Karimia Trust mosque on Platt Lane in Fallowfield. This mosque was housed on the first floor whilst the ground floor is occupied by a retail business.

The departure of maulana Farashwi heralded the period of Pir Muzzamil Hussain Shah. It would seem that during his period because he was not conversant in English, not that the previous imams were, the committee decided to appoint a deputy imam maulana Arshad Misbahi solely because he was educated in England and was fluent in English. One of the major reasons why Maulana Misbahi was employed was the committee's realisation that the people associated with the mosque expected them to make arrangements to attract the English speaking youth. This decision demonstrates recognition on the part of the mosque committee that an imam who was fluent in English was an important requirement of the time. However when Pir Muzzamil Hussain Shah was relieved of his duties maulana Arshad Misbahi took over as the main imam. I would assume that during his tenure as deputy imam with Pir Muzzamil Hussain Shah he proved to the mosque committee that he was proficient in both Urdu and English therefore they appointed him as the permanent main imam.

Pir Muzzamil Hussain Shah has set up his own mosque and appears on DM Digital Television channel. At the time of writing maulana Arshad Misbahi has also been relieved

of his duties. But what is interesting is that maulana Misbahi has remained part of Victoria Park Mosque for around fifteen years. It was suggested by some that this either means that the committee at Victoria Park mosque gained stability and continuity or it means that maulana Misbahi was not too strong a character to upset the committee members. Maulana Misbahi had the qualities to withstand the many changes in the committee of Victoria Park Mosque to survive so long. However one person who has been at Victoria Park Mosque throughout all its conflicts and developments is Qari Javid Akhtar. He arrived during the period of Allama Baig in the 1970's and has remained at the mosque as the second imam and is still the second imam.

The creation of the Minhaj ul Quran Central mosque on Withington Road in Whalley Range was also as result of the conflict with Victoria Park Mosque. I am informed that Minhaj ul Quran members were under strict instructions by its leader Muhammad Tahir ul Qadri not to set up mosques and work with the existing mosques. When Minhaj ul Quran approached Victoria Park Mosque with a view to holding a weekly *mehfil i zikr* they were told that they could not hold their *mehfil i zikr*. Minhaj ul Quran committee informed me that they were compelled to acquire their own building if they wanted their message to be put across to the people of Manchester because the mosque committees in Manchester would not allow them to hold their programmes in these mosques. It seems that even though Minhaj ul Quran did not wish to create its own mosque but due to its alienation and isolation it was forced to change its policy and create their own mosque in Withington Road, Whalley Range.

Figure 5.12 off shoots from Victoria Park Mosque

5.9 Conflict Resolution or Conflict Perpetuation

The creation of all the mosques, with the exception of the Islamic Academy and the Khizra mosque, that I have described above are from the Barelwi sect. Neilsen argues that "conflicts over control of mosques and associated resources are almost stereotypically presented as Deobandi-Barelwi conflicts" (1992: 45). Modood (1990) has also suggested that Deobandi-Barelwi conflict is fairly widespread in Britain. I would argue that although the conflict between Barelwi and Deobandi has been discussed but the development of mosques in Manchester the conflict within Barelwis themselves has been one of the most

important reasons for the creation new mosques. When the imams at these mosques are questioned about the creation of theses mosques they give different rhetorical reasons.

The imams and committee members justify creation of mosques but none suggested that it was due to their conflict at Victoria Park mosque. They suggest there was a '*zaroorat hai*' (need) as the community was growing. Looking at the attendance at these mosques one would not hesitate to agree with them as they are all well attended during juma prayers, however, I would argue that the creation of these mosques is due to conflicts at the Victoria Park mosque that fractured the Pakistani Muslims further thereby making unity even more difficult. If conflict was not the main cause for the creation of these mosques then the development of mosques would have been a lot more systematic, less sporadic and less divisive for the community.

Some of my respondents have argued that the divisions in the Muslim communities are largely as a result of how the community has (not) managed disputes. Almost every time a dispute occurs at the Victoria Park mosque the dispute is never settled until a heated divorce takes place between the parties resulting in the losing party decides to leave to set up their own mosque. It seems conflict resolution is a weak point of not only the mosque committees at Victoria Park but mosque committees elsewhere as well. My respondents said 'lack of education and rigidity' seem to be the key reasons for the splits from mosques to create new mosques. One of my respondent's says "Had the committees been more educated they would have had a better understanding of how to deal with conflict situations. None of the committee members have conflict resolution training". He goes on further to say that as a consequence "generally what happens is a polarisation of the parties involved into a situation where the only outcome is that one of the parties has to leave the mosque", thereby paving the way for the creation of another mosque. Many respondents

have said unless and until the imams and committees learn how to resolve conflict situations they will perpetuate these divisions further. It seems that in conflict situations they are only familiar with win / loose dichotomy and have never come across a win / win resolution.

5.10   Complexities Involved in the Creation of Mosques

My aim in showing the distinct and varied patterns of mosque development in Manchester has been to highlight the complexities involved in understanding the diverse types of mosques. One of the key components in creation of the different mosques is the different schools of thought for example the Barelwi, the Deobandi, the Ahle Hadith and Shias. However what we see is that just the fact that these mosques belong to a different school of thought does not provide a sufficient explanation for vast array of mosques. For example the creation of the mosques in close proximity to each other for example the Makki Masjid and Al Quba mosque. To understand this we need to understand the heterogeneous nature of the Muslim community in Manchester.

Figure 5.13 Al Quba mosque and Proposed Makki mosque Construction
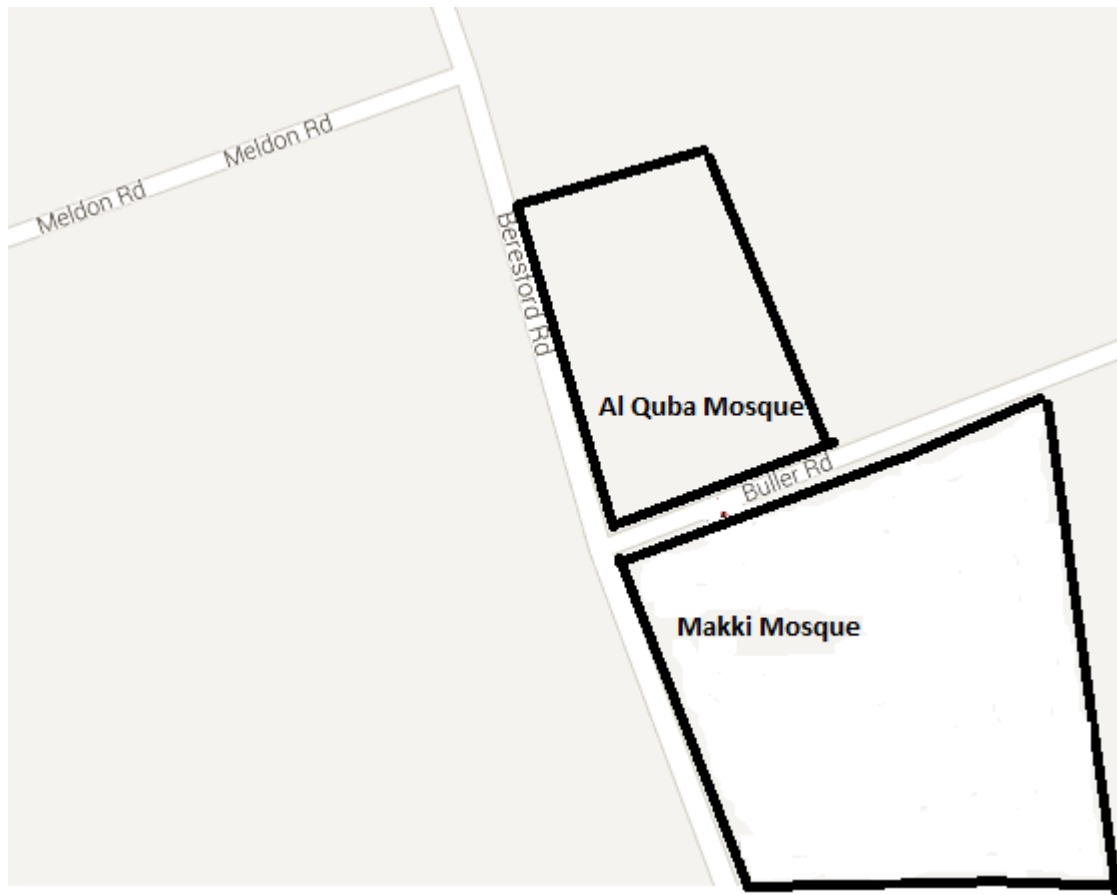
Map 5.1 Location of Al Quba mosque and Makki mosque separated by Buller Road

Manchester Muslims come from diverse ethnic backgrounds that separate them through cultural traditions and languages. For example one of the explanations for the creation of the Makki masjid and the al Quba masjid so close to each other is that the congregations come predominantly from two distinct ethnic backgrounds. Al Quba masjid is predominantly of Bengali origin whereas the Makki Masjid congregation mostly Pakistani ahle Hadith denomination. The issue of language and violent nationalistic separation of the two regions plays a strong part. What we have on display in the form of the mosque is the diversity of the Muslims in Manchester. A similar example amongst the Barelwis is the Victoria Park mosque and the Shah Jalal mosque both belong to Barelwi school of thought

but again one is predominantly Pakistani whilst the other predominantly Bengali. Where religion is the uniting factor culture and language provide the catalyst of the division.

When issues like Satanic Verses, halal food, single sex schools and religious education arise, the otherwise divided community comes together as these are shared religious values and cultural values. The language and cultural divisions give way to common issues facing all Muslims in Manchester. A Bengali will be equally vociferous demanding halal meals for children as will be the Pakistani and the Arab although each may have nationalistic differences. Nationalistic and cultural differences normally give way to unity when the issue is common when it comes to religious obligation.

5.11   The Variety of Mosques in Manchester

5.11.1 Masjid e Noor

The Masjid E Noor was the idea of the Old Trafford Muslim Society which came into existence in 1977 they purchased a redundant Co-Op shop in 1979 with the aim to set up a shop premises but when they applied for planning permission they were informed that their lease suggested that they could only open a shoe shop. Mr Chunara says that the location was not right for a shoe shop so they discarded the idea. They then thought that having purchased the building it might ideal to start a mosque for the Muslims of Old Trafford who at the time had no mosque. Their enquiries in relation to opening a mosque was very favourable from the owners of the freehold to building who not only agreed but became flexible on payment of the loan. After renovation work the mosque was opened in 1978 as the Masjid E Noor. Abu Bakr Chunara of Gujarati background is chairman of the mosque He migrated from Malawi to Manchester in 1978.

The purpose built mosque project began when they purchase vacant council flats in 1999 for £85,000. Once they had gained planning permission they demolished the flats to prepare the ground for the purpose built mosque. Mr Chunara informs me that all funds raised for the mosque were from within Britain. He says that they bought a car and travelled to London Thursday and come back on Sunday. He says that the money was collected from around 170 mosques in and around London. They then adopted the same approach but this time they targeted mosques in Birmingham. It goes without saying that the Manchester Muslim community donated generously towards this project. The purpose built mosque work began 1999 and was opened to the public by 2001. The total cost of the project was £897,000. The mosque can now accommodate approximately 1500 worshippers. However during *eid* prayers they make arrangements for two *Jamaats* as all worshippers could not be accommodated in one *Jamaat*.

5.11.2 Muslim Youth Foundation

The Muslim Youth Foundation (MYF) was constituted under a trust deed dated 23rd July 1983. The creation of the MYF was the idea of Dr Saleem al-Hassani. The aim, largely due to its location in the heart of Manchester city centre, was to cater specifically for Muslims who worked in and around the city centre of Manchester with a focus on youth activities. The mosque located on Turner Street in the Clydesdale House building was mainly used during office hours in the beginning but later become a full time mosque used out of office hours as well. The main reason for this is that many Muslim students who reside in the building use the mosque for Fajr and Isha prayers. From the name, Muslim 'Youth' Foundation, it becomes manifestly apparent that the mosque is focusing its attention towards the Muslim youth. The MYF is dedicated to fostering a 'British Muslim identity' within Europe to promote a peaceful dialogue with people of other faiths. The organisation is also keen to promote unity amongst Muslims by stating that it wants people to become

non partisan. It aims to minimise the negative impact of sectarian divisions among British Muslims. On a wider societal level the MYF aims to 'address misconceptions' that are prevalent about Islam amongst wider British society. MYF also states that one of its aims is to be 'non political' to develop the ability of the Muslim youth to actively participate in society. It has a motto of 'building bridges with the community'.

Figure 5.14 Muslim Youth Foundation in Manchester City Centre

What is clear from the aims of the MYF is that they are aware of and are attempting to counter the effects sectarian conflicts are having on the British Muslims. One of the projects they started to counter the conflictual elements within the Muslim community through a project known as 'Khateeb Programme' which I discuss in detail in chapter 7. The aim of the programme is to teach aspiring imams on how to avoid sectarian conflict.

5.11.3 Makki Masjid

Makki Masjid at 125 Beresford Road in Longsight was established 1989. The committee purchased a derelict industrial unit in 1987 for £30,000 and it was formally opened on 12 September 1989. In 2001 the mosque committee purchased the adjacent property, 127 Beresford Road for £65,000 to enable extension of the existing mosque. In 2007 third property 129 Beresford Road was purchased for £220,000. Figure 14 below shows the building that has now been demolished to make way for a two story purpose built mosque complete with minaret and dome.

Figure 5.15 The old Makki Masjid in a redundant cooperative shop

Figure 15 below shows that the Al-Quba mosque which is separated from the proposed purpose built Makki Mosque by Buller Road but both mosques are on Beresford Road adjacent to each other. It seems that the Makki mosque is Ahle Hadith with mainly

Pakistani Muslims whilst the Al-Quba mosque is comprised of Bangladeshi Deobandi Muslims.

Figure 5.16 Al Quba Mosque and next to it the proposed purpose built Makki Mosque Site

5.11.4 Altrincham Muslim Association (AMA)

Altrincham is one of the most affluent areas where Muslim professionals and successful Muslim businessmen from Manchester move to. Muslims who gained success in their respective fields are more affluent than the mainstream of the Muslim community who have chosen to move out of the city into affluent suburbs like Altrincham. One of the issues that these Muslims faced was that they had no mosque near their home and would have to travel to the city to attend mosque prayers. In 1992 a group of Muslims got together and decided that they needed a place for prayer in their area. It seems that Dr Altaf Ahmed, originally from Bangalore, was the impetus behind the initiative to establish a mosque. By 1995 it seems that the arrival of Dr Munir Ahmed Butt, a GP by profession,

provided the organisation with renewed enthusiasm to create a mosque in Altrincham. Dr Butt it seems was an active member of Islamic Society of Britain and was knowledgeable in Islamic matters and the Arabic language. He initiated weekly Islamic study circles for men and women.

On 22nd September 1995 Altrincham Muslim Association drafted its first constitution. This was followed on 23rd September by a talk by a prominent internationally renowned Muslim Yusuf Islam (Cat Stevens) entitled 'The Straight Path to Peace' which was followed by a week of activities for Islam Awareness Week.

However it was over a decade after the initial idea to establish a mosque in Altrincham was first entertained that the Altrincham Muslim Association purchased the St David's Church on Grove Lane in 2003. It seems that the same premises were used earlier, in 1994 and 1995, to perform the tarawih prayers. The purchase of the building allowed the Muslims of Altrincham to perform tarawih prayers in their own premises. Those who attended the Tarawih confirm that the place was full to its capacity on the first night of the tarawih prayers. Since the opening of Islamic Cultural Centre, the name given to the mosque, it had the privilege of being able to invite some of the most notable scholars of the Western world most notably Yusuf Islam; Dr. Jamal Badawi; Sarah Joseph; Dr. Munir Ahmed; Ahmed Thompson; Mahmud Manning; Dr. Amina Coxon; Abdul Latif Whiteman; Dawud Wharnsby Ali; Ibrahim Hewitt; Prof. Salim Al-Hassani; Siddique Seddon; Athsham Ali; Mohammed Abdul Malik; Dr. Abdus Salam Sarumi and Ajmal Masroor.

The Islamic Cultural Centre is different in terms of its activities from other mosques in Manchester in many ways. Firstly it is one of the first mosques to provide a written version of the Friday sermon and is available online in pdf format for people to download. The mosque is also pioneering in the language used for sermons and lectures is English. One of

the main reasons why they have been able to adopt English as the main language is to do with the educational composition of the congregation. Muslims living in Altrincham are predominantly educated and successful professionals who are fluent in English which is different from the likes of Victoria Park mosque, Zakaria Mosque and North Manchester Jamia mosque where the congregation is predominantly from working class background and whose first language in many case is still Punjabi or Urdu and as a consequence the sermons in these mosques are mainly delivered in Urdu with a minor add-on for English speakers.

However, what is surprising is that given the wealth of those involved in the Islamic Cultural Centre mosque they have not attempted to build a purpose built mosque nor go for a large building, instead they purchased a fairly medium sized building. One of the reasons could be that they did not wish to rattle their mainly white upper class neighbours. It is possible that this is a conscious decision on the part of the organisers to keep a low profile within the neighbourhood, although they are quite actively involved in interfaith programmes and the mosque is a founding member of the Altrincham Interfaith Group. The Islamic Cultural Centre is also involved in the wider community through the following organisations:

- Official Chaplain at Wythenshawe Hospital
- Directorship of Trafford Community Leisure Trust
- Members of the Police Community Liaison Committee
- Members of the Trafford Education Scrutiny Group
- Represented on the Trafford Black and Ethnic and Minority Group
- Member of the Trafford Jinja Association
- Providing support for Altrincham Grammar Girls' and Boys' Schools' bids for specialist language status

The Islamic Cultural Centre of Altrincham is a new breed of mosques that caters for a different audience and works a lot more systematically in comparison to the inner city mosque.

5.11.5 Cheadle Mosque & Community Centre – Cheadle Muslim Association (CMA)

Another mosque that works on a similar path is the Cheadle Mosque and Community Centre which managed by the Cheadle Muslim Association (CMA). The CMA began operating from January 2004 from a building that was previously a church. The CMA operates from two buildings one a mosque used for prayers and a four bedroom detached for classes and is used by women for Juma prayers. The CMA pays a lot attention to recreational and sports facilities as it has cricket nets, a netball court and 9 a-side football pitch.

Figure 5.17 Cheadle Muslim Association Mosque and Community Centre located in plush suburb of Cheadle.

The mosque offers two *juma jamaats* one hour apart as there is not enough space to accommodate all the worshippers in one Jamaat. The majority of the people who attend the juma prayer seemed to be people who do not necessarily live in Cheadle but in fact work in

the vicinity and find that CMA mosque is the closest. There is a food stall on juma for many of the people who came to perform Juma prayer during their lunch hour. The food stall holder says that "these people do not have enough time to go anywhere else for their lunch therefore what we do is provide some samosas, kebabs and drinks so that after their prayer they can grab some food and go back to work".

5.12 Mosques Become Environmentally Friendly Ecomosque

The mosque construction is moving into a new phase that reflects the education and financial development of British Muslims. British Muslims have begun to engage with ecological ideas in the construction of mosques. Due to the fact that migrant Muslims have accepted their fate as British Muslims to remain in Britain have begun to think about the environment and how mosques can become environmentally friendly. Most mosques initially installed normal water tabs that wasted a lot of water but have now begun to shift to sophisticated sprinkler type taps that use less water to perform ablution. This environmental momentum has transferred into the creation of Manchester's first eco-friendly mosque with another more ambitious project in the pipeline to create Britain's first university campus based purpose built Ecomosque in Salford.

5.12.1 Markaz al-Najmi mosque – Dawoodi Bora Shia

Manchester has already got its first 'eco friendly' in the shape of the Shia Bora mosque in Levenshulme which was opened in July 2008[57]. The idea of the mosque began in 2003 and was completed and opened to the public on Sardar (2008) who is generally quite critical of mosque designs welcomed Markaz al-Najmi mosque as an eco friendly mosque[58]. The mosque partly uses renewable energy through their installation of solar panels on the roof.

---

[57] Muslims put faith in £3.5m eco-mosque, 18 April 2010
[58] Welcome to the Eco Mosque Ziauddin Sardar Published 05 June 2008. http://www.newstatesman.com/religion/2008/06/ecomosque-mosques-british

The mosque used reclaimed Indian pink stone from a quarry in Jaipur in India which worked out cheaper than buying locally (See figure 18 below).

Figure 5.18 Markaz al-Najmi mosque – Dawoodi Shia Bora - Levenshulme

The mosque committee in making the eco friendly mosque have endeavoured to put forward a positive example for the Muslim congregation that will come to pray in the mosque. The mosque sends a message to the community to care for the environment and think about using resources wisely and not to be wasteful. The mosque cannot be classed totally as ecomosque as it will not run solely on renewable energy. The mosque has also tried to incorporate under-floor heating system as an energy saving measure.

5.12.2 Ecomosque - Salford University Student Mosque

The existing student mosque was housed in a prefab building near the Salford rail station. It is one the first buildings that is visible as you get of the platform. The President of

Islamic society, Usman, at the time who later on went on to become the president of the students union at Salford university became aware the that the building in which the mosque was located was due for demolition and there were plans to relocate the mosque into a different building (See figure 19 below). He considers that the demolition of the current building was mainly due to health and safety reason and secondly because the building was in located at a prominent position, was the first building that people saw when they came by train. Due to the influx of people into Salford due to the establishment of the new Media City being located in Salford and as part of Salford University's Master plan to revamp the campus to make the campus more attractive Salford University management committee decided they would demolish the building and replace it with a modern state of the art building in its place. So that when people come out of the Salford train station they do not see an unsightly prefab building but will in fact see a new state of the art university building.

The idea of the Salford University Ecomosque came about partly as a consequence of the universities desire to improve its campus and partly the initiative of Zahid and Usman. Zahid who has a background in Social Enterprise and Sustainability matters was approached by Usman to raise funds for the mosque. Social Enterprise Development Initiative (SEDI) was run by Zahid from Cheetham Hill. SEDI was a specialist BME (Black & Minority Ethnic) organisation that lobbied and supported the creation of social enterprises and carried out community research throughout the UK. Zahid has previously worked quite closely with the Khizra mosque to introduce ideas of financial sustainability for mosques. The specific aims were to create ways in which mosques could generate funds that would support the long term financial sustainability of the mosque. The other part of SEDI's brief was to suggest ways in which the mosques should use the existing resources that it possessed. Zahid's argument was that the mosque has space that is under

used and the mosque must develop methods to make better use of this space. For example most of the mosque space remains empty for most of the week except on Fridays during juma time.

Figure 5.19 Salford University Student Mosque in a Prefab building due for demolition.

The Salford University Ecomosque project is led by Usman and Zahid. The idea came from the desire to create a mosque that is not only sustainable economically but that is also environmentally friendly (sustainable). So the idea of the Ecomosque arises out of the university's desire to improve the attractiveness of its campus and Zahid and Usman's desire to create an economically sustainable and environmentally friendly mosque.

The arrival of Professor Martin Hall as Vice Chancellor of Salford University from Cape Town South Africa seemed to be a point from where the negotiations for the ecomosque began to move in a positive direction. It was suggested that his contact with the Muslim community in South Africa seemed to make him more receptive to the idea of a purpose

built mosque a university campus. The University provided land between University Road

and Christchurch Avenue which bordered by Aldred Street for peppercorn rent.
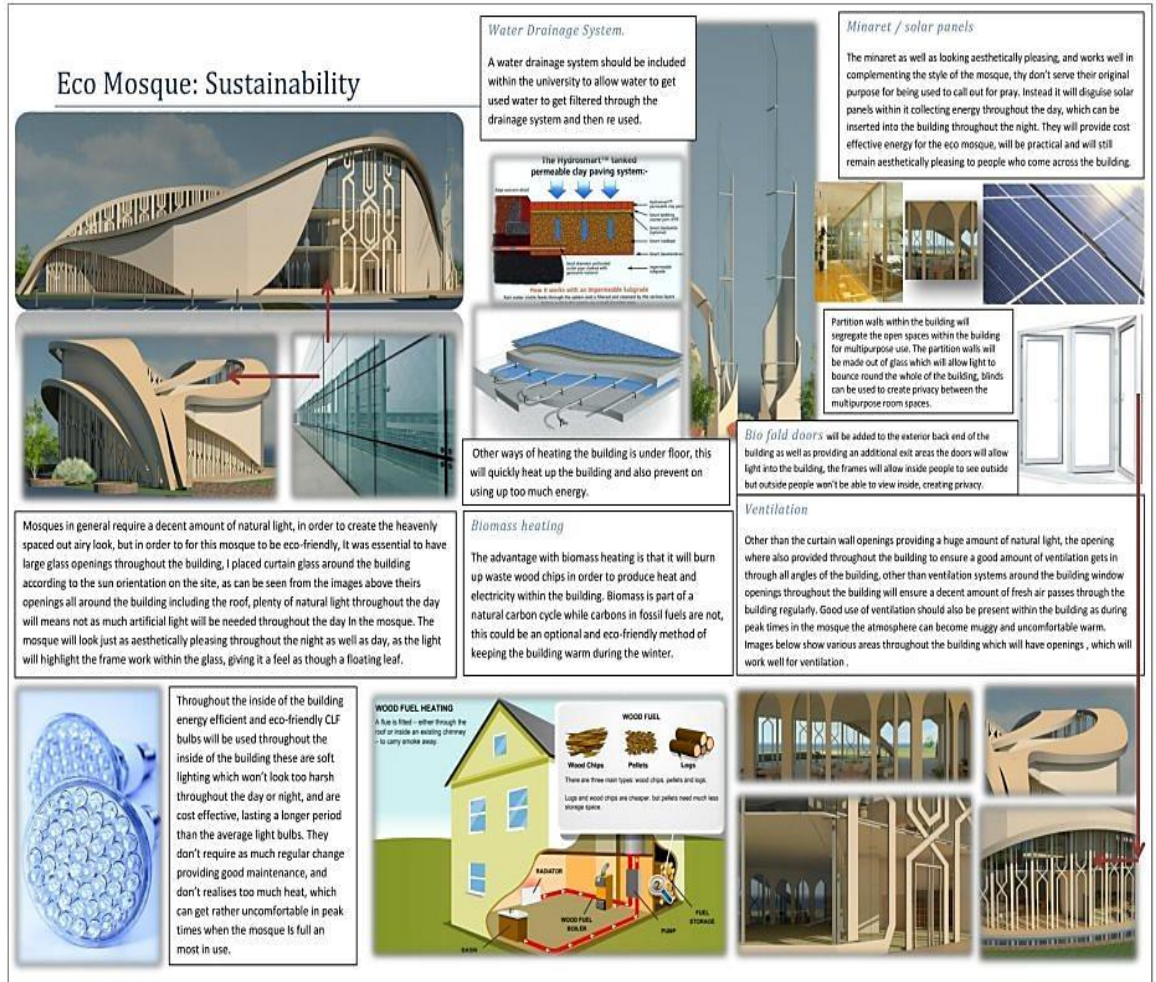
Figure 5.20 Hamera Farooq's winning Ecomosque design poster.

Salford University decided to hold a competition for third year architecture students to

design an architecturally eco friendly mosque. Mark Alston a lecturer in Construction

Technology at Salford University headed the ecomosque project competition in which a

total of 43 students took part. Hamera Farooq from Oldham won the competition for her

ecomosque project (See Figure 20 above)[59]. The competition organisers asked their students to pay particular attention to ways that the mosques design can accommodate a water management policy and ways to harness green energy for the use in the mosque. The designs looked at ways that water could be used sparingly and how the waste water could be used for other purposes. Similarly the use solar panel in the mosque design was a significant part of the winning design.

5.13 Conclusion

The development of mosques in Manchester mirrors the transformation of identity from temporary Pakistani economic migrants to confident British citizens playing their part in a multi-faith and multicultural British society. The mosques in Manchester began their life in make shift buildings that sufficed to provide space for their children to be taught rote learning of the Quran whilst at the same time the same space is used for the five daily congregational prayers and the Juma prayers on Friday. During this phase the emphasis was on having some sort of space which they could designate as a mosque. However over time Pakistani migrants became British citizens they began to envisage a more permanent future in Britain they began to develop mosques that would become permanent features of the British landscape. Purpose built mosques in Manchester began with the reconstruction of the Victoria Park mosque in early in 1970s and Manchester now boasts of 8 purpose built mosques including the construction of the City Mosque on Stockport Road, and with the addition of the Makki Mosque which is under construction Manchester will have 9 purpose built mosques. One of these purpose built mosque has incorporated environmentally friendly aspect in its usage and design. The Ecomosque project on Salford

---

[59] The winner Hamera Farooq was invited to the Manchester studios of BBC Radio for an interview along with Mark Alston, Zahid and Usman to discuss the Ecomosque project. Accessed 10/06/2013 - http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p018s0wb

University campus is another example of growing confidence of British Muslims to take on board environment concerns when constructing mosques which shows the transformation from make shift mosques. This investment in Manchester is an indication of how Muslims have come to accept that Manchester is their permanent home.

The number of mosques in Manchester from late 1960s onward has increased but the increase cannot be understood simply by the increase in the population of Muslims in Manchester. In fact the many conflicts at Victoria Park mosque have resulted in a number of mosques opening up due to their differences with how the Victoria Park Mosque is run. The development of new mosques is being shaped by the way conflict is handled in mosques. The lack of training and experience in dealing with conflicts has shown a mentality of win-lose without any space for win-win resolution to conflicts. Where the imams and committees are being trained to tackle the radicalisation of Muslim youth they are perhaps in need of urgent training in conflict resolution.

6 MOSQUES, COMMITTEES, IMAMS AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

The mosques of Allah should be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, establish Salah *(prayers),* and pay Zakah *(poor dues)* and fear none except Allah. It is they who are expected to follow the true guidance. Quran Surah 9: Verse18

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on mosques, the functions of the mosques, and the organisational structure of these mosques. Through an analysis of the internal workings of the mosques, I will illustrate the development of an innovative role of mosques as a living organ of the Muslims in Manchester. I discuss the convictions and aspirations of British Muslims initially to deconstruct through use of Quran and Hadith / Sunnah and then use the same to reconstruct the 'traditional' role of the mosque thereby, transforming the mosque in a way that it becomes the hub of the local Muslim community. I also explore the aims and objectives of those involved in the mosques and the future direction that they intend to proceed with the role of the mosque.

Naylor and Ryan, writing about one of the oldest mosques in London, state that 'the mosque now casts a sphere of influence on a scale few would have predicted at its humble beginnings' (2002: 57). Kingsley Purdam, analysing the impacts of democracy on identity, has also argued that mosques play a 'pivotal role in Muslim communities in Britain' (1997: 243). Ali Wardak's study of a mosque in Glasgow has highlighted role that the mosque performs in 'the micro-politics of social control' amongst the Muslim community (2000:200). I propose that the mosque also performs the role of boundary maintenance (Barth 1969; Jacobson 1998). The interaction between mosques and local authorities has implications for how its role and architecture have developed (Nielsen 1986; Naylor and Ryan 2002). The state authorities view the mosques as important institutions that have a

vital role to play particularly since the 7/7 bombings by funding research on mosques in Britain (Hart 2009; Rahman et al 2010; Asim 2011). I will also analyse the rhetoric and tensions between those who consider the role of the mosque as solely a place for worship and those who view the mosque as a 'community centre' (McLoughlin 1998; Rasdi GBER 2006).

Mosques have been criticised by some Muslims who are dissatisfied with their performance. This comment Fuad Nahdi in Q-News serves as an illustration of a common thread of criticism of contemporary British mosques:

> "Yes you have built Mosques… But you have also … built Mosques that are alien, hostile and irrelevant to our needs and requirements. Mosques that are full of squabbles and fights. Not love and compassion. Mosques full of notices of 'don't' do this 'don't' do that. Mosques whose doors are closed to the destitute, the poor, the orphans." (Q-News, May 1998, p. 5.)

This truly demonstrates the strength of resentment felt towards the ethos of mosques in Britain. It also highlights the contrast between held by many young Muslims concerning mosques to views held by committee members who shaping policy in mosques. Maulana Qamar uz-Zaman Azmi a prominent imam in Manchester in his speech said that 'Critics of mosques and *ulama* need to understand that it is thanks to these *ulama* and the *masajid* that you have Islam in Britain' implying that without imams, British Muslims would be identified by an 'Ali G' type of Muslim not a 'Lord Ahmed' type, the fact that we have Lord Ahmed's is due to the work of the mosques and imams (Lewis 2002). This shows the level of polarisation of views held by critics and apologists and the contested views on the role and purpose of mosques.

6.2   Masjid / Mosque

Literally the term *masjid* (mosque) refers to a place of *sujjud* (prostration) (Sibai 1987: 6-7). The Quranic verse number 36 in Surah An-Nur (Surah No. 24) says

(This Light of Allah illumines) such houses (mosques and centres) as Allah has ordained to exalt (i.e., enhance their esteem and honour) and remember His Name therein. (These are the houses) in which (Allah's servants) glorify Him morning and evening. (An-Nur 24:36).

The term mosque in this research refers to a much broader concept of mosque in which all the activities that take place inside the building are included within the domain of mosque's functionality. I am referring to the whole building complex, which includes the prayer hall, offices and all other rooms in the building and all the activities that take place within the compounds of the building termed mosque. The literall meaning of the mosque is a place for *sujjud* (prostration), prayer is conducted and more specifically in which congregational prayer (*jamaat*) is held. Congregational prayer is not mandatory for a place to be termed a mosque I have seen many small mosques in Pakistan where individuals come and pray whenever they have time, however these are sometimes referred to as *musallahs*.

The offices, places of ablution, library, recreational places and the morgue are technically not known as the mosque but here I use the term mosque in its wider interpretation that encompasses all the facilities mentioned. Historically libraries have been an integral part of some of the historical mosques (Sibai 1987). In Manchester, specifically and in Britain more generally, mosques cater for what are defined as religious necessities for the Muslim community. These facilities are part of the role that mosques fulfil in Britain. I am referring here to things like funeral services, place for gatherings and so on. In South Asian countries, these activities are reliant on other institutions, for example the family or biradari in Pakistan takes care of the funeral services and the built domestic environment in rural areas provides a number of meeting areas that are independent of mosques (see for example Barth 1959 or Lyon 2004 on *baithek* or *dhera*-- men's seating areas or guest rooms in wealthy landowners' houses).

6.3 Functions of Mosques

Daniele Joly identified at least eleven functions of a mosque in her research of mosques in Birmingham (1990:36-43: also see Birt 2005 188-191; see Bagby et al 2001 for mosques in America). The eleven functions identified were: (1) Prayers; (2) religious instruction; (3) language classes; (4) community centre; (5) welfare and advice centre; (6) sports facilities; (7) bookshops; (8) libraries; (9) local imam colleges; (10) funeral services; and (11) marriage ceremonies. Not all mosques in Manchester perform all of these functions but according to size and facilities available these functions are performed in mosques. For example some mosques did not provide any sports facilities while others do. All the mosques in Manchester provided prayer facilities, and religious instruction, both of which are considered the universal *raison d'être* for mosques, (Rasdi, GBER Vol. 2 No 2: 43). Not all mosques have bookshops or offer welfare and advice centres.

The mosque committees applied strict rules when deciding on the activities that can be undertaken within the mosque and who undertakes these activities. There are restrictions on   use of mosque facilities as well. If members of the local community wish to hold programmes at the mosque, they have to submit a request to the executive committee. The committee then decides whether to allow or refuse the programme. The first thing that the committees want to know is the background of the people who wish to hold the programme at their mosque. In doing this the mosques perform the role of maintaining the intra-group boundaries (Barth 1969). In some mosques, Barelwi Muslims are not allowed to hold specifically Barelwi programmes, like *urs* and *milad*, as these are perceived as deviant *bidat* (innovation in religion) in Islam according to Deobandi, Tablighi Jamaat and ahle Hadith. In Barelwi run mosques, the executive committee blocks access to people from other schools of thought in Islam. Secondly, they want to know what type of programme is proposed. Usually members of the committee know most of the people in

the local community or know someone who knows these people and on that knowledge they decide whether the proposal is coming from 'one of us' or 'one of them'. The response to programmes is different from different mosques. Requests forwarded for programmes to executive committees from unknown people or 'outsiders' are scrutinised thoroughly and mostly refused.

6.4 Contested Meanings of Mosque: Mosque as a Place of 'Worship' versus Mosque as a 'Community Centre'

None of the mosques in this research placed any sectarian or ethnic restrictions on who could come for the daily prayers[60]. No matter what school of thought the mosque ascribed to, be it Barelwi, Deobandi, Jamaat-i-Islami or ahle Hadith or even Shia, everyone was free to attend for prayer[61]. I saw Barelwi's at Jamaat-i-Islami (UKIM) mosques and ahle Hadith, Deobandi and Jamaat-i-Islami followers at the Barelwi mosques.[62] While this might suggest there is little distinction between such mosques, however, upon visiting the mosques regularly it becomes apparent that each mosque has its own 'sectarian' flavour. The rhetoric in sermons is directed at the other schools of thought, sometimes directly mentioning the others by name but more often through indirect assertions. Despite such subtle 'sectarianism', there are no visible barriers to members of different Islamic traditions in any of the mosques that formed the subject of this study. The fact that each mosque has a particular perspective that they emphasise, however, means that mostly those who like

---

60 Whilst working on the Pilot Project on 'Training of Muslim Religious Professionals' at Cardiff University, we come across a situation where we wanted to pray *magreb* prayer in a mosque in Leicester and we were told that women were not allowed in the mosque. The mosque was a purpose built mosque that had stunning views but unfortunately women were not allowed to pray in it. In the same town we went to a Barelwi mosque, where they had finished *magreb* prayer and were locking the mosque when we arrived, but when we said we wanted to pray *magreb* and that we had a Muslim lady with us who also wanted to pray, these people were very welcoming. They let us in and said that we could stay as long as we liked.
61 However this does not mean that some imams will not deliver speeches critical of particular schools of thought.
62 For an explanation of the different schools of thought in Islam refer to Robinson, F. (1988) Varieties of Islam. Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick. Also Geaves (1996) is a comprehensive analysis of the different schools of thought.

are sympathetic that type of rhetoric will attend that mosque and those who do not they

will attend a different mosque that is more suitable.

6.4.1 **Mosque as Recreational Centre**

The Madina mosque has separated its prayer facilities in two sections one where the five

daily prayers take place, which accommodates approximately fifty people while the second

section is where the *juma* prayer takes place which can accommodate approximately five

hundred people. The MINAB 'Mosque & Youth Engagement: Guidelines and Toolkits'

survey in response to their section under 'what youth would like to see in the mosques'

stated that 90% of the youth in their focus groups stated that mosques should provide

'sports facilities' (Asim 2011: 28; see also Ahmad 2009).

Farid, an overseas student at the university of Manchester studying for his PhD whilst also

managing educational activities at the mosque, informed me that he attempted to 'open up'

the mosque to the public. The *juma* hall is used for recreational activities for the youth. I

assumed that when Farid said 'opening up' the mosque to the public he was implying that

they hold study circles or *Quranic* classes but he included ostensibly non-religious

activities:

> The very first thing is that we have tried to do is open up this mosque rather
> than have a very closed kind of mosque where even the kids when they step
> in have to be quiet and hush hush. This is not a place they should be afraid
> of it should be very open. For example, for the kids there is the *juma* prayer
> hall, they might be playing football there. Before that nobody could imagine
> that kids would be doing that and we have to face a lot of opposition from
> elders. We need to educate the elders and tell them there is nothing wrong
> with this. It's okay for kids to play in the *juma* hall.

Farid has touched upon a very sensitive issue for many Muslims. He argues that mosques

should be places where people feel comfortable. They should also provide environments

where the identity of the users is reinforced. Crucially, the younger generation has been

entrusted with the authority to make crucial decisions in the management of the mosque,

which has generated tensions between the ideas of the younger generation and the older generation. There is a clear acceptance of the need to 'educate' the elders implying that the younger generation is better equipped with Islamic knowledge than the elder generation (Scourfield et al 2012). This situation is not necessarily the norm in other mosques. In many mosques the elders are still very reluctant to hand over control to the younger generation.

I asked Ahmed, a solicitor by profession who is also a high profile politician linked to the running of one of the mosques in Manchester, whether he felt that the use of the mosque for leisure activities, like playing football, was in anyway breaking any Islamic rules, especially given the view that the mosque is generally perceived as a 'sacred' space for worship. He said,

> Yes the mosque is sacred. Well even more sacred is the human. So why can't you use it for their benefit? Why do you have to think like that? Yes being sacred doesn't mean that you can't use it for anything else. Did the Prophet not know that it is sacred? Do these people who are running the mosques think that they know more than the Prophet? Yet when we look at his life he did use it as a living organ. I think these people need to go back and look at the *seerah* of the Prophet and the role of the mosque and the teachings of Islam. Why should we introduce this alien idea and say that this is a mosque and this is how it should be and all it should be used for is for prayer. Yes when the prayer is going on we should respect it and we should not be talking and we should be praying.

Ahmed accepts that the mosque is a sacred place, but rhetorically argues that human beings are more sacred than mosques and that mosque should serve the needs of humans. The challenge to the traditional view of the mosque as a place of worship only is made not through the use of western ideas but by referring back to the roots of Islam to the Prophet's period. The fact that the younger generation has direct access to Islamic material through the internet and the availability of religious texts in English enables them to challenge established views on the use of the mosque by quoting directly from early authentic

sources (Bunt 2003; Zaman 2008). The younger generation view the Prophet as the 'ideal' to be emulated and in their search for an ideal mosque they invariable turn to the example of the Prophet and his mosque in Madina.

In contrast, the view expounded by Dr Ali, a teacher, would seem to be the traditional South Asian view, which is held by the majority[63] of Muslims in Britain, that 'the mosque is a place of worship and not a place for playing games'. The MINAB survey actually shows that youth wanted mosques to provide recreational facilities but the reality on the ground is still that mosques are primarily placing of worship with a few mosques providing recreational facilities (Asim 2011). In his gentle soft pleading tone of voice Dr Ali says,

> Playing football in the mosque was wrong. The mosque is a place where you go for your prayers not to play football.

He suggested that there were places outside the mosques that are available to pursue leisure activities that the youth can make use of and not disturb the peaceful and tranquil environment of the mosque. The *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust mosque has spent almost two million pounds but in their planning it seems they did not take into account use of the premises for leisure pursuits by the Muslim youth because their vision of a mosque complex did not include sports activities. Whether this situation changes in the coming years, when pressure from the youth will increase, remains to be seen.

Key reasons why this issue arises is because many see mosques as large complexes that remain dormant for most of the day and in many cases most of the week. Ahmed argues that the mosques are not used to their full potential. When I put to him that the *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust has spent over two million pounds on its development does he think that the mosque is used to its full potential he says,

---

[63] I base this on the number mosques that physical recreational activity in the mosque. Most Barelwi and Deobandi mosques do not provide facilities for physical recreational activities in their mosques.

It's the under use of resources isn't it? No one can argue against that. That is definitely the under use of resources and that is alien to our actual historical use of mosque. Somewhere down the line this idea has crept in, it's certainly not from the early history of Islam.

This dialogue shows that there is a vibrant debate that is deconstructing the tradition role of the South Asian and reconstructing a mosque that takes on board the concerns of Muslims about the role of mosques in Britain. Both viewpoints turn to the life of the Prophet Muhammad to justify their viewpoints on the role that the mosque plays in any society. This debate is not transplantation from Pakistan but has arisen in the specific context of British Muslims status as a minority in search of ways to best use of the limited resources and institutions to reinforce their religious identity. However, the current state of mosque organisation is also strengthening their ethnic identity as well.

Through dialogue the traditional 'authority' of the *ulama* to settle religious issues is also being challenged by young British Muslims (Zaman 2002; Lewis 2006; 166). British Muslims are compelling the *ulama* to rethink and justify their position on many issues including the role of the mosque in British society. Those like Dr Ali, who are currently in a majority, argue that the mosque should be a sacred place and leisure pursuits like football or sports activities should be pursued outside the mosque to maintain the sanctity of the sacred space that is the mosque. They stress that Muslims need to create other spaces / places that would cater for the leisure activities of the Muslim youth. The view that the mosque should solely be used for ritual worship is the view promoted by the traditional *ulama* from South Asia[64]. On the other hand young British Muslims who have grown up in this country are arguing that the mosque is not solely for religious activities, it should serve a more holistic purpose. This demand to accommodate recreational facilities is echoed by some young Muslims who have recently arrived from Pakistan (Asim 2011). It seems this

---

[64] I say South Asia but even in Arab world one would be hard pushed to find examples where mosques provide recreational facilities.

type of Muslim youth is less dependent on the imams to tell them what Islam is and like many of my respondents argued that the early period of Islamic history quite clearly shows that the mosque was a living organ where a host of activities took place. They view Islam as a holistic *deen* encompassing religion, socio-economic, culture and politics. Their argument is that the mosque should continually interact with the society reflecting all aspects of the Muslim communities. The Muslim communities should be able to turn to the mosque for all their requirements. Through interaction of British Muslims with Western thought they are forging a debate in which they are deconstructing the prevalent meaning of mosque and reconstructing the meaning attached to the mosque through reinterpretation of the religious text and Islamic history using the example of the Prophet's model of mosque in Madina.

6.5   Process of Establishing 'New' Mosques

The Minhaj ul Quran International Organisation set up its first branches in the Northwest in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At that time, the Patron in Chief, Dr Muhammad Tahir ul Qadri, laid down strict guidelines for the local organisations. One these was that the organisation was not to get involved in making new mosques in Britain. Minhaj ul Quran members were instructed to work with the existing mosques and utilise their facilities to educate Muslim youth. The argument was that creation of new mosques would the Muslim community. However, this policy did not last long, as mosque committees and imams came to view Minhaj ul Quran as competitors and many imams were worried that Minhaj ul Quran qualified imams would replace them. They reacted by restricting the use of mosque facilities for Minhaj ul Quran activities which in turn led to Minhaj ul Quran reassessing their policy of not creating new mosques in Britain.

Through interviews, it emerged that the reason for the Minhaj ul Quran Central Mosque opening in Manchester, was that they were not allowed to conduct *mehfil zikr* or *darse Quran* at the Victoria Park mosque. For short period they used the Longsight community centre for their religious programmes on a monthly basis. They approached the Victoria Park Mosque to hold a weekly *zikr* session but the mosque rejected their written application. What was interesting was that the request was to hold a *zikr* session and *zikr* is a common activity for most Barelwi*'s* but they were still refused permission. The method of *zikr* may differ but all practice some form of *zikr*. At the mosque, *zikr mehfils* were held by at least three other groups. However, when Minhaj ul Quran asked for permission they were refused. I was informed by a Minhaj ul Quran members that the most common reason used by the imams and committees, whose views are generally led by the imams on these issues, to refuse permission was to convince mosque committee members that a certain organisation is not a 'Sunni' organisation that it is some kind of 'Wahhabi' or Shia sect. Ironically for Minhaj ul Quran the Wahhabi, Deobandi and Tablighi Jamaat consider Minhaj ul Quran as a Barelwi sect. Whilst Minhaj ul Quran goes to lengths to deny these accusations by contending, that it is not Wahhabi, Deobandi, Tablighi or Barelwi but a Sunni organisation. Minhaj ul Quran members say they are 'Sunnis' who do not wish to label themselves as Barelwi*'s* or Deobandi's. It has a policy that welcomes people from all schools of thought. As a direct result of the refusal by various mosques to allow Minhaj ul Quran to hold regular programmes they were forced into purchasing a building that would serve as a mosque and an educational institution.

The path to the creation of Minhaj ul Quran Central mosque in Manchester was not a smooth one. In their search for a suitable building they were initially informed of a building on Stockport Road in Levenshulme. This was a substantial building that had great potential for establishing an ideal mosque and an Islamic educational centre and it was

located in the heart of the Levenshulme Muslim community. In their attempt to raise the required funds to complete the transaction they contacted a broker from Bradford, Moghul, who was going to help them raise funds. I am informed that Minhaj ul Quran had even paid the brokers fees so that he would help in the purchase of this building. The deal for the building was done a price was agreed and the Patron in Chief of Minhaj ul Quran visited the building with members of Minhaj ul Quran from around Britain to give his approval to the project.

Whilst all of this was going on behind the scenes a sinister plot was underway that saw the building being hijacked from Minhaj ul Quran while its members were patiently waiting for the funding to be arranged. The broker who was to arrange the finance for Minhaj ul Quran had in fact taken the details of the building to a well known restaurateur in Bradford and a party of influential people from Gujjar Khan in Pakistan who was looking to invest in Britain. Whilst Minhaj ul Quran members were waiting for the finance to be arranged by their financial broker the same financial broker was in fact in the process of acquiring the building for the restaurateur and his associated investment party from Pakistan. Minhaj ul Quran only found out about this plot when the building was purchased by this other party. I am informed that members of Minhaj ul Quran visited the restaurateur to inform him that they were going to turn this building into a mosque and an Islamic educational institution and showed him the printed brochures to confirm that the plans were under way and that the broker who informed them of the building had actually taken fees from Minhaj ul Quran. However the end to this venture was that Minhaj ul Quran were unable to convince restaurateur and his party of investors and had to start their search for another premises. The building is now occupied by the restaurateur and his investment party who became partners in the successfully thriving restaurant in Manchester. Minhaj ul Quran later purchased the Madina Hall on Withington Road in Whalley Range, Manchester.

6.6   The Sacred and the Profane

Another facet of this incident is the interplay of the profane and the sacred to convince the restaurateur to withdraw and allow the building to be used for sacred purposes. Minhaj ul Quran requested a mutual acquaintance who was *pir bhai* to the restaurateur to mediate. During the mediation the *pir bhai* used the argument that their *pir* would not be pleased when he finds out that a building that was destined to be used for religious purposes has been 'stolen' to be used as a restaurant in which alcohol would also be sold. The mediator even got his *pir* to intervene in this matter but it seems that the restaurateur defied his *pir* saying he will speak to his *pir* later when he goes to Pakistan. The restaurateur was given all the arguments to suggest how it would benefit him in gaining a place in *Jannah* (heaven) and all the arguments about how big a *gunnah* (sin) it was to deliberately deprive a building to be used as a mosque, especially when all the plans and designs for its conversion have already been finalised. It seems none of these arguments managed to persuade the restaurateur to relinquish the building. Perhaps this what the Prophet Muhammad meant when he said that he did not fear his *ummah* going astray through polytheism but that materialism would lead them astray. It is the case of the profane being more important than the sacred. Many Muslims when faced with these types of moral dilemmas between the sacred and the profane choose to adopt sacredness once inside the mosque but once they leave the mosque they give precedence to the profane. This same incident also shows the naivety of the Minhaj ul Quran organisation as they relied on the appeal of the sacred than the attraction of materialism of the world.

The pattern of mosque additions resulting from refusal to be accommodated at other mosques is not an isolated incidence. Many mosques have been established as a direct result of this type of behaviour. Mosques of the same affiliations (Barelwi, Deobandi, etc.) have had to open up very close to one another not necessarily because of inter-sectarian

clashes but because most have come about through intra-sectarian conflicts. The mosques in Cheetham Hill were created as a result of the clash within the initial body of *Ibadhur Rahman* Cultural Association. The Khizra mosque was set up as a direct result of the split within this trust. The conflict centred on individuals who were once part of one team but gradually religious or ideological differences turned them into foes. The Khizra mosque aligned itself with the Jamaat -i- Islami of Maulana Abu ul Ala Maududi while the *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust aligned itself with the Barelwi Islamic World Mission of Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani. Splits within these groups have led to different Barelwi and Deobandi mosques being established around Manchester.

This leads us to the question of whether there was any real need for the creation of new mosques. The need of new mosques can be measured by analysing how well they are attended. In all the mosques I visited in Manchester during the *juma* prayer I found that they have been either full or near their full capacity. What is interesting is that the larger the mosques the greater the chances of the size of the congregation increasing. The Khizra mosque when it opened its purpose built mosque had a capacity of over 500 people. Salaam, one of the main persons involved in the construction of the mosque had this to say,

> On the first Friday when the mosque opened it seemed as if the mosque would not be filled for quite a long time. It seemed as if a huge mosque had been constructed that would not reach its capacity for a very long time. The development has been at such a pace that the mosque on Friday is now at its full capacity.

Dr Ali one of the trustees of the *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust recalled a time when they first purchased the land where the mosque was eventually constructed he tells me that one of his close friends pulled him to one side and said, "Are you sure you know what you are doing? Does the community need such a big place? How are we going to afford a project

costing over £250,000?"[65] Dr Ali says "never have we fallen short of the financial needs for this project". The original mosque was very soon full and the trustees and the imam decided to work on a plan to increase the size of the mosque further. Initially the mosque could accommodate approximately a thousand people and the plan was to increase the capacity by another five hundred. I was fortunate enough to be at the opening of the new extension. It was on the last Friday of Ramadhan. I was amazed to see that the mosque capacity was at its full even with the extension and many worshippers had to perform their prayer outside in the car park. Maulana Azmi said during the Friday speech "*Al-Hamdolillah* the mosque extension is already full we will have to look at extending it further very soon!" Since that time a third phase of the extension has been completed. This completion probably makes the capacity of the congregation at *Ibadhur Rahman* mosque the largest in Manchester although Victoria Park Mosque has plans to extend its mosque complex further to establish an educational institution. The Ibadur Rahman mosque with the completion of its third phase can accommodate approximately 2500 worshippers.

6.7   Explaining Increase in Congregation Size

There are many reasons that explain this increase in numbers. Firstly, the population growth[66] of the Muslim community in Cheetham Hill would account for some of the increase in the size of the congregation at all the mosques. Secondly, the facilities at the mosque are seen as quite important. Performing *wudhu*[67] is an important part of the ritual prayer. It is obligatory for Muslims to perform *wudhu* before they perform their ritual prayer. The size of the *wudhu* area and its cleanliness is an obvious attraction for some worshippers. The fact that the worshippers do not have to wait to perform their *wudhu* and

---

[65] This was earlier 1980s when project of this size deemed a mega project whereas now mosques are constructed costing millions of pounds.

[66] See chapter 4 and Chapter 9 for population size changes in Manchester and its different wards.

67 Wudhu is a way of purifying one's body before standing for prayer.

that the area for *wudhu* is kept clean does make a difference. Thirdly, the architecture of the mosque also makes a difference. Worshippers indicated that they felt better praying in a purpose built mosque than in a run down conversion. Fourthly, the size of the hall is also an important aspect in attracting worshippers to the mosque. They felt that small mosques get too cramped and that it was better to go to the larger mosques where there is plenty of space.

Finally and by no means the least important is the role of the imam, his contribution is major factor in attracting worshippers to the *Ibadhur Rahman* mosque. Maulana Azmi, who has been at the mosque since 1979, exemplifies this aspect through his personality at the *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust mosque. His followers perceive him as a charismatic speaker who has on many occasions mobilised the congregation on many crucial issues in Manchester, especially issues concerning Muslim children in state schools (King 2010). His ability to raise funds and his passionate oratory skills enable Maulana Azmi to maintain his charismatic authority within the *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust (Weber 1948: 46). Between 1980's to the present time he has tried to mobilise people on issues ranging from provision of *halaal* meals in schools to allowing Muslim girls to wear headscarves and issues to do with divorce and marriage procedures. He was also involved in mobilisation of the community around *the satanic verses* issue, although he did not seem to favour mass demonstrations he preferred to use political lobbying to diffuse the issue. He is viewed by his followers as what Weber terms as "the specifically creative revolutionary force" in the history of the *Ibadhur Rahman* mosque (Weber 1968: 244).

As a measure of maulana Azmi's popularity I have spoken to people who attend the *Ibadhur Rahman* mosque on a regular basis who feel disappointed when Maulana Azmi is away from the mosque. On many occasions when a large gathering has been arranged for a

prestigious guest speaker the regulars are seen complaining that they want to listen to Maulana Azmi's speech. The reason for this is that when it comes to making a speech there are very few imams in Britain who can equal Maulana Azmi[68]. It is his charismatic style of delivering the *khutbah* injected with emotive language that has made the expansion of the mosque possible without any major upheavals and in line with the extension of the mosque space he has been able to attract a mass following to fill that space.

6.8 Structures of Mosque Organisation

The structure of the executive body varies from one mosque to another. In the mosques included in this research the executive committee it is responsible for making policy decisions and dealing with the day-to-day affairs of the management of the mosque. The size of the executive varies from four people to forty-five. There are mosques in Manchester where the executive committee size is in excess of forty people but these were not the focus of this research. How the executive is formed also varies from mosque to mosque. The imam was not necessarily a part of the executive committee. The decision to include the imam in the executive committee is arbitrarily made by the members of the executive committee. In most of the mosques it emerged that the imam was a part of the executive committee but his participation varied from being the head of the executive committee to being an ordinary member of the executive there only to perform recitation of Quran at the beginning of the meetings. The size and the process of forming an executive also varied from one mosque to the next.

The *Ibadhur Rahman* mosque executive is comprised of the four trustees who have the option to include the imam in the executive. Initially they formed a *majlis*-e-*shura* (council

---

[68] However, it is important to note that Maulana Azmi in not universally accepted by all Barelwis and there are many who said that his personality is divisive. His stance on deciding the beginning of Ramadan, *eid ul fitr* and *eid ul Adha* and more recently on the timing of *sehri* (closing of fast time) has proved to be divisive and problematic for majority of the Barelwi mosques in Manchester.

of deliberation) comprising of approximately seventy people that acted as a consultative body forwarding suggestions for the trustees to consider. It soon emerged that the large size of the *majlis* was ineffective primarily because of two reasons. Firstly, it is difficult for seventy members of an executive committee to have their say. Discussion becomes extremely difficult when a meeting that is to last between one to two hours that involves more than seventy people. Secondly, the *majlis* did not possess any decision making power as that power rested with the trustees of the mosque. The *majlis* could only make recommendations but these recommendations were in no way binding for the trustees. The trustees could accept the recommendations or simply choose to ignore the recommendations.

The *Ibadhur Rahman* trustees were chosen approximately twenty years ago and have remained unchanged ever since. Only the death of Dr Bashir Ahmad, a prominent member of the Trust has meant that a new person has been included into the Trust. There have been odd occasions when worshippers raised concerns at this structure of the executive and called for a change the structure. The major concern raised was that the mosque is constructed from donations generated from the Muslim community and the community should have a say in how it is run. The issue of accountability of the trustees to the community that has provided financial support and continues to provide that support was also a major concern. The fact that the mosque has grown from strength to strength has put a dampener on dissenting voices.

Ibadhur Rahman Trust opposes any form of elections in mosques. Their argument is that elections lead to 'adversarial politics' creeping into the mosque. Their view is that mosques are religious institutions, sacred places, where politics does not play any role. They further argue that as the trustees were elected at an election that involved the whole

community that gives them the mandate they need to run the mosque. In support of their argument, they cite the mosques that hold elections on a regular basis but who also face problems associated with these elections. The case of Victoria Park mosque is the most cited case where there has been a stream of conflict associated with elections (Werbner 2002). The structure of the *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust is well defined but there are no procedures in place to effect any change to this structure.

6.9 Youth Involvement in Mosque Committees

Youth involvement in mosque activities was a constant concern that all respondents dwelled upon. Committees and parent constantly urge imams to reach out to the youth to invite them to the mosque. The mosques generally displayed a lack of youth involvement in the running of the mosques (see Ahmad 2009. It was interesting to see how the UKIM at Madina mosque attempted to encourage the youth to get involved in management of the mosque.

Madina mosques choice of Farid an overseas PhD student at Manchester University to manage the education system raises many questions. He was chosen in spite of the fact that he had no experience of primary or secondary education in British schools. The members of the executive committee at Madina mosque was comprised of young members who had arrived from Pakistan within the last five years. The president, the secretary and treasurer have all worked for *Jamaat-I-Islami* of Pakistan in the youth section, *Jamiate Talba-i-Islam*. The treasurer and secretary are overseas students while the president came here as a spouse.

This is an important development as a measure of the success of mosques in attracting the younger British born Muslims into decision-making bodies in the mosques. The UKIM is perhaps the most focussed mosque organisation that targets young Muslims. With all their

efforts it seems that at Madina mosque the UKIM been unsuccessful in attracting young British born Muslims to enter into leadership roles. In Madina mosque they had to turn to the youth coming from Pakistan to take up leadership roles.

Khizra mosque had the most representative committee although it had proportionally high number of male members. Khizra mosque committee had two female representatives, one young Muslim representative and one representative from Islamic Society of Britain. *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust, Madina mosque, Victoria Park Mosque and Minhaj-ul-Quran mosque had no female representatives in their executive committees. *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust had no youth representation at all in its trust board. It emerged that the Minhaj-ul-Quran mosque in London has both female and youth representation on the executive committee, which has had a mixed response but mainly positive. Minhaj-ul-Quran Manchester had the highest representation of youth in its committee. The question that needs to be addressed is why is there an absence of British born Muslims in mosque executive committees? If UKIM, with an acknowledged policy of targeting young Muslims, is failing what chance for others who have not focussed their attention on the youth?

Farid informed me of efforts being made at the youth level to set up an organisation that would incorporate youth from all the different schools of thought to work together to promote unity among the Muslim communities in Manchester. The impression I formed from his conversation was that if the imams or the older community leaders got wind of this attempt they would try to block it, warning their youth to stay away from this organisation. I asked Farid if I could meet with some of the youth who were involved in this attempt. He said that he would have to ask other members of the organisation. On our second meeting I asked him again if I could meet members of the organisation the answer

was an emphatic "no". He said that he consulted the other members of the organisation who said that it would not be beneficial to involve someone at this early stage[69].

What emerged from our conversation was that most of the youth involved in this attempt were university students. This stands to reason, as the most cosmopolitan mosques are the student mosques or those located close to the universities. In these mosques students from all nationalities and all schools of thought come together to pray under the same roof. At the student mosques the common thread that brings these people together is not nationality or ethnicity but religion and to a lesser extent the use English language. It was noticeable that a sizable section of the congregation at the student mosque is not from the student population but is in fact local businessmen and professionals who work at the university or near the university. The binding thread is Muslim identity and all had a working knowledge of the English language. It seems that most of those who attend student mosques are less interested in searching for differences but are in fact looking for commonalities between them.

There are four established student mosques, two at the University of Manchester and one at University of Salford. Manchester Metropolitan University dragged its feet for many years in providing a permanent place of worship for Muslim students. They provided makeshift rooms that were used for prayer and for *juma* gathering. However, after decades of struggles the Manchester Metropolitan University has provided a permanent place on the ground floor of the Cavendish Building.

The student mosque administration is in the hands of the Islamic societies at the universities. The most striking feature of these mosques is that ethnicity is not the main

---

69 During my years of research this project did not come to prominence this might be due to the widespread crackdown by the British authorities on activities on University campuses. Alternatively it could be due to the fact that they decided to tackle the issue of unity which in itself is quite difficult to achieve.

signifier as universities attract students of all nationalities and ethnicities. For some students this is perhaps the first time in their lives that they have lived away from home. These students feel vulnerable and in need of a group to belong to. In the university environment many students who have led a sheltered life whilst at home are exposed to the forces of freedom, ethnicity, nationalism, secularism and religion. They are expected to live and work alongside other students who are white, black or Asian, male and female of different national identities. They are no longer in the secure family environment but are required to face the challenges of diversity in society.

Of interest is the rise in the popularity of societies organised around religion. In the 1980s the number of Islamic Societies was only few in number but recent decades has seen a gradual rise in the formation of Islamic Societies at universities. What has been visible in mosques around the universities is a gelling of different ethnicities and nationalities under their common identity as Muslims. The student mosque has been able to provide for these students a place where they can identify with one another and gain confidence in their identity as Muslim students.

In student mosques *khutbah* is delivered in English as it is the common language of the all the students (although there is some portion of the *khutbah* that is in Arabic). Student mosques may provide a microcosm reflection of the future of mosques in Britain when ethnicity becomes less important and English language and British Muslim identity become the defining features of the community.

6.10 Practicing 'Democracy' in the Mosque

The democracy and resistance to accountability through the introduction of democratic procedures in mosque organisation is a social restructuring of the role the mosque committees play by making them more representative and accountable to the Muslim

communities it seeks to serve. Although accountability is a continuous theme within Islam but it's specific use as a 'democratic accountability' concept is a new development that British Pakistani Muslims are facing within the confines of the multicultural British society.

All the other mosques included in this research had some form of democratic procedure to form the executive body. The Khizra, Madina and Minhaj ul Quran mosques held regular elections but have not experienced the problems that opponents of democratic procedures within mosques have advocated. That does not mean to say that problems do not arise in organisations that hold regular elections. Ahmed from the Khizra mosque suggests that the reason that problems occur at Victoria Park mosque is that they have not been able to lay down clear rules and regulations regarding who can and cannot take part in the elections (Werbner 2002). At Victoria Park mosque, the criterion was that if you live in Manchester or even work in Manchester then you were eligible to register as a member of the mosque. Membership of the mosque enables their eligibility to participate in the elections. The crucial factor that defines eligibility to participate in mosque elections is membership of the mosque in question. The fact that Manchester became a business hub that attracted many Muslim workers from surrounding towns meant that there were many people who were members of Victoria Park mosque but did not necessarily have any direct link to the mosque other than through their employer. These businessmen were the key players in Victoria Park mosque who in order to maintain their influence would transport their employees to the mosque to take part in elections (Werbner 2002). The criterion for membership of mosques however varies from one mosque to the next mosque.

At the Khizra and Madina mosques the criterion is well defined and is the same for all the UKIM mosques. At these two mosques only those people who are members of the UKIM are eligible for posts in the executive committee. UKIM membership is similar to the

membership of *Jamaat-i-Islami* in Pakistan. The basis of the membership is the ideological allegiance to the aims and objectives of UKIM. From that stem the other conditions of abstinence from *gunnah-e-kabeera* (major sins) as laid down by the *Quran* and *Sunnah*. Ideological allegiance is measured through knowledge of the written works of maulana Abul Ala Maududi the founder of *Jamaat -i- Islami* in Pakistan. One thing that is significant for our discussion is the concept of 'major sins' and how this is applied especially in the case of UKIM organisation structure.

One significant problem that is faced by British Muslims is that of purchasing living accommodation through an interest based mortgage. UKIM argues that dealing in interest whether it is giving or taking interest is considered as a major sin in Islam and anybody who has a business loan or purchased a house through an interest based mortgage is committing a major sin. This largely eliminates the vast majority of the Muslim population from contesting elections at UKIM mosques. For these two mosques the participation of Muslims in the executive elections is limited as there are only a few people who would be eligible to contest the elections. In most of the UKIM mosques what one finds is that the posts are usually circulated among few members who happen to be eligible according to their strict criterion. So what happens is that those few symbolise the UKIM in that region due their presence on a rotational basis after every two years. In the Khizra mosque, Mr Salaam[70], who with his brother Maulana Habibur Rahman, have come to symbolise UKIM in Manchester. The post of *Amir* is usually circulated among three to four people because those are the only people who are eligible for the post according to the strict criteria laid down by UKIM. The system of membership has been relaxed for those who wish to become members but not for those who wish to stand for the position of *Amir*.

---

70. Mr Abdul Salaam passed away in 2012 and I owe a debt of gratitude to his cooperation in allowing me access to Khizra mosque and its personnel. I pray that Allah bless him for the efforts he made to ensure the rights of the Muslim Community in Manchester.

Similarly at the Minhaj-ul-Quran mosques they have a system of membership. The membership is not a membership of one centre or mosque in Britain but it in fact means that the person can go anywhere in the world and wherever there is a Minhaj-ul-Quran mosque he or she is eligible to participate. The only requirement for membership is an undertaking to promote Islam which is fairly relaxed compared to the fairly strict criterion of UKIM. However there is a monetary element to Minhaj ul Quran membership which is administered directly from Pakistan and the membership funds were used to distribute the Minhaj ul Quran monthly magazine to all members by post[71]. In their earlier phase the criteria of membership was fairly relaxed and a person could even become a president on the same day as becoming a member. Minhaj-ul-Quran soon found that this system left a lot of room for 'mischief-makers' to disrupt branches. This was then changed, so that you had to be a member for at least one year before you were eligible to contest for any posts and in later years, this was extended to two years for the post of *Amir* or President.

The procedure for Minhaj-ul-Quran Greater Manchester branch to form an executive committee seems a lot simpler and lax. They hold an annual general meeting in which the existing executive resigns and the new executive is elected. One or two members from the national body of Minhaj-ul-Quran monitor the elections. The size of the executive committee varies from branch to branch. The Greater Manchester branch has an executive of twenty-three people including the imam. In some branches, the imam is also the head of the branch whilst in other branches the imam participates in the executive as an ordinary member of the executive. This has led to a lively debate within Minhaj-ul-Quran about the role of the executive members and the imam and the need to define it more clearly. As

---

71 I am informed that the magazine is no longer sent directly members' homes as the use of internet has meant that distribution can take place more efficiently and effectively through use of digital network. However, membership fee is still applicable and is sent to the Minhaj ul Quran Centre in Lahore, Pakistan.

mentioned elsewhere in the chapter the role of the imam is considered sacred and as a result must remain above the role of the executive.

The *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust has resisted calls to 'democratise' their organisation. The main argument advanced was that in mosques where this system has been introduced there have been major disruptions whereas *Ibadhur Rahman* Trust has functioned and developed smoothly since the early 1980's. During this time they have managed to expand their mosque three times and are in the process of extending again. Their argument is that the 'election' system is not suitable for mosques.

Maulana Azmi one of the strong pillars of Ibadur Rahman Trust mosque rhetorically questions 'why have Churches not introduced elections?' He goes into detail about what elections mean and why they are not suitable for mosques. In a response to a question about why he thinks people come to his mosques he states,

> This mosque was established according to Islamic basis that is the Trust basis not elections. We are not holding election over here we made the trust from the first day. They (the Trustees) are running (the mosque) if they need somebody they invite and everybody is working for them. They can make a committee under the Trust but the Trust is the base of this. If you need to hold an election there will be an opposition but opposition is always trying for political reasons. In the (political) party election it is OK because those who are against them play some role but in the mosque or in churches that is not case. But in the mosque it is not good to criticise the work which is going on in the proper way or to those offering their services in the trust without anything and without any money for the sake of Allah, for the razaah of Allah. So if you are criticising them you are committing a sin and all the ikhtalaafat (differences) and conflict between the communities is because of this election. That is why according to my own knowledge this is a country that is democratic country everything is according to election but they don't hold elections for the Churches Also they have their own system of the Church. The mosque should be above any kind of conflict…. So the election is the creation of the Western thinkers with this reason the opposition always opposes those people who are right and doing right job.

His analogy of political parties and their opposition to each other even if they are doing the right thing is interesting. He argues that when you have opposition then opposition has a

duty to oppose to remain in existence. If they do not oppose then their own existence is threatened.

When I asked that if elections are not suitable in mosques then what system does he envisage for the mosques?

> Unfortunately those people who came from India and Pakistan they were uneducated people most of them, not everybody. They came from the rural areas of India and Pakistan and they were not able to run the Mosque in a proper way. They have some fight and some other things also. That is why the Quran says only those people who have the fear of Allah Almighty and they have Taqwa[72] and piety they can run the mosque and not everybody. They have power to do anything if you choose those people who are pious people they are prepared properly. They know the rules of Islam and they are very educated people I think there won't be any conflict but if you are going to choose only on the basis of the biradari , who is Choudary or who is a leader who is more powerful person who has a lot of money then there will be conflict without any doubt. There will be some differences without any doubt because they don't know how to run the mosque. Quran says only those people can build and can establish the mosque who are believers and believe in *Akhirah* (afterlife) and they are powerful enough to control everything. They don't have the fear but only fear Allah Almighty. Why the Quran has mentioned it that those who believe in Allah, the day of Judgment and the same time those who do not fear anyone but only Allah Almighty? These three conditions are very important for those who are running the mosque because if they believe in Allah then they will do everything for the sake of Allah Almighty. If they believe in Akhirat then about the mosque affairs they will think we have to be responsible and we have to be questioned and accountable on the day of judgment in front of Allah Almighty and if they are more powerful enough they are not fearing another god only they fear God Almighty then they will run the mosque because they don't have the fear of anybody, community or any leader, any person. They fear only Allah Almighty they are responsible to Him. That is why the Quran has given three conditions. They have to believe in Allah. They have to believe in Akhirat and they don't have any fear but only to Allah Almighty. They can run the mosque and at the that time when we established this Trust we chose the best people of those kind who are in my eyes. Al-Hamdulillah they are in the mosque and they don't have any thirst of any fame or name or anything they are running the mosque for the sake of Allah Almighty up to this time.

The maulana has referred extensively to the verse 18 in Surah Tauba of the Quran. The verse states,

---

72 Taqwa is sometimes translated as 'fear of Allah' whilst others have translated it as 'God consciousness', 'being conscious of Allah's presence at all times and in all your dealings'.

"Only he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and establishes Prayer and pays Zakat (the Alms-due) and who fears none but Allah can maintain and frequent the mosques of Allah. So they alone are expected to become the rightly-guided." (Irfan Ul Quran: 9:18).

The maulana says that belief in Allah Almighty and the fear of life after death are pre-conditions that Allah has imposed on those who wish to maintain or establish mosques. The argument is that because one is conscious of being held accountable in the hereafter they will maintain mosques justly without fear of worldly powers and enticements of grandeur, of being called a 'president' or 'chairman', their key focus is the accountability of their actions after death.

6.11 New Breed of Mosques - Altrincham Muslim Association – Islamic Cultural Centre

The Altrincham Muslim Association established the Islamic Cultural Centre in July 2003 at St David's Church in Hale. Being situated in one of the most affluent areas of the Metropolitan Borough of Trafford it wants to maintain cosy relations with the community.

Figure 6.1 Altrincham Muslim Association mosque - Islamic Cultural Centre Hale

One of features of this type of mosque is that it maintains a very low key visible presence (see Figure 1 above). It is easy to go past the premises thinking it is a church until one stops to read the sign board that says 'Islamic Cultural Centre'. The ethos in this type of mosque is not to stand out but to blend in with the wider community. The AMA conveys a message of common good not of being different.

The Altrincham Muslim Association (AMA), aims to set precedents for other mosque. It has taken steps to counter the influence of biradari and familial influences. In their constitution they have added clauses specifically designed to counter this situation. Article 26 of the AMA Constitution states that,

> "No two trustees shall be close relations (i.e. spouse, parent/child, sibling, uncle/aunt, nephew/niece, cousin, or in-law)."

AMA Constitution Article 42 states that,

> "No trustee or immediate relative shall take or hold any interest in property belonging to the Charity or receive remuneration or be interested otherwise than as a trustee in any other contact to which the Charity is a party."

The aim of these articles is to minimise the disruptive impact that biradari and familial ties have had on the factional nature of conflicts in others mosques (Werbner 2002).

A cursory look at the activities that take place in this mosque also shows that they are trying innovative ways to develop mosque activities that other mosques are failing to develop.

- Aunty Gees Club
- Ladies Keep Fit Classes
- Ladies Study Circle
- Mother and Toddlers Club
- Men's Study Circle
- Altrincham Bayaan Academy (Primary)
- Boys Sports & Study Circle - Secondary School Level
- Girls Group - For Secondary School Girls
- Altrincham Bayaan Academy (Secondary)

193

- Monthly Talk
- Altrincham Bayaan Academy (Primary) (1)
- Arabic Classes

These activities are not your typical activities found in the mosques within Manchester although there are individual mosques that try to be innovative and think outside box and consider the specific needs of the Muslim community. However, this view of women's active involvement in mosque activities is not equally visible across other mosques in Manchester.

6.12 Women (Not) at Mosque

In the early stages of mosque development in Britain the mosque committees and imams did not make provisions for women in the mosque. One of the reasons for this was that during early stage of migration there were very few Muslims who accompanied their families to Britain. The other major factor of the absence of women from mosques was the South Asian cultural background which restricted women's participation in mosques (Lyon 2004; Reda 2004; Marsden 2005). In South Asian mosques even today women rarely attend mosque for *Juma* prayer (Joly 1987: 43; Lewis 1994: 89 & 185). Anwar's study of the Pakistani community in Rochdale found that 'there was no evidence of Pakistani women's involvement' in mosque committees (1979: 165). The fact is that the majority of mosques that developed in the early phase did not cater for women and did not feel the need to cater for them partly because there were very few women in Britain in the earlier stages of settlement. It was only in late 1960s and 1970s when wives and daughters arrived in Britain that attention was paid to religious needs of women. The fact that they were coming from South Asia where there was no issue of women wanting to attend mosques therefore, the issue did not arise in Britain until quite late on in the settlement process of

the Muslim communities. Raza, a Barelwi imam, commenting on mosques and provision for women in the 1980s says,

> "Looking at the mosques one would think that only males were required to pray, for women are not allowed in mosques... The home and the mosque have to play an important role, which they have so far not done... The home, the mosque, the Muslim community are the media through which Islamic education can be inculcated in Muslim women." (1991: 90)

I found that most of the mosques in Manchester had space where women. They were allocated a separate section to pray in. This section is generally used on Fridays for the *juma* prayer but during the week for other prayers the ladies section is mostly closed. The main reason stated for this is that it is not obligatory for women to attend the mosque to perform prayers in a *jamaat* (congregation) whereas the men are required to attend the *jamaat*. In recent years it seems that attempts have been made to encourage women to take part in mosque activity by attending *Juma* prayer and arranging separate programmes for women. In some mosques I was informed that they encouraged women to arrange their own women only programmes at the mosque.

In the Minhaj ul Quran mosque women were more active in arranging their programmes than the men. More programmes for women were held than for men. Minhaj ul Quran women were fairly bold in voicing their demands. I will illustrate this with two examples that I witnessed where women challenged the status quo. First involves a *qawwali mehfil* that was held in a hired hall in which the founder of Minhaj ul Quran, Dr Muhammad Tahir ul Qadri, was present. The seating arrangements were as usual, men would sit in the front rows whilst women would sit in back rows this is usually the case in these kinds of situations. When the programme began some women sent a note to Dr Qadri suggesting that they could not see the programme properly from the back rows. Dr Qadri mentioned this complaint to the audience suggesting that the separate seating of women should split in

such a way that in one half of the hall from front to back women would sit and parallel to them in the other half of the hall men would sit. There were some murmuring and giggles amongst the audience but nobody questioned the decision. Men were asked to vacate the front seats on one side of the hall where women took their place. The second example took place in the Minhaj ul Quran mosque in London during an AGM meeting. The women sent a message saying that they were too far back and not able to fully participate in the meeting and requested permission to sit near the front. Dr Qadri again suggested that men should vacate one half of the mosque hall to make space for women to move to the front sitting parallel to men. Dr Qadri who is renowned scholar has the authority to do this without being challenged by the Minhaj ul Quran members but if any of the lower level scholars did this the chances are that they would most likely be lambasted for 'perverting' Islam.

In 2013 Victoria Park Mosque engaged the services of a fairly high profile female scholar. I was informed that she has conducted programmes on ARY's QTV and more recently she has been on Ummah TV giving lectures and conducting phone-in question and answer programmes. It does seem that although the *alimah* is a high profile female scholar whose views have been aired on Barelwi channels, but it seems that some people felt that her '*aqeed*a' was not in line with the Barelwi *aqeeda* and as a consequence there was a certain conflict brewing between some members of the committee on this issue. Whether the female scholar remains in employment at the mosque remains to be seen but it seems that her presence has certainly rattled feathers and as a consequence there are moves to relieve her of her services. It has to be recognised that the committee by employing a female *alimah* has shown intent to increase the facilities provided at the mosque for women.

The Deobandi and Tablighi Jamaat mosques seemed to be less accommodating of women attending mosques for Friday prayers. Therefore, even today one can find mosques in Manchester that do not provide separate space for women to worship in the mosque. This may be due to lack of space or in some minor cases the *ulama* have still not come around to the idea of having women in the mosque. The Tablighi Jamaat mosques however, do hold regular *bayan* sessions for women in their mosques where women from the *Tablighi* centre invite local women to come to the mosque to listen to a *bayan* by another female *alimah*.

An argument often used to justify not facilitating women in the mosque is that it is better (*afzal*) for the women to pray at home than in the mosque (Mattson 2008). This in some cases is used strictly to prohibit women from praying in the mosque and 'tell' them to pray in their homes. However those who argue against this cite the Hadith nararrated by Ibn Umar and found in one of the most authentic Islamic books Sahih al-Bukhari which states that the Prophet (PBUH) said, "If your women ask permission to go to the mosque at night, allow them[73]" (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 1: Chapter 80: Hadith Number 824).

The counter argument to explain the prohibition of women attending mosques suggests that one must understand the context in which this was said as without understanding the context the saying of the Prophet is wrongly used to prevent women from coming to the mosque. One of the women I interviewed gave the counter argument by saying

> This saying came in the context when the Prophet said that one congregational prayer is equal to twenty-seven. The women companions of the Prophet asked that if they are not able, due to their duties at home, perform their prayer with the congregation they would not be able to achieve the additional benefits that men

---

73 Another version of this found in Mattson (2008) is as follows: The Prophet said, "If the wife of anyone of you asks permission to go to the mosque, he should not forbid her." Mattson does not give a precise reference but states 'Book of Salat in Sahih Bukhari'.

would receive by attending the mosque. It is in this context that the Prophet said that for women they would get the same benefits if they prayed at home.

Sayyed (2001) gives a similar explanation by arguing that it was not to prevent women from going to the mosque but to take into account that if due to their domestic duties they are unable to attend congregational prayer they would not lose out on the *swaab* (Sayeed 2001).

It was, however, generally accepted that the majority of the mosques in Manchester do not discourage women coming to the mosque for Friday worship. One possible reason for the liberalisation in this matter could be due do to the weak financial status of the mosques, who need regular donations from their congregation and larger the congregation the more the amount of donation. Therefore, allowing women to attend mosques for *jalsas* and *juma* prayers has advantageous financial implications for the mosque.

The Altrincham Muslim Association (AMA) a new breed of mosque has decided to tackle the issue of women in mosques more directly by adding a clause in their constitution that makes it mandatory for the Trust to have women trustees. The AMA Constitution's Article 25 states that,

> "The number of trustees shall not be less than seven (at least two of whom must be female members of the Charity) but (unless otherwise determined by ordinary resolution) shall not be more than ten (at least three of whom must be female members of the Charity)."

The AMA is setting a benchmark for other mosques in Manchester to emulate but whether this will in fact be taken up by other mosques remains to be seen. However, it is certain that at a time when Muslim women in the West are calling for women imams to lead mixed congregations the imams[74] and committees of Manchester must address this issue of

---

74 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/oxfordshire/7673845.stm - Woman to lead UK Muslim prayer. Accessed 20/05/2012. See also http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4290960.stm - Quest to become 'UK's first female imam'. Accessed 20/05/2012

neglect of women in the development mosque if they are to avoid further polarisation on this issue. For Muslim women to fully participate not only in mosques but also in the wider British society it is important for women to take control of their destiny of and establish what British Muslim identity means for them. The creation of Islamic schools to cater for Muslim girls is a positive step only if as Akhtar says, "Muslim women themselves must now attempt to interpret the sacred text and question the traditional male bias that has patronised their oppression for so long" (Akhtar 1989: 100). If Muslim schools established for girls do not take this path then all they will be doing is replicating rather than eradicating the bias. There is no question that Islam gave women freedoms but over the years, those freedoms have been taken away by the apparent male bias in interpreting the sacred text (Barlas 2002). An acknowledgement of male bias amongst South Asian Muslims will be the starting point for genuine change.

6.13 Children at the Mosques

It is argued that the recitation and the study of the Quran in Britain have been solely maintained by the presence of mosques and imams. There are many critical arguments, which I make in chapter seven about the role of the imams in Britain but one must consider that the existence of Islam and the Muslim life in Britain would have been totally different if there were no mosques and imams in Britain. Virtually a large majority of Muslims in Britain have learnt to recite the Quran from an imam, in most cases at the mosques. The efforts of the Muslim communities to safeguard the religious future of their children have focused on establishing mosques and employing the services of imams who are capable of imparting at least the very basic religious knowledge to their children.

There is no provision to enable children to learn the Quran or Arabic language within the school system. A recent report on the 'Muslim Situation in Britain' commissioned by EU

has argued for inclusion of these subjects within the school system. The Report argues that the current situation is unhealthy for the Muslim children. A Muslim child has to attend school, as all other children do during the day time, but Muslim children have the extra 'burden' of up to several hours that they have to endure in the evening classes at the mosque / madrassah. Within this time, they also have to undertake any homework set by the school. In effect, the Muslim child has very little social time or time to be with the family. The Report argues that if the schools accommodated Quranic or Arabic language within the school time then it would relieve a lot of the pressure that Muslim children face as a consequence of the lack of provisions within the school.

If the schools provide Quranic and Arabic language facility this would have a bearing on the role that mosques currently play in providing this facility. In effect, the mosques would have to provide alternative courses in Islamic Studies that could be provided for those children who wished to build a strong Islamic knowledge base. Currently most of the effort from mosques is concentrated on providing facilities for children for basic rote learning of the Quran. If staff and facilities were disengaged from this side, this would provide the mosques an opportunity to provide Islamic Studies courses that would greatly benefit not only the Muslim community, but courses could be laid on for the non-Muslim community to educate them about Islamic etiquettes. These courses could be for older children who would be able attend weekends or evenings as it suits their requirements. In many mosques the situation where there are well qualified imams who have spent many years acquiring Islamic knowledge but currently are unable to communicate this knowledge because they are teaching children the Arabic alphabet. These imams are well versed in Islamic knowledge but are not trained to teach younger children. I have seen many mosques where the only form of control applied to the children is force and verbal threats. In one class that I participated in for the current research, the imam had only fifteen children but he was

unable to deliver the lesson in an adequate manner. He lacked rudimentary teaching skills and as a result was unable to retain the attention of the children. However, if you engaged that imam in a discussion on *ilm-i-ghaib*[75] he would come up with some of the most intricate and complex arguments on the subject, but he lacked the basic skills to conduct a class on simple teaching of recitation of Quran to young children.

6.14   Conclusion

The mosque is perceived as a living organ that transmits, reinforces and reconstructs the beliefs from one generation to the next. We have seen that some British Muslims view the mosque as place of prostration, a quite contemplative environment away from the hustle and bustle of the material world, while others view the mosque as an all encompassing place. The mosque is a place that not only provides religious and spiritual environment but also provides socio-economic and political support for the Muslims in Britain. The idea of the use of the mosque recreation and sports activities is derived from the vast mosque space that remains dormant for most of the week and the desire to bring the youth into the mosque so that they do not get detached from their religion.

The mosque organisation structures vary across Manchester in terms of the size and the method used to elect or select the executive committees than run the mosques. Many mosques due to their charitable status have adopted democratic procedures to fulfil the requirements of the Charities Commission and in some cases local authority funding for community activities is contingent upon adopting democratic structures. However some British Muslims held the view that the democratic idea of holding regular elections in mosques is problematic and therefore they have chosen the route of creating a 'Trust' that deals with the day to day administration. Those using this approach for mosque

---

75 *Ilm-i-Ghaib* is translated as the knowledge of the hidden. There is an argument within *Sunni* schools of thought as to whether the Prophet possessed *ilm-i-ghaib*.

organisation did so using the Quranic text to justify this method. This approach relies on the committee member's belief in One God, the concept of accountability after death and fearing none but Allah.

The establishment of the Altrincham Muslim Association and the Cheadle Muslim Association mosques have provided a new direction for existing mosque in terms of how the committees and imams should develop to provide smooth running and widen the services provided by the mosques. These mosques have paved the way for interfaith activity to take place from the mosque whilst at the same time opening the mosque to the involvement of women in the committees. However it can be concluded that the domain of the mosque is a contested space in terms of its role, its organisation and its meaning within the British Muslim communities.

7 THE CONTESTED ROLE OF THE IMAM

And when his Lord tried Ibrahim with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you an Imam of men. Ibrahim said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the unjust, said He.(Shakir Translation: Quran 2:124)

7.1 Introduction

The 'office' of the imam is viewed as fundamental in Muslim communities (Ahmad 1972; Lyon 2002: 216; Hatina 2009: 1). How the role of the imam is perceived in different Muslim communities varies and the level of importance placed on the role of the imam varies (Lewis 2006: 274-76). In this chapter I analyse the role that imams play in a multicultural/multi-faith British society and discuss how this role is perceived by Muslims in Manchester. Data collected from mosques in Manchester will be presented and analysed to illustrate how the Muslim community holds a contested spectrum of views on the role of the imam. I will demonstrate that there is a lively debate amongst Muslims that is transforming the development of the imam's role in British society.

Anwar viewed the role of the imam as 'largely an intra-ethnic nature but there are times when these leaders act in inter-ethnic situations as well' (1979: 162). Anwar's research of the Pakistan community portrayed the role of the imam predominantly as the 'preservation' of the Pakistani life style whether cultural or religious. Anwar's study conducted in the 1970s showed that the process of appointing an imam was the responsibility of the 'Islamic societies' (1979: 164). Anwar gives an insight into the mind-set of the early Pakistani community who were the pioneers of the mosque institutions. From Anwar's research it becomes clear that the aim of the earlier Pakistani Muslims was the preservation of the Pakistani way of life and who better to do that than an imam coming directly from Pakistan.

The imam coming from Pakistan is fully aware of the Pakistani culture and is able to teach the children their parent's cultural heritage as well as the recitation of the Quran. The inter-ethnic aspect of community relations was left to the 'formal' community leaders (ibid). This image gives an insight into the thought process of the earlier Pakistani Muslim communities in relation to the role of the imam. I aim to demonstrate how Pakistani British Muslims deconstructed the traditional Pakistani role of the imam and reconstructed the role of the imam to function in a multicultural and multifaith Britain. I will demonstrate how the imams were imported to from country of origin to carry out very specific tasks but as time passed the expectations of the Pakistani British Muslims from their imams transformed but the 'imported' imams could not fulfill the reconstructed role. The blame for the failings was, unfairly, placed on the imam's shoulders.

Defining the role of the imam has become problematic due to the transformation in conceptual development and the clash between the traditional perceptions of the imam's role in contrast to the current emerging expectations of the imam. The imam is seen as the leader of the Muslim community whilst he is viewed as an employee by the mosque executive committee. The employee / employer relationship leads to complications in the acceptance of the imam as a leader. It is argued that if an imam is an employee he has is in some kind of subordinate relationship with the executive committee who are in effect his employers (bosses). Almost all of the imams in my study performed their duties on a paid basis.[76] In contrast to the imams all the executive committee members I met were providing their services on a voluntary basis[77].

---

[76] I say 'almost all' because I came across one imam who delivers the *juma khutbah* but does not take any financial reward for this task. He is able to do this because he has a full time job outside the mosque.

[77] This not to say there are no mosques who employ administrative staff as the Cheadle Muslim Association employed administrative staff but the administrative staff were not part of the committee or Trust.

7.2 Employer / Employee Dynamics

The role of the imam and how that is affected by the employer / employee relationship is important in comprehending the dynamics of their relationship with the committees. In response to the question on the role of the imam the majority of my respondents said that traditionally the role of the "imam is as a leader of the Muslim community". Whilst some the imam as the "moral conscience of the Muslim community". Respondents "looked to the imam to save their children from immersing wholesale into the Western culture". The imam is perceived as the guardian of the morality of the community. In the Quranic translations the word imam is most commonly translated in English as 'leader' (Irfan ul Quran). Whether these are realistic expectations from the imam is debatable but it is becoming apparent that expectations appear to exceed the abilities and training of the current batch of imams (Choudhury 2007).

Responses in relation to the role of imam show contradictions in the views held by many of my respondents. On the one hand they viewed the imam as an employee who receives a salary and has to abide by the guidelines set by the executive committee at the same time they viewed the imam as leader of the Muslims. The imam following guidelines is perceived by his followers as obeying orders and if he does not follow the parameters set by the committee then they threatens his position as an imam. The main contradiction revolves around who is in charge, the imam or the committee. Is the imam to lead the committee or is the committee leading the imam?

Afzal a graduate of the University of Manchester who has also under gone a imam training course under a prominent *alim* in Manchester argues that the problem lies with this employee and employer relationship. He feels the imams cannot act independently or lead people when they are themselves considered to be 'subordinate'. Afzal says financial

dependency of the imam on the executive committee is the most off putting factor for would be imams. In considering his own situation Afzal says,

> One of my thoughts at the time when I decided to become an imam was that I would never make religion my source of income. I think that's where the problem lies. … My decision was that I would always have a separate job and do my religious work part time on a voluntary basis.

Whether the imams can perform their role on a voluntary and part time basis is a contentious question. Maulana Habibur Rahman is able to deliver the *khutbah* on Friday voluntarily because he has a salary from his main job as teacher which allows him to provide his services to the mosque on a part time basis for free and at the same time maintain his connection with the congregation. However the reality is that the needs of the mosque committee require the services of a full time imam who is able to lead the five daily prayers, teach children in the evening, being available for marriages and funerals and for all other religious activities arranged by the executive committee. These tasks require a full time imam and a full time imam cannot survive without an income.

7.3 Expectations from the imam

One of the consistent responses from my respondents was that Muslims require moral and spiritual leadership from the imam. The concept of leadership that Muslims desire is that the imam should be the leader in all aspects of community life whether moral, spiritual, social, economic, legal or political. Most imams in Britain are unable to 'connect' with their congregations to fulfill these requirements (Birt 2005; Lewis 2006; Choudhury 2007; Suleiman 2009). Some of the imams are only *hafiz*[78] or *qari*[79] with very limited knowledge of issues to do with *fiqh,* let alone having working knowledge of the culture they live in.

---

[78] Hafiz is someone who has memorised the whole Quran. A hafiz is not necessarily a qualified Alim who can give religious or legal edicts.

[79] Qari is a person who is qualified in the proper recitation of the Quran.

Whether this lack of interest in the culture of the host country is deliberate or accidental remains to be seen from how future imams contend with this issue.

Most of the imams are not necessarily leaders within their own mosques but are working on an employed basis and overly concerned about their economic future. Many imams consider their future dependent on how well they 'obey' (un)written guidelines set by the mosque executive committees. Whilst there is a breed of imams who are choosing to acquire their own mosques premises in which they are in full control of the committee, the imam is virtually a lifetime imam of that mosque. Still others have decided to leave the profession and take up other professions, in a few cases becoming taxi drivers with mixed reactions from the community.

7.4   The committee and the Imams

One case that demonstrates the fragile and volatile relationship between the committee and the imam took place during my research. Some members of the committee felt that the imam was not true to the cause of the mosque and it was alleged that he had ulterior motives to undermine the work of the national organisational leadership. The mosque committee was not in a position to relieve the imam of his duties without the express permission of the national executive committee. A meeting was arranged at the mosque, old and new members were asked to attend to resolve the dispute. The imam had been involved in major dispute with the previous committee which was dismissed by the national executive committee. The new local branch committee that made the complaint about the imam was the committee that the imam had aligned himself with in the earlier conflict in the same mosque. On the face of it the committee was in favour of the imam but the reality was that the committee was also divided on this on the suitability of the imam.

When the meeting began the imam was questioned about some of the things he had said in relation to the national organisational failings. The questioning implied that his questioning of national organisation's failings was his way of undermining the leadership of the organisation and the organisation itself. It seemed that the imam began to feel agitated as the questioning began and after a few questions the imam not able to control his emotions began to say that this is no way to treat an *alim*. The imam argued that if there are any questions about my loyalty or my work then rather than humiliate me, an alim, in front of all the members of the mosque it would have been better to ask these questions on a one to one basis just involving the imam and the people making the complaints and few representatives of the national executive committee. He felt that this was an insult to the 'office' of an *alim* that an *alim* could be hauled in front of the members of the mosque and questioned in this way. After his outburst he decided to leave the meeting and as has happened in many other mosques, the few ardent followers of the imam decided to walk out of the meeting with the imam.

This meeting demonstrated that two opposing views of the imam one where the imam and his followers felt that it was an insult for the imam to be questioned in this manner in front of the members of the mosque. Whilst the other view was that the imam is accountable to the local branch members who pay for his services and complaints about him must be addressed in front of all the members. The two key arguments given to me for adopting this procedure were firstly to show that this is an organisation that holds it members to account no matter what their role or status within the organisation. The second reason was the transparency of the organisation. The matter was dealt in front of all the members to show that no underhand tactics were being used and what was being said and decided was decided in the open forum in full view of the members.

Once the imam left the meeting the proceedings continued where it was decided that the role of the imam was temporarily given to someone else and an attempt would be made to convince the outgoing imam to come back and take his post after apologising to the head of the organisation for his outburst and walkout. Few of the scholars associated with the organisation tried to reconcile the matter by going to the imam's residence to convince him to reconsider his position but their efforts were to no avail. The imam had made his mind that he was no longer going to work under this organisation and felt he had managed to detach enough members to set up another mosque in the vicinity of the existing mosque.

The imam with his followers left the mosque to set up their own mosque in 'competition' with the existing mosque. The imam purchased a building within close proximity of the existing mosque with the help of the members that had left the mosque with him. It seemed that the imam having learned from few episodes of conflict in mosques decided that the new mosque would be purchased under his ownership where no committee would again be able to dispense with his services. Lewis also states that all the ulema he discusses in paper "… felt the need either to set up independent institutions or to maintain their economic independence of mosque committees" (2006: 178) However, the imams followers, above, did not realise the implications of this but agreed with the imam and purchased a disused factory that was converted into a mosque in the name of a trust that was controlled by the imam. However it did not take long for conflict to develop between the imam and his allies to the extent that I am informed a physical altercation took place within the mosque premises between one of the committee members and the imam. The end result of the conflict was that the committee member left the mosque but the imam who had the ownership of the building is still the imam in this new mosque. This seems like a role reversal where previously the imam had to leave the mosque whereas in this case the

committee is at the beck and call of the imam and the imam can choose who he wants to include in the committee and who he wants to exclude.

7.5 Imam the Leader of the Muslim Community?

The fact that the majority of imams in Britain are from South Asian background who spent most of their life in a rural setting and having gained all their education from the traditional *madrassah* places them at a disadvantage to lead Muslims who have grown up in an urban British multicultural environment with a predominantly secular education. For most of his life the imams has lived in a Muslim majority country with very little or no experience of living in a community where Muslims are a minority or more precisely in a European country (Mandaville 2004: 123).

The motives of the imams in coming to Britain differ from one imam to the next. Some imams came to Britain as economic migrants whilst there are others who came for religious reasons, to preach Islam. Some 'economic migrants' imams once they gain permanent residence in Britain look further than just being imam as the post of an imam is perhaps the one of the lowest paid professions in Britain. When these imams turn to other professions the reaction from the Muslim community is twofold. Firstly, the view expressed is that these imams are 'only here for financial gain' and secondly, a more sympathetic view that argues that the treatment of imam at the hands of the committees is so bad that they are better off making their living outside the mosque.

The imams inability to fluently communicate with the British Muslims in their mother tongue, English, is an obvious hindrance to their attempt to provide leadership to the Muslim community in Britain. To command respect from the youth is dependent upon the ability to communicate with the youth effectively. Many imams who speak to youngsters in 'broken' English feel vulnerable that they are losing their respect as imams therefore

they shy away from using English. Imams have attempted to provide leadership using Urdu language to communicate directly with parents in the hope that the parents will transmit the message to their children. It common place to hear appeals in mosques by imams to control the youth but these have been in Urdu and directed at the parents. Especially on the occasion of *eid ul Fitr* and *eid ul Adha* imams are heard asking the parents to ask their children to behave in a responsible manner and not defame the good name of the Muslim community. Ghulam Mohiyuddin who has been involved with the Victoria Park mosque since the 1970s argues that even today we get imams saying 'Please bring your children to mosque for a speech in English'. He sternly protests 'why is it that the imams are not speaking directly to the youth and ask them to attend the English programmes in the mosque, rather than ask their parents to bring them'. Some mosques have experimented with asking their imams to make a small part of their *khutbah* in English but on the whole this has been viewed as 'breadcrumbs'. Dr Ahmed argues that the 'Muslim youngsters do not want breadcrumbs they want the full speech to be in English'.

7.6 'British' imams

Muslims realising that the imams coming from South Asia are detached from the issues faced by youth growing up in Britain decided to embark upon a policy of training imams in Britain. In the light of this thinking, centres have been created in Blackburn, Bradford, Bury, Dewsbury, London, Milton Keynes, and Nottingham. Some of these were pioneering institutions of imam training in Britain (Birt & Lewis 2011). Lewis (1994) commenting on these centres in the early 1990s argues that the teaching in most of these centres was based upon the traditional method and the traditional syllabus that is used is the same as the one that is used in South Asia.

7.6.1 Maulana Habib ur-Rahman

Maualna Habib comes from a religious family and was the son of a civil servant. His father passed while he was only 4 years old. His education is was mainly taken care of his father's friends. He studied at Khalsa College Guranwala as student of science gaining an FSc. In the fourth year of his BSc at the same college his studies had to halted to partition and the creation of Pakistan in 1947. In 1947 a few months before his final B.Sc. examination he had to leave his education. He feels that on the face of it that was a tragedy but it turned out be a blessing in disguise. When he discontinued his education in the college he started to gain religious education from a local Dar-Al-Aloom, Jamia-e-Arabia In Jamia-e-Arabia he gained his Islamic education of Hadith, Quran and Fiqh. Due to social and family situation he did not gain his BSc until ten years later in 1958. He then decided to join the teaching profession and enrolled at the central training college of Lahore where he attained CT, Certificate of Teacher. He then went on to do a Bed and an Med from the Institute of Education and Research of Punjab University. He began teaching in local high school in Gujranwala whilst at the same time taking Islamic training course of Jamaat-i-Islami as he had by then become member. In 1965 he came to Manchester where he gained his first post as Imam in the only mosque in Manchester at the time, Victoria Park Mosque. He says that although he had not gained his Islamic education with a view to becoming an imam but he considers himself fortunate that he did become an imam when he to England. After 6 years as the imam of the Victoria Park mosque he decided he could no longer work for the committee which he described as 'political businessmen who had secular ideas'. After handing in his resignation enrolled with Leicester University for a Postgraduate Certificate of Education. After one year he became a qualified teacher. He gained his first teaching post as a teacher in Mathematics in a secondary school in Failsworth, Manchester. From that day onwards until retirement from his teaching post he

taught at school and performed his Khateeb duties at the Madina Mosque in Levenshulme. He is also part Kassim Darwish Muslim School, the first Muslim boys school in Machester.

In Pakistan he was member of the Jamaat-i-Islami and upon arrival in Manchester he became a member of UK Islamic Mission and has served as the President UK Islam Mission.

7.6.2 Allama Muhammad Qamaruzzaman Khan Azmi

Allama Qamaruzzaman Azmi, one of the longest serving imams in Manchester, was born in Azamgarh in the in Indian State of Uttar Pardesh in 1946. His entire imam training took place in India. He came to England in 1974 when Allama Arshad ul Qadri invited him to become the joint secretary of the World Islamic Mission. He came initially to Pir Mahroof Hussain who was also one of the key members of the World Islamic Mission. Allama Azmi's first contact with Manchester was as a visiting Alim was in 1975 when he came to deliver what became weekly Darse Quran at the Shah Jahan mosque on Eileen Grove in Longsight. From there he Allama Azmi became well like by the Trustees of the Ibadhur Rahaman Trust who approached hime to become the permanent imam in 1979. Initially at 25 Bellot Street Cheetham Hill and then at the purpose built mosque on Woodland Road, Cheetham Hill. He was the main force behind the construction of the purpose built North Manchester Jamia mosque (Ibadhur Rahman Trust) first phase of which was completed in 1984. However, the mosque is going through another phase of reconstruction that will see it become the largest mosque in Manchester. From his arrival to Manchester from Bradford 1979 to Allama Azmi has been one of the most influential imams in Manchester. He has an international fan base. He has been influential in terms of handling matters relating to schools in Manchester whether on the issues of dress or religious assemblies or halal food in schools. He has also been key player in the responses to T*he Satanic Verses* issue.

7.6.3 Allama Ghulam Ahmad Rabbani

Allama Ghulam Ahmad Rabbani was born in 1968 in Pakistan's business capital Karachi. He completed his Arabic studies in Karachi City. He gained secular education in private schools and gained his religious training from Jamia Zia-Al-Aloom. His father Maulana Ghulam Dastaghir Afghani was a prominent Sunni alim in Pakistan who founded the Jamia Zia ul Aloom. Allama Rabbanni started his education at Zia al Aloom by learning Quran-e-Majeed there and completed his Nazra education, he started Hifz and after Hifz he started to study early classical books in Dars-e-Nizami. He later moved to Jamia Mian by the special advise of his father to complete some books under the guidance of Allama Ghulam Rasul Saeedi Sahib who was a well-known scholar of Ahle Sunnah and Mufti Chief Justice retired Justice Sujjad Ali Qadri *Marhoom* (late) and Mufti Muhibur Rehman Sahib. After completing his metric education, he went to college and after that, he started studying in Lahore at Minhaj ul Quran University. Because he had completed a fair amount of his studies in Karachi Madrassah's under different scholars, he gained admission into the fourth year Minhaj-ul-Quran. He says there were three requirement of admission to Minhaj-ul-Quran education to metric and he had done his FA. He did his FA while he did Dars-e-Nizami in classical books in Islam. He gained his Matriculation in 1987, FA in 1989 and BA degree from Punjab University in 1991. He then went on to gain a Masters degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies from Minhaj-ul-Quran University in 1994. He came first in his Masters Degree in Minhaj ul Quran. In his Masters he completed a dissertation on the topic of Khatm-e-Nabuwat (Finality of Prophethood).

He came to England first as a visitor speaker in 1997 for one week on the request of Minhaj ul Quran London from Denmark. In 1998, he moved to London as the 'Director' / *Ameer* of Idara Minhaj ul Quran London. He moved to the Manchester Minhaj ul Quran mosque in 2000.

In relation to the question on identity he says

> "I think it's important to describe for me as a Muslim. Because our message is a message of deen and it doesn't matter who is your audience and who are doing this message. We are spreading the message of Islam. So our basic concern is Islam that's why I prefer to be described as a Muslim rather than Asian or Pakistani".

I asked him whether there was a difference between being a Pakistani Muslim and British Muslim. His response was,

> "Apart from geographical difference I think it doesn't make sense. If it means geographical differences it is OK because you are Muslim and after Muslim you should tell anyone should he belong from where you are? Where do you live? This you have to mention as Allah Subhanahuwatallah says to know each other I am a British Muslim or I am a Pakistani Muslim apart from geographical difference it doesn't make any sense."

7.6.4 Maulana Muhammad Arshad Misbahi

Maulana Muhammad Arshad Misbahi has been involved in the Victoria Park for the past sixteen years at the Victoria Park mosque, initially deliovering his speeches in English asa the second imam but gradually took as the main imam when Pir Muzamil Hussain Shah left Victoria Park mosque. He gained imam training mostly from Britain but has spent some time in Behra Sharif in Pakistan to complete the final part of his imam training. Maulana Misbahi is 44 years old, was born in Ahmadabad in India, and came to England in 1978. He is married and has teenage children. He comes from a very religious family background. He hails from a family of imams, his grandfather, Maulana Muhammad Younis, was a great religious scholar. His father, Maulana Hafiz Muhammad Younis, is an imam in Birmingham and his uncles were also imams. Because of the family background and environment at home he had the desire to follow in the same footsteps. So it was his own desire to train as imam and says there was no coercion for him to come into this profession. He studied first with his brother in India. When he came to Britain in 1978 he started studying with his father and then moved to Bradford to become the Hafiz-e-Quran.

And then he went to Manchester for one year to study Arabic language. Then from there he went to Jamia-Al-Karam. From Jamia al Karam he went to Pakistan, Behra Sharif, where he completed his alim /fazil course.

In India they come from an urban background. He was born in Ahmadabad the capital city of the state of Gujarat in India. The place that he comes from in the city is known as Ghaugh Malle Ghaun. The actual population is about 100,000. He says the city of Ahmadabad is a very interesting city and very nice part of the world. The family's economic background he describes as "not too well off". He would class himself "just below middle class background". When he came to Britain he went to secondary school and college as well. He gained his GCE O' levels. He studied in college for a new course knownas CPVE. But he was "not very involved in secular education" he felt that he was more "dedicated to learning Islam".

He says he does not know where the motivation for becoming an imam came from, maybe because it's been in the family for a long time. The home environment where he grew he saw his grandfather as a great scholar, his father as a scholar and his uncles also in the same line. So that's why he thinks that he became an imam. He felt a duty to become an imam because of his family background.

In relation to his identity he considers himself as a British Muslim. He says,

> "I am a Muslim and then it would be either Asian or British because now I live in Britain. So I think more likely it will be British as well, British Muslim. Black I mean looking at the political situation in Europe I think we will be called black in that sense. But I wouldn't personally say that I am black or a whatever. First and foremost I am a Muslim."

7.6.5 Allama Muhammad Faisal

Muhammad Faisal who is now aged 38 years began his journey to become an imam at the age of 13 years. Muhammad Faisal who was born in city of Hydrabad, Pakistan came to England when he was six months old. His initial education was at St Thomas Nursery school where he spent his infant and junior years as well. He went to Kaskenmoor Comprhensive secondary school. After one year at the secondary school his father decided

to send his son to Pakistan for education. His father was not too happy about the education that he was receiving in England and felt that his son would be better off going to Pakistan to gain a better education. Faisal first went to a private school in Pakistan but after six months changed over to a military school. He says that he only spent a year in Pakistan and he did not like it there, he felt homesick and came back to England at the end of the year. During summer holidays he went to Jamia al Karam madrassah of Pir Imadad Hussain. Again he did not enjoy living away from home. He came back and went back to Kaskenmoor School for his secondary education. He did his GCSE's from Kaskenmoor.

However, his father wanted his son to gain Islamic education along with the secular education so decided that Faisal should start his Islamic education on a part time basis at one of the mosques. They approached Qari Khadim Hussian and Allama Bashir Ahmed Sialwi who suggested that he would better off approaching Allama Qammaruzzaman Azmi in Cheetham Hill. So from the age of o 13 years Faisal would go to Allama Azmi in the evenings and weekends whilst attending school full time. Faisal completed his GCSE's at school and then he completed his A' levels at Oldham College. After A' levels the family decided to take a break from his education so that he could help with the running of a takeaway they had purchased. Whilst working at the takeaway he continued his Islamic education under the guidance of Allama Azmi. After a 3 to 4 year break from education he completed his undergraduate education from the University of Manchester in Arabic and Middle Eastern History and he followed that with a Masters in the same department. Alongside his university education he managed to continue his Islamic education and in 2000 at the age of 26 years he completed his Islamic education. He says most of Islamic teaching was in Urdu.

Faisal identified himself as a Pakistani Muslim before he considered himself as British. He considered his family background to be reason for his love for Pakistan being quite strong, especially the fact that he spent a year in school in Pakistan where he learned about Quaid-i-Azam (The Great Leader) Muhammad Ali Jinnah the founder of Pakistan. He said he consider himself as an Asian but did not consider himself as 'black' under any circumstances.

Of the four imam profiles, provided above it seems that majority of imams predominantly come from a family background that already has precedence of imams in the family. Allama Azmi, Allama Rabbani and Allama Misbahi all have illustrious religious backgrounds as all had fathers and grandfathers who were renowned imams in their own right. Maulana Habib ur Rahman and Allama Faisal are from lay backgrounds but Allama Faisal's father had a strong desire to educate his son as an alim.

Lewis' analysis of religious centres also concluded that they had failed to adapt the teaching and training of imams to the changing circumstances of the imams in Britain (1994: 99). This view was echoed by maulana Qamaruzaman Azmi who said,

> Most of the teaching in these madrassah's is conducted in Urdu. The reason for this is that most of the books used in their syllabus are from India or Pakistan and written in Urdu. The madhrassah's need to teach in English and provide literature that students can refer to in English language.

Maybe the fact that the many centres are experiencing problems in attracting students to train as imams may be related to the inadequacies of these *madrassah's* to adapt to the changing situation in Britain.

In discussions with the imams and members of the executive committees, it emerged that there are serious problems in attracting people who would be willing to be trained as imams (Birt 2005: 187). Respondents when questioned about attracting young students to

become imams said that they are experiencing difficulties in recruiting students. The reasons sighted are the 'mistreatment' of imams, the 'low status' of imams and low salaries offered to imams. Afzal a graduate of the University of Manchester from the Middle Eastern Department is also a trained imam, spent approximately nine years studying part time under the supervision of an esteemed Barelwi scholar in Manchester. During his student years on Fridays he used to lead the *juma* prayer at a Grammar School in Manchester where he gives the *khutbah* in English and Arabic. Afzal talked at length about the problems related to attracting students to become imams. Afzal says

> "I think the imam has no respect. So when people look at this situation nobody wants their children to go through the humiliation that the imam suffers. I can't blame anyone who wouldn't want to become an imam in this day and age.

The availability of imams from Pakistan willing to work for lower wage fulfils the needs of mosque committees who require a *hafiz* or a *qari*. A *hafiz / qari* to a large extent is essential for the needs of the mosque committees in Britain. They are especially in demand during the month of *Ramadan* for *taravih* prayer. With the number of mosques growing it is becoming difficult to find a *hafiz* during the month of *Ramadan*. A *hafiz* trained in Britain expects to be paid a reasonable salary that allows him to live a respectable life. Training to be a *hafiz / qari* takes several years of practice. If a student is expected to devote three or four years of his life towards training as a *hafiz / qari* and eventually work for less than what you would get if you were unemployed is seen by many as an insult to the profession. Maulana Azmi very strongly argued that,

> "The imams should be paid a 'proper' wage. They must be paid on par with government paid school teachers."

If this trend of failing to pay the imams a fair salary continues then it is difficult to see how of importing imams from Pakistan can be stopped (Birt 2005: 191). The imported imams

who will require many years before they adjust to the system in Britain and in the meantime the Muslim youth will get pushed further away from the mosques.

Imams trained in Britain as *hafiz / qari* competes with the established imams who have been trained in South Asia and who are working on very low salaries and unpleasant working environment. As long as the financial state of the mosques remains poor it is difficult to see how the mosques would be willing to employ imams trained from Britain and pay them an adequate salary. One of the purpose built mosques in Manchester spent approximately a million pounds on its construction project but when I asked why they had not employed British trained imams the response was 'We can't afford it. It is cheaper to get imams from abroad'. British imams competing with the older and experienced imams who are not willing to relinquish their positions to allow British trained imams take up prominent positions. There is a surplus of British trained imams who if they ever do get to be imams play second fiddle to the senior imams from abroad.

The fact that the established imams are not willing to relinquish their position has meant that the English *khutbah* is marginalized and normally takes place at the end of the Urdu *khutbah*. The *khateeb* at Victoria Park mosque realised that the English khutbah delivered by a British trained imam at end of his Urdu khutbah meant the English khutbah was heard by a full mosque so he decided to change the situation to have the English *khutbah* before the Urdu *khutbah*. The reason for this change was that if the English khutbah takes place at the end of the Urdu *khutbah* the mosque is at full capacity and when the Urdu *khutbah* starts the mosque is usually empty. Mosque is not empty because there are not many people who wish to listen to the *khutbah* in Urdu but is mainly due to the fact that worshippers tend to come to the mosque nearer end of the *khutbah* just before the start of *farz jamaat*. This was changed whereby the English *khutbah* takes place when the mosque

is virtually empty while the Urdu *khutbah* takes place when the mosque is full. Another irony of this situation is that generally the elderly worshippers, for whom English is not their first language, come to the mosque earlier than the English speaking youth and the elderly were the ones who would have to endure the English *khutbah* while the youth had to endure the Urdu *khutbah*! This defeats the objective of having an English *khutbah*. The main objective is to attract the youth so that they become closer to the mosque and in turn become closer to Islam. The current situation means that the youth must come very early to the mosque if they wish to listen to the English *khutbah*. They must not only listen to the five to ten minutes English *khutbah* they must also sit through the whole of the Urdu *khutbah*. Therefore the arrangement has not only defeated the objective of attracting the youth towards the mosque but has made it even more difficult for the youth to come to the mosque as they must sit through the Urdu *khutbah*, which they do not understand[80].

Recently developments, however, have shown a change of heart on the part of the committee who having dispensed with the services of Pir Muzamil Hussain earlier and more recently Arshad Misbahi they have now employed imam Muhammad Asim. Imam Asim grew up in Bradford and has been trained as an imam in Britain delivers the Juma Khutbah in English only[81]. Since his appointment there is no Urdu *khutbah*.

Imams from Pakistan bring with them procedures and methods developed in a different socio-economic and political environment. There are at least two types of imams who have arrived from abroad. Firstly, the imams who come from important posts abroad like the Mufti being considered by the current Victoria Park Mosque committee. They come

---

[80] The most recent development is that Imam Muhammad Asim from Bradford has been employed to give the Juma Khutbah in English. Currently the khutbah is only delivered in English

[81] How long this will last remains to be seen as there are rumours that imam Asim may be replaced by a famous Mufti who regularly appears on ARY QTV. As yet I have only heard this from a few of the committee members but no official confirmation of this has been made.

with a strong reputation generally as '*alims*'[82]. Then there are those who are *hafiz* or *qari's* and are not '*alims*'. *Alim* is a scholar of Islam while a *hafiz* is not necessarily a scholar. He is someone who has memorised the whole Quran, it does not entail that he knows the whole Quran with meaning. It does not even mean that the *hafiz* or *qari* knows or understands Arabic. The *hafiz* can recite the Quran but is not necessarily able translate the recitation into Urdu or English.

Imams who come from important positions from abroad come with a reputation as *alim* and *Khateeb*[83]. The imam is the person who leads the five times prayer but he is not necessarily the *khateeb* of the mosque. For example Victoria Park mosque has *Qari* Javid as the imam while the *khateeb* was *Pir* Sayyid Muzamil Hussain Shah, then Allama Arshad Misbahi and more recently imam Asim. In a mosque the imam and the *khateeb* can be the same person but there is a delicate differentiation between the role and power of the two. The *khateeb* has the attention of the large congregation, in some cases in excess of 2000 people every Friday, which provides him a platform from which he is able to make an impact through his *khutbah*. The imam is usually over shadowed by the *khateeb* on that day. This sometimes leads to a tension between the imam and the *khateeb*. However, the imam who leads the five daily prayers has much closer bond and interaction with the regulars at the daily prayers. In contrast at the Khizra mosque the imam and the *khateeb* is the same person. He has duties during the week and has the responsibility for the Friday *khutbah*.

The reason why I wish to highlight the difference in the types of imams is to enable a better understanding of their impact on the mosques in Britain. The *hafiz* / *qari* has the least unsettling effect as he is often assigned the task of leading the prayers and delivering

---

[82] Alim, pl. ulama literally means "the one who knows". Alim is person who is a scholar in Islam. He is someone knowledgeable who can guide.
[83] Khateeb is a person who delivers the khutbah / speech.

the *juma khutbah* but has a very minimal effect on the administrative set-up of the mosque. This type of imam is willing to play second fiddle to the executive committee which assumes the dominant role in this relationship. In this situation there are less chances of a conflict between the committee and the imams emerging. The obvious reason for this is that the imam sees himself as employed by the committee and sees his future secure by cooperating with the executive committee.

A conflict between the executive committee and the imam begins generally when the imam's position is threatened. When this situation occurs then the imam generally turns to the congregation to mobilise support so that the executive committee can be undermined (Werbner 2002). Once a tension develops between the imam and the executive committee this is then dragged into the wider sphere involving the imam, executive committee and the mosque congregation. The executive committee wishes to replace the existing imam so as to proceed with the running of the mosque in the best way they envisage. The imam in turn feels that the executive is using the mosque to enhance their personal image. What ensues is an attack on the intentions and motives of the imam and executive. Once this situation occurs it becomes extremely difficult for the imam and the existing executive to have a harmonious working relationship.

The mosque at this point becomes an arena of a power struggle between the imam and the members of the executive. The imam questions the legitimacy of the executive to order him to do certain things whilst the executive questions the imam's role and ability as a pious leader. The question of status is invoked where the role of the imam is brought into question (Weber 1968). The question generally asked is whether the imam works for the executive or is the imam of higher authority than the executive. Who is responsible to whom? Why should the imam be responsible to the executive? Who or what gives the

executive the authority to hold the imam accountable? Can the 'lowly' executive, hold the 'high' status imam accountable? The public is then asked to play a mediating role by taking sides. This then leads discussions about who can participate in the debate entered into. The membership of the mosque is brought into question. Who is a member and who is not a member of the mosque becomes a key issues that all of a sudden acquires significance. What are the criteria to become a member of the mosque? These are all questions that need to be discussed when analysing the symbiotic relationship of the imam and mosque committee[84].

The imam is treading a very fine line where he has to maintain his image as a leader and as someone who follows set guidelines. Set guidelines need to be followed if the imam is to receive his salary from the executive. Set guidelines in this context does not necessarily constitute any form of a written document it could be as simple as a meeting in which the committee informs the imam that this is what is expected from him, in an informal setting. At one stage I am informed that the *khateeb* at Victoria Park mosque provided his services without any pay for approximately six months. There has been a change in the executive committee at Victoria Park mosque, and the current committee is to a large extent dominated by the followers of a previous imam Allama Nisar Ahmed Baig who has been quite influential within Manchester, especially Victoria Park mosque. The executive wished to replace the current *khateeb* but the *khateeb* came to terms with not taking a salary for his services from the executive who at time were powerless as the use of withholding the imam's salary as leverage in replacing the *Khateeb* could not be employed. At Victoria Park Mosque the general trend has been that there is a struggle before any imam is replaced. The *khateeb* in question had made some powerful friends who have not

---

[84] For recent case that was decided in court see South Wales East AM Mohammad Asghar's case - http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/judge-rule-mosque-ban-tory-1802030 - accessed 15/07/2013.

been successful in getting elected into the executive but were strong enough to counter the forced removal of the *khateeb*. However, after visits to the *khateebs* residence by some prominent figures from Manchester resolved the issue and a new *khateeb* was appointed.

7.7 Contractual Agreements and Financial Concerns

Of special interest for this particular discussion is the authority to remove an imam from his position in the mosque. In line with Lewis' findings my research showed that many imams did not have formal contracts that set out clearly any procedures for grievances and reconciliation (1994: 122). Whenever a problem occurs between the imam and the executive there are no fixed rules. Lewis mentions the lack of the use of the contract for the imam however a further dimension that would be useful in this debate is the reasons why the use of the contract has not been adapted. It was not until 2003 that imams were accorded full employment rights (Birt 2005: 191). I will briefly analyse some of the reasons furnished by my respondents as to why the contract is rejected by some while others prefer it.

The executive committees in many cases do not follow any rules when removing an imam from the mosque. Once again the example of Victoria Park mosque illustrates how an imam was virtually 'thrown' out of the mosque along with his belonging during the night without any member of the congregation knowing, apart from those who were in the executive. The reason why this situation occurs is that the imam had not been issued with any formal contract and mosque committees exploit this situation to their advantage. The fact that the imams who are 'forcibly' removed from mosques generally do not turn to the legal system is mainly a result of the informal nature of their employment arrangements and their lack of familiarity with UK employment law. They have been asked to take on

the job but they do not have any job security. In most cases they are not able to provide documentary evidence to support their claims of unfair dismissal.

Generally there is no document that would inform the imam of his job specification. As a result of the lack of clarity in defining the role of the imam what usually happens is that the imam is expected to perform a wide variety of tasks some of which he has not been trained to do. Many of the imams in smaller mosques tend to live within the mosques, as the executive cannot afford to provide them with separate accommodation and his salary is not enough to allow acquisition of separate residential premises. It usually agreed that the imam would live within the mosque and use the heating and lighting facilities of the mosque. The rent and utility bills are often part of the payment package together with a salary. Many unmarried imams who have recently arrived from abroad find the package attractive, but the same package would be discouraging for British trained imams.

Until year 2001 in many small mosques the imam was paid a mere £50 for one week's work and any imam receiving above £150 a week was seen as the exception. Lewis argues that the main reason for this 'precarious' economic situation of the *ulama* is that the "general economic situation of the Muslim communities is parlous, due to the dramatic recession affecting the very industries for which they were recruited" (1994: 123). He also goes on to say that the "mosques committees are still burdened with large expenses over and above the costs incurred in buying a building to be used as mosque" (ibid.) Lewis' reasoning may hold for some mosques but the established mosques in Manchester seem to have enough income to pay their imams a fair salary but in many cases they still do not do so. The Ibadhur Rahman Trust and Victoria Park mosque have substantial revenues that they have used for other purposes but have failed to provide fair and adequate wages for their imams. One of the imams informed me that it is economically easier for Barelwi

imams to work on lower wages due their participation in *khatams* and other socio-religious activities where it is customary amongst Pakistani Muslims to give some money to the imam in lieu of his *dua* and recitation of the Quran for *barkat* (Lewis 1994: 125). This imam argued that they make more money from the 'extra-curricular' activities than they do through wages paid directly by the mosque committees. I have on many occasions witnessed this taking place on weddings or birth ceremonies and this is especially the case at funerals and annual death anniversary *khatams*. The imam is called upon by many families to recite the azan in the new born baby's ear and in many cases it is expected that the family would give some monetary recompense out of their joy at the birth of their baby. This is the client patron relationship that Lyon's has highlighted in his study of the Pakistani society (Lyon 2004). Marsden in his study of Muslims in Pakistan has also provided examples of how the imams are paid in kind (Marsden 2005)

It emerged that there were mosques that were capable of paying the imams a fair salary but out choose decide to spend that money on other activities than pay the imam an appropriate salary. The major reason given by imams was the fluid availability of imams from South Asia willing to work for very low wages, especially in their first five years until they obtain indefinite leave remain in UK. General Secretary of one of the mosques described how when they required two additional imams a disagreement occurred that resulted in two imams being employed from Pakistan. The disagreement centred on who should have a say in the choice of the imam. Regionalism played a significant role in the final decision as it was decided that one of the imams would come from Mirpur to appease the Mirpuri's in the mosque and the second imam would come from Faislabad to please the Faislabadi contingent in the mosque. The decision to employ the new imams did not take into consideration the needs of the Muslim youth who attend the mosque but the major concern

was how status quo could be maintained to avoid any kind of confrontation amongst mosque members.

I asked one of the trustees that if a mosque like theirs that has a very strong and stable set up did not employ an imam from Britain then what chance is there for the financially weaker and organisationally less stable mosques to employ imams from Britain? He described the problem they faced,

> We have people from Faislabad, Jehlum and Mirpur who would like the imam from their region. It was to please the factions that we employed imams from Pakistan.

I am informed by my respondents that this situation is not isolated to this particular mosque but is quite similar to what happens in other mosques. Regionalism and biradariism continue to play a significant role in choosing the imam. Members of the mosque committees usually bond very well with an imam from either their region or from their biradari. Biradari and regionalism would in time become the source of strength for the imam in any future conflict. When the executive committees wish to replace the imams' the biradari and regional network are what the imam relies upon to save him from dismissal from their post or assistance in establishing a new mosque once dismissed from the current mosque.

7.8 Tasks an Imam Performs

It seems that the imam who has recently arrived from the sub-continent is usually lumbered with countless tasks. The imam, first and foremost, has the duty to lead the five times daily prayers. This is a duty that involves challenging timings that are continuously changing through the year. For example during the summer period the *Fajr jamaat* takes place at before 3.00 in morning, then he has to be available for the *Zuhr* prayer at around 14.00 hours, *Asr* prayer is usually around 20.00 hours and *Magrib* prayers at just before

22.00 hours and the last prayer of the day *Isha* takes place at around 23.00 hours at night. The total amount of time involved to perform these prayers may be less than two hours in total but being available at inconvenient times has caused a problem for many imams. Maulana Zaman says

> Being available from *fajr* to *isha*, being available for births and deaths, being available for all the needs of the community at all times is hard for imams. This aspect of an imam's job is putting off many young students who would otherwise be willing to devote their life to their religion.

In mosques where there is more than one imam the duties of prayer can be split between the two imams, one imam can deal with the *Fajr* prayer while the second imam can take on the responsibility for the *Isha* prayer. But in mosques where there is only one imam and he lives away from the mosque a problem occurs with leading the *Fajr* or *Isha* prayer. In mosques where the executive is strong it usually stipulates that the imam to be present at all five prayers. In these mosques there is no official contract between the imam and the executive committee. Tasks are decided ad hoc as and when required. There are only a few tasks which are fixed that have to be performed regularly namely leading the five daily congregation prayers, teaching the children Quran after school and the Friday *khutbah*. All other tasks are not fixed and are mutually agreed or in some cases enforced upon the imam by a dominant committee.

7.9   The 'Demeaning' Contract

I came across imams who viewed the contract as something negative that demeans their status as imams. I witnessed at first hand the preparation of a contract and the discussion where the executive committee was to decide whether to ask the imam to sign the contract. A point that was made very strongly by the majority of the executive members was that the

imam is our leader not our employee or '*ghulam*'[85] whom we can order about or bind to a contract. One of the members suggested, "if you put a contract in front of the imam he will not stay at this mosque and we will be deprived of a good imam". The issue is further complicated by the fact that the same executive was willing and did give a contract to the previous imam. So what has changed? I intend to analyse the complexities involved the relationship between the imam and the executive committee.

The contract is a written expression of the desired relationship between the imam and the executive committee. The contract defines the duties of the imam, it provides a procedure to deal with complaints and grievances and finally it deals with the procedure for the termination of the contract. The contract is to be mutually agreed between the parties concerned before it becomes effective. The response to a contract depends upon the individual circumstances of each mosque and the circumstances of the imam. If the mosque has a massive debt hanging over it then it is in a weaker position to negotiate the contract with an imam who is able to motivate the congregation to donate generously. This response also depends upon the calibre of the imam being approached. If the imam is a well-known person who can attract people to the mosque then he is again in a stronger bargaining position. Imams of high calibre are few in number but the demand for high calibre imams far exceeds the supply. There are many reasons that have been suggested for this lack of supply of high calibre imams. I will deal with this issue separately but for the time being I would like to concentrate on the negotiation process that takes place between the mosque's executive committee and the imam.

One issue mentioned earlier is the financial status of the mosque. One of the key tasks for an imam in Britain is the ability to raise funds for the different projects that the mosque

---

[85] *Ghulam* literally means a servant.

committees wish to undertake. The government in Britain does not provide funds for any religious purpose, therefore all the funds to build a mosque and to undertake projects that are religious in nature have to be generated from within the Muslim community. From this it should not be understood that in every mosque the imam is solely responsible for raising funds.

The members of the executive committee are equally responsible and, in many ways more capable of raising funds as the members of the executive committee have lived in a particular area for many years and have become well acquainted with the local community. These members have built a certain reputation in the community. The reputation of the members has a twofold effect, positive and negative. If the members have been able create an image of honesty and reliability then the community will entrust the members with their money and if the members have an image that reflects a certain amount of self-promotion and contempt then the community will not part with its money. Under these circumstances many committees turn to the imam to generate funds from those they are not able convince.

In one mosque I observed that the appeal for funds was made not by the imam but by the president of the mosque. The imam initially made the main speech in which he touched upon the benefits of donating in the way of Allah but was not able to make the same impact as the president made when he stood up to make the appeal. The president who had lived amongst the community for over thirty years knew almost everyone in the congregation and on that basis made a personal appeal for the funds. Within a matter of fifteen minutes he had got commitments from the congregation of over twenty thousand pounds. This was in a mosque that has a maximum capacity of 200 people. At the time when the appeal was made the total number of those present in the congregation was

approximately 100. In mosques where the president is quite influential the imam is generally quite submissive.

Jorgen Neilsen in a paper presented at Manchester Metropolitan University argued that imams are at the mercy of powerful executive committees. I found that in some cases the imam is the driving force and is a lot stronger than the executive committee. In one of the mosques in my research the executive committee wished to resolve the problem of two *eid's* and were willing to compromise but the imam told them that if they compromise on this issue then he would leave this mosque. The executive members knew that their project would be jeopardised if the imam left. The result was that the executive committee had to give in to the wishes of the imam and the issue of 'two eids' to this day remains unresolved in Manchester.

In the mosque in question the imam is able to attract audiences of over two thousand every Friday. The imam is well aware that the large audience has people who come from different towns to listen to his *khutbah*. I remember a period when a group of people from Oldham would come every Friday to listen to the imam's *khutbah*. The mosque gains considerably from the financial contribution of these people through the imam. This ability to attract increased audiences places the imams in a powerful position. It is not easy to replace these types of imams without destablising the mosque set up possibly leading to the dissolution of the executive committee and a new executive being formed.

If the mosque is in debt, it finds itself in a paradoxical position. On the one hand, the mosque is already under a financial burden but in order to attract an imam of high calibre it has to pay above the average salary, which in turn increases the financial burden of the mosque. On the other hand if the mosque employs an imam of lower calibre and pays him a lower salary this will decrease the immediate burden of the salary but in the long run it

works against the mosque. If the imam is unable to attract people to the mosque then the attendance at the mosque is low, which in turn means that the finances generated will also be low. Therefore the financial burden of the mosque rather than being reduced is in many cases further exacerbated.

The other aspect of the contract that is usually a cause for concern is the ability of the imam to undertake the projects that the executive wishes to undertake. For example, in Minhaj-ul-Quran mosque the executive committee asked for an imam to be fluent in at least three languages namely Arabic, English and Urdu. They further wanted an imam who was capable of running an educational institution and a mosque at the same time. Their plan was to convert the place they had acquired into a full time educational institution. The executive decided to include all these items in the job description of the imam to be employed. This led to a severe conflict between the imams they wished to attract and the executive committee members. The imams, who were all qualified from the Minhaj-ul-Quran International Islamic University in Lahore, for the first time had come across such a comprehensive contract that covered a detailed job description, they seemed very apprehensive about signing a formal contract. The aspect of a comprehensive description of their role at the mosque was daunting and many imams when they viewed the contract refused to take up the position. Although, in my view, these were tasks an imam undertakes at most mosques but having them written on paper and signing a declaration to undertake these tasks was unacceptable. It was assumed that if the imam signs the contract and then finds that he is unable to fulfill these commitments it would give legitimate grounds for the executive to dismiss the imam in question and employ another imam.

The contract also had a section dealing specifically with complaints and grievances procedure. The aim of this section was to allow both parties in the contract to have their

complaints dealt with in a fair and transparent manner but it also stipulated that if the imam does not fulfill the tasks agreed and after following the proper procedure the imam would be relieved of his employment. This part of the contract was seen as threatening the imam's status. The thought that an imam could be 'sacked' was akin to 'giving the executive a knife with which to slaughter the imam when the executive had dispensed with their duties'. It was seen as a way of using the imam's abilities and once the executive felt they no longer needed his services or they required a new imam the contract would give them the legitimacy to replace the imam with another. The imams perceived the contract to be a way of weakening their position.

In a situation where there is no official contract the dismissal or replacement of an imam would generally lead to a split within the mosque, in many places this has turned into violent conflicts leading to severe consequences. The example of the Victoria Park mosque is prime example where a man died of a heart attack during a tussle (Werbner 2002). It is this ability of the imam to appeal directly to the public that is being challenged by the contract. What happens in these situations is that the imam's only direct contact with the public is usually on Friday or on any other function that is arranged by the mosque. The public only hear the imam's speeches but are not fully aware of the internal wrangling that takes place between the imam and the executive committees. The imam, through his speeches, is able to make certain sarcastic insinuations at the members of the executive to create sympathy for himself. I witnessed a meeting in which the imam's version of events was accepted at the expense of the whole executive committee.

7.10 The 'sacred' Imam

In an executive meeting the imam was given direct responsibility to prepare a feasibility report for a project that the committee wanted to operate from the mosque. The person giving the task placed his hand on the shoulder of the imam and said that this is your responsibility and this task should be completed within seven days. This instruction was given in a friendly and cordial manner and the imam agreed to complete the task in the specified time. When after a week the members of the executive committee approached the imam to ask whether the task had been completed the imam replied that it was not his responsibility and that he had not been entrusted with this task. The issue came up in front of the full executive committee where it was alleged that the imam had failed to fulfill the task asked of him. All those present from the executive committee, excluding the imam, bar one person vouched that the task had been entrusted to the imam while the imam denied that he had been given the responsibility.

The point that was most fascinating was that all those members of the executive who were not present in the initial meeting when the task was allocated to the imam did not believe the members of the executive committee but believed the imam. The majority of those people who were not in the initial meeting accepted the denial of the imam that the task was not designated to him. I was curious to find out why it was that the executive members who were present in the initial meeting were not believed while the imam being a lone voice was believed. Most of the people I spoke to afterwards said that they believed the imam because "he cannot tell a lie, after all he is our imam". The issue was taken in front of the leader of the organisation who after hearing from all sides upheld that the imam was telling the truth. This also shows how the leader was not willing to accept that the imam would lie whilst at the same time implying that the committee members might have either lied or misunderstood the imam's undertaking.

235

There is an image of sacredness attached to the imam while the executive committee members consist of 'worldly' people who do not possess this 'sacred' image. This was a display of the power that the imam in his office as 'imam' commands amongst his congregation and those within the executive committee. The congregation perceives whatever the imam says as the truth. This perception does not occur as a matter of coincidence but is in fact implanted in the minds of the congregation. The imam makes his position synonymous with that of the Quranic commandments [86] (Akhtar 1998). His instructions become the instructions of the Quran and failure to follow his instructions is a failure to obey the commandments of the Quran (Sayyid 2006). It is this power that the imam commands that enables him to create a division when the executive committee tries to replace him with another imam.

The mosque becomes an arena for the contestation of legitimate authority between the imam and the committee where the congregation undertake the role of the arbiter in this conflict. Who has what authority becomes a crucial issue? The mosque though a 'sacred' place becomes an arena of power struggle between the imam, members of the executive committee who themselves are split into different loyalty groups and the general public. What we see is a transformation of the 'sacred' into the everyday contestations of authority and power in which charismatic imams and bureaucratic committee members contest for authority (Weber 1948). In these contestations the imam in order to justify his position as the leader of the Muslim community uses his charismatic religious authority. Whilst at the same time the members of the executive committee use the idea of bureaucratic accountability to legitimise their bureaucratic authority. The committee members argue that they have been entrusted by the people with the responsibility to ensure that their

---

[86] See Shabbir Akhter who argues that the imams abuse the text of the Quran to derive meanings suited to their point of view. Times Higher Education Supplement, 16th February 1998

donations are not misused in anyway. The crux of the executive committee's argument is that the 'charismatic' imam, at least from his supporter's perspective, has to be accountable to the executive committee. However, the imam and his supporters argue that he is only accountable to Allah and not to those who are lacking in adequate Islamic knowledge. The power games that take place in mosques involve charismatic and bureaucratic authority as they would be used in power contestations played out in the public arena. The fact that the mosque is viewed as a sacred space has its complication but this does not stop the power contestation between the imams and committees in British mosques (Werbner 2002). This environment of conflict between imams and mosque committees has acted as a major de-motivating factor for the younger generation to become imams.

7.11 Neogiating Biradari and the Downfall of Allama Nisar Ahmed Baig

During the turbulent years of Victoria Park mosque biraderi played both a divisive and a uniting role. The Arians having established a strong business community in Manchester predominantly possessed the financial might and were able to contribute financially to the expansion projects of the mosque. In the construction of the first purpose built mosque in Manchester in 1972 the Arian businessmen contributed generously (Werbner 1990). It is alleged that Karam Din a prominent Arian businessman stated that the mosque cost £250,000 and he himself contributed more than half the money. It is suggested that this might be true given that he was one of the first Pakistani Muslims to purchase a Rolls Royce in Manchester. Werbner has document the success of Pakistani business in Manchester and the role of the Arian biradari in this success (Werbner 2002).

The Arians were the ones who first appointed Allama Baig in 1979. I am told by Ali who arrive from Pakistan in early 1960s and is a member of the Majlis Shura and has been a member of the Victoria Park mosque committee since the 1970s said that within the first

six months conflict between Choudhry Sarwar the Arian chairman of the mosque and Allama Baig surfaced in which the chairman was replaced by another Arian Choudhry Subhan Ali. However over the decade that Allama Baig remained at the Victoria Park mosque he played a balancing act between biradari loyalities and sectarianism. He would play a balancing between three key biradaris, the Arians, the Gujjars and the Rajputs at times switching alleginaces from one to the other depending on the demands of the circumstances in order maintain power in his hands.

In 1991 Barelwis who until this time were divided along biradari lines, most arians in the mosque committee were anti Allama Baig whereas most of the Gujjars in the committee were supporters of Allama Baig. In 1991 many Gujjars who until then were staunch defenders and supporters of Allama Baig felt he was trying to get rid of the Gujjars in the committee. His downfall came when some Gujjars decided to vote against Allama Baig backed committee, thereby his leaving the mosque was at the hands of his Gujjar biradari supporter. However, in 1991 some Gujjars who were his loyal supporters began to doubt Allama Baig's allegiance and alleged that he was supporting the Arian biradari trying to get rid of the Gujjars. Therefore, those Gujjars who were previously Allama Baig's supporters decided to desert him during the 1991 elections. Allama Baig's party lost the election and the following *juma* he announced his resignation from his post as chief imam.

The downfall was a consequence of the perception created through continuous negoatiation between biradari allegiances. As a consequence of his aligning himself initially with the Gujjars and then the Arians the final outcome was that both the Gujjars and the Arians perceived Allama Baig as 'out to get them out of the mosque committee'. In the end in the 1991 elections both Arians and Gujjars voted against his chosen committee thereby

suffering defeat at the hands of biradari network that he had so successfully negotiated for over a decade.

The financial contribution for victoria park mosque was predominantly from the Arian business community but strength in numbers belonged to the Gujjars. Financially The Arians were able to use the financial leverage whereas the Gujjars were in a position to swing the election outcome. When both these biradaris began to oppose Allama Baig's regime the downfall of his supporters was inevitable.

7.12 The 'Modern' and the 'Traditional'

Most of the imams I interviewed came from the sub-continent, where the concept of a written contract was alien. Similarly most of the people I met on the executive committees were people who came from abroad, albeit in some cases a long time ago. The executive committees are predominantly comprised of mostly elderly and middle aged men (Modood 1990). There is a severe under representation of the youth and females in the executive committees. Considerations in appointing an imam fail to address the needs of the female and younger sections of the Muslim communities. However, more recent evidence from Victoria Park Mosque was encouraging as they employed an *alimah* who is quite famous for her appearances on Q-TV and Ummah channel[87] and they have given representation on the committee to the youth.

One of my respondents Dr Ahmed, a GP in Manchester for over 30 years argued that the fact that mosques have not embraced the use of English as a medium of instruction has damaged the development of Muslims in Britain. His argument is that the imams who have come from Pakistan have failed to realise the importance of using the English language.

---

[87] I have recently been informed that she might have been relieved of her duties at the mosque because they were not happy 'aqidah'.

The mosque executive committees are equally to blame for the lack of judgement in promoting the use of English language. He argues that 'we have lost at least two generations due to the fact that we did not use English to invite the youth towards the mosque and Islam'. He informed me of his many debates with his sons on the mosque neglecting the English speaking youth. He says,

> The youth want to come to the mosque but they feel that their needs are neglected at the mosque. The issues the youth are interested in are not the issues the imams are interested in.

The GP further argues that the youth feel that they are forced to sit through speeches that they do not understand at all. He says

> How can you expect to attract the youth if you do not speak to them in the language that they feel comfortable. If you make them sit through hours of speeches that they do not understand then it is obvious that they will turn away from the mosque. If they turn away from the mosques there are good chances that they will stray away from the core values of Islam.

The Dr Ahmed recalled a time when he was invited to a religious programme at the Bengali mosque on Eileen Grove in Longsight. He said that he asked his sons to accompany him to the programme, who willingly obliged. When they got to the mosque they sat down to listen to the speech by a renowned Bengali speaker. Dr Ahmed said that exactly after five minutes I got up and said to my sons 'let's go home'. He says that when they came out of the mosque his sons asked "Dad, what's wrong, why have you come out?" He replied, "I don't understand a word of the speech! No point sitting around here." The GP said that his sons turned to him and said,

> Dad, do you now see how we feel when you take us to the mosque every week and expect us to sit there for over two hours not understanding a word of what's being said. We don't understand what is being said but we sit because you want us to be there!

This conversation is not far removed from the position of many of the youth who have grown up in Britain. When they are at home most of the youngsters speak English with their parents, they speak English with their peers and almost all their education has been in English. It is unrealistic to expect the youth to then sit through hours of religious speeches that are not in the language that they are fluent in. Many youngsters are bilingual but their preferred language is English and in my experience they tend to shy away from events that they know will be in Urdu.

Most people in the research said that it would take time but English would eventually become the main language of the *khutbah*. It was also suggested that once the use of English becomes standard the ethnic boundaries would begin to weaken as these are strengthened by the use of different minority ethnic languages. It was further suggested that biradari a key component of groupings would also loosen its influence allowing social relations across different biradaris and ethnicities.

Maulana Zaman says that Muslims do not realise that there will be an acute shortage of well-educated imams in Britain. He says

> "There is a shortage of qualified people who could take over as imams. Most of the imams we have come from Pakistan or India and are not able to connect with the issues facing British Muslims. The imam has to know about the culture of the society in which he is living. These imams do not know British culture they only know Pakistani or Indian culture. We need to train imams in Britain attracting students who have been born in Britain and who know the culture they are living in. Most of the imams are taught at madrassah's in Urdu and after training they are unable to convey the message of Islam properly in English."

Many mosques were blind to the reality of shortage of imams knowledgeable enough to replace the existing imams to provide the leadership required by the Muslim communities in Britain. The use of English is imperative for the mosques if they are to attract the youth. The longer that the mosques delay use of English language in mosques the more chances that the younger generations in particular and Muslim communities in general will turn to

241

other institutions for leadership. The executive committees and imams must address this issue as a matter of urgency if they wish the mosque to remain a relevant institution in Britain.

7.13   Private Tuition

A new trend is visible amongst Muslims where the imam goes to a house to teach children the recitation of the Quran. This trend reflects a new phase in the development of Muslims in Manchester. An imam going to a child's house to teach Quran and Islamic studies existed before but it was only on a small scale, only those parents who were financially well off would arrange private tuition. However, this situation seems to be changing as even parents who are not well off are arranging private tuition for their children.

There are at least four reasons for the development of this trend; firstly, an increase in affluence has meant that many parents are now able to afford private tuition for their children. This in turn means that children get one to one attention from the imam and can progress fairly quickly than learning in a large class. Secondly, the move from the 'ghettoes' to more affluent areas of Manchester has placed a distance between the mosque making it difficult for the child to attend mosque on a daily basis. The more affluent Muslim families view this daily travelling to mosque inconvenient and time consuming. The imam by travelling to the children's home is not only fulfilling the need of these children, who are unable to commute to the mosque but is also supplementing his meagre salary. Some imams earn more from private tuition than they would earn from teaching for a full week at the mosque. Finally, disenchantment with teaching standards at the mosques has led has pushed concerned parents towards private tuition. This trend is also a sign of the increased importance placed by parents on providing better Islamic education for their children. Whereas at one time it would have been enough that the child has learnt how to

read and recite the Quran but now many parents feel that is not enough and they need to provide better Islamic knowledge to equip the child to live confidently in the multi-faith society of Britain.

7.14   The Growing Phenomenon of Naatkhani

Naatkhan is a person who recites poetry in praise of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In the earlier period of settlement *naatkhans* were a rare breed and were to a large extent marginalised in relation to their role in British society. In 1960s and 1970s *naatkhans* were an additional feature to fulfill the time space until the main speaker arrived. They were viewed with a certain amount of respect but nothing compared to the imams or the main *khateebs* in a mosque. It seems during this period more stress was placed on gaining knowledge from a learned *alim* than 'merely' listening to a *naatkhan*. *Naathkhawani* has been transformed during the last two decades.

It seems that over time especially from early 1990s to the present period a dramatic rise in *naatkhans* and *mahafils* of *naat* organised around Britain is apparent. In 1991 Minhaj ul Quran organised one of its first mehfil e naats in Oldham in which *naatkhans* from all over England were invited. The Minhaj ul Quran programme in Oldham was one of the first attempts to professionally organise a *naat* only type of programme in a British mosque. Previous to this the programmes at mosques concentrated on speeches by ulama but this was one of the first attempts to place *naat* at the heart of religious programmes where the speech of the *khateeb* became a secondary event.

At the time Qari Muhammad Ahsraf Sialvi was one of the most renowned naatkhans in England. Other naatkhans from around the country took part coming from far afield as London, Birmingham, Nelson, and Warrington. A group who are seen as the pioneers of *naatkhani* in England particular in the Northwest was a team of four people famously

known as *Jamiate-Hassan*. The quartet consisted of Qari Muhammad Mushtaq (Warrington), Haji Abdul Ghafoor (Warrington), Haji Muhammad Afzal and Haji Nazir Ahmed. Only Qari Mushtaq was an imam at a mosque the other three were lay members of the public who came together to form the *Jamiate Hassan* to recite *naat* as a group. The group still exists but has now been overshadowed by the arrival of the newer more professional *naatkhans*.

Interestingly one of the highlights the 1991 programme was to be a special guest from Pakistan, Qari Khushi Muhammad, a renowned *qari*, was invited by Minhaj ul Quran to the programme. He arrived at the end of the programme when the concluding *salaam* was being recited. He stated that he had today seen all the mosques in Oldham in trying to find the Ghausia mosque, in which the programme was being held. The reason for his adventurous journey was that Ghausia mosque was a newly built mosque and many people were unaware of its location and navigation systems were nonexistent. However, Qari Khushi Muhammad did arrive in time to recite the '*Salaam'* at the end of Barelwi programmes.

The programme was such a big success that for the next five years Minhaj ul Quran turned this into an annual event in which famous *naatkhans* and *ulama* were invited. On seeing the success of the *naat* programme many Minhaj ul Quran local branches that were in their organisational infancy began to arrange *naat* programmes in different towns and cities in order to establish themselves. In all probability the development of *naatkhani* to this level was first instigated by Minhaj ul Quran and eventually the mantle was taken over by the mainstream Barelwi mosques who witnessed the success of these programmes began to hold regular *mahafil e naats*. *Naatkhani* had become a mainstream event not a side show.

The development of the *naatkhani* phenomenon has grown to such an extent that one of the largest annual programmes organised by the Muslim community in Manchester is the annual *Mehfil e Milad* at the Victoria Park mosque. The list of *naatkhans* attending this programme is impressive given that almost every famous *naatkhan* attends this *milad* programme. Most of these *naatkhans* are sponsored from Pakistan specifically for this programme. The likes of Shahbaz Qammar Faridi, Qari Shahid Mahmood and Awais Raza Qadri have become regulars at *mahafil e naats* in England. The Victoria Park mosque can accommodate more 3,000 people in congregational prayer is at full capacity during the annual *milad mehfil*. On several occasions a marquee has had to be installed outside in the mosque car park to accommodate the overflow. It seems that a famous *naatkhan* like Awais Raza Qadri will attract as many if not more people to his programme as would any famous *alim*.

On the financial side I am informed that the highly prominent *naatkhans* come with a fairly steep price tag. That is one of the reasons why all these *naatkhans* would attend the Victoria Park Mosque but only few would attend other mosques. The mosques are not able to afford to pay for all the *naatkhans* therefore they only invite one, two or three to attend so that they can keep within a reasonable budget. I suppose the mosques have to balance this with the need to attract people towards their mosques and *naatkhani* has been a very effective tool to bring people closer to the mosque. The committee at Victoria Park mosque provides food continuously during the programme. The *langar* is usually served from the start of the mehfil to its end in most cases around fajr time the following day.

Important aspects of the growth of the *naatkhani* phenomenon are firstly that the financial gains attached to becoming a *naatkhan* are far greater than they ever were in Britain; secondly, the power that is part and parcel of the financial strength is a key motivator and

finally the general increase in the *milad* gatherings around British mosques is seen as way of bringing Muslims into the mosque. The power of this has been so significant that the chairman of one the most prestigious mosques in Manchester, Victoria Park Mosque, is also the chairman of the *Naat* Council that arranges the visits of these famous *naatkhans*. Naeem Tahir the chairman of the *Naat* council is also the chairman of the Victoria Park mosque has seen his position has strengthened because of the popularity of the *naatkhani* phenomenon in which he has played a prominent role.

7.15   Conclusion

The role of the imam has contested meaning, for some they are God's anointed while others view their role secondary to their lives and as such we see variety of imams in Manchester. The initial temporary nature of Pakistani Muslim presence in Britain seems to be the main reason behind the type of imams imported from abroad. The mere need to transmit the recitation of the Quran to their children was the initial reason for importing imams but as generations have grown up considering Britain as their home their expectations from the imams have changed. The issue of language emerged as a strong point of disagreement between the youth and the mosque committees who are struggling to find a balance to please the older generation whilst at the same time retaining the interest of the younger generation.

Issues of economic concern were seen as important variables in deciding to import imams while this factor also became the major obstacle in the discouragement of younger generation to train as imams. The financial weakness together with a short sighted view has meant that not much attention has been focussed on employing imams from Britain and as a consequence the importing of imams is still continuing. This will decrease as the financial situation improves and committees can break free

from their concentration on the earlier generation turning their attention to the needs of the young British Muslims.

Imams have moved into the field of private tuition firstly to fulfil a need of the more affluent Muslims who have for whom daily transportation of their children to mosques has become difficult and secondly to supplement their meagre wages that they receive from the mosques. It is not clear how this will affect British trained imams, whether they would prefer to become private tutors or would they prefer to work in mosques. The other new development in mosques is the rise of the *naatkhan* phenomenon which has its own dynamics of finance and *aqidah* battles in Britain.

In the case of Manchester I would argue that the annual mehfil e milad at Victoria Park mosque has become a national event that attracts thousands of people from around the country which is a far cry from the mosques humble beginnings in late 1940s when only 10 to 15 people would be present for juma prayer.

8 'BRITISH' IMAMS, 'BRITISH' TRAINING - TACKLING RADICALISATION

8.1 Introduction

The training of imams in the past decade, especially since 9/11, has taken on a new significance in the West. In Europe the discourse on imam training and importing of imams was placidly under discussion looking at the pros and cons of home-grown imams and imported imams prior to 9/11 (Raza 1991; Landman 1999). However, since 9/11 this subject has taken an enhanced importance with particular emphasis on the development of a Muslim identity in wake of these events and how imams can be used to contain the radicalisation of British Muslim Youth (Peek 2005; Choudhury 2007; Birt & Lewis 2011; Fitzsimon 2012). Many prominent articles, reports and surveys have been published in Britain to analyse imam training and look for a way forward away from importing imams from abroad (Birt & Lewis 2011; Mukadam & Bauman 2010; Haddad & Balz 2008; Geaves 2008; Imtiaz 2008; Gilliat-Ray 2006; MCB 2006; Birt 2006; Gilliat-Ray 2005).

8.2 Imam Training – Key Issues

One of the key themes to emerge from my research data was the need to training imams in Britain. The 'office' of the imam was seen by all as crucial for the transmission of Islamic values (Lewis: 1994; Lyon 2004). It has to be stressed that many perceived the office of the imam as pivotal and instrumental for the transmission of Islamic knowledge in Britain. As previously highlighted in chapter seven their role is viewed as being vital in transmitting Islamic knowledge to the coming generations of Muslims whilst at the same time there is derision for their failure to successfully meet the challenges facing the Muslim community in Britain (Sardar 2008). This chapter focuses on the training of imams in Britain and many the numerous challenges that lie ahead.

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) published a survey looking at the role of imams and mosques in Britain entitled 'Voices from the Minaret: MCB Study of UK Imams and Mosques' (2006). The survey is useful to get a feel of the issues that surround the role of the imams and mosques. The survey looked at number of factors in relation to imams, namely, the ethnic origin, current nationality, language spoken, age, length of time since arrival in UK from country of origin, qualification, and training and accreditations. In relation to mosques it looked at their legal status, the type of mosque, the services and facilities provided, core finance, ancillary finance, mosque services provided for adults, children, and the wider community, language of the Friday sermon. One of the draw backs of this survey was the small sample size and possible bias because most of the mosques in the survey were those affiliated to the Muslim Council of Britain. In this chapter I will limit myself to looking at imams and the issues directly related to training of imams.

Raza argued in an early monograph on Muslims in Britain that imams showed a lack of understanding and a lack of commitment to the cause of Islam in Britain (1991: 49). His criticism rested on the assertion that imams had got themselves involved in power politics within mosques and this turned them away from their real duty of promoting Islamic values in Britain. Raza's honest assessment was courageous given the fact that he himself is an imam who could face harsh criticism from other imams. However, what Raza was stressing is that these things can be expected from the committee members, who were not well educated, but imams who were educated should rise above these factional politics and focus on the bigger picture of promoting Islamic values in Britain to safeguard the Islamic future of the generations of Muslims to follow.

In the Netherlands the debate on home grown imams has been going on since the 1980s (Landman 1999). The Dutch government formulated a policy document in 1998

advocating the provision of training for imams through institutions within the Netherlands. The debate and policy formation took place through a recognition that the Muslims must integrate if they are to make a meaningful contribution to the Dutch society. The policy met with mixed reaction, on the one hand mistrust of an establishment that was meddling in imam training and whilst others showed a positive reaction to the government's recognition that Muslims were an integral part of the Dutch society who should be encouraged to integrate.

In a recent article Geaves (2008) looked at imam training in Britain based on a survey that looked at issues related to language, age, place of birth, place of training of imams, and qualifications. One interesting aspect of this research was that Geaves suggests that the success of the research was 'the strategy of using Muslim volunteers speaking key languages" (2008: 101). I found that this was a key aspect of getting information from my respondents. I went to a *darululoom* with a view to eliciting information about their education system. One of the people that I met categorically said that he was not comfortable with people wanting to conduct research on their institution. He said he was apprehensive about how the research would be used. The apprehension was that research like mine would be used for 'mosque / *darululoom* bashing'. It would seem that in order to gain a good insight and to have a candid discussion about the training of imams the researcher must first build a relationship of trust so that those whose views are being ascertained know that their views would not be manipulated in a way to derive meanings to suit the research requirements.

One of the key criticisms of the imams in Britain that came through from my data was that most of the imams were not able to communicate with the youth and the fear amongst many of my respondents was that we would alienate the younger English speaking

generation from Islam (Gest 2010). Geaves' research came up with similar evidence to support this fear amongst the Muslim communities. In Geaves' research it seems that 83.7% of the imams who responded were born in South Asia, with a further 8.1% born in other parts of the world and only 8.1% were born within UK. Furthermore the issue of language was also dramatic given that 90% of Geaves's respondents said their mother tongue was one of the South Asian languages and 65% stated Urdu as their mother tongue and only 6.4% of imams who stated that English was their mother tongue. This scenario is ironic given that the majority of South Asian and particularly Pakistani population are young whose mother tongue is English and the medium of communication between the youth is English. There is a clear training deficit in terms of English speaking imams for the younger generation which without doubt have bearing on the identity of the future generation of British Muslims.

The main mode of training for imams in Britain is through the traditional *madrasah* systems using the syllabus developed many centuries earlier, known as *darse-i-nizami*. *Darse-i-nizami* was founded in 1695 by the Farangi Mahalli ullama in Lucknow (Zaman 2002: 76). Vast majority of imams in Britain have had their education through the traditional *darululooms* in South Asia where the syllabus used is the *darse-i-nizami*[88] (Robinson 2001). Majority of my respondents were of the opinion that the training system used for training of imams in South Asia and in *darululooms* in Britain is not adequate to provide guidance for British Muslims.

The language used to train imams in British *Darululooms* is currently Urdu (See Lewis 2004: 99). When these students come out and try to convey what they have learnt they need to do that in English and in many ways it seems that they have not lived up to what

---

[88] For the most comprehensive description of the darse I Nizami see Robinson, Francis, (2001). The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia. London: Hurst and Company.

has been expected of them. The teaching of students in Urdu is imposed on the teachers because of the current circumstances that the imams find themselves in. First, their own mother tongue in most cases is Urdu and they have gained their training as imams in Urdu. Secondly, the literature that is used to train imams is mostly in Urdu and as such most students must have working knowledge Urdu language in order to engage with the available literature in this field. Thirdly, currently there are insufficient numbers of imams who are fluent in English who might be able to fulfil the needs of the *darululooms* in Britain. It seems they do not have much choice in terms of the language of instruction until the above three listed circumstances change.

Another issue in relation to language that came through was that the Urdu language was viewed my many imams as part of their Islamic heritage. The argument was that by dropping Urdu they would have to detach themselves from the wealth of Urdu Islamic books. In many circles adopting English at the expense of Urdu was also deemed tantamount to giving precedence to the English culture at the expense of 'Islamic' culture, which they inextricably linked to Urdu and Arabic languages. This was the *ulemas* way of fighting off assimilation into the dominant culture. Resistance to language was viewed as resistance to the culture of the perceived 'other'.

It seems that the ulama that run these *darululooms* are very intelligent people who are wary of what changes are required and how they should be implemented. They know that by changing language of instructions immediately they will be doing injustice to the *dares-i-nizami* syllabus. They will have to rely on teachers who do not have formal qualifications but are able to speak and teach in English (Geaves 2008: 101). While these teachers might be very good in their profession, as teachers, however if they lack the rigour and depth of

knowledge that is needed to teach and train imams then the end product will be far short of what is required.

This appears to be one of the reasons why many imams have been very critical of the suggestion that imams should be trained in British universities. Their main criticism is that the courses taught in universities as Islamic studies do not have the depth necessary for the imam. Their criticism is that teaching ability and style might be very good but the depth of knowledge required to teach imams is not apparent at universities. Ibrahim Mogra a prominent Muslim commentator, who I interviewed for the pilot project on 'Training of Imams'[89], is quoted to have said,

> Imams must have spiritual and theological training that can only be supplied by people who themselves have had this training. We won't accept any interference from government or universities in our theological training.[90]

Mona Siddiqui an academic at Glasgow University, while commenting on the differences in styles of teaching between *darululooms* and universities said,

> critical thinking is an important part of university courses in the UK. Imams are taught with more of devotional rote learning[91] (Shepherd 2007).

These two quotes acknowledge that the two styles of teaching are different and any attempts by authorities to meddle with the training of imams would be viewed with certain amount hostility. The hostility generated against attempts to change imam training in Britain is partly due to the timing of these initiatives in the backdrop of terrorism and anti-

---

[89] A Report submitted to the Leverhulme Trust at the completion of the pilot project- Gilliat-Ray, S., & Ahmed, F. (2004). 'The Training and Development of Muslim Religious Professionals in Britain' 'Pilot study' funded by theLeverhulme Trust. October 2003-March 2004. Two research papers were published by Dr Sophie Gilliat-Ray from the data generated through this pilot research project: Gilliat-Ray, S. (2006). "Educating the c Ulama: Centres of Islamic religious training in Britain." Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations 17(1): 55-76.
Gilliat-Ray, S. (2007). "Closed worlds: (not) accessing Deobandi dar ul-uloom in Britain." Fiedlwork in Religion, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 7-33.
[90] Jessica Shepherd, "Imams are Not the Solution to Terrorists", *The Guardian Higher Education*, 12 June 2007.
[91] *Ibid*.

terrorism. This policy became even more significant in the light of the developments since 9/11.

8.3   Training Imams to Tame the Terrorists

Tthe training of imams in Britain has been overshadowed by security concerns in the light of 9/11 and then 7/7. There has been a strong urge, since 9/11, to bring training of imams under government control. Tony Blair announced during his tenure announce a £1m fund to train imams in Britain to restrict the importing of imams from South Asia. This announcement was met on the whole with criticisms from Muslim leaders and seminaries (Guardian Higher Education 12/06/2007). They argued that Muslims will not tolerate any government interference in training of imams. Ibrahim Mogra argues, "The problem is not imams and their countries of origin. The tiny proportions of extremists usually have nothing to do with imams. Anyway, there is no guarantee that just because an imam is trained in the UK, he won't suddenly flip. Likewise, foreign imams are not necessarily extremists. The majority of imams are trained in the UK and in the next 20 years 90% will be British graduates. But there will always be a need for an expert from abroad." (ibid.)

Although Mogra is optimistic about 90% UK trained imams the evidence is not conclusive that these UK trained imams will actually take up the profession of imam in a mosque given the unappealing working environment of the mosques (Birt 2005: 187). Evidence from MCB and Geaves's article does not show that 'the majority of imams are trained in the UK' which does not support his argument (MCB 2006; Geaves 2008). Both these studies have shown that large majority of imams are still from abroad. However, Mogra's argument that there is no concrete proof to link imams to extremism and radicalisation of Muslims in Britain is it seems quite significant. There is stronger evidence to suggest that radicalisation and extremism may be linked to the unpopular foreign policies and domestic

policies that are marginalising the Muslim youth in Britain and western countries than what is being preached in mosques (Choudhury 2007; Amghar et al 2007). In the mosques that I visited I found a certain amount of contempt for radical groups on the part of the imams and many mosque personnel got in altercations with radicals distributing leaflets outside the mosque. I did not come across imams who 'owned' the radical groups on the contrary went to lengths to distant themselves from these groups.

There is strong emphasis on the part of the British government to show some correlation of a link between foreign imams and terrorism or their lack of knowledge of the British culture and terrorism. Mona Siddiqui, argues that it is wrong to assume imams will act as the buffer between extreme Islam and secular education. "People who are involved in extremism will not usually involve their imam," she says. Mona does think that imams are the solution "to the problem of terrorism" (ibid.). Mazin Younis, a volunteer imam at Leeds University, also adds his voice to this argument when he sates "Extremism is not created from abroad, it is coming from within. Blair's plans could have the opposite effect." (ibid.) This is an important point that needs to be highlighted and understood. Whilst Muhammad Jameel Yusha'u, an associate chaplain for Sheffield University, states that the solution is "to empower the community and give them the right knowledge and the right texts" (ibid.).

Haddad and Balz discuss attempts of different European governments to regulate the training of imams in Europe to curb the growing trend of fundamentalist and extremist versions being promulgated in European cities. Haddad and Balz highlight the number of ways in which European governments have attempted to create a 'euro-friendly' Islam (2008: 216). European governments began making public proclamations that imams resident in Europe were promoting jihad against the West as a consequence increased

surveillance of mosques and imams became a government policy in order monitor and root out radical imams through high profile visible deportations (Qureshi 2005 - 'Muslim cleric's battle over FBI terror claims' – Yaqub Qureshi – 18/08/2005; Fekete, 2006).) . The governments began to support pro-government Muslim leaders by providing funds to strengthen these organisations so that they are viewed by the majority of Muslims as representing them at government level. In Britain in 1997 the then Labour government gave support to the creation of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) which emerged out of Unites Kingdom Action Committee on Islamic Affairs (UKACIA). The MCB became an umbrella organisation which currently represents over five hundred mosques in Britain. But once MCB began to differ with the Labour government, particularly on the issue of Iraq war, they were marginalised and funding was made available to British Muslim Forum and MINAB as rival representative organisations[92].

In order to create 'euro-friendly' imams the British government provided funding to mosques by partnering with European Union, private donors, and local authorities to create community centres attached to mosques. One of the mosques in my survey was built along a similar structure where the ground floor of the building was to be used as a community centre and received funding from the local authority for this whereas the first floor was built with donations from the local Muslim community and was to be used as a mosque. After a lengthy struggle some Islamic schools have also been provided state funding under the faith schools scheme (King 201). Further attempts are being made by governments to re-educate imams in schools that have close ties to the government who are striving to train Euro-friendly imams (Haddad & Balz 2010: 216). However Haddad and Balz argue that the Islam that is being practiced and taught in Britain is 'concretized' and 'has been tested

---

[92] However, MINAB includes representation from MCB within its organisation is designed specifically to provide advise to mosques and imams in tackling radicalisation.

under fire, one that seeks to be impervious to secularism' (ibid: 218). Soon after 7/7 London bombings the British secret services compiled a list of 50 imams who were labelled as 'preachers of hate' (ibid: 222). In order to curb the radical preachers the then Home Secretary announced that any imams who were creating any distrust in Britain would be deported back to their country of origin. In order to strengthen their resolve to follow this threat through the British government made a public demonstration of the deportation Abu Hamza al-Masri[93]. These actions demonstrated to the British public, including British Muslims, that the government was serious in tackling the radical and extreme preachers.

I have tried to demonstrate the environment in which the training of imams in Britain agenda has been pursued by the British government. It is apparent that the authorities did not trust imams and felt that they had to 'curb' the imam's rhetoric through a programme of re-training. The aim of the training of new imams in Britain was to loosen the grip on mosques of foreign trained imams. Geaves' (2008) survey, however, shows that this has not worked and the foreign imams still dominate the mosques in Britain. It seems that current policies do not seem to have been successful in curtailing the flow of imams from abroad.

The government is in the process of developing new policies to further discourage the British Muslim community from employing imported imams through the implementation of stringent language and British society knowledge tests. It was now expected from imams wishing to enter Britain to demonstrate an ability to communicate in English and also to show an appreciation of the British national culture (Haddad & Balz 2010: 224). The government has plans to test the knowledge that imams possess of the British society.

---

[93] The extensive time line for the deportation of Abu Hamza al-Masri can be at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-19844349 - last accessed 04/062013.

An ability to show awareness of the issues facing Muslims in Britain would support their visa application.

Haddad & Balz argue that "those that train imams in European languages and contextualize their curricula to a twenty-first century European society – have questionable Islamic legitimacy. Religious scholars have long been trained through traditional methods developed in resistance to European efforts to alter or modify the teachings of Islam" (ibid: 227). The Islamic schools and seminaries argue that efforts to teach English language and its culture can complement Islamic teaching but not replace the imam training courses.

Imtiaz (2008) wrote a brief but succinct paper on the need for a different type of training for imams to enable them to engage with the issues that face British Muslim youth. He raises the question 'does this training in and of itself make the Imam fit for purpose for the communities that they serve?' (Imtiaz 2008: 1). He says even within Britain the imams face different challenges in different regions. He argues that an imam coming to Manningham in Bradford will face a different set of challenges to an imam working at the Richmond Muslim Association. Issues facing Muslims in the deprived areas of North England might be different to those faced by imams in affluent areas of the South. He goes on to describe three types of Muslim youth identity in Britain, namely, 'rude boys', 'extremists' and 'coconuts' (Imtiaz 2011). He says each one of these typologies of British Muslim identity requires different set of skills from the imams to engage with these youngsters. I do not wish to go into the ins and outs of his typologies but what I do want to concentrate on is his expectations from the imams.

Imtiaz's reflective article splits his questions in three sections. Firstly, the issues the imams need to engage with, secondly, the ability of the current batch of imams to engage with

these issues, and thirdly, can imams cover the breadth of knowledge required to satisfy the needs of the Muslim communities in Britain.

Imtiaz says Imams must know,

> "How does Islam explain our personal experience of freewill? Why are women not equal to men in Islam? Can individualism be a basis for law in Islam? How can religion as a body of knowledge claim to supersede science and its achievements?" (Imtiaz 2008; 2)

He query's the ability of the current batch of imams by raising the question,

> "How many imams are able today to answer questions like these after having received the traditional training and how many Imams can do so in a way that is intellectually satisfactory and persuasive?" (Imtiaz 2008: 2)

He then questions how the breadth of knowledge that is required for the imam to perform his adequately in Britain by raising the following questions,

> "how much should the Imams know about the intellectual hinterland of the West, Europe and/or Britain. Do they need to know the difference between empiricism and rationalism? Or the difference between Hume and Kant? Or the origins of the enlightenment? And its relation to the atheist movement? Do they need to know the history of the social sciences? Or should they be trained in any of the social sciences? Sociology as the sociology of the city or the sociology of modernity? Psychology as child psychology or depth psychology?" (Imtiaz 2008:2)

An imam in a mosque whose main job is to teach the children how to read the Arabic text of the Quran does not need to have the high level of philosophical knowledge that Imtiaz highlight. This imam needs to have basic knowledge about how the Quran is read accurately so that he can transmit this knowledge to the students who come to his mosque. Training requirements for this type of imam will be quite different to the training needs of the *alim* who has to engage at a more scholarly level.

In effect what Imtiaz (2008) ends up with is a scenario whereby the imams need training according to the situation they face. If an imam is dealing with 'rude boys' he needs to

communicate at a level where they will be able to comprehend what is being told otherwise the whole purpose of engaging with the youth is futile. I would argue that what is being asked of the imams is too much to achieve from one person. It is near impossible for one person to cover the breadth of knowledge that Imtiaz speaks of. However he does suggest a 'two pronged approach. He suggests training courses that teach the basics of sociological thinking and more in depth courses that enable the imam to engage with a wide range of issues.

Suleiman (2009) highlighted certain problems the imams and Muslim parents face in relation to communicating with the younger generation. He highlighted the problems of disconnection between the imams, parents and the younger generation by arguing that "An inter-generational disconnection also means that parents and imams are often not able to deal with problems the younger generation is experiencing" (Suleiman 2009: 24). He further argued that

> Imams in the community should not be teaching Qur'an and *hadith* in isolation, but as a way of reawakening people's sense of membership of their community, their sense of social justice and their responsibilities to their families, their communities and the society in which they live. Part of their task, in other words, is to prepare people to be citizens in a democracy. (Suleiman 2009: 67)

8.4 'English Khateebs' - Training at Muslim Youth Foundation

Fitzsimon (2012) looks at the necessity for imams to deliver their *khutbas* in English language. Muslim Youth Foundation mosque that Fitzsimon writes about has a cosmopolitan mix of congregation where member of all nationalities congregate. The mosque is located in the heart of Manchester City centre which is convenient for businessmen particularly those who are employed in the city centre. At times the *juma* prayer at Muslim Youth Foundation is held several times due to lack of space to accommodate all the people who want to pray in one *jamaat*.

260

The key aspect of Fitzsimon's argument is that British Muslim youth have specific requirements that the current batch of imams are not able to deliver. Living in a market orientated world we perceive the duties of our imams in similar light. The expectation is that imams must cater to demands of the contemporary society. The society expects that as the rest of society adapts to market conditions of supply and demand so should imams submit to these market forces. However, as Lewis has highlighted the financial plight of the mosques makes it difficult to attract highly educated individuals to mosques (Lewis 1994).

The way Fitzsimon frames the argument in relation to the role of the *khateeb* in working with Muslim youth is in the current climate of terrorism and the need to curb the radical and extreme preachers. Of the items listed in role of the *khateeb* the item at the top of the list is tackling extremism. The other two on the list are 'spirituality' and 'alienation'. If we cast our minds to circumstances before 9/11 we would realise that extremism was not one of the fundamental concerns of the imams. The 'ontological insecurity' felt by Muslims in Britain was the main concerns in transmitting Islam to the next generation, to provide guidance for schools and local authorities (Bateson 1973). However, continuous media barrage that portrays Muslims as extremists and blamed imported imams for increase in radicalisation and stoking the flames of extremism. The suggestion is that the imported imams must reign in their fundamentalist rhetoric if they want to live in Britain. Consequently, one of the key roles of the imams is to act as an agent of the authorities to curb extremism amongst Muslims, as if to accept the premise that extremisms stems from the way Islam's message is delivered by the imams.

The role of the imam in providing spiritual guidance is not new and imams have for centuries provided spiritual guidance. However, what is new is the issue of alienation.

British Muslim youth alienation is seen as one of the key reasons why they easily swayed towards radical and extremist rhetoric. The MYF programme argues that imams need to engage with the youth to give them a sense of identity and belonging to a strong Islamic heritage. They need to feel pride in their Muslim identity and this can only be done through providing strong role models. Self-esteem can be built by referring to their Islamic past when the West went to the East, specifically to Muslim lands for knowledge.

Moving on from this what is apparent is that the other key element of the *khateeb* training programme was the need to deliver *khutbas* in English. This is something that has come through quite strongly from my respondents as well. Many have said that lack of English language and knowledge of British culture is a serious drawback of importing imams from abroad. The ironic aspect of the *Khateeb* training workshop was that it emphasised *khutbas* in English, but the scholar who delivered this workshop could not speak English and his speech had to be translated by one of the organisers of the workshop. The fundamental problem is the lack of authoritative imams who are fluent in English that is why one of the imams interviewed, who is a qualified Mufti with training from abroad and Britain, stated that "This is the best time for bilingual imams as they can provide a smooth transition of religious values from the older generation to the younger generation".

8.5 Issue of "economic imams" and "Religious imams"

What needs to be done is to delink the two issues. Firstly my research has shown there are many imams, especially those who are low on the qualification hierarchy, who have primarily come to England to better their economic position. Secondly there are those who came here for economic reasons but then turned towards religion to provide their services for the British Muslim community, one such person is Maulana Habibur Rahman who came here as an economic migrant but began to work as an imam at the Victoria Park

mosque in 1965. Lewis has cited the examples of Pir Mahroof Hussain from Bradford and Sufi Abdullah from Birmingham as two prominent religious authorities who arrived in Britain as economic migrants but with time devoted their lives to the service of the Muslim communities in Britain (Lewis 1994). These are people who while working in factories to earn a living provided their services to their religion. Once the need to provide full time religious services increased they then left their positions in the factories and began to completely devoting their lives to providing religious guidance to Muslims of Britain. These people were the pioneers of Islamic guidance to British Muslims in Britain.

It is interesting to note that in many cases the origins of the issue of 'under' educated imams stems from people involved committees. Not that they are directly responsible for the problems that became apparent later but they were the 'trendsetters'. These were the people who first began to call imams from Pakistan. Their target imam was a *hafiz* or a *qari* who could do the basic duties of teaching children the Quran, Urdu and lead the daily prayer congregation. In many cases these imams came from their own seminaries in Pakistan, especially in the case of Pir Mahroof who built up a network of mosques and imams. In the earlier development of the British Muslim community there was no significant problem with this kind of importing of imams. It was later when the needs of the community began to change that the problem of under qualification became an issue for the Muslim communities.

The inclination to lump all imams in one category is not helpful and leads to misinformed conclusions about imams. Similarly I believe that the institutions providing training of imams needs to be analysed further to establish who is actually providing imam training.

8.6 Islamic Schools / Seminaries – Imam Training or Islamic Knowledge Providers

Gilliat-Ray provides an historical overview of the emergence of the two South Asian religious movements namely, Deobandi / Tablighi Jamaat and Barelwi (Gilliat-Ray 2006). Whilst also stating reasons for their creation being based on strategies of 'survival without power' (Bateson 1973). Gilliat-Ray goes on to argue that two movements, Deobandi and Barelwi, created mosques in Britain in 1960's and 1970's and then progressed further to creation of seminaries that reflected these two movements. It has been suggested that these schools / seminaries have been created with an aim of providing British trained imams to fulfil the needs of the British Muslim communities.

However, there is an overlapping of what the needs of the community were in creating these schools and seminaries. There is some ambiguity in the earlier part of the article and I believe this is also present in Birt and Lewis (2011) and the Mukadam & Bauman Report (2010). These articles suggest to the reader that they are listing imam training institutions but what becomes clear further on is that some of these institutions are simple Islamic schools but are described as places for training mosque imams when they are quite literally straightforward 'Muslim' schools. It is not clearly evident that these institutions are solely training imams at these schools. One could equally argue that they are training doctors and lawyers at these institutions as many who have the ability go into these professions. Just to cite two examples Ibrahim Mogra and Mahmood Chandia have not taken up the profession of full time imams but have successful careers in their own fields. Similarly one of the students in my research has also not taken up the profession of imam but has decided to pursue a career outside of the mosque. The Kassim Darwish School in Manchester is an Islamic school but it does not solely train imams, in fact many who send their children to

this school suggest that they want their children to gain Islamic knowledge but they do not necessarily want them to become imams in mosques.

The origins of these schools were not necessarily with the intention of creating religious scholars because many were created because Muslim communities were unhappy with the culture of education and the type of education provided for their children. In some schools a regular religious assembly began the day with the Lord's Prayer with the belief that Jesus is the son of God, which was viewed as contrary to Muslims belief in one God who does not have any son or daughter. Gradually this was happening in schools where majority of the children were Muslim and Muslim parents felt that there was a certain indoctrination taking place in these schools that was fundamentally against their religion, for example the ideas of trinity and Jesus as son of God. In view of this situation a number of Muslims decided to confront the schools to say they wished to withdraw their children from these assemblies or that in place of religious assemblies something else more secular should be used (Muslim Council of Britain 2007: 44-45). Whilst there were others who felt that the only way to safeguard their children was to create their own separate Islamic schools and single sex schools.

Gilliat-Ray does however near the end of her paper highlight some of the reasons that children were sent to these schools / seminaries. Some of the reasons cited are to do with disciplining their children, where the children were going out of control and parents felt that the normal comprehensive schools were not doing enough to discipline their children. The aim of placing their children in Islamic schools was to safeguard them from the effects of the 'corrupting' dominant culture. The issue of Muslim girls studying in mixed education classes was cause for concern for some parents who were looking for either mainstream single sex schools or Islamic schools single sex schools.

What becomes quite apparent from the list provided by Birt and Lewis (2011) is that these schools are not necessarily just centres to train imams in the strict sense but that most are straight forward simple Islamic schools that also provide some imam training for those who wish to take up the profession. It would be a mistake to take the full list that Birt and Lewis provide as the basis of the number of imams coming out of these imam training centres. Most of these act simply as schools where majority of the children will not go on to become imams. This is in the same manner as having Christian or Jewish schools and assuming that everyone graduating from these schools will become a priest or rabbi. My research data has cast doubt on this issue as I have come across imams who feel that they are struggling to retain students to continue training as imams. Two of the main reasons cited for this are to do with monetary reward and the treatment of imams at the hands of the committees.

The report on training of faith leaders also makes a similar mistake because it assumes, mistakenly, that all the institutions they have listed are solely training imams (Mukadam and Scott-Bauman: 2010). This report gives the false impression that there are so many institutions providing imam training, that Britain will be sprawling with imams everywhere. The reality is that only a small part of these institutions is the training of imams whereas the vast majority are simply Islamic schools from which children decide their different career paths. There is an argument that there is more training of imams taking place at an individual, one to one level than through the seminaries and this is probably more accurate for the Barelwis. This phenomenon is perhaps quite significant that requires further research but this is not in the remit this research. Rather than research focusing on the list of schools it might be a fruitful anthropological research to study the people who provide the training and whether this training is taking place at an individual level or through certain institutions.

If we were to concentrate on those seminaries that have a stated aim of training imams then we would have a more accurate analysis of the institutions training imams. It seems the report on training of faith professionals has cast its net too wide to give any meaningful results to inform policy about the training of imams in Britain.

I want to turn to the data that I collected and see what key themes in relation to imams and their training came out.

8.7   Imam Training - Data Analysis

8.7.1 Major Themes Emerging from the Data

1. Imams were unfamiliar with the British culture
2. Do not have a good grasp of the English language
3. Their training was not contemporary – they were trained in matters that were discussed many centuries ago and are no longer relevant.
4. Should the imams be trained in England or should they be trained from abroad.
5. Issues relating to contemporary society not taught during the imams training.

First and crucial theme that came out was the importance of knowing the culture in which the imam is to work. Maulana Habibur Rahman says,

> I don't know any proper institute which trains the people to become Imam for this country, because if a person is to become an Imam in this country he should know about the culture of this country about the law of this country at the same time he has to know about Islam and the law of Islam and Islamic culture equally exists side by side because he is going to teach Islam in this country.

According Maulana Habibur Rahman it is a requirement of trainee imams to know about the culture of this country and the law of the land. I would deduce from his ideas that he is advocating the inclusion of some content in the imam training curriculum that would teach the students about the British culture. This would include what Imtiaz (2008) describes as 'nuances and subtleties of polite conversation that lies at the heart of the British culture'. It is refreshing to see that an imam trained from abroad is advocating that imam training courses must contain the cultural elements of the country that they would be working in. It

shows that imams are aware of the importance of knowing the host culture and the need to engage with that culture to become a successful imam.

Similarly Maulana Arshad Misbahi who is a home trained imam, in response to a question about the ability of the imams from South Asia says,

> I wouldn't say they are totally incapable. I wouldn't say that no because you see that there are over a thousand mosques in Britain today and all the credit goes to the scholars who came from South Asia or whatever or the Middle East. They are the ones who worked and developed peoples understanding that this is what we need in this country if we are going to survive as a nation as a Ummah.

However he goes on to talk about their short comings in dealing with young British Muslims by saying,

> But I think that because there upbringing and their background is not what we need in this country. For example I have grown up in this society so I know the thinking of the youngsters how they think? How they interact? But people from Pakistan and India they can't understand that because they only seen that (India/Pakistan) environment and when they come to Britain they're only in the mosque 24 hours a day. They are not in touch with the youth. They don't know what's going on in colleges and universities. So therefore they can't play the role that needs to be played.

Being a young British trained imam he is concerned with the need to engage with the British Muslims at their level. He feels that the imam's inability to get out of the mosque and into the community amongst the youth is a strong drawback for imams from abroad. He says that by not being able to go out into colleges and universities the imam will be blind to the issues facing British Muslims. Another aspect that he thinks is important is that because he himself has been through the school system in Britain he is more aware and more in tune with the thinking of the youth and connect with them in a meaning way (Lewis 2006).

However his respect for the imams from abroad does not diminish as he comes back to his original point that the imams from South Asia are still required for people like himself,

> But I think even today we still need the scholars who came from the sub-continent for the guidance for people like myself who are new in this field.

Ultimately it points to the fact that even though we have British trained imams but they still look to imams from abroad for guidance. It seems that in terms of depth of knowledge and authority the South Asian imams still command that respect and authority from the British trained imams. However, it is difficult to see how changes to the training structure and syllabus can take place while the authority rests with the imams from South Asia. The cultural differences will only begin to be accommodated once the imams who are born and trained within Britain gain the respect and authority that comes with enabling change to take place. But it seems inevitable that these changes in the curriculum and the training methods will take place but how far down the line in time they are depends on how long it takes for authority to transfer to the British trained imams.

The other significant note of criticism for the imams coming from abroad is their inability to speak in English. It is argued that lack of English means that the imams are unable to have a meaningful dialogue with the host community and are not able to take part in inter-faith dialogue. Maulana Azmi says,

> Majority of the mosques has got the imams who cannot speak English or who cannot speak good English. They cannot converse with the people. They cannot even have meaningful dialogue with our young generation but gradually and slowly I can say the number of Imams who are is improving. They are in a position that they can teach our young children the religion of Islam in their language and the language of our children is of course English. The majority of our imams they speak the language of the country they are coming from but in such mosques where the Imams are not fully qualified, the management committee of the mosque step in to deal with matters that require English.

However, Maulana Azmi says that although the Muslim communities face this problem of having imams who are not conversant in English the problem is solved through cooperation of the imam and mosque committee working in tandem. He says,

There is usually one other person who is educated and they can look after the other imams of the Muslim community. So what I have noticed in most of the mosques is that this job is divided. Imam will just look after the affairs, which are associated with *masjid*. Five times daily prayer and teaching and reading of the Quran and marriages and funerals. The mosque committee will look after social affairs political affairs and their demands when they have to apply for a passport or visa. There are many other things they have to get right. If the imam cannot do so one or the other person of the Muslim community will do it. So in one way or another mosques are looking after the aspects of Muslim community. If the imam is not properly educated and most of the imams are not educated, one of the persons of mosque committee who is able to deal will look after these issues.

What is interesting here is that although generally from the outside there is a perception that the imams and committees do not have a good working relationship, but what is apparent from this quote is that when it comes to division of tasks there is a fairly good working relationship that has been established between the imams and the mosque committee members. However, even though there is a good working relation there are issues that are cause for concern.

Just as an example if we take the inter-faith meetings that take place in Manchester where the imams did not take part but other English speaking members of the committee participated. From the other faiths the representation of their faith was carried out by the learned clergy or a religious authority whereas on the Muslim side the representation was made by a lay person. How knowledgeable he is on Islamic religious matters is debatable and chances are that he has to refer the religious matter back to the imam for ultimate guidance.

Another aspect that arises from the above quote is the relationship of power play between imams and committee members. The religious matters are referred back to the imams but imams in turn are at the mercy of the committees for their immigration needs. The committees are the ones who will eventually decide whether they want to keep this imam

at the mosque or not extend his visa and deport him. This threat though not apparent does play a significant part in the independence of the imams in their decision making.

Rizwan a youth respondent in my research in relation to the work of the imams from South Asia said,

> No I think it can be improved. Another example is the current situation in the Middle East there is a good some Muslims might not have the chance to read up to see what's happening in the Middle East. You know what's the Muslims perspective because in the media it's you know biased and one sided. So if our Imams were you know well informed they know what's happening? They can challenge the latest figures facts and tell us what we can do to help.

For Rizwan he argues that imams should be aware current affairs not only in Britain around world particularly what is going in Muslim countries.

If any one wishes to train as an imam in Britain, especially among the Barelwi's, they will have their initial teaching here in Britain but would then go to either Al Azhar or a seminary in Pakistan / India for final training and certification as alim / 'fazl' (Lewis 2006). In relation to University undergraduate degree courses in Islamic Studies and the teaching at *Darululoom* Samar said,

> I think that from the Dewsbury them ones they probably would be more knowledgeable than someone who goes on an MSc course because it's all in an English medium. But I think if I had the choice to I would go far and I would expect the ones from the Madrassahs to be better trained than someone who has done a Bachelors in Chemical Engineering and decides to do a two year MSc in Islamic Studies or something like that.

This demonstrates the dilemma that British Muslims face in having imams trained from within Britain. Samar who is a qualified dentist has university education and is well aware of the level of study at universities is suggesting that those who gain their Islamic education from British universities do not have the in-depth knowledge that those imams who trained from the *darululooms* have, whether here in Britain or abroad gain. The depth

of the knowledge might be greater from the *darululooms* but they do not necessarily train the imams to critically engage with issues facing the Muslim communities in Britain.

Asked about whether there were institutions that trained imams in Britain one of the long established imams in Manchester Maulana Azmi said,

> I don't think that there is anything in this country which is enough to provide them with the knowledge. Only few things are taught for example how to recite the Quran. How to lead the prayer..… That belongs only to as I mentioned to the prayers in the mosque not about the complete Islamic philosophy and Islamic way of life, which is the complete code of life. With this reason only a few months or few years training is not enough for them I don't know any proper institute which trains the people to become imam for this country because if a person is to become an imam in this country he should know about the culture of this country about the law of this country at the same time he has to know about Islam and the law of Islam and Islamic culture equally exists side by side because he is going to teach Islam in this country.
>
> But unfortunately after GSCE's those who are very brilliant good boys they go to the University or the Colleges they don't come into the Arabic education and this is a very great setback. What I experience over here.... is that it is very difficult for us to control them and to say to them come to the mosque. They say 'I have a lot of homework'. I have this and that. They have a lot of activities outside and inside the house. I trained many groups sometimes 20 then they reach the age of GCSE's they run away. They are not trying to complete their education it was very easy for them to come for 1.5 hours when I am in the mosque up to the age of the University then they will be *alim* at the same time but they don't come again. These are the problems we are facing over here and if you are not going to solve these problems I think we will not be able to provide the real preacher and teacher in this country for the future generation and those who don't have enough knowledge will continue to be imams.

The sentiments displayed by this imam are not optimistic for the *madaris* (plural of *Madrassah*) and the imams that come out of these seminaries. He argues even when students are at college or university it is not difficult for the student to take one and half hours out of their schedule to complete the course but unfortunately they do not have the dedication required to set aside time for the *alim* course. Therefore, they make excuses that they have too much homework. He stresses that if they dedicate just this amount of time they could be alims. The students would end up with a degree from a university as well as

a certificate / *ijaza* to become an *alim*. His argument is that the two could complement each other.

He argues that some schools develop very good reputation for GCSE's but that does not translate into high caliber imams coming out of these schools. The reason stated for this is that at the stage of GCSE's and A/S Levels the students and their parents make a decision that they do not want to pursue the profession of an imam and take them out of the Islamic schools and place them in British Higher education institutions. The argument is that the best students who receive top marks in the Islamic schools chose the universities to pursue their higher education and which in most cases is at the expense of loss to the pool of high calibre students who would otherwise become prestigious imams in large mosques.

As argued earlier in this chapter it is a mistake to take all of these institutions as imam producing institutions. One reason for this is demonstrated by the above statement from one of the senior imams in Manchester who is actively involved in training imams. He argues that when the students get to the age of 16-18 years they decide that they do not want to continue along this path and decide to go to universities and colleges. Here he is not talking about those who are at school age but those students who have attended the Islamic school since the age of 11 years as full time students. It is saying something about the motivation of the students who attend these schools and it is also saying something about the ability of the teachers at these schools to motivate these students to continue on the path to completion of their *alim* course and become full time imams. I maintain that the teachers at these Islamic schools do not see their task as producing imams but to provide education in the broader sense with an Islamic ethos.

This statement also throws a casts doubt on the ability and academic calibre of those students who do decide to continue at these schools to become the future imams. He is

273

saying that those who get excellent GCSE and A/S level results leave and in most cases leaving behind students of lower calibre to go on to become imams.

In response to whether the institutions training imams in Britain are producing imams of adequate ability to work in British mosques, Maulana Habibur Rahman says,

> They should and it depends. Have we got the religious institutions Islamic institutions in this country that can train our young people to become qualified imams? There are not many. I can tell you such institutions and those institutions are producing imams but demand is much much more higher of the product (calibre) of those imams. Still we need the people who are qualified in the religion in the teaching of the Quran the teaching of Hadith and the teaching of Fiqh. So I can say for some time to come we have to depend on those people who have to come from the South Asian countries.

Maulana Habibur Rahman has lived in Manchester since 1965 and served as an imam for most of his life, argues that although there are institutions in Britain that provide training for imams but he is not convinced about the quality of the training. His argument is that there are very high expectations from the imams in Britain and that those who are coming out of these institutions are perhaps not coming out with the level of quality that would be required to deal with the issues that are faced by the British Muslim communities. He goes on to admit that the teaching in seminaries of Quran, Hadith and *fiqh* is in depth but their awareness of the British society in general and the issues faced by them have not been incorporated into the syllabus taught at these seminaries.

Mualana Habibur Rahman went on to discuss the situation of Islamic Studies at the various universities in Britain. When asked whether students from these universities should be accepted as imams he says,

> If you ask me they should be accepted as an Imam. There may be some aspects, which are lacking over there that, that could be compensated or made up but I know particularly about Lampeter and particularly there is one in Birmingham where the students in the degree courses are given sufficient knowledge of Islam that they can become Minister of Islam. But perhaps again their knowledge in the study of Quran and Hadith is *superficial not deep*. If not today perhaps after some time the British universities maybe in a position to produce such graduates who are

> qualified to become Ministers of religion in the local mosques. Up till now I would say as far as I know perhaps they are not in that position. (Emphasis mine)

Although he appreciates the work undertaken by the various universities and starts off by saying the students educated at these universities should be accepted as imams but then he starts to reflect on the level of education and he re-assess the situation. He feels that the level of Quran and Hadith teaching at British universities is not to the sufficient level that would be required by an imam. But what is interesting is that he is hopeful that if Islamic Studies continues in British Universities it could develop to a level where it would be recognised as a valid course to certify the training of professional imams. But for the time being he is of the opinion that there is a lot more work that needs to be done by universities before they can produce qualified imams of the level that would be adequate to fulfil the role of the imam in British mosques. I believe that British universities will need to dispel some of the suspicions that surround the teaching of Islam at these institutions and gain the trust of the Muslim before they gain any kind of recognition by the mosques and imams. They will need to show that those who are providing these courses are not there to represent the 'orientalist' view of Islam (Said 1978).

8.8 Possible Trajectories for Imam Training in Britain

In the literature on imam training at least three models have emerged to provide imam training that is Islam centred but also country friendly. I will briefly look the three models, the Dutch model, the French model and finally the British model.

8.8.1 Dutch Model

The Dutch model is quite an interesting one to look at as a possible model for Muslims in Britain because it basis itself on two important issues that are also quite relevant and pertinent in relation to the training of imams in Britain. Firstly, the key issue in the Dutch model is the provision of training taking on board the regional variations in Islam (Ghaly

2011). For example training imams who will work amongst the Moroccan community in the Netherlands the training will pay special attention to the Maliki juristic school and the Ashari theological school. It is quite reasonable and logical to make sure that imams who are going into the community know the theological backgrounds of the community to avoid causing major frictions within the community through training in a different *fiqh* school.

The second key component of the Dutch model was that it placed particular emphasis on 'promotion of the integration and active participation of Muslims in the Dutch society'. This part of the syllabus was made a part of the imam training course on the insistence of the Dutch government. The government felt that it was important to integrate the imams within the Dutch community in order to avoid segregation and alienation from the wider Dutch society of Muslims in general and imams in particular. The isolation and segregation of imams will automatically have a knock on effect on the Muslim communities in becoming isolated from the mainstream of Dutch society.

The Dutch training model is predicated on the universities providing that training. The University of Amsterdam (VU) began the course in September 2005 with 40 students, receiving an annual grant of €250,000 for six years for this special course. The process of accreditation of the imam training course at Leiden University began in September 2006 (Ghaly). Islamic theology course was provided by Leiden University, with a grant of €2.35 million for 2006-10 (Godard 2007: 192). The University of Amsterdam and Leiden University developed master's courses during this period. The Hogeschool Inholland provided further training for imams, spiritual advisors and chaplains, and in November 2005 received declarations of intent from five organisations of the CMO. These initiatives also teach Dutch Islam and pastoral care. A question mark hangs around the legitimacy of

a Protestant university to teach Muslim religious staff. Neither the University of Amsterdam nor Leiden University received an explicit mandate from the Muslim organisations. The Hogeschool has had a programme in Islamic studies since 1995 for Islamic teachers in secondary schools. This on the whole is a distinctive experiment in Europe, as an attempt to provide Muslim theological education in a western university with Muslim and non-Muslim teachers. (Amighar 2007:192). The Milli Görüs accepted this programme, but the *Diyanet Işleri Türk-Islam Birliği*, DITIB, was more reticent and continues to send imams from Turkey.

The Dutch model however incurred its fair share of problems on the way to the accreditation of the imam training course at Leiden University. Ghaly says that one of the key impediments was the issue of trust (2011: 2). One of the things in favour of the Dutch was that the imam training discussions began in early 1990's without the backdrop of the 9/11 and 7/7 the debate on terrorism thereby possibly having less suspicion compared to discussions in Britain and France which began after 9/11. Since 9/11 and 7/7 the debate around terrorism seems to have been the driving force behind the issue of imam training which creates an uneasy mix for many ulama involved in imam training. Gaining trust of the British Muslim communities while there is a hostile debate that views Muslims as the enemy within is problematic. Dar ul-ulooms in Britain have become suspicious of the intentions of the British government and therefore have been reluctant to engage in a meaningful dialogue (Gilliat-Ray 2007).

Ghaly (2011) says that one possible problem with the Dutch approach is that imams trained from University with this particular syllabus would only be able to gain employment amongst the Moroccan Muslim communities. An imam trained in this way would not be able to become an imam in a Pakistani mosque as his training was not based

on the Hanafi School of Fiqh. In order for it to be successful the universities must have experts on each of the fiqh schools so that imams can choose which *fiqh* to specialise in to help the specific Muslim community.

8.8.2 French Model

French authorities and Muslim organisations have been discussing the issue of training of imams in France since the 1990s (Peter 2003). The main aim of these discussions was to thrash out an acceptable curriculum for imams in France that is compatible with the French principle of *laicite*. The concept of *laicite* which stipulates the absence of religious involvement in government affairs as well as absence of government involvement in religious affairs was established under the 1946 French Constitution and reasserted in the 1958 Constitution but originates from the 1905 French laws on the Separation of the Churches and State (Laurence & Vaisse 2006; Groves 2008; Maussen 2009). The first article of the 1905 law guaranteed "the free exercise of religious worship" while the second article advocates a French republic that "does not recognize, pay, or subsidize any (form of) worship". In France, as in Britain (Modood 2010a), there is an ongoing debate about the nature of secularism (*laicite*), whether it is 'militant secularism' or 'moderate secularism' (Maussen 2009: 46). Those who advocate militant radicalism focus on the second article that 'does not recognize, pay, or subsidize any (form of) worship' whilst the advocates of a moderate secularism focus on the first article which 'guarantees the free exercise of religious worship' (ibid.).

In order to deal with the issue of training of imams and the integration of French Muslims the Conseil Francais du Culte Musulman (CFCM) was created in 2003. Amiraux says that one of the major reasons for the creation of the CFCM was that "Muslims are almost everywhere systematically disqualified for their incapacity to provide the state with a

unique and unified speaker, preventing thus its institutionalization, its "churchification" (Amiraux 2003: 25) THE CFCM is a national representative Muslim organisation that has wide participation, of the 1600 mosques and prayer rooms in France 1200 participated (Peter 2006: 712).

Over 2,000 imams are working in France of which approximately 90% are foreign born imams who often are not fluent in French (Amiraux 2003: 25). This means that French Muslims are heavily reliant on the supply of imams from their parent country. The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Education in cooperation with CFCM have resolved to tackle the shortage of French trained imams to accelerate 'gallicization'[94] (Peter 2003: 20). It was envisioned that the university would be the platform to provide imam training and Islamic education on the lines of an intermediary between a pure faculty of theology and a religious seminary. The French universities were to provide certain courses in history, law, social sciences and French in collaboration with the Mosque of Paris. Godard states that this venture failed because the 'Professors refused to give specific courses to imams' (Amghar et al 2007: 186-187). It has been argued that by placing the 'problematic' nature of Islam as the major issue the authorities underestimated the strength of the political and social reasons that were deemed as the reasons for the eruption of riots and jihadist violence, even when these are undertaken in the name of Islam. He says CFCM has not been able come up with curricula although the government has asked it to agree on an official definition of the imam and its training. FASILD (*Fonds d'action et de soutien pour l'intégration et la lutte contre les discriminations* - Action and Support Fund for the Integration and the Fight Against Discrimination) the organisation responsible for the implementation of this curriculum argues that teaching of the French language on a

---

[94] Gallicization a process of cultural assimilation that gives a French character to a word, an ethnicity or a person.

regional basis also failed as CFCM failed in mobilising the support from the imams. (Amghar et al 2007: 186-187). Exemptions to the strongly worded differentiation between religion and the State have been institutionalized over the past century.

The French authorities decided to deal with the issue of training imams by funding certain institutions who would agree to teach a 'civil[95] Islam' to the French Muslims. The state is directing the providers of imam training courses with guidelines as to what is to be taught at these institutions. Many institutions that are financially weak, and most are, are reliant on state handouts or foreign donations. The prevalent impression is that France might advocate a strict separation of state and religion but what the example of imam training shows is that the state when it deems it a necessity does fund certain institutions that provide religious education. . Most notably, the French state now subsidizes private religious schools, provides salaries for religious personnel in secular institutions such as prisons and the army, finances chaplains in public schools, recognizes religious holidays, and provides tax exemptions to faith organizations.

8.8.3 British Model

The British model is well illustrated by Birt (2006) in his analysis of British policies devised for national integration in Britain. In Britain he coined the phrase 'good imam, bad imam' to describe the dichotomy of the imams and the British authorities want to train, the 'good imam', and those they wish to eradicate are the 'bad imam'.

The imam training model chosen in Britain is not based on the state training of imams but training is left to Islamic institutions currently involved in providing Islamic education. They have decided to use the network of existing Islamic seminaries and the higher

---

[95] I am informed by a colleague in the Anthropology Department Emilie Fairet that the term civil in this context is not used in a derogatory manner but is used to imply a civic Islam.

education institutions like the Muslim College and the Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE). Most seminaries provide education for children from the age of 11. The seminaries main focus is on providing rote learning of the Quran, hadith and fiqh. They are required by law to fulfil the statutory educational requirements of the British educational curriculum for secondary education. However, although the statutory subjects are included in their syllabus they do place a strong emphasis on providing Islamic Studies.

The funding aspect of these seminaries is not reliant on the state providing the funds as they generate their own funds through a variety of funding methods. There is a fee structure whereby the seminaries charge a set amount for fees. I am informed that these fees would barely be sufficient to cover the cost of board and lodgings never mind providing funds for professional teachers. These seminaries rely quite heavily on their charitable status to attract donations from Muslims across Britain. Most Muslims in Britain give Zakat at least once a year and these seminaries rely on the network of mosques to generate these funds through the collection of the annual *zakat*. Finally, some seminaries have foreign donors who provide funding. Very few if any get state funding for providing training for imams.

MIHE and the Muslim College have managed to attract state funding for their courses on Chaplaincy and imam up skilling classes (Suleiman 2012: 42). The British government's desire to create British trained imams has not been backed by the provision of funds for these courses. Manchester Metropolitan University developed a diploma course in Islamic Studies in the early 1990's the course was provided on a part time basis in the evenings. The main purpose of the course was to provide a basic working knowledge of Muslims in Britain and Islam in general. The target audience was nurses, police officers, teachers, etc. The course is still running but very little has been done to convert it into an undergraduate

level course let alone providing a postgraduate course. What this meant was that if anyone wished to enrol on this course they would have to fund the costs of the course from their own pocket. The key reason why this course has not developed further is because the visionary behind the setting up of the course, Burjor Avari, no longer remained the course leader. The new course leader seems content to leave the course as it is rather than develop it further may be fearing it be taken over by someone more senior than himself if developed into an undergraduate / postgraduate course.

However the training of imam discourse is taking place during a time of unease between the authorities and the British Muslims. Gilliat-Ray has pointed to this issue in the reflective article on the unsuccessful attempts to gain access to the *darululooms* (Gilliat-Ray 2007: 17). She argues that the treatment by the authorities of one of the key Deobandi scholars in Britain made matters worse for researchers who wished to undertake research on training of imams in these institutions. maulana Yusuf Motala's who is considered as one of the most important scholars amongst the Deobandis in Britain, was held for questioning whilst on his trip for pilgrimage to Makkah (Birt 2005: 193). Ibrahim Mogra during an interview for the Leverhulme Trust funded pilot project on imam training also highlight the increase in distrust as a result of the arrest of maulana Yusuf Motala. Protests were voiced by Muslim organisation at the treatment of Muslims by the police authorities in Britain in the wake of the campaign against terrorism. These types of incident make it difficult for trust to be built between the authorities in Britain and the British Muslims. In order for a collaborative imam training project to begin an element of trust has to be earned by the authorities, currently that is lacking.

Furthermore, the regional aspect of the Imam training in the British context would mean that as the largest minority Muslim population in Britain comes from Pakistan the bodies

would need to strongly engage with the Pakistani British Muslim organisations in order to come to some kind of consensus on the theological content of the curriculum that would cater for the Muslims from the South Asian background. In order to do this the authorities would have to engage with the representative British Muslim organisations to come to a consensus on the curriculum. The issue of authority here would have to play a pivotal role in deciding what goes into a course on the training of imams. Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) that emerged out of UKACIA was for some time the chosen representative body of the British government before they fell out favour over the Iraq war when other Muslim organisation were being courted by the government.

Since the 7/7 bombings the government has made overtures to bring the imams and mosques on board to provide appropriate training for imams to tackle radicalisation and enhance Muslim integration into mainstream British Society. The government who prior to 9/11 and 7/7 provided funds to create and strengthen the MCB however, after these incidents the government decided to side line the MCB and create a 'Mosques and Imams Advisory Board' (MINAB) to implement their ideas on imam training. One of the issues with the MCB was that it was considered that it had limited representation of Barelwis and their mosques whilst they would seem to be the largest group amongst the lay Muslims in Britain. MINAB during its earlier phase made some positive noises but it seems that because their funding was withdrawn they have not been as effective and its role seems to have faded as the government's interest in taming the imams seems to have mellowed. The people that I spoke to on the ground seemed to categorise MINAB as 'talking shop' with very little influence on the ground. Though they argued that there was a need for an organisation that dealt with issues relating to mosques and imams but for some reason they did not have the confidence in MINAB to perform this role.

8.9 Conclusion

The chapter has identified a number of key issues concerning training of imams in Britain. The issues are specifically concerned with the role and how that is performed in Britain. The imam's lack of familiarity with the British culture hinders their ability to convey the message of Islam to the wider British society and also the Muslim communities in Britain. The issue of language came up on numerous occasions through the research but this I argued can only be tackled if committees have the financial strength and intent to employ British trained imams. As long as mosques remain financially weak they will inevitably turn to importing imams from abroad who would be willing to work for lower wages and poor work environment. However there are signs of improvement in some mosque as one interview of an interfaith coordinator revealed that one of the mosques was prepared to offer a salary of £40,000 to a qualified imam but the imam refused in favour of setting up his own educational institution. He informed me the reason that he refused was that he found that he would be restricted in what he would be allowed to do outside the mosque.

The need to communicate with the wider society was also elaborated in the chapter and it was argued that imams must equip themselves with academic discourses of the wider society. The arguments need to be framed in a way that they take on board the epistemology of the society that they inhabit. Only through engagement with socio-economic and political knowledge will the imams be in a position to convey their message in a logical and rational manner.

The imams in Britain are using the training they gained from abroad to transmit Islamic values to the next generation whilst at the same time attempting to maintain the input of the older generation who control the mosques. However it shows that British Muslims are far from satisfied with the foreign trained imams and they too recognise that imams must

be trained in Britain if they are to engage with the British youth. It was argued that the training of imams was not contemporary as their training was outdated as they were using texts and methods developed when the darse Nizami curriculum was developed. The training has to be made more relevant to the contemporary society that they live in.

The matter of imams and their training has been complicated by the rise in political Islam and the rhetoric of the radical political Islamists who are wrongly viewed inter-changeably as imams. While there might be a justified rational debate that needs to take place between political Islamists and other political theorists but this has to be delinked from the imams and the issue of their training. Imams are not tools that the government decides to use whenever there is a terrorist attack but in fact their role is much broader and any attempts to restrict it to taming the terrorists must be resisted to maintain the impartiality of the office of the imam and mosques. Similarly Islamists who use the guise of the of the office of the imam need to be honest and show integrity by delinking themselves from the office of the imam and call themselves by whatever other name they wish, it may be that they think of themselves as political theorists who are expounding an 'Islamic' vision of governance, but they need to say this rather wear the garb of the imam.

The British Muslims have established a number of seminaries from where future imams will be recruited however some of the Barelwi schools do send their students to either Pakistan or Egypt's Al Azhar University for the completion of their studies. These imams will be conversant in English language, however, for the time being they will lack one thing and that is the 'authority' to act as the pioneers of future imam training. It will take them a long time before they will become the 'authority' that can bring the required changes in training imams. The reason for this is that currently the seminaries are in the hands of those who have had their education from abroad and are seen as the authority in

Islam. It will take a few generations before we have heads of these seminaries trained from within these seminaries. Currently there is a teacher student relation that is still at work that prevents the newly trained imams to take a bolder stance to effect change.

9 BEING BRITISH MUSLIM – MAKING MUSLIM POLITICAL SPACE

9.1 Introduction

*T*he Muslim community in Britain clearly already has a political identity which perhaps best understood as a process of social re-construction and transformation (Anwar 1979; Barth 1969). In this chapter I examine the ways in which the Muslim community in Manchester is 'making space' to assert its political identity (Joly 1995; Werbner 1996; Modood 1998). Such an examination enhances an understanding of participation of British Muslims in the political process.

Political participation in the context of this research is something rather narrower than that found in the literature of political anthropology (Cohen 1969; Easton 1959). The concept of political participation here is the one used by Le Lohe in his study of ethnic participation in elections by Asians in Bradford where he limits participation to the electoral processes of voting and running for office (1975: 84). Active involvement in electoral processes, whether through participation in general, local or closed party elections, provides a useful domain within which to assess the extent to which British Muslim identities interact with larger, pluralist state and civil society institutions.

Parekh Report (2000) amongst its many recommendations made a number of recommendations for political representation of minorities. For the political parties it recommended, "political leaders should shape, not pander to, public opinion on issues relating to race and diversity" (2000: 224). It also recommended that "black and Asian people should be more fully involved than at present in the party political system at local and national levels, as both elected representatives and party activist" and suggested that for this to take place 'institutional' racism within their own structures and procedures"

must be addressed (ibid: 225). The Parekh Report only mentions 'black' and 'Asian' minorities with the assumption that these two categories encompass Muslims concerns of representation but we know that this does not necessarily translate into increased Muslim representation as seen in the creation of the black section in the Labour Party to encourage minority representation.

This chapter analyses Muslim representation and participation in Manchester. The empirical data on which a typology of political participation is constructed has been collected over a period of twelve years. Initial data was collected in 2000/2001, subsequent data was collected in 2003/2004 and finally again in 2012. The secondary data on the electoral results has been sourced from the Manchester City Council records available on the various elections in Manchester. The data on the size of the Muslim population in the electoral wards of Manchester was extrapolated from the 2001 and 2011 Censuses. The primary data used to construct a typology of political participation was produced primarily through the use of semi-structured interviews designed to enable a greater understanding of the role that mosques, imams and British Muslims affiliated with mosques played in British political processes. Throughout my conversations over this extended period I was keen to explore the concept of secularism from the perspective of my respondents. An understanding of how my participants perceived the meaning of secularism to provide an insight into how they respond to the constant and pervasive debate surrounding the secularity of British society. In most Western countries religion has been consigned to the "private sphere", however in Pakistan the boundary between "public and private" is not clearly demarcated as it is in Western societies and is rarely fixed (Hoexter 2002; 7). One of the principle aims of understanding the relationship of British Muslims to broader, formal political processes is to comprehend British Muslim perceptions of the concept of a secular state.

9.2 Secularism - British Secularism – 'Moderate' or 'Radical'?

The main argument for denying a Muslim identity is that Britain is a secular state where religion is not meant to play a role in public life. Within this argument is the assumption that religion is a private matter that should be confined to the privacy of an individual's life. Daniele Joly challenges such an argument by suggesting that, "Britain [is] primarily a Christian Protestant society; this is enshrined in the composition of its institutions whereby state and church are not separated" (1990: 32). Joly highlights the links between religion and the state by citing compulsory religious education, courts where the oath is taken on the bible, priests officiating marriages that are legally recognised.

Modood argues that it is a mistake to view Britain as a radically secular society. He says, "in a country like Britain religion and state are not separate, the constitution gives the Church of England, with its links with the monarchy and Parliament, a privileged position, often referred to as *establishment*" (1998: 392). Modood argues that the position in Britain is best described as moderate secularism. He argues that the obvious links of the church with the establishment demonstrate that Britain is not an extremely secular society. He highlights the presence of the church in the House of Lords, the school holiday schedule that takes into consideration religious days and the existence of state funded religious schools. Similarly, he argues that characterising Muslims as radical Islamists is misguided. He argues that,

> In contemporary Islam there are ideological arguments for the absolute subordination of politics to religious leaders, but this is *not* mainstream Islam, any more than the model of politics in Calvin's Geneva is mainstream Christianity (1998: 391, *emphasis added*).

He further argues that it was rarely the case that 'saints or spiritual leaders' held political power. If we accept this then perhaps recognition of the strong and vibrant presence of

British Muslim religious identity might become less challenging or threatening to mainstream British society.

The government wishes to deal specifically with ethnic/cultural organisations but not those that are specifically religious, like mosques and/or imams. This attitude from state bodies demonstrates an attempt to marginalise the Muslim viewpoint. The more the Muslims feel marginalised the more insular they will become and consequently this will perpetuate the apparent segregation and alienation of Muslim communities as it has recently been documented in many reports after the riots of 2001 in the northern mill towns of Bradford, Burnley & Oldham[96] (Kundnani 2001). In order to provide an environment for peaceful co-existence and integration, policies must recognise and take into account the views of the religious minorities. The religious minorities, like other minorities, need to feel secure in the society they inhabit. In democracy the state must provide religious minorities' legal protection against discrimination and incitement to religious hatred if Britain is to become a truly inclusive society (Modood 1993: 516-517).

Grace Davie argues that a common theme emerging in the new millennium, involves an increasing need to address questions raised by minority communities in religious rather than racial terms (2000: 122). Davie says that one illustration of this change is the discussion of a religious question in 2001 Census. The inclusion of the question on religion in the Census came about after strong lobbying on the part of Muslims with support from the majority of Christians. Davie, like many others, argues that there is a failure on the part of the state to address the discrepancies between protections for religious minorities.

---

[96] For a fuller account of the riots in the Northern towns the Home Office ordered inquiries into the incidents and looked at what can be done to avoid these kinds of riots in the future. 1) Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team chaired by Ted Cantle; 2) Burnley Report; 3) Oldham Report; and 4) Ouseley Report into riots in Bradford. 3.   One Oldham, one future, David Ritchie, Oldham Panel, 2001 (The Ritchie Report); Burnley speaks, who listens? Report of the Burnley Task Force, Tony Clarke, 2001 (The Clarke Report); Community pride not prejudice - making diversity work in Bradford, Sir Herman Ouseley, 2001 (The Ouseley Report)

Lewis addresses the contested meanings secularism holds for different people (Lewis 1994) (1994: 127). Following his lead, I present here a sample of views from my own informants on the notion of secularism:

> I think in a very broad sense what I understand is that secularism is a system which accepts religion but keeps it as a private affair.

> Secularism means that they don't have active part with religion, we can't say non-believers but in a way like that. India used to say that we are a secular country but in a way they say that but act as a Hindu country.

> My understanding of secularism is when you don't have religion or your belief in God and religion being part of your life. All your thinking all your actions are separate from religion. So religion is a private individual issue and all the other things in life is secularism. So if you don't influence your aspects of life with your religious belief that's what I understand is secularism.

> A secular state is where religion is not high in the list of priorities at all. Religion doesn't matter-- what matters is the nation and nationalism. Again I quote the Ottoman's because in the last year of the Ottoman Empire they started. The emergence of Turkey was the emergence of a secular state. From religious Islamic caliphate to a secular state where hijab was banned. It's got a very anti-Islamic connotation, has secularism.

> Every term is interpreted according to their own desires and wishes. Secularism… what I understand… in simple words is a system where no religion plays any part and no religious group is given importance because of their religion. But what I have seen in the secular system it should be that no religion should be given any importance but what I have seen is that this system is used against some religions. That is what is happening in many countries including Muslim countries. I find in India that India claims to be a secular country and if it is a secular country in the true sense of the word no group should be given importance on the ground of religion but we know that the majority group who are Hindus they are using their political power against the Muslims. Muslims are being crushed and pushed back in all departments in all walks of life in the name of secularism. On the other hand we find in countries like Turkey the Muslims are in a majority but the ruling junta which is completely Westernised, they say they are secular and they will not allow the Muslim community which is in a big majority, 98% majority, they are not allowed to practice their religion in their individual and collective life in the name of secularism. Again I will say that is a wrong use of secularism. Different countries and different governments are using it according to their own vested interest. In simple words it means that it should not have any favour against or for any group but I can see that it is not being used in its form as it should be used.

> I believe that it means living according to non-religious views, a society based on non-religious views. That is any religion.

> Secularism has changed a lot the way it is used now. For example people in the 30s they say that its secular but they are not in its very strict sense. The way I

understand it is that ok your religion is your personal matter that's it. So you can do whatever you want to do in your personal private life but don't bring it in a collective thing or affairs. And don't like again bring into politics and all this not in this community affair that's your own business what you do you do it at home and that's it. Again like when you're in the Mosque you do whatever you want to do and when you go out of the Mosque finished. Your religion has finished and at the same time the other people or what the other people are doing is none of your business whatever they are practicing whether it's right or wrong doesn't matter. This is their own business but there is one definition of secularism in 1930. They say we are a secular state and but they impose things that you have to do this like wearing a (head)scarf. They don't allow that you are not allowed even though it's my priority whether I grow a beard or not it's a personal issue but they don't interfere.

My understanding of that is a state, which is anti-religion. A state basically which is one without religious institution of that country maybe for example if it's a Muslim country if it's a state which is run with the isolating the religious institutions when it comes to politics.

The main thing about secularism is that it is an ideology based on 'godlessness', basically things that go against god and religious principles. That's what I would term as secularism. It's a set of ideologies not necessarily a way of life.

I think it's a word I don't like. It's about moving away from religious values and coming to an open approach to everything. To me it's more like let's bring in homosexuality, let's bring in lesbianism let's bring in whatever everybody wants. Basically it's opening all barriers good or bad.

Actually I have a concept of secularism, different than the real concept. According to my own feeling the concept of religion is that every religion has the freedom of practice, faith and they are in the one place with government issues and company issues, understand. So, that is just like the bunch of the flower, many flowers, *guldastey key tarah se hai, har guldastey ka apna ek husn hota hai, har phool ka. Agar app saray phooloh ko ek jessa kerdey to guldastay ka husn khatam ho jayey ga. To humarey nazdeek* secularism *ka yeh mafoom hai sarey mazahib ko mukamal azadi hasil hogi aur har phool apni puri danak kay saath apnay guldastey main gura hua hoga. Yeh nehi hai ka madhab ko katam kar diya jaey agar yeh hai to* I'm against this kind of secularism.

The responses of my respondents shed light on how British Muslims. The views demonstrate that British Muslim view secularism in different ways and that it is important to understand what they mean by the term. The views include secularism as anti-religion to secularism as a multiplicity of religions with no single religion having hegemonic control on state apparatus. These views show quite explicitly the differing views people have on their understanding of secularism. The last quote is from a prominent Indian *alim*, originally from India, who has experience of living under Indian secularism. He views secularism not as an absence of religion but as a bouquet of flowers where each flower

represents a different religion. The beauty of the bouquet is in its plurality not in the absence of the flowers. The majority of my respondents understood secularism to be either anti religion or specifically anti Islam and Muslims. The cause of the anti Islam perceptions can be seen from the quotes below. When I asked whether Britain was a secular country, people responded in the following ways:

> No it's a Christian country the official religion of this country is Christianity. The Queen is the defender of the faith of Christianity. All the Bishops have got by right a seat in the House of Lords. With this education bill all the school assemblies have to be Christian and Muslims and other non-Christians can withdrew from that assembly. So it is Christian country through and through. It may appear to be secular but it is not secular. In theory it is a Christian country but religion has no influence on what they do. The Prime Ministers say he's Christian the Queen says she's Christian they all say that and there are few who say they are atheists. But again all these issues about section 28 and the lowering of age for consent of homosexuals, abortion about giving contraceptive pills given to unmarried school girls these are the issues where religious leaders and the church has opposed it. But they remain Christian nevertheless.

> Yes I think it is regarded as a secular state. In the books the Church of England is head and whatever but with regards to reality if you look at it realistically is this really a country where religion is high on the list of priorities. Most people really haven't got a religion. Okay they celebrate Christmas but apart from that I don't think many people go to church.

> Well Britain is not a secular country because the head of the state is the head of the Church of England. If the head of the country is the head of a particular religion how can that country claim that it is a secular country. If the sovereign of this country is the head of the Church of England definitely I will say that this country basically privileges Christianity over other religions therefore it is not a secular state.

> Muslims should be allowed to practice their religion in their individual and collective life. After in secular systems democracy, our democratic right is there that we should be allowed to practice our religion in our family life in our social life we should be allowed to live according to our own religion but we find that this it is not the case in many countries. It is a misuse of the term secularism.

> No I think it's a Christian country even though they say they are not.

> Some people say we don't have a religion this is a secular country but when Christmas comes they become more Christians than Christians. So if they are secular then they should not be keeping their names John, Fred or Thomas and Harry sometimes they should become Amjad or sometimes become Ali. Up to a certain extent their secularism means they are not very active in their religion.

> I wouldn't say it's a secular society. I would say their basis is more towards humanism that they adopt that thing rather than a secular approach. Yes you can

say within humanism because there are lots of things, which are to do with secular things. So that's why it appears it is secular but because it's a kind of overlap in between. So that's why?

The majority of respondents do not view Britain as a secular state. They seem particularly focussed on the fact that the head of the state is Christian and her (or his) title includes defender of faith. The Church sits in the House of Lords by right, and the holiday structure of the country is based on Christian festivals. It is therefore disconcerting for British Muslims when they demand rights and recognition based on their religious identity but are refused on the basis that Britain is a secular country. This is seen as a double standard which renders secularism a tool to be directed against British Muslims. This perception of duplicity provides the radical element within the Muslim community fuel to drive their radical version of Islam.

9.3 Development of Political Discourse Surrounding British Muslim Political Engagement

A vibrant British Muslim identity has matured since the establishment of the first mosques in Britain and particularly in Manchester. Muslims play a dynamic and prominent role in the political landscape of Manchester. This role is undergoing a dynamic reconstruction through the interaction of Muslims with wider British society. The internal dynamics of group relationships are predicated, in part, on the boundaries between 'insider' and 'outsider', however, group boundaries are subject to change over time. Following Barth (1969), I take it as axiomatic that boundaries are a salient and defining feature of a community. The boundaries are not static formations but are adaptive and contingent on time, place and social relations. A group name might remain the same but this does not mean that the group boundaries remained the same. In Barth's (1969) seminal work on the Pukhtun and Baloch ethnic boundaries, for example, it is clear that the specific cultural attributes associated with each group are in fact subject to radical reassignment in response to shifts in the types of interactions. For some ethnic groups, such as Pukhtuns, the *idea* of common origin may be fundamental for membership, while for others, such as various Maori groups in Polynesia, residence and conformity to local practices may be more highly prioritised (Sahlins 1973). In Jacobson's study of the Pakistani community she found that the *hijab* became a marker of group identity for many Muslim women in Britain. Like other identity markers, however, this is the result of particular political and social events in history rather than an inflexible marker of Muslim womanhood. The specific *hijab* that has

become an identity signifier was not a marker in the past nor will it necessarily remain one in the future (Jacobson 1998).

9.4 Political Journey

Modood, commenting on the state of Muslim political power at the height of the Rushdie affair stated that they were a 'powerless' and 'friendless' group (Modood 1993). Werbner, during the first Gulf war described the British Muslim political power as 'impotent' (1992). She argued that British Muslim politics was one of empty rhetoric without any political power to substantiate the rhetoric. The failed attempt to have Gerald Kaufman, a sitting Member of Parliament from Manchester Gorton constituency, deselected is an episode that displayed their empty rhetoric (BMMS February 1996 Vol. IV, No. 2, p. 3-4) that definitively demonstrated the marginalised political status of British Muslims during the 1980s and 1990s.

Anwar (1979) highlighted the need for more effective political participation of the Pakistani community in British political life when he argued that participation of the masses could only take place if their interests are addressed. For example during the early 1970's Anwar found that one of the major matters of concern to the Pakistani community in Britain was the war between Pakistan and India and the eventual creation of Bangladesh in 1971. The Labour Party openly supported the Indian viewpoint, while Liberals in Rochdale viewed the situation more sympathetically to the Pakistani perspective. Anwar argues that this was one of the reasons why the Labour Party eventually lost their parliamentary seat in Rochdale (1979: 140). He notes also that racial discrimination affected ethnic minorities voting patterns. Given that the Muslim population in Rochdale was much lower than it is today suggests that Muslims may be in a more advantageous position to influence the outcome of election results in Rochdale, and given the regional demographic changes, possibly more widely across Mancunian elections.

The ground breaking Runnymede Report on Islamophobia (1997) made certain recommendations for Muslims in British public life. It describes the exclusion of Muslims from the public domain and its recommendations include measures to encourage British Muslims to engage more widely in public life. The authors of the report considered 'whether Muslims do in fact take part, in numbers commensurate with their numbers in the population as a whole in the principle areas of public life' (1997:32). One measure of such

participation lay in the number of Muslims who have taken part in elections as candidates as well as the number of Pakistani councillors or Members of Parliament.

In the 1970s and 1980s ethnic identity was a key factor of political mobilisation, however, from the late 1970s, religion began to form an important focal point for mobilisation of British Muslims. Banton (1979), Anwar (1979) and Shaw (1988) all point to the maintenance of religious ties and mobilisation around Islamic issues. Modood (1994) argues that following the Rushdie Affair, British Muslim mobilisation has occurred increasingly through the expression of a religious identity rather than through an Asian or Pakistani identity. The place of religion in the construction of British Muslim identify has, therefore, become an existential challenge for British Muslims. Such a challenge has potentially profound implications for the place of British Muslims and British Pakistanis in the public sphere. It is not entirely clear what space exists within the public sphere for the recognition of a political religious identity. Finally, if a 'genuine' religious identity emerges within a public space, the capacity of the British political system to accommodate such an identity may be limited but not impossible as Britain has accommodated the Church of England in public life (Modood et al 1997). The recommendations of the Runnymede Report on Islamophobia seemed to suggest that such an accommodation risks being perceived as a direct threat to the secular state (see Modood 1998).

Goulbourne (1988), in his discussion of the The Satanic Verses and its aftermath in the political context entitled his chapter 'The participation of new minority ethnic groups in British politics' whereas, given the focus of the discussion, the chapter might have been much more appropriately entitled, 'religious minority groups in British politics' (1988: 181-203, emphasis added). The reason for this contention is that Goulbourne does not deal exclusively with issue of 'ethnic' minorities but in fact discusses the impact of religious minorities in the political sphere. For example Goulbourne states,

> The Rushdie affair brought back onto the public agenda the question of the relationship or the balance between religious faith and the faith in a rational secularism that informs general public values in the modern state and the comity of nation-states. (1998:184)

In fact, the Rushdie Affair heralded the Islamic identity on to the public political domain more prominently although it had been developing since the 1970's if not earlier (Vertovec 2002: 28). The dominance of a 'secular' research agenda in the social sciences undermined the significance of the development of an Islamic identity amongst British Muslims. From

a very early period Muslims began to establish the institutions that were necessary for the maintenance of an Islamic identity. There were halal meat shops, mosques and the importation of imams from South Asia to facilitate congregational prayers and the teaching of Quranic recitation in Arabic for young children. In addition, British Muslims actively lobbied for halal food in schools and hospitals, religious school assemblies, religious education, lobbied against sex education in schools, called for provision of single sex schools or lobbying to keep the existing girls only schools and permission to wear 'Islamic' atire in school, specifically the hijab and *shalwar* or trouser instead of skirts for girls (Nielsen 1987; Ansari 2004; Joly 1995). However a more recent development has seen the emergence of requests for Muslim chaplains in hospitals and prisons (Beckford & Gilliat et al. 1998).

Most of these demands from Muslim communities were only met after sustained lobbying. British Muslims understood that they had to exert a great deal of effort to establish religious rights. Interestingly, demands made on ethnic grounds were more easily accommodated than those made on religious grounds. Some who were involved in the study of Muslim communities have concluded that Muslims began to 'ethnicise' their religious demands (Nielsen 1992: 53). Given the extent to which British Muslim groups have relied on 'ethnicised' arguments to assert what are effectively religious identity markers, it is reasonable to conclude that this was a concerted strategy (Samad 2007: 168).

9.5   Muslim Demographic Changes in Manchester Electoral Wards

The recent 2011 Census figures show that electoral wards have seen a significant change in the distribution of and number of the Muslim population in particular wards. Figure 9.1 shows the percentage of Muslim population in the 2001 and 2011 Censuses in all the electoral wards in Manchester. There a number of wards where there is a growth of the percentage of Muslims in by up to 18%. Figure 9.2 shows that there have been significant changes in the number of wards that have at 10% or more Muslims in one ward. In the 2001 Census there were ten wards that had 10% or more Muslim population. Figure 9.2 shows that in the 2011 Census this number has increased from ten to sixteen wards that have 10% or more Muslim Population. In effect there has been a more than 50% increase in the number of wards that have 10% or more Muslim population. Figure 9.3 shows that in the 2001 Census there were just four wards in Manchester that had 20% or more Muslim population, however, by 2011 the census shows that this number has increased to eleven

wards that have 20% or more Muslim population. In the 2001 Census, there were only two wards that had 30% or more Muslim voters but by 2001, this number has increased to six electoral wards that have 30% or more Muslim population. However, the 2001 Census figures showed that there were no wards that had more 36% Muslim Voters, however the 2011 Census has revealed that for the first time in the history of Manchester one of the electoral wards has a majority Muslims population. The Longsight Ward had a Muslim population size of 36% in the 2001 Census which increased to 54% in 2011 Census. The second Ward that has the highest Muslim population in Manchester is the Cheetham Ward that has 43% Muslim population.
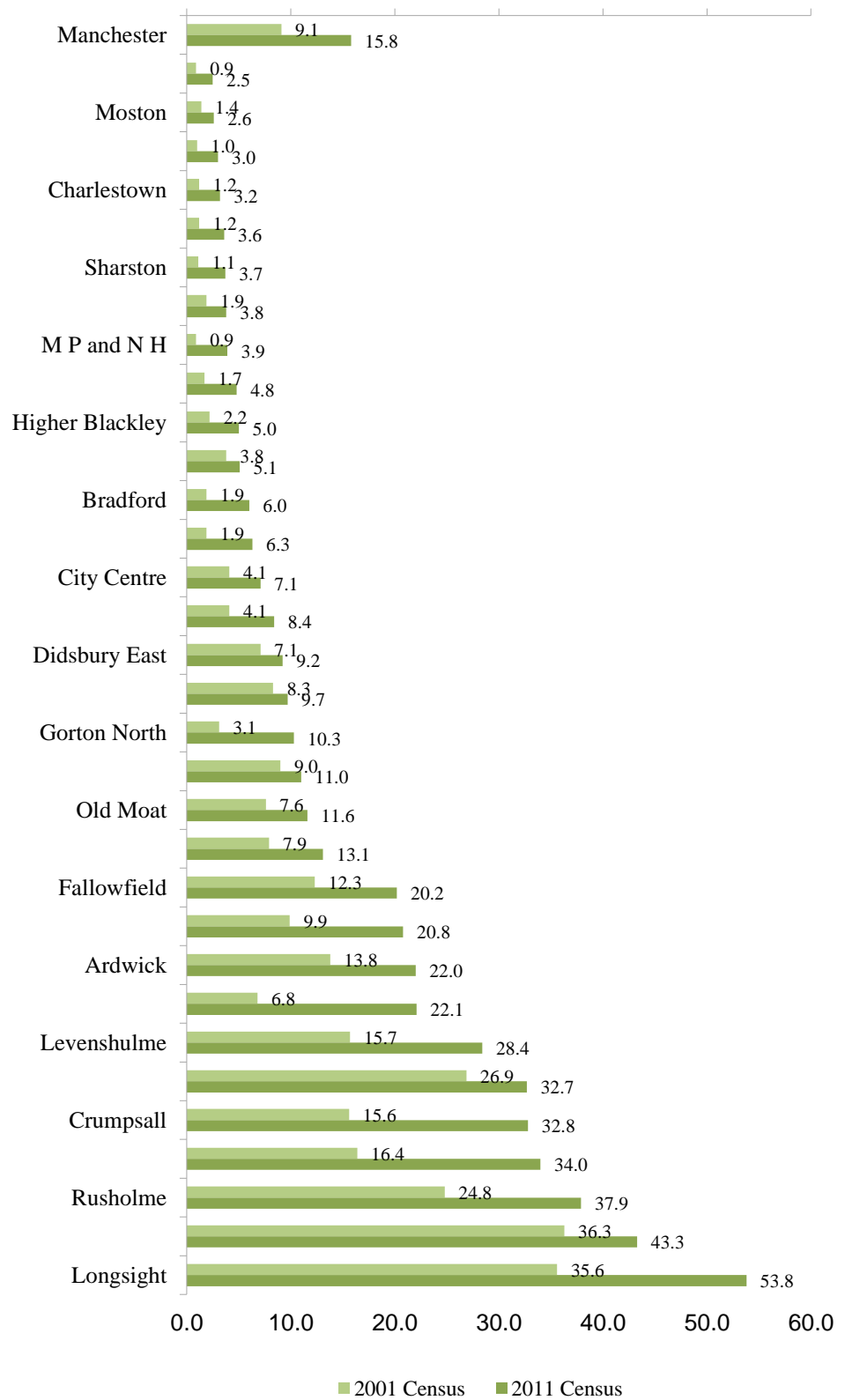
Figure 9.1 Demographic changes in Manchester's Muslim population in all of Manchester's electoral wards from 2001 to 2011 According to the 2001 and 2011 censuses
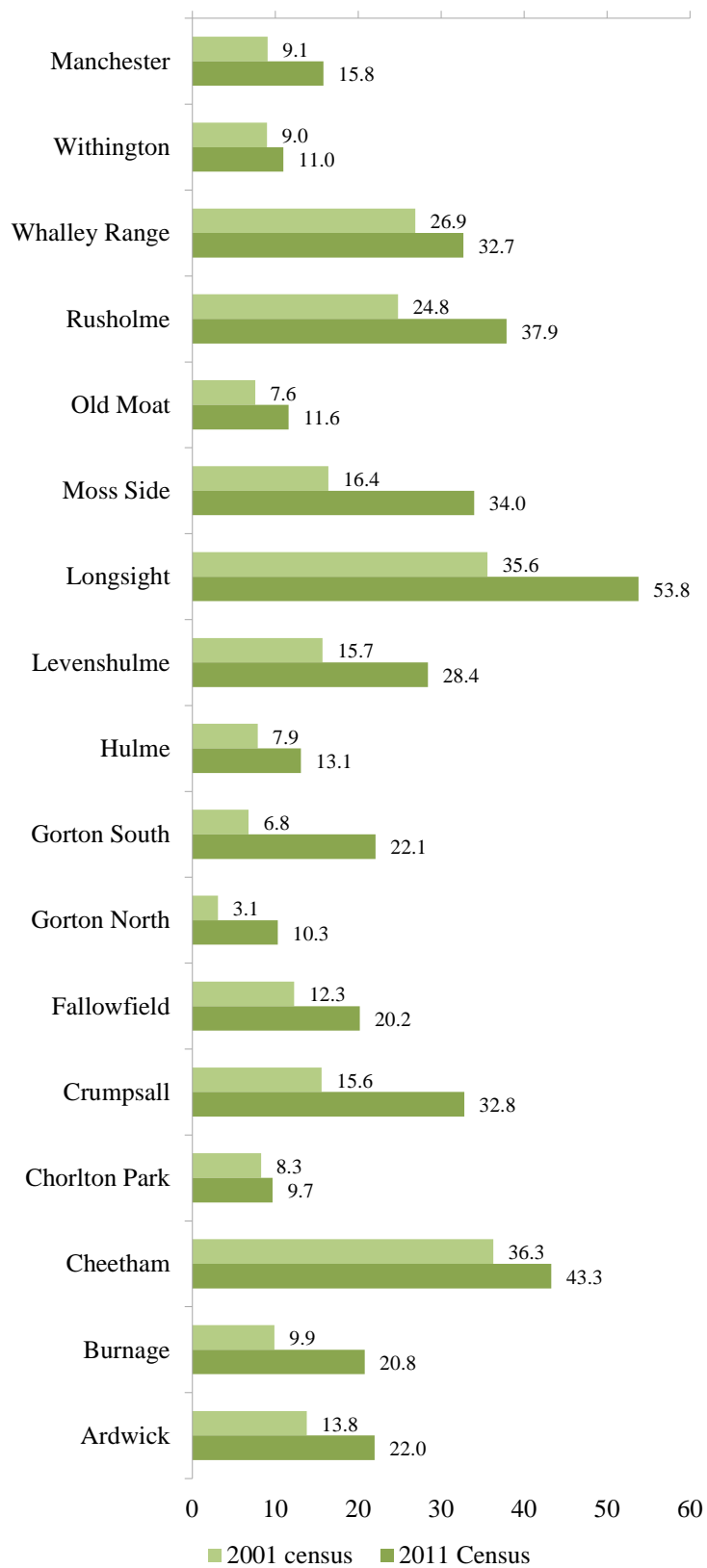
Figure 9.2 Manchester Ward with more than 10% Muslims Population - 2011 Census
Source ONS (Office of National Statistics – 2001 Census and 2011 Census.
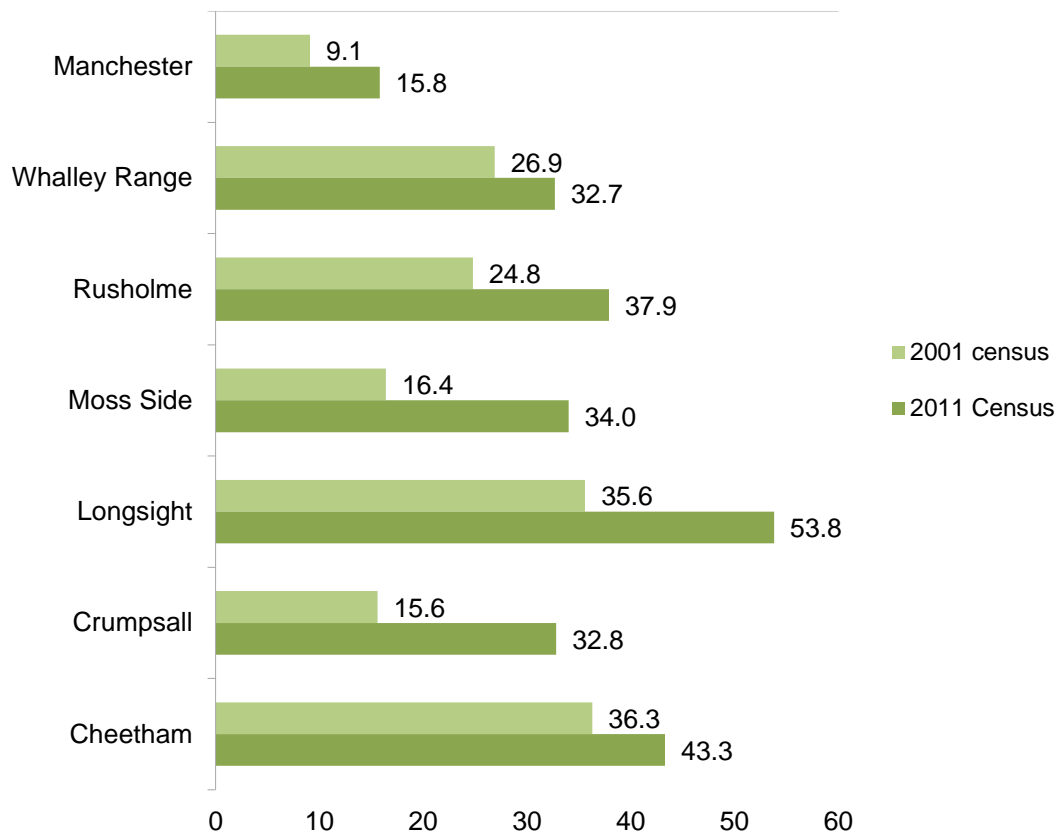
Figure 9.3 Wards with 20% or more Muslim Population in 2011 Census − − Source ONS (Office of National Statistics − 2001 Census and 2011 Census.

The concentration of Muslim population in particular electoral wards has implications for the results, in particular local elections. Politically these demographic changes are signigicant especially in wards that have majorities between 10 to 20 percentage points. Theses figures show that significant number of wards in which the Muslims can make a difference to the outcome of the result. These figures also demonstrate that in terms of size the Muslim population is growing in importance and if representation at the political level is not accommodated then Muslims are in a position to effect the outcome in a number of wards to rectify that situation.

9.6 Parliamentary Elections

British Muslim political representation at the national level remained non-existent until 1997 when the first Muslim Member of Parliament, Muhammad Sarwar from Glasgow, was elected. A second Muslim MP, Khalid Mahmood, was elected in 2001 General Elections from Birmingham. The General Election of 2005 returned four Muslim Members

of Parliament. However, in Manchester currently there is no Muslim Member of Parliament. The absence of Muslims from Manchester in Parliament does not mean that they have not engaged themselves in national politics. In 1983 the first Muslim to stand for one of the major parties for the Parliamentary elections in Manchester was A Ahmad for Social Democrats[97]. However, a Syed Ala Ud-Din contested the 1979 General election in the Manchester Central constituency as an independent gaining 187 votes. The Liberal Democrats were the first mainstream party to select a Muslim candidate for the Parliamentary elections. Yasmin Zalzala of Iraqi origin became the first Muslim candidate to contest Parliamentary elections on behalf of the Liberal Party in Manchester from the Withington Ward in 1997. The seat was a safe Labour Party seat with a majority of approximately 19,000. Zalzala gained a respectable 6,000 votes behind the Conservatives who had 8,522. The Liberal Democrat share of the vote from the previous election had declined marginally from 6,457 votes to 6,000 votes. In the 1997 General Elections Zalzala increased the Liberal democrat share of the vote from 6,000 votes to 7,715 votes (Ibid.).

Two other Muslim candidates have taken part in Parliamentary elections, both in the 2001 General Elections. Aziz Bhatti stood for the Anti Corrupt Party from Manchester Blackley constituency, gaining 456 votes, falling five votes short of the Socialist Alliance (Ibid.). The other Muslim candidate to contest in the General Elections in 2001 was Rashid A Bhatti for the UK Independence Party from Manchester Gorton constituency against the safe seat of Gerald Kaufman. Rashid Bhatti gained 462 votes this time gaining more votes than the Socialist Labour Party who came last with 333 votes (Ibid.). Neither Labour nor the Conservatives have, to date, fielded a Muslim candidate in Manchester for Parliamentary elections. In 2004 all of the five Members of Parliament from Manchester were white men from the Labour Party. However, in the 2005 General Elections the Liberal Democrats got their first Member of Parliament, who managed to beat Labour candidate by 667 votes. In 2012 Lucy Powell, Labour Party, female candidate won a by-election.

Muslim candidates have attempted to break through at the national level but thus far, have not been successful (Anwar 1998). This lack of success is due to a number of reasons. The main parties have not encouraged Muslim participation at the national level. In Manchester the Labour Party has declined to field ethnic minority candidates for Parliamentary

---

[97] http://www.manchester.gov.uk/elections/archive/gen2001.htm

elections even when their majorities have been over 10,000[98]. This may reflect a fear of white prejudice against Muslim candidates (Le Lohe 1998: 85). Compounding this reluctance to field minority candidates, there exist a number of divisive intra group conflicts among British Muslim communities Locally powerful factions based on biradari, ethnicity, and sect complicate the selection of Muslim candidates[99]. One interviewee said that:

> "In situations where the Muslim membership of a party is enough to select a Muslim candidate to stand as an MP it has been seen that internal divisions amongst Muslims have resulted in someone other than a Muslim benefiting".

The respondent quoted the example of Bradford where Marsha Singh who won the seat vacated by Max Madden in the 1997 General Election. It was alleged that four candidates contested this selection, three candidates were Muslim and the fourth was a Sikh. Marsha Singh, the Sikh candidate, won the selection and went on to become a Member of Parliament. In a discussion with some Muslims from Bradford it emerged, that biradariism had a strong role to play in the outcome. My informants told me that one of the Muslim candidates, a strong contender for the selection, was of a lower biradari therefore, the others voted for the Sikh candidate rather than a Muslim of a lower caste[100]. This shows that Muslims do not necessarily vote for Muslim candidates and that there is intra group competition, which is sometimes based on the biradari affiliation. It also shows that in some cases biradari is still an important variable in the analysis of Muslims from South Asia.

Another example, closer to Manchester, is the 2011 by-election in Oldham East and Saddleworth which illustrative of this point. The by-election was a consequence of the result of 2010 General Election in Oldham East and Saddleworth declared void as Mr Phil Woolas was found to have breached the Representation of the People Act 1983 in the course of the 2010 general election campaigning (Polly Curtis - Guardian 05/11/2010). The ensuing battle to select a candidate to contest the seat on behalf of the Labour Party, two Muslims candidates and one white female candidate, Debbie Abrahams, contesting in the

---

[98] All of the Labour Members of Parliament in the Manchester area enjoyed majorities over 10,000 votes before the anti-war movement vote allowed a Liberal Democratic to be elected.

[99] By sects I mean the different schools of thought such as Barelvi, Deobandi, Shi'a and Wahabi.

[100] This discussion took place in Manchester by some Muslims who were residents of Bradford. One of those involved in the discussion worked in Bradford City Council.

selection process. The two Muslim candidates had an opportunity to win the selection contest but only if one of the Muslim candidates withdrew in favour of the other. It emerged that one of the Muslims candidates was of Bengali and the second a Pakistan and both declined to stand down in favour of the other. The result was that the Muslim vote got divided between them and the third candidate Debbie Abrahams won the contest and became the Oldham East and Saddleworth MP. While Muslim participation at the national level has not been very successful, it is better at the local level.
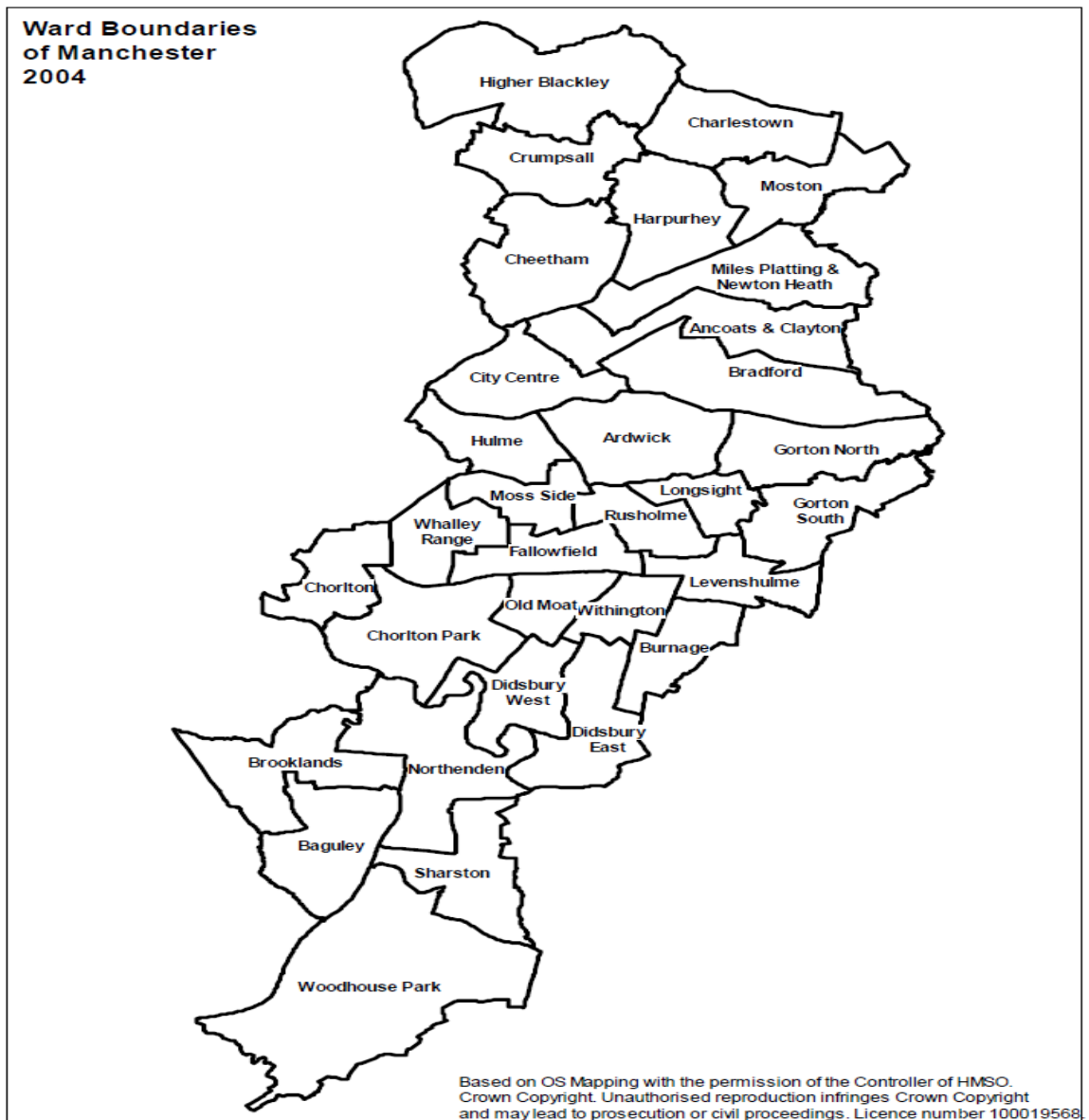
9.7   Local Elections

Anwar (1986) says that the growing numbers of ethnic minorities and their concentration in certain locales has meant that the ethnic minority vote can determine the outcome of certain local elections. The concentration of British Muslims in certain constituencies and the level of the majority of the incumbent elected member for that constituency determine the possible impact that British Muslims can have on the choice of candidate elected (Cutts, & Fieldhouse, et al. 2007). Le Lohe states that in Britain Dr Qureshi was the first Muslim candidate to stand for a mainstream party in a local election after the Second World War when he contested the Manningham ward in Bradford on behalf of the Liberal party (Le Lohe: 1979; 194). In 1971 the Labour party selected a Bengali Muslim Manawar Hussain who had recently joined but as a result of an 8.3% swing against him he lost.

The first Muslim councillor to be elected to the Manchester City Council was Nilofar Siddiqui, originally from Gujarat in India, for the Labour party. In the 2004 local elections, Nilofar Siddiqui was selected to contest the Rusholme Ward, however, she failed in her attempt to be elected as a councillor. In 2012 she was elected as Councillor for the Harpurhey Ward. Siddiqui's successful election as a councillor is not attributed to the concentration of the Muslim community in that area, as there are only a small number of Muslims in the area. Neither does she claim the votes as part of her identification as a Muslim councillor. Her votes and selection are because of her membership of the Labour Party and her left leaning political ideology (Werbner 1996).

In the Longsight Ward, all three elected candidates were Muslims but in 2003 one of them was deselected. Almost all Muslim councillors, with the above exception of Nilofar Siddiqi, are in wards that have a strong concentration of Muslim population. All of the councillors currently represent the Labour Party. During the course of this research, the

Cheetham Ward has seen the emergence of a Liberal Democrat councillor for a short period. Afzal Qasim a Liberal Democrat candidate beat the sitting councillor for Cheetham ward Imran Rizvi of the Labour Party in a fiercely contested election. Qasim Afzal gained 1,394 votes against Imran Rizvi's 1,342 votes, winning by 52 votes. Qasim Afzal who was the first Liberal Democrat Muslim councillor for the Cheetham Ward was defeated by Muhammad Afzal Khan in May 2000 1,602 to 1,382. It seems that the fiercest contests are usually within wards that have a high percentage of Muslim voters and the contest is usually between two Muslim candidates standing from two different parties.

Map 9.1 Ward boundaries of Manchester 2004

In the 2004 local elections there were thirty-one Muslim candidates who had been selected to contest from a wide cross-section of the parties. The table 5 above shows the number of Muslim candidates contesting local elections from each of the parties. It is interesting to note the above table shows that British Muslims are represented in all of the mainstream parties. It also illustrates that Muslims are not a politically homogeneous community and must not be taken for granted by any of the parties. The Muslim community has views that spread across the political spectrum of British political ideology standing from each of the party's contesting the elections. These data suggest that British Muslims in Manchester are willing to join a wide range of parties in the elections. It also illustrates that Muslims are not a homogeneous community and should not be taken for granted by any of the parties. The Muslim community has views that spread across the political spectrum of British politics.

	Conservative	Green	Labour	Lib Dem	Respect
2004	4	1	8	15	2
2003	0	1	3	2	-
2002	0	0	1	3	-
2000	0	0	3	3	-
1999	0	0	4	5	-

Table 9.1 The Spread of Muslim Candidates Contesting Manchester City Council Seats from 1999 to 2004

9.8 Anti-War Politics

In the 2004 local Manchester elections, Liberal Democrats, aligned with anti-war protests, fielded fifteen Muslim candidates to the Labour Party's eight, Conservative Party's five, Respect two and Green's one candidate. The Liberal Democrats intentionally sought both the anti-war and the Muslim vote in these wards. The concentration of Muslim Liberal Democrat candidates is primarily in the wards that have a high concentration of Muslims. Liberal Democrats fielded three candidates in Longsight ward and three candidates in Cheetham ward, both these wards have a high concentration of Muslims. They also had three candidates in Moss Side, which has a high concentration of other ethnic minority people. The Liberal Democrat strategy was to invoke anti-war sentiments to break Labour Party's political stranglehold in Manchester by fielding Muslims candidates to compete against the Labour Party Muslim candidates.

The outcome of the 2004 local elections shows that the Liberal Democrat strategy of playing the anti-war[101] card succeeded (Walker 2006: 18-19). This also suggests that Muslims may not want to be taken for granted by any of the parties. Muslims are choosing to contest elections from more than one party. It also shows that on matters of conscientious objections to specific policy issues, Muslims are prepared to change party allegiances. The 2004 local elections returned seven Muslim councillors. In the 2001 local elections in the Longsight Ward three Muslim candidates were elected, all from the Labour Party.

In the 2004 local elections in the Longsight Ward three Muslim councillors were elected but this time all three were Liberal Democrats. The Liberal Democrat Party policy to contested election between the two parties to gain the Muslim vote.attract the Muslim and anti-war votes was also successful in the Longsight Ward. One needs to be careful not to attribute total success to Liberal Democrat anti-war strategy because local elections in Longsight Ward there are high levels of intra-group Muslim rivalry, not directly related to the Liberal Democrat stance on the Gulf war. Anti-war rhetoric has been used in the intra-group politics in Longsight Ward to gain ground on the opposition. Both Liberal

---

[101] See also The Muslim News. Issue 169, Friday 30 May 2003 -War costs Labour the Muslim vote
By Elham Asaad Buaras

Democrats and Muslims candidates from other parties were using the anti-war rhetoric against Labour Party Muslim candidates.

2004 Result Longsight Ward - Local Elections
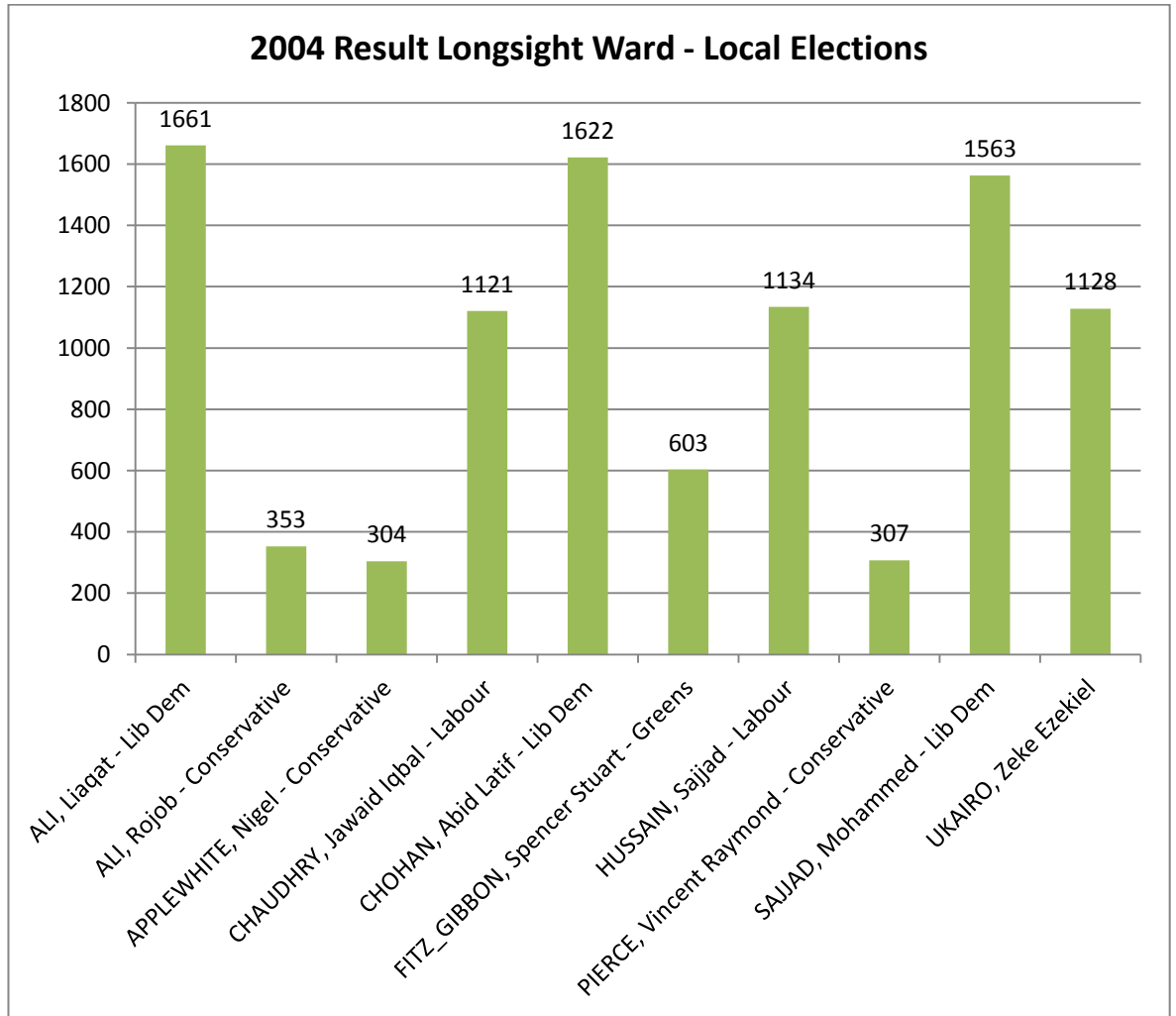
Figure 9.5 Local election results for the longsight ward in 2004.

However, Liberal Democrat anti-war strategy did not succeed as well as they thought in the Cheetham Hill Ward. Liberal Democrats fielded three Muslim candidates in Cheetham Ward. Labour fielded two Muslim candidates. The Liberal Democrats who had one sitting Muslim councillor, Qassim Afzal, failed to win any while the two Muslim Labour candidates were elected. Although the anti-war rhetoric was equally vociferous in Cheetham Ward it failed to yield fruit for the Liberal Democrats. A look at the votes gained by the Liberal Democrat's and the Labour Party candidates. Figure 7 shows that it was a fiercely contested election.

2004 Result Cheetham Ward - Local Elections
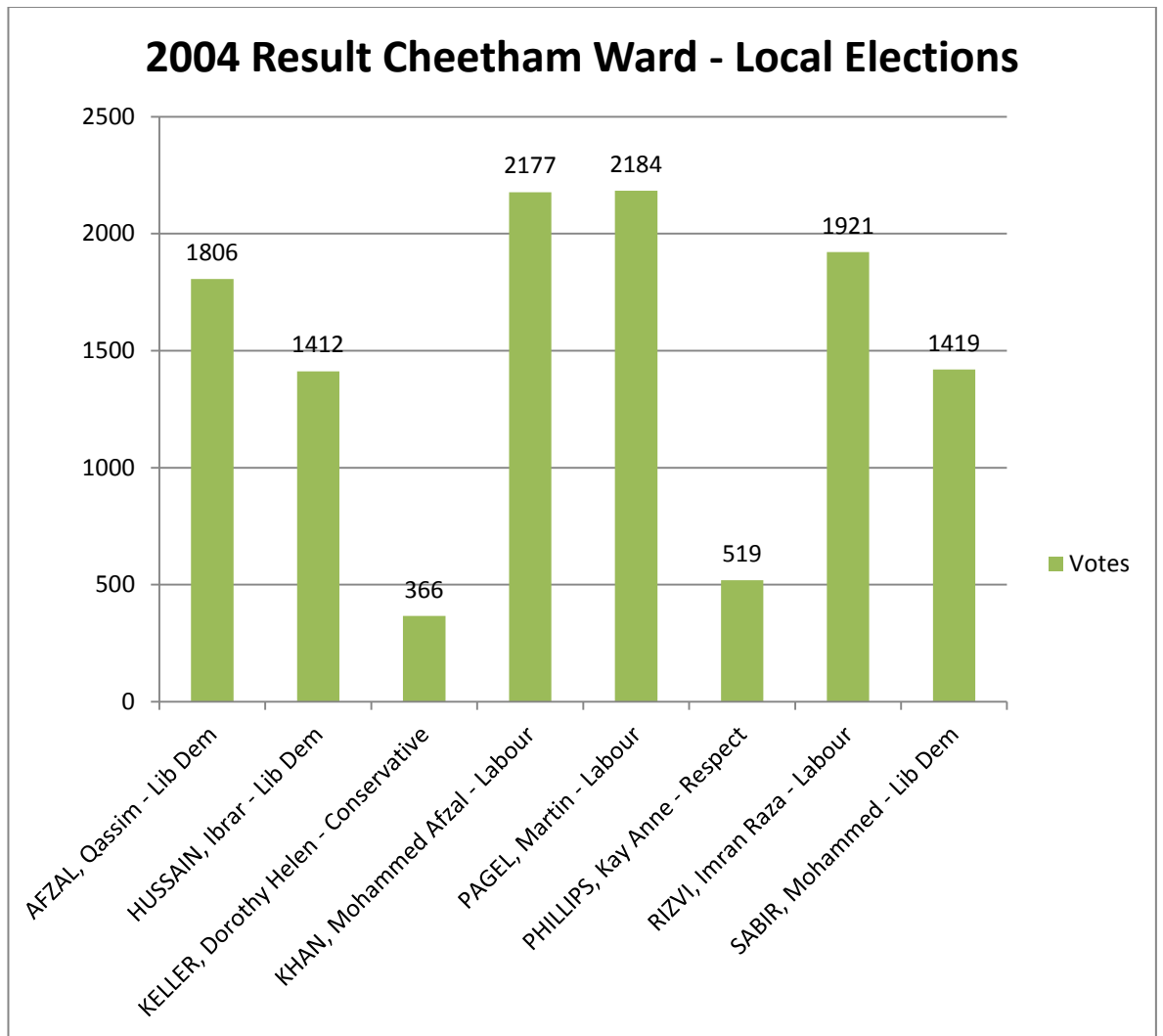
Figure 9.6 Local election results for the Cheetham Hill ward in 2004.

A cursory glance at the number of Labour Party Councillors over the period 1999 to 2012 shows a correlation with the Iraq war of 2003. In 1999, the Labour Party had a total of 80 Councillors, the Liberal Democrats had 19 and the Conservatives had none. The invasion of Iraq took place in 2003 and from that point on the number of Labour Councillors decreases. In 2003 the number of Labour Party Councillors decreased from 80 to 71. Liberal Democrats increased their tally from 19 to 27 and the Green Party got one councillor. In 2004 Manchester witnessed a revolt against the Labour Party when the number of Labour Party Councillors decreased even further to 57. Liberal Democrats were the biggest beneficiaries. They increased their total number of councillors from 19 to 38, doubling their representation in the Manchester City Council. The Liberal Democrats sustained their gains until the 2010 General Elections when they joined the Conservative

led coalition government. In Manchester this was the point at which Labour Party voters begin to return and the number of Labour Party Councillors begins to return to 1999 levels. In 2011, the Labour Party increased the number of its Councillors to 75, at the expense of Liberal Democrats who decreased to 20, similar to their 1999 numbers.
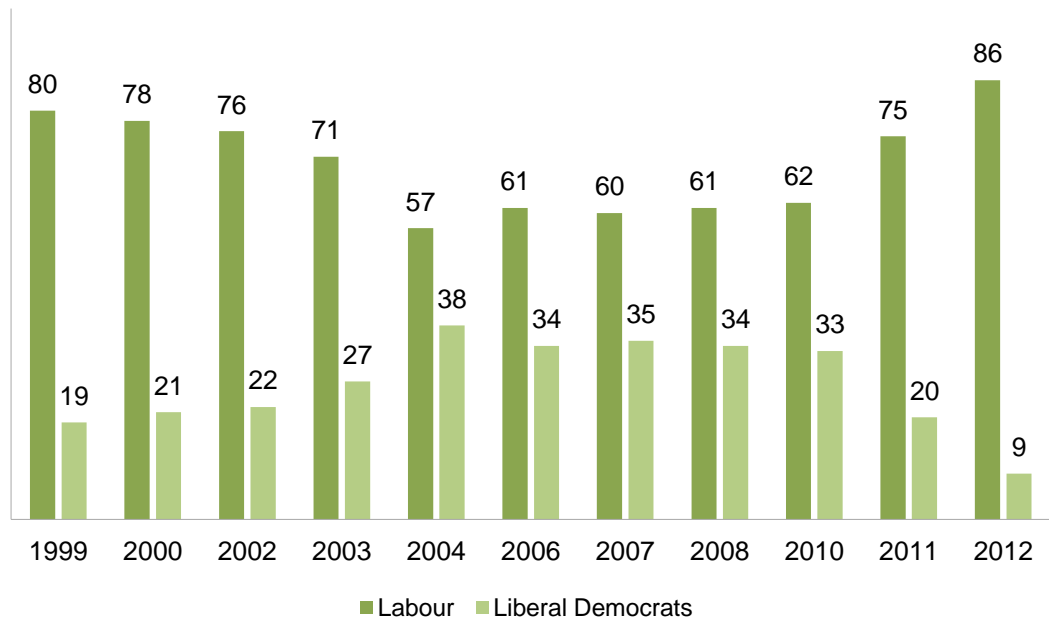
Figure 9.7 Manchester Local Elections - Comparison of Labour Party and Liberal Democrat Party and the Impact of Iraq in Manchester.

The coalition government has been very damaging for Liberal Democrats. By 2012 the Labour Party had increased local councillor total to 86, while Liberal Democrats were left with only 9 Councillors. It seems after a period of anger at Labour Party's Iraq war policy Manchester Muslims seem to have forgiven them, or perhaps they have confronted the reality of having to choose the least disappointing of a number of disappointing choices. There are currently fourteen Muslim councillors in Manchester City Council who were all from the Labour Party.

9.9   European Elections for the Northwest

The 2004 European elections in the Northwest also saw the number of Muslim candidates from a cross section of political parties competing to be elected as the first British Muslim Member of European Parliament (MEP) from the Northwest. The strong anti-war sentiments played a strong part in the election of the Liberal Democrat MEP, Sajjad Karim

in 2004 European Elections. The Liberal democrat European campaign amongst the Muslims concentrated on the anti-war rhetoric. Sajjad Karim, who was formerly a councillor for the Pendle Council, is the first Muslim MEP from the Northwest and also the first ever Muslim MEP for the Liberal Democrats. Sajjad Karim during his campaign visited most of the mosques in Manchester. In some of the mosques he was allowed to make a speech whereas in others he was refused. In reality one could say that Karim did use the network of mosques in the Northwest to strengthen his bid to be the first British Muslim MEP from the Northwest. My informants have told me that Karim also used biradariism where ever he thought it was to his advantage.

During his campaign to become the first British Muslim MEP, I asked Sajjad Karim whether Pakistani identity in Britain was relevant any longer given that the majority of young people consider themselves British Muslims whose home is Britain. He said that Pakistani identity was still important since Pakistan is the birthplace of the parents of most British Pakistanis. He argued that it is be a mistake to disregard the Pakistani aspect of identity because the cultural heritage of people's parents is attached to Pakistan. It was interesting because he was campaigning for votes from the British Pakistani community and for him to have said anything different could have upset some of his 'Pakistani' voters present when I posed this question. Karim was well aware of the fact that the people he was campaigning amongst still had strong feelings for Pakistan and it could be politically damaging to say anything different in this context where stress on Pakistani identity was crucial to keep on board the community leaders who were mostly born in Pakistan.

The Labour Party had Muslim candidates in their list of contestants for MEP's but they were at the bottom of the list with no realistic chance of winning[102]. The Conservative Party did not field any Muslim candidates for MEP from the Northwest although the first Muslim Member of European Parliament was Bashir Khanbhai of the Conservative Party, elected from Eastern England in 1997. For the 2004 elections, the Conservative Party deselected Bashir Khanbhai, therefore there was not a single Muslim candidate for those European Elections from the Conservative Party.

---

[102] Muhammad Afzal Khan, the first Pakistani Lord Mayor of Manchester in 2013 has managed to come third in the Labour Party list for the next European Elections with a good chance of being elected as the first British Muslim MEP in the Northwest getting elected from the Labour Party.

9.10 DATA ANALYSIS

My respondents viewed their participation in the political domain in different ways. I asked whether they participated in politics and whether they thought that Muslims should or should not take part in the British political system. I wanted to establish the levels of enthusiasm on the part of the Muslims to take part in political activities and identify other factors contributing to the exclusion of Muslims in British political life alluded to in the Runnymede Report (1997).

9.11 Muslim Attitudes to Political Participation

The respondents were all Muslims with attachment to the mosque in some capacity expressed diverse views towards participation in the British political system. Here I mean political participation in the wider context, where involvement in party politics is not the only form of political activity. Participation in elections at local and national level, meetings at local level that deal with policy formation is also included.

All the respondents were asked whether Muslims should take part in British political life. All respondents without exception said that British Muslims should take part in British political life. All respondents felt that it was imperative that Muslims take an active interest in British political life if they are to live here as British Muslims. Most differed on the form that political participation should take. They further argued that failure to take part could further marginalise Muslims thereby ineffectual in obtaining their rights.

Maulana Habibur Rahman who has been an imam since 1965 in Manchester said that

> The system of this government is such that if we want to have a decent respectable position there is no other way except to take part in political activities. There are local bodies and national bodies and if we want that our community should have weight, political weight, then we should participate in the local bodies elections. If that means joining political parties then one must join them. One can participate as an independent candidate but that does not work in this country. So by joining one party or the other we should take part in the politics at local and national level.

Maulana Habibur Rahman argues that the system in this country is such that if the Muslim community does not participate in political activity it will remain marginalised and lack 'political weight' (Werbner 2002). Werbner has suggested that the issue of *Satanic Verses* highlighted how politically powerless and marginalised the Muslim community was in Manchester. Although British Muslims in Manchester had businesses with multi-million pounds worth of turnover they did have the political strength necessary to bring about the

kind of religious protections they sought.

Aslam born and educated in Britain and a graduate when asked the same question said

> Yes they should participate because obviously they will get into jobs like Sarwar the MP…. Yes I think if you go into Parliament you have a bigger say in the running of the country so obviously it would be good.

For Aslam, participation in political activity is linked to employment prospects. It is hardly surprising that employment is at the top of his agenda as was in his final year at university and is worried about his job prospects. He feels that the Muslim community by participating in political activity can enhance their job prospects.

Abdul in answering the same questions says that

> If I want to help my community then we must join the political system of this country at the central government and local government. We should have a good involvement especially in the local council and also central government. People come to me they need a house or they need their house to be repaired or they have bad neighbours or they have trouble with the police or they need a small ground for their activities. If I know how to go about it or I know some people who may be able to help me then I can help my community better than if I don't know anybody. They will hear me when I want something for our community.

Abdul believes that the political process allows Muslims an opportunity to voice the concerns of the British Muslim community. He sees participation in political activity as a way of helping the community. He argues that by engaging in the political process there is a greater probability of having your concerns heard than if Muslims remain excluded from the political process. All of the respondents said that there were benefits in participating in the British political system but the form that participation took varied from person to person.

All three female respondents said that Muslims should participate in political activity. Samina, a housewife, echoes others when she says:

> Because there are many many issues now being dealt with that have far reaching effect on Muslims here and abroad. If we are not there to express an opinion or we are not there to influence an opinion then we are at a great loss.

Samina makes a crucial argument shared by many of my respondents in favour of British Muslims engagement in the British Political process. Many decisions are currently being taken that have a direct bearing upon British Muslims but it seems that British Muslims are

very rarely consulted when these policies are formulated.

One of my respondents Mr Nadir, who has now sadly passed away, was a regular participant in local authority meetings dealing with issues of education, health and race relations. I was at some of these meetings and realised how weak his English was but he always attended and always made a contribution in these meetings. I once asked him why he went to these meetings when he could not speak proper English. I asked whether others made fun of him. He said:

> I am aware that my English is not good and sometimes people made fun but my mere presence at these meetings was enough to ensure that there is no blatant racism taking place during these meetings and issues concerning ethnic minorities are not fudged.

Since 9/11 and 7/7 news concerning Muslims has been continuously linked with terrorism. In line with this focus the government in recent years has introduced legislation concerning immigration, asylum, terrorism and racism but in none of these has there been any consultation with Muslim groups[103]. As a result of the terrorism legislation Maulana Shafiq ur Rahman, from Oldham, faced a long legal battle to avoid being deported[104]. He is alleged to have raised money for an organisation that has been proscribed as a terrorist organisation. This has a direct bearing on the fund raising activities of all the mosques and imams in Britain. Mosques raise money on a continuous bases for charities based in Muslim countries. Some of these charities provide support to orphans and widows of Muslim 'freedom' fighters in Palestine and Kashmir. Under the current legislation, anyone raising funds for certain charities may be deported if it is deemed that these charities have been placed on the list of terrorist organisations. This could have disastrous consequences for those involved in raising funds for charities that support the families of the victims of the brutal occupations in Palestine[105] and Kashmir (Chomsky 1996). For many years Britain was supportive of the Afghan freedom fighters in resistance to Soviet occupation of

---

[103] Bradford Council of Mosques was formed with the help of the authorities to deal with Muslim issues. Kingsley Purdham states that this organisation was neglected once it decided to show its independence during the Rushdie Affair. See Purdham 'Impact of Democracy on Identity: Muslim Councillors and their experiences of local politics in Britain. PhD thesis, Manchester University, Department of Government, 1997, pp. 262.

[104] The Home Secretary Jack Straw lost the Appeal at House of Lords to have Maulana Shafiq ur Rahman deported on charges of providing financial support to terrorist organisations. See The Guardian, Tuesday, August 17, 1999, 'Muslim Cleric was wooed by MI5'.

[105] I recent met with a family who went on a trip to Palestine to visit the Al Aqsa masjid who told me how one family had been rejected a visa by the Israeli government because the husband had once made a donation to a charity that Israel has classed as terrorist.

Afghanistan and also the freedom fighters in Kashmir struggle. For decades British Muslims raised funds to support the orphans and widows of the freedom fighters from Palestine, Afghanistan and Kashmir but recent years have seen strict restrictions on the type of organisation that can receive the charitable donations. Many Muslims view the cause of these organisations as legitimate and feel that rather than terrorism from these organisations the state terrorism that takes place in these countries is the root problem and the cause of the increase in 'terrorist' activities. My respondents argued that by tackling state terrorism one may be in a better position to end terrorist activity of these organisations.

Similarly issues concerning immigration policy are equally important for Muslims but Muslims are rarely consulted or involved in the shaping of these policies. Policies to deal with racism in Britain have for a long time been formed on race or ethnicity bases but have failed to take account of discrimination against Muslims. Only in 2006 did British policy makers decide to tackle the issue of incitement to religious hatred by introducing The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006[106] (Barendt 2011). The Muslim Council of Britain had been lobbying for the introduction of laws to prevent Muslims experiencing religious hatred (Modood 1993). The law was introduced in the wake of a number of incidents involving Muslims being beaten or threatened and mosques being torched. The anti-Muslim backlash for the 11 September bombings has prompted the government to introduce legislation against incitement to religious hatred. Continuous lobbying and participation with the political process by Muslim organisations like the MCB brought about changes in law to protect religious minorities[107].

Farid who was studying for PhD at the University of Manchester when questioned on participation in the political process argued that it was important but he went further by suggesting that British Muslims should not join any of the political parties. They should participate in the election but should not place themselves in the 'pockets of the political parties'. He says that once you join a party you begin to be taken for granted. He said that the 'parties know that you are with them whether the party listens or not'. Farid's says his idea of political participation is based on the way CAIR (Council on American-Islamic

---

[106] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/2490/pdfs/uksi_20072490_en.pdf
[107] Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, and more substantially the Equality Act 2010.

Relations) in United States operates[108]. He says that CAIR remains outside the party system but acts as a lobby group for Muslims. He says the fact that they are not affiliated to any particular party means that they can 'pressurise' both parties and switch support from one to the other if they fail to deliver. For Farid, membership of a party ties a person down. Ahmed Andrews (1996) in a study of Muslims in Leicester on Muslim attitudes to political participation noted that *Jamaati Islami* participants in his study advocated that Muslims should not join the parties. The reasoning behind this was the same as that stated by Farid, that parties begin to take you for granted once you become a member. It is interesting to note that Farid is also associated to the *Jamaati Islami*, UKIM in Manchester. However, one must be careful not to judge UKIM members in this manner because there are many UKIM members who are members of the political parties, many of whom have become local councillors. They see the membership of political parties as a way of furthering the interests of Muslims in Britain. The chances of being elected as a councillor or Member of Parliament are greater if one joins one of the main parties than standing as an independent candidate or as a candidate of the Islamic Party of Great Britain[109].

Afzal Khan in response to the question on should Muslims participate says,

> I think it's a question that our survival is at stake if we do not participate…. The reasoning behind this is that at the end of the day the political process does affect us in every way. Any community without political representation is really left at the mercy of those who yield that political power…. Whenever you have someone else representing your interests they can never do it justice.

Afzal Khan sees the question of participation in terms of the survival of the Muslim communities in Britain. He argues that only Muslims can best represent and struggle for the needs of the Muslim communities. He argues that if Muslims do not participate in the political process they will not be able to survive as Muslims. They will lose their Muslim identity if they do not participate. He says Muslim interests can best be secured by Muslim participation in the political process.

Afzal further says that,

> I think there are only a number of choices in reality. One is the idea of excluding,

---

[108] CAIR is Muslim lobby group in the United States that deals with issues concerning Muslims. It takes on legal cases of religious hatred and discrimination and lobby for Muslim rights within the US. http://www.cair.com/
[109] George Galloway has has managed to get elected as a Respect Party candidate firstly in Brent and then repeating this feat in a Bradford bye election in 2012.

316

second could be that because we have a vision we have a way, a system, then we bring about a party that brings about that system. We then compete with the mainstream political process and convince the electorate that we have a solution. Third is participating in the existing system. Ideally the first one is out of the equation and the second probably fits and gives us the maximum freedom to express our vision, views and ideas. The third may be the compromise in that you are left with the idea of influencing the existing system so that it is more favourable to your needs.

Afzal's assessment of the situation is quite incisive in that he realistically assesses the appropriateness of the three approaches for Muslims in Britain. He says that exclusion from the political sphere is out of the question. An early example of exclusion by a group of Muslims in Norwich resulted in its failure and attempted to integrate back into mainstream society. The second type, own political party, has also been tried in the shape of Islamic Party of Great Britain. Most of my respondents said that it was futile supporting the Islamic Party of Britain, as it had no realistic chance of success amongst the other mainstream political parties. He believes the third example of participating in the existing system until now has been the most fruitful. Fruitful as it has given a voice to Muslim concerns through Muslim participation as Members of Parliament, Lords, Baroness', and councillors at local level.

9.12 Typology of Political Participation

From empirical data collected one can discern a certain typology amongst those interviewed. The typology I put forward is by no means conclusive and is only representative of *my* respondents but it moves us towards a greater understanding of the different types of attitudes towards political participation among British Muslims.

The first category was of respondents who showed no interest in local politics at all. Secondly, there were those who had no interest in local politics but were pressured by parents, biradari or peers to at least vote for a particular candidate. Thirdly, there were those who had a strong knowledge of politics at local and national level but did not actually get involved in the active side of politics. For example, they had never voted in any elections at all but were well versed in issues concerning British Muslims and had very constructive comments on the political issues facing British Muslims. Fourthly, there were those who were actively involved in politics but did not wish to contest elections. This category is very interesting in that it argues against politics from the mosque platform but

at the same time it advocates engagement with the political system to have your say. Finally there were those who engaged in political activity wholeheartedly and felt no inhibitions about wanting to progress in the political sphere. I will elaborate on each one of these categories with examples from the interviewee's comments on this subject.

9.12.1 Politically Uninterested

In the first category, we see people like Saedi whose view is that he wishes to concentrate on the social and welfare side of activity in the mosque. With 25 years of experience working in the benefits agency office, he is amply qualified to undertake this work. He comes to mosque around zuhr[110] time and reads the Zuhr prayer. Then he meets the different people in the mosque then proceeds toward his office, which is located on the first floor of the building adjacent to the mosque. Most of the people are aware of his office timings. He has some prearranged appoints while some people will turn up at the office without appointment. Every Thursday the Jewish community in Salford avail his services where he provides advice on these matters.

He deals with matters ranging from divorce to social security. He has a very likeable and pleasant personality that is easy to get along with. He says that confidentiality is a key issue in his position because people come to him with all sorts of personal problems. When questioned about political issues he said

> The mosque should not get involved in political activity here. The mosque is a religious institution and it should remain outside of any political activity. In my role here (in the mosque) I keep myself away from politics.

Mr Saedi's position has resulted in my perceptions of the UKIM being re-examined. UKIM with its close links with Jamaat-i-Islami, a political party in Pakistan, has people like Mr Saedi who argue that mosques and imams should not participate in the political process. In Pakistan, their organisation favours participation of mosques and imams in the political process whereas in Britain they argue that it is not the right thing to do (Bahadur 2008). What this shows is that UKIM is not an organisation with monolithic views on political participation. However, UKIM is still politically more aware than most of the other mosque organisations, like Deobandi's, Barelvi's. Tablighi Jamaat etc, perhaps that is why the UKIM supported Muhammad Afzal Khan who became the first Pakistan Muslim Lord Mayor of Manchester is the most successful Councillors in an area of

---

[110] Mid day prayer.

Manchester that boosts one the largest Barelwi mosques in Manchester.

9.12.2   Awareness of Political Issues –Electoral Non-Participant

The case of Rukhsana provides a contrast in thought and action. As far as political issues were concerned she was fully aware of what was taking place and who was involved in which issue. She knew about the debate on section 28 taking place[111]; she was aware of the issues concerning religious education in schools; she was well versed in the headscarves issue in Manchester. When asked about her personal participation in the British political system she confessed that she had never voted in any elections. She did also add that she will one day get involved. When asked if she had participated in any elections she said,

> I must say I have never voted! (laughter). It's because at the moment politics is so depressing. At this moment in time I will not go out to vote. If I know there is a Muslim councillor who is in Labour I will vote for him to support him, but I don't openly vote for any particular party. I am not that inclined towards the Conservative or the Labour party because every party has their own policy. Because may be I am not that political person and if I was I would engage in voting and lobbying. I feel that I should use my vote because people have given their lives to gain the right to vote. I feel it's a wasted opportunity. But then again I am kind of reserved about these things.

In an answer to whether she supported the Islamic Party of Britain she said,

> I don't know much about the Islamic Party of Britain I do feel that any organisation that is there that support good ideas, I know of a Christian organisation against riba, usury and interest, I would support that organisation. I support the pro-life organisation I support the Green peace organisation. I would do fund raising for cancer research. So basically any cause that is good I would support it. So if the Islamic Party is looking for support yes I would support them as long as their activities are not that averse for example openly antagonistic and against this country whereby they could be considered …. I think once you live in a country you have to respect the laws of that country. It doesn't mean that you have to follow every aspect of their law. This country doesn't say you all have to eat pork! You can eat whatever you like and dress the way you want so that openness and flexibility is there. I feel that in this country the system is quite open and relaxed.

The fact that she had never voted in any of the elections in no way means that she has no interest in politics. In fact she indicated quite clearly that she was aware of political activity taking place amongst the Muslim community and outside the Muslim community

---

[111] Lowering of the age of consent for homosexuals and the provision of sex education in schools to include homosexuality.

in Manchester as well as political activity at the national level. What this illustrates is that there are members of the Muslim community in Manchester who may be aware of the political issues but are not getting involved in the active political process.

Shahid said,

> I must say that I have not participated in any voting political activity. I have been on demonstration and things like that but not as such. I feel yes Muslims should engage in politics definitely. They should try and influence through lobbying and they should definitely be involved in politics. That's the only way you can raise certain issues. You see you can bargain from a position of strength. When you have strength and power then you bargain and put things forward.

What is interesting to note in these responses is that these are people who are politically well aware of what is happening around them but have for some reason not participated in the actual voting. It is quite possible that this type of person will eventually enter the political process and be very articulate in putting forward their views. At this stage in their life they are aware of the political situation in Britain but have not made the conscious decision to actively take part in the political process. Why they are not getting involved is an important question that has to be addressed by those who are advocating participation for the Muslims in the public sphere of British life. One important element is that if these people see that their participation making a difference to how policy decisions are made then they would feel heartened and encouraged to participate in the political.

9.12.3 The Reluctant Participant – 'Biradari Politics'

The third category of Muslims is those who are not interested in local politics but who do end up taking part in the local elections. This again is a very interesting category as the respondents in this category showed a strong sense of apathy towards the political situation at the local level but ended up taking active part. Fazal says that he is not interested in politics. He says certain people who are friends of his father usually pay for his membership to the Labour Party. Fazal says,

> I was a paid up member of Labour Party until last year and hope to God that they haven't renewed my membership. What happened is it's this biradari system. My dad knows a few people and every year they pay our donation as well. They just take us down whenever the elections come up and bring us back home after the elections.

He is very pessimistic of the local political situation. He argues that we should not get involved in politics. His reasons for not getting involved are based not on the assumption

that politics is not for the religious minded people but are mostly based on the political naivety of Muslims. He is worried that Pakistani Muslims taking part in politics will bring in the vices associated with the political situation in Pakistan. His worry is that we will end up corrupting the political arena in Britain and give a 'bad name to Muslims' as whole.

Fazal says that he is not interested in politics but the only reason he ends up taking part is as a result of his father's instructions.

> Yes I think if you go into Parliament you have a bigger say in the running of the country so obviously it would be good. Having said that I have no interest in politics what so ever. I often try to argue with my dad which is very hard to argue with my dad but I try to make excuses by saying "baut kaam hai" (I have too much work). I try to get out of it but you can't when these people turn up then I have to go.

He says that some friends of his father come and pick him from his house when they need him to vote and then drop him off back to his house when the voting is over. He relates an interesting story when a *gora* (white) candidate got very angry and said that 'you people don't really care who is standing for elections. All you care about is your man winning'. Fazal tells me that he felt very guilty when this was said because most of the Pakistanis weren't really interested in the best candidate all they were interested in was their man winning or in Fazal's case his dad's man winning. He says "I wasn't even too sure of the candidate's name!" Fazal tells me that he is not the only one in that situation there are many he sees there who are not remotely interested in politics.

The example of Fazal is useful to demonstrate how there is disconnect between the youth and the biradari system whilst the elder generation are holding on to the idea of a biradari as a unifying system. Fazal's dad's insistence on supporting a candidate based on biradari lines without consideration for the qualities of the candidate or what the candidate has to offer to the community is based on the idea of loyalty to kith and kin over other considerations of education and ability. However, Fazal himself is disillusioned by the blind support on the basis of biradari but is powerless to do anything about this as his loyalty and respect for his father is the overriding factor. His denial of his father's wishes to support a particular candidate would be deemed as disrespecting his father which would

place him at odds with his 'religious' obligation to respect and obey his father. He does not see his support for his father's chosen candidate as in anyway going against the principles of Islam. Fazal has to balance his religious beliefs with those of the biradari system inherited from the South Asian culture of which he is not fond.

Many Pakistani youngsters find themselves in this conundrum of loyalty and respect for parents and the need to express their own opinions in a way as not to offend their parents. However, the father always sees himself trapped in the biradari system where his refusal to support a candidate of his biradari might see him being stigmatized by his biradari as a sell out or disloyal to biradari principles.

Altaf a Pakistani origin British Muslim who has served as a Councllor for eight years was adamant that biradari still plays a part in the local elections in Manchester. He says

> "On the one hand you have a candidate who can't speak English[112], who can't even write his name and in opposition is a respected and educated doctor who is able to communicate fluently in English but the one who gets elected will not necessarily be the doctor but it could be the uneducated person who cannot communicate in English because he is well connected with his biradari network. They have created so many divisions based on biradari, *ilaqeet* (regionalism) *qaumiat* (nation) and *mazhab* (religion), They have now gone to the extent of creating forums based on biradari, Jat forum, Arian forum, etc. Each thinking their caste is superior. Where have these castes come from? They are not Islamic they have come from India. They part of the Indian culture. Pakistanis have given precedence to Indian culture and made Islam secondary. The younger generation of British Pakistanis who have not seen Pakistan have got involved in biradari politics."

Altaf goes on to say that the younger generation are getting in on the act,

> "The younger generation who have not seen Pakistan are getting involved through watching the interaction of their elders. They are looking at the *mahaul* (situation) how elders are interacting with each other. I did not know anything about biradari until I came into politics. A young lad who is involved in socially bad habits such as drugs all of sudden discovers that he is 'a Choudhry'. This boy's behaviour

---

[112] Altaf is referring to the election of Liaqat Ali in Manchester as a Councillor in 2003 Local Elections. Liaqat Ali's was staying in Manchester as an asylum seeker from Pakistan and did not have a good grasp of English so much so that he required a an interepreter to attend Council meetings. The Guardian – 'Councillor who needs translatot rides storm' – 3 July 2003 - http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2003/jul/03/uk.localgovernment

changed all of sudden from nobody he is someone belonging to a superior caste."

It seems that from being an outcast due to his habits his reconnection with his biradari provides with a group of people, his biradari, that provides him a platform from which to launch a political career.

9.12.4 Politically Knowledgeable – 'Enablers'
The fourth type of person is someone who has a very strong interest in politics but does not actually wish to stand for any contested position see her/himself as a 'facilitator' or 'eneabler'. For example Dr Nazir who is aptly qualified to contest any political position does not actually want to take part in elections as a candidate but is willing to lend his support to the candidate he thinks will be a decent Muslim candidate. He says,

> I am not a member of Labour Party. Even being outside the membership of the party I still play a part by trying to influence people to vote. He says it's more for the young. In Cheetham Hill and in Oldham there are quite a few Asian councillors. I would support a Muslim candidate from any party providing that Muslim has got a chance of winning.

Dr Nazir who in his own right is well known because of the community work he has undertaken in the past 25 years chooses not to stand as a candidate. He has practiced as General Practitioner for over thirty-five years. He was a trustee of a mosque in Manchester. In that respect, he is well known and well liked by the Manchester Muslim community. He says that elections are not for him. Although he regularly participates in elections at local and national level he says that he sees himself more as a facilitator than the type to take part as a contestant in elections.

> I supported Afzal Qasim of the Liberal Party because Labour Party were taking us for granted. He lost once and then got elected and then lost again to a Muslim candidate from the Labour Party.

In the mosque that he was a Trustee in there are no elections. This does not mean that he is anti-democracy but he feels that the mosque is not the place for democracy. His argument, which is also put forward by others within his mosque, is that mosque environment should remain outside of political dealings as it leads to instability. He argues that the mosque should proceed along the lines of the church that keeps itself aloof from political activity and is not a democratic institution itself. This view is then further highlighted by citing the example of Victoria Park mosque where there are regular elections resulting in continuous feuding between the rival parties.

As an example of the opposite situation, they need not go far from their own mosque. The Khizra mosque in Cheetham Hill holds elections every two years without any feuding. So the argument that regular elections lead to feuding within the mosque does not necessarily apply in all situations. As we have seen[113] Khizra is not the only mosque that holds regular elections. Suffice it to say that the implementation of elections in mosques is a very complex issue that involves sects, biradaris, regionalism and all the other issues that make up the local milieu.

A Maulana Habibur Rahman is also someone who sees himself as an enabler, He says,

> Any party or any candidate who gives us more assurance and gives us more support we should support that candidate irrespective of his belonging to any party.

Dr Amanat Ali another person who has been active in community work in Manchester also sees himself as an enabler.

> I do not personally have any political interests myself, you know I'm not a man of politics at all but we should take part in politics 110% emphasis on that, we must and you know you can only do that through joining certain parties but I personally do not have membership of any party. I am not that kind of person you know politics doesn't attract me. But I would support and encourage young people to take part in the political process.

9.12.5 The Politically Active

The final type is the one who has no hesitation in taking part in the political process. The person feels that there is no harm in wanting to do well in the political field. This type of person is fully aware of the political situation and is not afraid to manipulate the situation for personal political gains. This type of person feels that there is no harm in having political ambitions. This person feels that he is the best candidate to put forward the case for the needs of the Muslim community. He/she sees their success as the success of the Muslim community. The persons that most fitted this type were Afzal, Abdul and Rizwan. Afzal says,

> I have concluded that really there is no choice we must participate in the political process. In a way it's become so powerful within my own understanding of it that I think it's a question that our survival is at stake if we do not participate.

Abdul says,

---

[113] See chapter on Mosques and Mosque Structures.

> I think like the poet said in Urdu 'hath jo bardh kay utahlay ye meena uska haay' (the hand that proceeds to pick up the wine, the wine belongs to him). It's up to us that we should take initiative and play an active part then the Labour or other parties will help you to go up and up but if you are going to sit back and not take active part then nobody is going to push you.

Rizwan says,

> Yes we should participate in the political process. I think the main benefits are that you have got a voice. You can actually change things. You demand things. For example the things we need for example education wise, in the legal system.

All these people have been actively involved in the political process. They contested elections within the party structure, within mosques and in local elections for the City Council. They see participation in the political process as a force for good and an opportunity to put across the views of the Muslim community to the wider society.

Afzal's views have developed from being totally aloof from practical politics and ending up by saying that 'our survival in Britain depends upon our participation in the political process'. I want to analyse his answer a bit further to gain an understanding of how he has dealt with the issues within Islam and how he has adapted to use those concepts in British Politics. When I asked him why he had not participated in the political process prior to this he said,

> I was in the concept of *dar ul harb* (laughter). It all started from some of the development which was going both locally and nationally. Basically I concluded that as a community we have no choice. Our survival is at stake and any community without a political voice is left at the mercy of others and that can never be good for any community, therefore we must participate in order to ensure that we can advocate our rights and needs at the highest level to the government. It is after all political decisions made that give directions. Hence I decided that this idea of *dar ul Dawwah* is equally important in the political field. I accept the sovereignty concept of Allah I have no problems with that. Within that there is a democratic process where we discuss things and start delegating to lower level. Hence I want to participate in politics and I want to give my views my solutions to the problems of society. Islam is supposed to be mercy, *Rahmat*, for all mankind as the Prophet himself who gave the message said. Islam has got solutions to the problem then why should I sit back in the mosque and isolate myself. I want to be at the heart of the community the whole community and give my solutions. If there is something good that I have got why should I hide it? Why should I not share it? I want to do it but I want to do it through the political process. I concluded that without this proper voice we are at the mercy of government and politicians and that could never be right. No community has ever accepted that it's a good idea to be at the mercy of

others. It's always good to be strong and be independent and have your own voice. You can only do that when you participate. The other point is that we do participate to the extent of contributing to the economy of this country. The small businesses have a turnover of around 37 billion. All the taxes and everything we are paying to the government, doctors are being provided by our community why shouldn't we also take our share back.

Afzal touches on many aspects that British Muslims have to contend with when participating in the political process. Whether Britain is *dar ul harb*[114]? Is Britain in state of war against Muslims? The traditional binary division of territory into *dar ul Islam*[115] and *da rul harb* is being brought into question. He is challenging the traditional view by arguing that in Britain a Muslim has more freedom to practice their religion than they have in many of the Muslims countries. Under these circumstances is it fair to consider Britain as *dar ul harb*. He suggests that we should view Britain as *darul dawaah*[116] this concept is useful when we speak of Britain. He also touches upon the issue of sovereignty in a democracy, is Allah the Sovereign or do the people have sovereignty.

9.13   Conclusion

It is clear that Muslims in Manchester have shown that they are by and large enthusiastic about participation in the political process but at the same time are apprehensive about being taken for granted by any of the political parties. All my respondents said that it is important for Muslims to participate in the political process. The form that participation takes may differ but the encouraging aspect is the research shows that Manchester Muslims do not want to live in a segregated society and are actively engaging with the mainstream political parties. They want to vote in local, national and European elections but as with any other community there are some who are not in favour of actively joining political parties. The main reason for not join parties was that once you join a party they begin to take you for granted.

The fact that Liberal Democrats had five Muslim councillors and one Muslim MEP in 2004 was a warning to the Labour Party that Mancunian Muslims will not be taken for granted. The Labour Party had to devise a strategy whereby it can show to the Muslim voters that it is listening to their concerns. A significant step towards that rebuilding of confidence between the Labour Party and Muslim voters in Manchester would be to select

---

[114] Abode of War – land that is at war with Islam
[115] Abode of Islam – Land of Islam –Land where there is Islamic rule.
[116] Abode of Invitation – a land where you may invite people to your faith.

a Muslim candidate to contest the next General Election. Given that Muslim population in Manchester has grown significantly it is perhaps the right time for the first Muslim Member of Parliament in Manchester. This would demonstrate that Muslims have access and representation at the highest. With the large size of the majorities of Labour Party MP's the party could be bold without fear of loosing and at the same time build bridges between the Mancunian Muslims locally and British Muslims nationally.

10   CONCLUSION

Some recent events have placed greater spotlight on the imams, mosques and British Muslims. The recent horrific murder of a serving member of the armed forces was unequivocally condemned by all the British Muslims[117]. Muslims were horrified to see what had taken place in the name of their religion. The immediate sense of horror felt and the subsequent hype created by the media and Prime Minister David Cameron's comments on the first day catapulted this incident to such a level that Muslim women wearing headscarves who had nothing to do with this incident bore the brunt of EDL Islamophobic abuse and physical violence. The other key target for right wing Islamophobes was the mosque as they are seen as the foremost symbolic representation of Islam in Britain (Kundnani 2002; Fekete 2012). EDL, who have targeted Muslims and specifically mosques prior[118] to the Woolwich Murder, used the incident to stoke up anti Muslim sentiments. The mosque in Muswell was totally burned to the ground[119] and another mosque in Walsall had a bomb placed in it[120], fortunately this was discovered before detonation and the bomb was defused by the bomb squad before any loss. The police arrested a 75 year old man in connection with this incident. [121]Other mosques around the country have had graffiti scrolled[122], windows smashed[123]. Many mosques are considering

---

[117] See the list of Muslim organisations who unequivocally condemned the mindless and barbaric murder at Last   accessed   12/08/2013. http://www.asianimage.co.uk/news/10438210.List_of_Muslim_groups_condemning_Woolwich_murder/

[118] Mail Online. 'Police shoot out tyres of English Defence League member as seven are arrested over mosque 'bomb plot'. 28/07/2010. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1298086/Seven-arrested-Bournemouth-far-right-mosque-bomb-plot.html#ixzz2XoBqoedf

The Independent (London, England) – 'Imam Attacked as Anti-Muslim Violence Grows'. 14 August 2007.

[119] Huffington Post UK. 'Muswell Hill Mosque Set On Fire In Suspected EDL Attack'. 05/06/2013. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/06/05/mosque-set-on-fire-edl-attack_n_3389136.html

[120] Huffington Post UK. 'Bomb Squad Sent To Mosque As 39 Homes Evacuated In Walsall'. 23/06/2013. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/06/23/bomb-disposal-team-sent-to-mosque_n_3485251.html

[121] Huffington Post UK. 'Mosque 'Bomb Plot': Man, 75, Arrested In Walsall'. 27/06/2013. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/06/27/mosque-bomb-plot_n_3511475.html

[122] Daily Mirror. 'Redditch mosque vandalism: Swastikas sprayed in racist attack'. 26/06/2013. http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/redditch-mosque-vandalism-pictures-swastikas-2000505#ixzz2XoDoTbV1

measures to safeguard their mosques during the month of Ramadan when mosques are full of men, women and children late at night. These issues highlight how central the mosques and imams has become a symbol of Muslim representation for mainstream society.

The central argument of the thesis is that faced with 'ontological insecurity' Pakistani Muslims through a process of deconstruction and reconstruction are transforming their identity into a Pakistani British Muslim identity. The process of reconstructing identity has taken place in phases reflecting their status in Britain initially as economic migrants who on first arrival had minimal contact with mainstream British society. Their circumstances changed further when their families joined them necessitating separate accommodation and the educational needs of their children became a major concern. The stage when they moved on from this phase was when they came to terms with the fact that they were no longer temporary residents of this country but British citizens for whom the idea of return to the country of origin became nothing more than nostalgia. These phases at each stage required a rethinking of their identity, their way of living, their place in the wider society and the the construction of permanent institutions for future generations to transmit those elements of their identity that they felt were essential to their future existence.

On first arrival as single male economic migrants they were Muslims who were born into a Muslim family whose Muslim identity was a matter of fact that and was taken for granted by themselves. However, on arrival in Britain as migrant workers their focus was economic betterment to enable return to their country of origin. Over time it became apparent that though the desire to return to the home country was sincere but the ensuing circumstances created a dilemma that required a rethinking of their priorities. The laws

---

[123] For a comprehensive list of incident the website developed by 'Tell Mama' a major projected document Islamophobic incidents is very useful. One can see correlation of rise in incidents against Muslims from date of any major incident taking place in Britain that is attributed to the Muslim community by the media. http://tellmamauk.org/

introduced to restrict immigration in the 1960s and early 1970s forced the first rethink when they had to make a decision to call their families to Britain before visa restrictions prevented their families from joining them. The process of migration gained momentum during this period as many decided to call their families for fear of future restrictions. The dynamic of family life transformed the lives of the single male economic migrant for good which inevitably contributed to the future decision making about the establishment of Muslim institutions in Britain which included a major rethinking of the types of mosques that were the need of the British Muslims.

Having women and children joining single male economic migrant not only affected their living space which meant having to accommodate the family in spaces that provided *purdah* for women but it also prompted a rethink on establishing religious institutions (Khan 1976). In their desire to transmit Islamic and Pakistani cultural norms to their children they established mosques and imported imams from abroad who ensured that the children had basic skills to read the Quran and gained knowledge of the performance of daily prayers. The initial arrival of families did not necessarily translate into a belief into permanent stay in Britain. The perception was still that one day they would go back to their home in Pakistan which could be viewed as the reason why initially the establishment of mosques in make shift buildings, sometimes only the use of somebody's front room sufficed to hold Quran classes for children and the same space would also be used for prayer[124]. However as the number of families grew so did the need for larger spaces to accommodate the increasing number of children attending Quran classes. This is when Muslims began to purchase slightly bigger but still old rundown buildings to convert into mosques.

---

[124] As mentioned earlier that the Zakariyya Mosque began life in the front room of the house of one of the trustees of the mosque.

The next transformation in mosque construction was when the 'myth of return' was shattered as it became inconceivable for them to relocate to their country of origin as their children had jobs in Britain therefore for them to relocate to Pakistan became impracticable (Anwar 1979). It was during this period that the economic down turn and the collapse of the textile industry resulted in large numbers of British Muslims being laid off work which was the first time that many had been out of work with little prospects of future employment away from the textile industry for which they had no training or transferable skills. During this period there was an increase in the number of men attending mosque for congregational prayer, also resulting in an increase in the numbers attending *juma* prayer. This meant that the existing small converted buildings had to be extended or larger properties bought to accommodate the increase in the number of men attending mosques.

Those who grew up in Britain grew up considering themselves as British Muslims who considered Britain to be their home but they did not necessarily want to assimilate into the host culture. The dynamics involved in considering Britain as their home were not as straight forward because their religious identity became problematic for the liberal left who were wrapped in the race relations discourse embedded in black and white dichotomy. The Satanic Verses affair led to the liberal left withdrawing their support for a 'powerless' and vulnerable minority group that had sought recognition as British citizens who felt very strongly about their religious identity. During this period there were other religious groups who were recognised and protected by the law, for example Jews and Sikhs had legal protection against discrimination and in the case of Christians they were protected under the blasphemy laws, though redundant in modern Britain but the law remained on statue. However, Muslim calls for protection against discrimination on the basis of their religion, whether this was through the extension of the blasphemy laws to cover Muslims, the official responses were firm refusals. Just as measure of how long it took for the

establishment to recognise the need for protection against religious discrimination it is useful to note that it was in the 1980s that Muslims began asking for protection against religious discrimination but it was not until 2003 that the first legislation was passed in relation to this. The initial argument that Britain was a secular country where religion remained in the private domain not as part of the public sphere remained the official line. Many young British Muslims could not come to terms with the apparently duplicitous in responses from the authorities. After a long period of dilly dallying the authorities came round to introducing legislation that would prevent religious discrimination via the European Union rulings. However, this came too late to prevent a certain amount of polarisation of views, which seems to have paved the way for the radicalisation of the British Muslim youth.

It is this confrontational posturing and perceived duplicity of the authorities that the young British Muslims felt which alienated them from mainstream British society resulting in riots in the deprived regions of northern industrial towns. The British society had fairly polarised views on religion as the fourth national survey showed. The survey showed that religion was important / very important to Muslims whereas responses from white British Christians were that religion was not important to them (Modood et al 1997). In a society where religion is viewed in such polarised perspectives a minority asking for rights based on religion will inevitably be frowned upon. British Muslims were unable to relate to the idea of black pride that had begun to represent the minorities, many Arabs selected white as their category when it came to choosing from black and white identity labels. Therefore it was no longer feasible for Muslims to accept themselves as black when in fact they were not able to relate to black identity in a positive way. British Muslims became more comfortable calling themselves as British having more loyalty to Britishness than the indigenous white Britain's as surveys have shown (Samad 1998a; Ansari 2004).

In negotiating ontological insecurity through to a British Muslim identity British Muslims established religious institutions that sought to reflect their growing confidence in their newly reconstructed British Muslim identity. Mosque projects initially begun to reflect their religious heritage through use of minarets placed on buildings that were previously used for the azan to reach as far as possible. The placing of small minarets as in the case of Madina Mosque in Levenshulme and the converted UKIM building Cheetham Hill was the inexpensive way of creating architectural affiliation with what was perceived to be 'Islamic' architecture from their country of origin. However, in early 1970s Manchester Muslims constructed their first purpose built mosquein Manchester complete with a minaret and dome when the Victoria Park mosque was constructed. It was more than a decade later in the mid 1980s that the North Manchester Jamia Mosque, the Ibadhur Rahman Trust, with minaret and dome was constructed. It was more than two decades later that the third purpose built mosque, Khizra mosque / Community centre, was constructed. The construction of these purpose built mosques with what British Muslims perceived to be 'Islamic architecture' was their way of countering the perceived threat to their identity and of reinforcing their vision of what it was to be a British Muslim.

The Didsbury mosque in an unused Methodist Church did not employ the use of any exterior changes that reflect 'Islamic' architecture. This was mainly because they viewed the use of the already religious building sufficient to reflect the religious nature of the institution. The Didsbury mosque did not make any changes inside preferring to renovate the Church with its original features intact. Rather than construct a *mimbar* for the imam to deliver his *khutbah* the Didsbury mosque preferred to use the Church pulpit which served the same purpose. This was a nice use of the fascinating original features of the Church without any hang-ups about the fact that this was a Church which had to be 'Islamised' through architectural changes. This showed the willingness of British Muslims to co-opt

the already existing architectural style of religious buildings. The other example of the use of an unused Church for religious purposes is the Qadria Jialania mosque in Longsight which used to be the St John's Church. Apart from the sign board no other feature of exterior of the church can be viewed as a mosque but inside changes have been made to create space for congregational prayers but with minimal alteration of the original features. This shows that British Muslims have progressed from ontological insecurity to a confidence in adopting parts of the architectural heritage of Britain without their identity in any way threatened or undermined. This is the British Muslim way of separating culture and religion by arguing that the building structures are viewed as regional cultural architectural styles whilst the belief is that religion is not in the architecture. However, there are those Muslims who have chosen to bring their architectural styles with them through the use of the dome and minaret on the newly constructed buildings. It would not be surprising to see in the near future purpose built mosques in Manchester that do not have a dome or a minaret as we have seen in some of the purpose built mosques in the South of England, the idea of designing an 'anti-mosque design' (Verkaaik 2012). The competition for an Ecomosque at Salford University exemplified how notions of environmental concerns are taken into account when designing new mosques.

The language used in mosques has been and remains a key issue that divides opinion amongst Muslims. The issue of language is strongly linked to formation of identities and Pakistani Muslims perceieved that their identity, religious and cultural heritage to be linked to the preservation of Urdu language. It is for this reason that most mosques along with teaching the Quran also taught Urdu language. The fact that local councils provided funding for teaching Urdu in mosques was also a strong incentive for the financially weak mosques. The elderly Muslims having retired from their jobs regulalrly attend the five times daily prayers. That is why sometimes cynically some have labelled the mosque as

'old men's club'. The mosques are striving to strike a balance in the use of the language by looking towards the youth who are the future of these mosques and if they do not cater for them then the result would be what one of the imams I interviewed feared. Mufti Subhan said that "Now we purchase redundant churches to use as mosques but if we do not focus on the youth in the future we would be the ones selling these mosques due to lack of attendance". Reflecting on the trend of mosque attendance in the last decade he stated that "Since 9/11 and 7/7 the trend has actually seen an increased interest in Islam and increased youth attendance in the mosque". Whether the imams are able to convert this increased interest in Islam into increased numbers engaging with the mosques and imams in the future remains to be seen. The signs are that increased number of bilingual British trained imams is a positive sign for the mosque committees who can now focus on attracting the youth towards the mosques by drawing on the pool of bilingual imams (Lewis 2007).

In the main the responses from many imams about the role of the mosques and imams until now in supporting a British Muslims identity has been negligible and the need for the imams and mosques to engage meaningfully with the youth to have a siginigicant impact in supporting a British Muslim identity. The next decade will show whether the neglected youth will return to mosques or find other avenues to support their identities.

The role of the imam in Britain is in flux, on the one hand they are seen as the main reason for the dire state that Muslims find themselves in, especially in relation to the failure of mosques to to attract the youth to the mosques and the radicalisation of Muslim youth, whilst on the other hand they are seen as the sole reason for the preservation of Muslim religious values in Britain. The role of the imam is under strain from at times the heavy handedness of the committees and the increasing sphere of expectations from imams, particularly imported imams. The current batch of imams who are predominantly from

abroad are experiencing difficulty in attracting the youth as they are still communicating with the youth through their parents. Direct communication with British Muslim youth is virtually non-existent in many mosques and perhaps out of reach of the current batch of imported imams. The British trained bilingual imams are still in their 'infancy' to be able to take the lead to act as authoritive figures. In the case of Maulana Arshad Misbahi, by the time he gained enough experience to provide meaningful guidance to the British Muslim youth he was replaced with Imam Muhammad Asim, a newly qualified British trained imam. Some have said that the current imam is only a 'stop gap imam' until they can import a high profile imam from abroad.

The training of imams in Britain has been left in the hands of the imported imams and the madrassahs they have created in Britain (Cherti et al 2011; Cherti & Laura 2011). Some madrassahs provide initial training in Britain but then send them to either the al-Azhar University in Cairo or Bhera Sharif in Pakistan for the final two years to become fully qualified *alims* (Gilliat-Ray 2006; Birt & Lewis 2011). The training has improved since its initial phase to reflect the needs of the British Muslims as many British trained imams are now in their thirties and forties and provide their services to the madrassahs in Britain. Recent attempts to engage the British trained imams to provide specialist teaching are under way but they are few in number to make a significant impact.

However, one of the drawbacks for imam training has been the imposition of the government agenda to provide training for imams to counter the radicalisation of Muslim youth in Britain. It seems that the focus has shifted from providing training in Islamic Studies to providing training in how to counter radicalisation. Training in what imams should do to counter the radicalisation implies that imams hold the key to stopping radicalisation, however, the imams are a fairly small part of the radicalisation equation the

majority of the work has to be undertaken by the government to make sure that British Muslim youth is not alienated from mainstream British society by adopting inclusive policies that take on board their concerns, whether they are in relation to the higher rate of unemployment among British Muslimyouth or their perception of 'war against Islam'. These are issues that the government has to take responsibility for and not pass the responsibility onto the imams to do their work as this will in turn damage the image of the imams and the imams will no longer be trusted by British Muslim youth who are already apprehensive about the role of the imam in Britain.

The mosque committees have attempted to establish mosques providing the necessary facilities in the mosques but have been hampered at times by the lack of financial and educational constraints. The lack of educated committee members has resulted in splinter groups forming their own mosques. The imams have not been very helpful in this matter as they have in many cases been the main reason for the schism in the first place and have then further fuelled the situation through the employment of biradari and regionalism to create splinter groups that in turn create their own mosques. Biradari has been a source good in the form of the members of a biradari coming together to raise funds to create and maintain mosques, as with the earlier Arian community who contributed generously in the construction of the initial purpose built Victoria Park mosque. However, the problem arises when biradari is manipulated by leaders, whether in shape of imams or committee leaders, to gain control of mosques without regard for meritocracy.

The committees have demonstrated a lack of training in conflict resolution by holding firm to the ideas of Manichean dichotomies of conflict resolution. The thesis establishes as one of the major tasks that the committees face is to work out a way of conflict resolution that is based on a win/win outcome to prevent further divisions within the British Muslim

communities. The committees also need to encourage the participation of youth and women in mosque committees to allow them the freedom to be involved in setting agendas to attract more youth and women towards the mosque. The current situation is that many women and youth are eager to come to the mosque but if they are not facilitated then they will turn away and find other spaces to fulfil their goals and the mosques will become redundant spaces that will have for sale sign boards[125]. The onus is on the committees to give direction to 'inclusive' policies and move away from the 'exclusivist' nature of mosque committees. The committees need to come to terms with the British society that is different from the society they migrated from and the transformation through interaction with the host community has entailed a reconstruction of giving birth to a British Muslim identity that looks to the mosque to provided services and facilities that the mosque did not provide in the country they migrated from. The committees hold a minority view in British society as opposed to when they were the majority in their country of origin. To view all mosques or Islamic Centres as homogenous is misleading at best, and potentially factually grossly incorrect.

Empirical data from Manchester has shown that British Muslims views on the meaning of secularism are fairly broad. Most view Britain as secular country but that this does not translate into absence of religion from public life for them. Their view of secularism was based on the existence of the established Christian Church as part of public life in Britain. In the words of maulana Azmi, 'secularism was a bouquet of flowers in which all religions are represented to form a beautiful bouquet'. Secularism does not mean that religion does not play any part in public life and as such British Muslims in Manchester have actively taken part in the electoral process. Many have chosen to contest local and national

---

[125] This seems a fairly exaggerated view but this has been the view that has been conveyed to me by many of my respondents who felt that women and youth have been ignored by mosques.

elections with a certain degree of success. Afatab Razaq contested and won the local election as a Labour Party Councillor did not feel any hesitation in campaigning in Local Council elections wearing *shalwar kameez*, a turban on his head and a full length beard. Similarly others participating in elections have chosen to wear trouser suits. British Muslims choose to adopt whatever they feel comfortable in without fear of ontological insecurity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbas, T. (2007). "Ethno-Religious Identities and Islamic Political Radicalism in the UK: A Case Study." Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs 27(3): 429-442.

Abbas, T. (2011). Islamic Radicalism and Multicultural Politics: The British Experience. London; Routledge.

Ahmad, Aziz (1972) Activism of the Ulama in Pakistan in Keddie, N. R. (edited) Scholars, Sainst, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institution since 1500. London: University of California Press.

Ahmed, A. S. (1987). Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society. London: Routledge.

Ahmed, A.S. (1993). Living Islam: From Samarkand to Stornoway. BBC Books.

Ahmed, A.S. (2003).Islam Under Siege: Living Dangerously in a Post- Honor World. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Ahmed, I. &. Ried., H. (2009). Report on the Masajid Engagement Project. Bradford Council for Mosques.

Ahmed, F. & Gilliat-Ray, S. (2004). The Training and Development of Muslim Religious Professionals in Britain. Leverhulme Trust Project Report on Pilot project on training and development of Muslim Religious professionals.

Ahmed, Ishtiaq & Reid,Helen (2009). "Report on the Masajid Engagement Project . Published by Bradford Council for Mosques June 2009.

Ahmed, Sughra (2009). Seen and Not Heard: Voices of Young British Muslims. Policy Research Centre Islamic Foundation: Markfield.

Akhtar, S., (1989). Be Careful With Muhamad! Tha Salman Rushdie Affair. London: Bellew Publishing.

Akhtar, S., (1998). 'Islam's unofficial Clergy are not people of the Book but slaves of the Book. Times Higher Educational Supplement 16 February 1998.

Allen, C. (2013). Between Critical and Uncritical Understandings: A Case Study Analyzing the Claims of Islamophobia Made in the Context of the Proposed 'Super-Mosque' in Dudley, England. *Societies*, *3*(2), 186-203.

Allen, C., & Nielsen, J. S. (2002). Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001: summary report. Diane Pub Co.

Allievi, S., Ed. (2010). Mosques in Europe: Why a solution has become a problem. London, Alliance Publishing Trust.

Amghar, S., Boubekeur, A., Emerson, M., (editors) 2007. European Islam: Challenges for Public Policy and Society. Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies.

Amiraux, V. (2003) CFCM – A French Touch. ISIM Newsletter 12, June 2003, pp. 24-25.

Ansari, H (2004). 'The Infidel Within': Muslims in Britain Since 1800. London; Hurst & Company.

Ansari, Humayun (edited) (2011). The making of the East London Mosque, 1910-1951: minutes of the London Mosque Fund and East London Mosque Trust Ltd. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press for the Royal Historical Society.

Anwar, M. (1979). The myth of return: Pakistanis in Britain, Heinemann London.

Anwar, M. (1986). Race and Politics: ethnic minorities and the British political system, Tavistock London.

Anwar, M. (1994). Race and elections: the participation of ethnic minorities in politics. Coventry, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick.

Anwar, M. (1994). Young Muslims in Britain: attitudes, educational needs and policy implications (Vol. 2). Leicester: Islamic Foundation.

Archambault, H. (2007). A Community United?: Going in Search of Community with Edinburgh Muslims. Centre for South Asian Studies, School of Social and Political Studies, University of Edinburgh.

Asad, T. (1990). Multiculturalism and British identity in the wake of the Rushdie affair. Politics & Society, 18(4), 455-480.

Asim, Qari Muhammad (2011). Mosques & Youth Engagement: Guidelines & Toolkit. MINAB. http://minab.lmnocouk.netdna-cdn.com/images/stories/Documents/Mosques-And-Youth-Engagement-Guidelines-And-Toolkit.pdf

Aspinall, P. J. (2002). Collective Terminology to Describe the Minority Ethnic Population: The Persistence of Confusion and Ambiguity in Usage. *Sociology*, *36*(4), 803-816.

Atkinson, P. and Hammersley, M. (1994). Ethnography and participant observation. In Denzin, N. and Lincoln, S., editors, Handbook of qualitative research, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 248–61.

Avcioglu, N. (2011). Turquerie and the politics of representation, 1728-1876. Surrey, Ashgate.

Bagby, Ihsan, et al (2001). The Mosque in America: A National Portrait. Washington D.C.: Council of American-Islamic Relations.

Bahadur, Kalim (2008), Political dimensions of Islamic fundamentalism in South Asia, in Manas Chatterji, B.M. Jain (ed.) Conflict and Peace in South Asia (Contributions to Conflict Management, Peace Economics and Development, Volume 5), Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp.249-266.

Ballard, Roger, (1994). Desh Pardesh: The South Asian Presence in Britain. London: Hurst & Co.

Banton, M. (1979). 'It's our country' in Miles, Robert; Phizacklea, Annie. Racism and Political Action in Britain. London: Routledge, 223-246.

Banton, Michael (1983) Racial and ethnic competition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barendt, E. (2011). "Religious Hatred Laws: Protecting Groups or Belief?" Res Publica 17(1): 41-53.

Barlas, Asma, (2002). Believing women in Islam: Unreading patriarchal interpretations of the Quran. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Barth, 1959] Barth, F. 1959. Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans . The Athlone Press, University of London.

Barth, Fredrik (edited) (1969) Ethnic groups and boundaries: the social organization of culture difference. London : Allen & Unwin.

Barton, S. W. (1986). *The Bengali Muslims of Bradford: a study of their observance of Islam with special reference to the function of the mosque and the work of the Imam*, Univ. Leeds, Department of Theology, Community Religions Project.

Bateson, Gregory (1973). Steps to an Ecology of Mind. Suffolk: Chandler.

BBC News UK (2012). Abu Hamza arrives at RAF Mildenhall for US Extradition.

5/10/2012. Accessed 21/05/2013 - http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-19852506

BBC News UK (2012). Abu Hamza among five terror suspects extradited to US. 06/10/2012. Accessed 20/11/2012 - http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-19853903

Beckford, J. A., S. Gilliat, et al. (1998). Religion in prison: Equal rites in a multi-faith society. Cambridge University Press.

Bectovic, S. (2011). "Studying Muslims and constructing Islamic identity." Ethnic and Racial Studies 34(7): 1120-1133.

Parekh, B. C. (Ed.). (2000). The Future of Multi-ethnic Britain: Report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*;[the Parekh Report]*. Profile Books.

Bhimji, F. (2009). "Identities and agency in religious spheres: a study of British Muslim women's experience." Gender, Place & Culture 16(4): 365-380.

Biondo, V. F. (2006). "The Architecture of Mosques in the US and Britain." Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs 26(3): 399-420.

Birt, J., (2005). 'Locating the British *lmam:* The Deobandi *'Ulama* between Contested

Authority and Public Policy Post-9/11' in Cesari, J. & McLoughlin, S., (2005), European Muslims and the Secular State. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Birt, J. (2005). 8 'Wahhabism in the United Kingdom. Transnational Connections and the Arab Gulf' in Al-Rasheed, M. (Ed.). (2005). Transnational connections and the Arab Gulf. Abingdon: Routledge Press Limited.

Birt, J. (2006). "Good Imam, Bad Imam - Civic Religion and National Integration in Britain Post 9-11." The Muslim World 96:4, (October 2006): 687-705.

Birt, Y. (2006). "Islamic citizenship in Britain after 7/7: tackling extremism and preserving freedoms." The state we are in: identity, terror and the law of jihad: 14-31.

Birt, J. & Lewis, P. (2011). The pattern of Islamic reform in Britain: the Deobandis between intra-Muslim sectarianism and engagement with wider society. In Producing Islamic Knowledge: Transmission and dissemination in Western Europe M. v. A. Bruinessen, Stefano. London, Routledge.

Blom, A. (2011). 'Changin Religious Leadership in Contemporary Pakistan: The Case of the Red Mosque', in Pakistani and its DiasporaMultidisciplinary Approaches. Bolognani, M. & Lyon, S. (eds), New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bowen, J. R. (2012). "Working schemas and normative models in French governance of Islam." Comparative European Politics 10(3): 354-368.

Brighton, S. (2007). "British Muslims, Multiculturalism and UK Foreign Policy - 'integration' and 'cohesion' in and beyond the state." International Affairs 83(1): 1-17.

Britain, M. C. O. F. (2006). Voices from the Minarets, MCB Study of UK Imams and Mosques. London; MCB.

Brown, K. (2008). "The Promise and Perils of Women's Participation in UK Mosques: The Impact of Securitisation Agendas on Identity, Gender and Community." British Journal of Politics & International Relations 10(3): 472-491.

Cantle, T. (2001). The Cantle Report:'Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team'London: The Home Office.

Craig Calhoun (1992) "Introduction" in Habermas and the Public Sphere, edited C. Calhoun. Cambridge: MIT Press, pp 1-48.

Cesari, J. (2005). "Mosque Conflicts in European Cities: Introduction." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 31(6): 1015-1024.

Cherti, M., Glennie, Alex and Bradley, Laura (2011). Madrasas' in the British Media. Institute for Public Policy Research. Institute for Public Policy Research.

Cherti, M. a. B., Laura (2011). Inside Madrassas: Understanding and Engaging with British Muslim Faith Supplementary Schools. Institute for Public Policy Research.

Chomsky, N. (1996). World orders, old and new. Columbia University Press.

Choudhry, T. (2007). The Role of Muslim Identity Politics and Radicalisation. Commissioned by the Preventing Extremism Unit March 2007. Communities and Local Government.

Choudhury, Tufyal (2000). 'Discrimination on Grounds of Religion or Belief', Working paper No. 6, Centre for Public Law, University of Cambridge.

Cohen, A. (1969). Political anthropology: The analysis of the symbolism of power relations. *Man*, *4*(2), 215-235.

Coleman, Lys (2009). Survey of Mosque in England and Wales. Charity Commission February 2009.

Cutts, D., E. Fieldhouse, et al. (2007). "Voter Turnout in British South Asian Communities at the 2001 General Election." The British Journal of Politics and International Relations 9(3): 396-412.

Dahya, B. (1973). Pakistanis in Britain: Transients or Settlers? Race and Class, Vol. 14, pp. 241-277.

Dahya, B. (1974). The nature of Pakistani ethnicity in industrial cities in Britain. Urban ethnicity, 77, 118.

Daily Mirror. 'Redditch mosque vandalism: Swastikas sprayed in racist attack'. 26/06/2013. http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/redditch-mosque-vandalism-pictures-swastikas-2000505#ixzz2XoDoTbV1

Daily Telegraph, The - 13 July 2001.

Davie, Grace (2000). 'Religion in Modern Britain: Changing Sociological Assumptions'. Sociology, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp 113-128.

Dobbs, J., Green, H., & Zealey, L., (2006). Focus on Ethnicity and Religion. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dyke, A. H. (2009). Mosques made in Britain. Quilliam Foundation, February.

Eade, John (1996). "Nationalism, Community, and the Islamization of Space in London" in Barbara D. Metcalf (edited), Making Muslim Space in North America and Europe, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Easton, D. (1959). Political anthropology. *Biennial review of anthropology*, *1*, 210-262.

Eglar, Z. S. (1960). A Punjabi village in Pakistan. New York: Columbia University Press.

Electoral Commission, The (2002). Black and Minority Ethnic Survey - Research Report May-July 2005. The Electoral Commission; London. www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Electoral Commission, The (2005). Voter engagement Among Black and Minority Ethnic Communities. Research Report July 2002. The Electoral Commission; London.

Eriksen, T. H. (1993). In which sense do cultural islands exist? Social Anthropology, 1(1b), 133-147.

Fekete, L. (2006). "Europe: 'speech crime' and deportation." Race & Class 47(3): 82-92.

Fekete, L. (2012). Pedlars of Hate: the violent impact of the European far Right. London, Institute of Race Relations.

Fieldhouse, E. & Sobolewska, M. (2013) Introduction: Are British Ethnic Minorities Politically Under-represented? Parliamentary Affairs 66, pp 235-245.

Fielding, N. (1999a). "Social Science Perspectives on the Analysis of Investigative Interviews." In Canter, D., & Alison, L. (2012). Profiling in policy and practice. Ashgate Publishing.

Fielding, N. (1999b). 'Qualitative Interviewing' in Nigel Gilbert (ed.) Researching Social Life. London: Sage Publications, pp. 135-153.

Fielding, N. (1999c). 'Ethnography' in Nigel Gilbert (ed.) Researching Social Life. London: Sage Publications, pp. 154-171.

Fitzsimon, A (2012) Training Muslim Youth to be 'Khateebs' in Ahmad, Fauzia & Mohammad Siddique Seddon (eds) Muslim youth: challenges, opportunities and expectations. New York; Continuum International.

Frishman, M. & Khan, H.U. (1994). The Mosque: History, Architectural Development & Regional Diversity. London: Thames & Hudson.

Fukuyam, F. (1992). The end of history and the last man. New York: Macmillan Press.

Gaffney, Patrick D. (1994) The Prophet's Pulpit: Islamic Preaching in Contemporary Egypt. London; University of California Press

Gale, R. (2005). "Representing the City: Mosques and the Planning Process in Birmingham." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 31(6): 1161-1179.

Gale, R. and S. Naylor (2002). "Religion, planning and the city: The spatial politics of ethnic minority expression in British cities and towns." Ethnicities 2(3): 387-409.

Geaves, R. (1996). Sectarian Influences Within Islam in Britain: With Reference to the Concepts of'ummah'and'community'. Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Leeds.

Geaves, R. (2004). Who Defines Moderate Islam 'post'--September 11? Islam & the West: Post, 9(11), 62-74.

Geaves, R. (2008). "Drawing on the Past to Transform the Present: Contemporary Challenges for Training and Preparing British Imams." Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs 28(1): 99-112.

Geaves, R. (2010). Islam in Victorian Britain: The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam. Markfield: Kube Publishing.

Gest, Justin (2010). Apart: Alienated and Engaged Muslims in the West. London: C. Hurst & Co. Ltd.

Ghaly, M. (2011). "Training Imams in Europe: The Challenges of Developing a Unified Program, Leiden University as a Study Case." Hikma: Journal of Islamic Theology and Religious Education 1: 57.

Ghaly, M. M. (2008). "The Academic Training of Imams - Recent discussions and initiatives in the Netherlands."

Ghouri, N. (2005) "Health Fair in a Mosque: putting policy into practice." Journal of the Royal Institute of Public Health, 119, pp. 197-201.

Gilliat-Ray, S. (2006). "Educating the c Ulama: Centres of Islamic religious training in Britain." Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations 17(1): 55-76.

Gilliat-Ray, S. (2007). "Closed worlds: (not) accessing Deobandi dar ul-uloom in Britain." Fieldwork in Religion, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 7-33.

Gilliat-Ray, S. (2010b). "Body-works and fieldwork: Research with British Muslim chaplains." Culture and Religion 11(4): 413-432.

Gilliat-Ray, S. (2010c). "'The first registered mosque in the UK, Cardiff, 1860': the evolution of a myth." Contemporary Islam 4(2): 179-193.

Goffman, E., (1961). Asylums: Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates. England: Penguin.

Goulbourne H. (1988), 'The participation of new minority ethnic groups in British politics' in Blackstone, T., Parikh, B., & Sanders, P. (1998) Race Relations in Britain: A Developing Agenda. London ; Routledge. Pages181-203.

Groves, B. (2008). "A two pronged approach for France and its Muslims: Integration and Assimilation." Yale Journal of International Affairs Spring / Summer.

Guardian, The - July 27, 2001.

Guardian, The (2003) MPs urge French ban on religious symbols, The Move to reaffirm secular nature of state institutions fuels row Jon Henley in Paris, Friday 14 November 2003. http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/young-muslim-and-french/timeline-french-secularism/2564/ retrieved 15/05/2012.

Guardian, The (2004) French MPs vote for veil ban in state schools Jon Henley in Paris, Wednesday 11 February 2004.
http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/nov/14/france.jonhenley retrieved 15/05/2012

Guardian, The (2007). Shepherd, Jessica. 'Imams are not the solution to Terrorism': Muslims spiritual leaders say Blair's call for training in UK universities is misguided. 12/06/2007. Accessed 21/04/2012 - http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2007/jun/12/highereducation.uk

Guardian, The (2010). Curtis, P. 'Phil Woolas ejected from Parliament over election slurs.' 05/11/2010. http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/nov/05/phil-woolas-ejected-parliament-election accessed 17/05/2013.

Haddad, Y. Y. and M. Balz (2008). "Taming the Imams: European Governments and Islamic Preachers since 9/11." Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations 19(2): 215-235.

Halliday, F. (1992). The millet of Manchester: Arab merchants and cotton trade. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *19*(2), 159-176.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (1983) Ethnography: principles in practice. London and New York: Tavistock

Haq, M Anwarul (1972). The Faith Movement of Mawlānā Muhammad Ilyās. London : Allen and Unwin.

Hart Dyke, A. (2009). Mosques made in Britain. Quilliam. www.quilliamfoundation.org, Quilliam.

Hassan, Mehdi (2010). Rejoice! The number of Muslim MPs has doubled. NewStatesman, 07/05/2010. Last Accessed 27/08/2013 - http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/mehdi-hasan/2010/05/muslim-majority-labour-england

Hatina, Meir (edited) 2009. Guardians of Faith in Modern Times: 'Ulama' in the Middle East. Leiden; Brill.

Hepple, B, Coussey, M., & Choudhury, T. (2000). Equality: A new framework: Report of the Independent Review of the Enforcement of UK Anti-Discrimination Legislation. Hart Publications.

Herbert, Steve (2000). For Ethnography. Progress in Human Geography, 24:4, 550-568.

Hillenbrand, R (1983) 'The Mosque in the Medieval Islamic World' in Cantacuzino, S (Ed.) Architecture in Continuity: Building in the Islamic World Today. Aperture: New York.

Hoexter, Miriam. Eisenstadt, Shmuel N. Levtzion, Nehemia (eds.) 2002. The public sphere in Muslim societies. New York: State University of New York Press.

Huffington Post UK. 'Muswell Hill Mosque Set On Fire In Suspected EDL Attack'. 05/06/2013. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/06/05/mosque-set-on-fire-edl-attack_n_3389136.html

Huffington Post UK. 'Bomb Squad Sent To Mosque As 39 Homes Evacuated In Walsall'. 23/06/2013. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/06/23/bomb-disposal-team-sent-to-mosque_n_3485251.html

Husband, C. (1994). The political context of Muslim communities' participation in British society'. In Muslims in Europe. Eds Bernard Lewis & Dominque Schnapper, London/New York: Pinter, 79-97.

Hussain, Dilwar, (2004). Muslim Political Participation in Britain and the 'Europeanisation' of Fiqh. *Die Welt Des Islams*, New Series, Vol. 44, Issue 3, Shari'a in Europe (2004), pp. 376-401.

Husson, J.-F. (2007). "Training imams in Europe: The current status." http://orbi.ulg.ac.be/bitstream/2268/90149/1/PUB_1694_TrainingImamsEurope%20(Husson%202007).pdf - Last accessed 23/04/2012.

Imtiaz, A. (2002) Identity and the Politics of Representation: the Case of Muslim Youth in Bradford (PhD thesis, Department of Social Psychology, London School of Economics, unpublished).

Imtiaz, A. (2008). "Some Reflections on Principles of Islamic Education within a Western Context " Cambridge Muslim College (CMC) Papers 1.

Jackson, A. (Ed.). (1987). Anthropology at home. London and New York: Tavistock Publications.

Jacobson, J. (1998). Islam in Transition: Religion and Identity among British Pakistani Youth. London; Routledge.

Jamal, A. (2005). "The Political Participation and Engagement of Muslim Americans: Mosque Involvement and Group Consciousness." American Politics Research 33(4): 521-544.

Jazeel, M I M & Ghani, Z.A (2012). Mosque Leadership in Muslim Minorities – articulating a Dynamic Mission: A Theoretical Discussion. Proceeding: International Conference on Islamic Leadership -2 (ICIL).

Jenkins, R., (1999). Social Identity. London: Routledge.

Joly, Danièle (1987) Making a place for Islam in British society: Muslims in Birmingham. Coventry: Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick.

Joly, Danièle (1995). Britannia's Crescent: making a place for Muslims in British society. Aldershot : Avebury.

Kahani-Hopkins, V., & Hopkins, N. (2002). 'Representing'British Muslims: the strategic dimension to identity construction. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *25*(2), 288-309.

Kalra, Virinder S. (2000) From textile mills to taxi ranks: experiences of migration, labour and social change. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Kaye, Ronald (1993) The politics of religious slaughter of animals: Strategies for ethnoreligious political action. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. v. 19. no. 2. 1993. p. 235 - 250.

Khan, Dina (1998). Mixed marriages in Islam: An Anthropological Perspective on Pakisan. JASO29/1, pp. 5-28.

Khan, Z. (2000). Muslim presence in Europe: the British dimension-identity, integration and community activism. *Current Sociology*, *48*(4), 29-43.

King, C. (2010). "Faith Schools in Pluralistic Britain: Debate, Discussion, and Considerations." Journal of Contemporary Religion 25(2): 281-299.

King, J., (1997). 'Tablighi Jamaat and the Deobandi Mosques in Britain', in Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach (edited) Islam in Europe: The Politics of Religion and Community. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press LTD., pp. 129-146.

Kirtsoglou, E. (2004). For the Love of Women: Gender, identity and Same-sex Relations in a Greek Provincial Town. Routledge.

Klausen, J. (2009). British Counter-Terrorism After 7/7: Adapting Community Policing to the Fight Against Domestic Terrorism. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 35:3, 403-420.

Knott, K., & Toon, R. (1980). Considering Religious Statistics: Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims in the UK of South Asian Ethnic Origin. *CRP Research Paper*.

Kundnani, A, (2001). From Oldham to Bradford: The Violence of the Violated in The Three Faces of British Racism. Published by The Institute of Race Relations in October 2001.

Kundnani, A. (2002). An unholy alliance? Racism, religion and communalism. *Race & class*, *44*(2), 71-80.

Landman, N. (1999). Imams in the Netherlands Home-made Better than Import?. *ISIM Newsletter*, *2*, 5.

Laurence, Jonathan & Vaisse, Justin (2006). Integrating Islam: Political and religious challenges in Contemporary France. Washington; Brookings Institution Press.

Le Lohe, M.J. (1975) 'Participation in elections by Asians in Bradford' in I. Crewe (ed.), The Politics of Race. Croom Helm, London.

Le Lohé, M. (1998). "Ethnic minority participation and representation" in The British Electoral System, Saggar S. (1998) Race and British electoral politics. London: UCL Press.74.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1966). Anthropology: its achievements and future. Current Anthropology, 7(2), 124-127.

Lewis, D. (1973). Anthropology and colonialism. Current Anthropology, 581-602.

Lewis, P. (2002). Between Lord Ahmed and Ali G: which future for British Muslims? In <u>Shadid, W. A., & van Koningsveld, P. S. (Eds.). (2002). Religious Freedom and the Neutrality of the State: the Position of Islam in the European Union (Vol. 1). Peeters Publishers.</u>. Pp. 129-44.

Lewis, P. (2004). "New Social Roles and Changing Patterns of Authority Amongst British 'Ulama' " Archives de sciences sociales des religions Jan-March: 169-187.

Lewis, P. (2006). "Imams, ulema and Sufis: providers of bridging social capital for British Pakistanis?" Contemporary South Asia 15(3): 273-287.

Lewis, P. (2006). "Only connect: can the ulema address the crisis in the transmission of Islam to a new generation of South Asians in Britain?" Contemporary South Asia 15(2): 165-180.

Lewis, P. (2007) <u>Young, British and Muslim</u>. London: Continuum.

Lieven, A. (2011). <u>Pakistan: a hard country</u>. London: Allen Lane.

Lofland, J. (1995). "Analytic Ethnography: Features, Failings, and Futures." Journal of Contemporary Ethnography 24(1): 30-67.

Lukens-Bull, R. (2007). Lost in a sea of subjectivity: the subject position of the researcher in the anthropology of Islam. Contemporary Islam, 1(2), 173-192.

Lyon, S. M. (2004) <u>An Anthropological Analysis of Local Politics and Patronage in a Pakistani Vilage</u>. Lampeter: Edwin Mellwn Press.

Mail Online. 'Police shoot out tyres of English Defence League member as seven are arrested over mosque 'bomb plot'. 28/07/2010. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1298086/Seven-arrested-Bournemouth-far-right-mosque-bomb-plot.html#ixzz2XoBqoedf

Malik, M. (2004). Muslims Pluralize the West, Resist Assimilation. Middle East Policy, Vol. XI, No. 1, Spring 2004, pp. 70-83.

Malinowski, B. (1922). <u>Argonauts of the Western Pacific</u>. New York: EP Dutton & Co.

Manchester Evening News

Maron, Stanley ed. 1957. <u>Pakistan: Society and Culture</u>. New Haven; Human Relations Area Files.

Metcalf, Barbara Daly (1982). <u>Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860-1900</u>. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Metcalf, Barbara Daly (edited) (1996). <u>Making Muslim space in North America and Europe</u>. London: University of California Press.

Muslim cleric's battle over FBI terror claims – Yaqub Qureshi – 18/08/2005. Accessed 19/10/12

http://menmedia.co.uk/manchestereveningnews/news/s/170/170198_muslim_clerics_battle_over_fbi_terror_claims.html

Car park work disturbs headstones -Paul Britton - 10/09/2009. Accessed 19/10/12. http://menmedia.co.uk/manchestereveningnews/news/s/1136108_car_park_work_disturbs_headstones

Mosques 'made my husband a bomber' – 23/09/2005 – Accessed 19/10/2012. http://menmedia.co.uk/manchestereveningnews/news/s/175/175312_mosques_made_my_husband_a_bomber.html

Maqsood, R. W. (2005). "Role of Mosque - Maqsood." A study sponsored by The Muslim Institute Trust & Bait al-Mal al-Islami. London: The Muslim Parliament of Great Britain. http://multifaiths.com/pdf/mosqueengland.pdf

Marsden, M. (2005). Living Islam: Muslim religious experience in Pakistan's north-west frontier. Cambridge University Press.

Matar, N. (1998). Islam in Britain, 1558-1685. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.

Mattson, Ingrid (2008). Can a woman be an Imam? Debating form and function in Muslim women's Leadership. The Columbia sourcebook of Muslims in the United States (2008), pp. 252-263.

Maussen, M. (2009). Constructing Mosques: The governance of Islam in France and the Netherlands. Doctoral thesis University of Amsterdam. http://dare.uva.nl/record/294328 downloaded 17/06/2013.

McLoughlin, S. (2005). "Mosques and the Public Space: Conflict and Cooperation in Bradford." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 31(6): 1045-1066.

McRoy, Anthony (2006). From Rushdie to 7/7: The Radicalisation of Islam in Britain. London: Social Affairs Unit.

Meer, Nasar (2010) Citizenship, identity and the politics of multiculturalism : the rise of Muslim consciousness. Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan.

Metcalf, B. D., (1978). The madrasa at Deoband: A model for religious education in modern India. Modern Asian Studies, 12(1), 111-134.

Mirza, K. (1989). *The silent cry: second generation Bradford Muslim women speak* (pp. 1-32). Birmingham, UK: Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations.

Modood, T. (1988). 'Black', racial equality and Asian identity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *14*(3), 397-404.

Modood, Tariq. (1989). Religious anger and minority rights. *The Political Quarterly*. v. 60. no. 3. p. 280 - 284.

Moddod, T. (1990). British Asian Muslims and the Rushdie affair. *The Political Quarterly*, *61*(2), 143-160.

Modood, T. (1993). "Muslim views on religious identity and racial equality." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 19(3): 513-519.

Modood, T. (1994). Political blackness and British Asians. *Sociology*, *28*(4), 859-876.

Modood, T., Beishon, S., & Virdee, S. (1994). Changing ethnic identities (Vol. 794). London: Policy Studies Institute.

Modood, T., Berthoud, R., Lakey, J., Nazroo, J., Smith, P., Virdee, S., & Beishon, S. (1997). Ethnic minorities in Britain: diversity and disadvantage. London: Policy Studies Institute.

Modood, T. (Edited) 1997. Church, State and religious minorities. London: Policy Studies Institute.

Modood, T. (1998). Anti-Essentialism, Multiculturalism and the Recognition' of Religious Groups. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, *6*, 378-399.

Modood, T. (1999). 'The place of Muslims in British Secular Multiculturalism', paper presented at the conference on Nationalism, Identity, Minority Rights at the University of Bristol.

Modood, T. (2010a). "Moderate Secularism, Religion as Identity and Respect for Religion." Political Quarterly 81(1): 4-14.

Modood, T. (2012). 2011 Paul Hanly Furfey Lecture is There a Crisis of Secularism in Western Europe?. Sociology of Religion, 73(2), 130-149.

Mogra, I. (2007). "Moral education in the makātib of Britain: a review of curriculum materials." Journal of Moral Education 36(3): 387-398.

Muhammad, Tamir Abu As-Su'ood. 2001 (Compiled and Translated). Portraits from the Life of Prophet Muhammad: Compiled from the works of Ibn Katheer, Ibn Hishaam and other scholars. Revised and Edited by Noha Kamal El- Din Abu- Al-Yazid Dar Al-Manarah; El-Mansora, Egypt.

Mukadam, Mohamed & Scot-Bauman, Alison (2010). "The Training and Development of Muslim Faith Leaders: Current practices and future possibilities." London: Department of Communities and Local Government.

Muslim Council of Britain,The, (2007). 'Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools: Information & Guidance for Schools'.London: The Muslim Council of Britain. Last accessed 27/08/2013 - http://www.mcb.org.uk/downloads/Schoolinfoguidance.pdf

Muslim Parliament of Great Britain (1992). Race Relations and Muslims in Great Britain: A discussion paper. London: The Muslims Parliament.

Muslim News, The. Issue 169, Friday 30 May 2003 -War costs Labour the Muslim vote By Elham Asaad Buaras.

Naqshbandi, M. (2013). "UK Mosque Statistics / Masjid Statistics as at 28/05/2013." from www.muslimsinbritain.org/resources/masjid_report.pdf

Nasser, N. (2003). The space of displacement: making Muslim South Asian place in British neighborhoods. Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review, 15(1), 7-22.

Nasser, N. (2005). "Expressions of Muslim identity in architecture and urbanism in Birmingham, UK." Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations 16(1): 61-78.

Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza (1993). Islamic Opposition to the Islamic State: The Jamaat-i Islami, 1977-88 International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 261-283.

Nasr, S. V. R. (2000). The Rise of Sunni Militancy in Pakistan: The Changing Role of Islamism and the Ulama in Society and Politics. Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 139-180. Modern Asian Studies is currently published by Cambridge University Press.

Nawaz, I. a. W., Shaukat (2006). Mosques and Imams National Advisory Body: Consultation Findings and Conclusions. London, Faith Associates Publications.

Naylor, S. and J. R. Ryan (2002). "The mosque in the suburbs: Negotiating religion and ethnicity in South London." Social & Cultural Geography 3(1): 39-59.

Nielsen, J. R. S. (1981). "Muslim Education at Home and Abroad." British Journal of Religious Education 3(3): 94-99, 107.

Nielsen, J. R. S. (1986). A survey of British local authority response to Muslim needs. Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations.

Nielsen, J. R. S. (1987). "Muslims in Britain: Searching for an identity?" Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 13(3): 384-394.

Nielsen, J.R. S. (1991a). "Muslims Organizations in Europe." In W.A.R. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld (eds.), The Integration of Islam and Hinduism in Western Europe. Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos.

Nielsen, J. R. S. (1991b). "A Muslim agenda for Britain: Some reflections." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 17(3): 467-475.

Nielsen, J. R. S. (2004). Muslims in Western Europe. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Nielsen, J.R.S. (2002). British Response to 11 September. ISIM Newsletter.

Nielsen, J. R. S. (2005, November). Who is interested in European imams and why? Accessed - 20/04/2012 - http://www.ku.dk/SATSNING/Religion/indhold/publikationer/anden_litteratur/joergen_S_Nielsen.pdf

Parray, T. A. (2012). Muslim Responses to Imperialism in India: A Study of the Educational Reforms of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. International Journal of History: History Studies, Volume 4 Issue 3, p. 153-171.

Patten, J. (1990) Letter of 4 July 1989 from Mr John Patten, Minister of State at the Home Office, to a number of leading British Muslims.‖ In CRE (ed.) Law, Blasphemy and the Multi-Faith Society: Report of a seminar organised by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Inter Faith Network of the United Kingdom, September 1989. London: Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). pp.84-87

Peach, C. & Glebe, G. (1995). Muslim Minorities in Western Europe. Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 18, No. 1.

Peek, L. (2005). "Becoming Muslim - The Development of a Religious Identity." Sociology of Religion 66(3): 215-242.

Peter, F. (2003). Training of Imams and the future of Islam in France. ISIM Newsletter 13 December 2003.

Peter, F. & Arigita, E. (2006). Religious Authority in Western Europe. ISIM Newsletter 17, Spring 2006.

Peter, F. (2006). Leading the community of the middle way: A study of the Muslim field in France. The Muslim World, Vol. 96, October 2006, pp. 707-736.

Phillips, D. (2001) "The changing geography of South Asians in Bradford." Paper submitted to the Bradford Race Review, online at http://www. bradford2020. com/pride/docs/Section5.doc .

Poole, E. (2002). Reporting Islam: Media Representations and British Muslims. IB Tauris.

Prochazka, A.B. (1986). Architecture of the Islamic Cultural Sphere: Mosques. MARP (Muslim Architectural Research Program); Zurich.

Purdham, K. (1997) Unpublished PhD Thesis - The impacts of democracy on identity: Muslim Councillors and their experinces of local politics in Britain. Department of Government, University of Manchester.

Quigley, D. (1993). The Interpretation of Caste. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Q-News, May 1998, p. 5.

Rahman, H., J. Bartlett, et al. (2010). "Engaging mosques: a demos and MINAB toolkit for involving young people." Demos. London.

Rasdi, M. T. M. "The Design of Mosques as Community Development Centres from the Perspective of the Sunna and Wright's Organic Architecture." Global Built Environment Review 2: 40-50.

Rasdi, M. T. M. (1988). The Mosque as a Community Development Center. Johor, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

Rasdi, M. T. M. (2006). "Mosque as community centre." Global Built Environment Review (GBER) 2(2): 40-50.

Rasdi, M. T. M. (2008). "Reconstructing the idea of Islamic architecture: restructuring the academic framework and design approach within the perspective of the Sunnah." The Journal of Architecture 13(3): 297-314.

Rath, J., Groenendijk, K., & Penninx, R. (1991). The recognition and institutionalisation of Islam in Belgium, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 18(1), 101-114.

Raza, Mohammad S. (1991). Islam in Britain: past, present and the future. Leicester: Volcano.

Reda, N. (2004). Women in the mosque: Historical perspectives on segregation. *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, *21*(2), 77-97.

Reeves, F., Abbas, Tahir & Pedroso, Dulce (2009). "The 'Dudley Mosque Project' - a Case of Islamophobia and Local Politics." The Political Quarterly 80(4): 501-516.

Rahman, H. et al (2010) Engaging Mosques: A Demos and MINAB Toolkit for Involving Young People. Eindhoven: Lecturis.

Rex, John & Moore, Robert (1967). Race, community, and conflict: a study of Sparkbrook. London : O.U.P.

Rex, John (1990). 'The Urban Sociology of Religion and Islam in Birmingham' in Tomas Gerholm & Ynve Georg Lithman (edited), The New Islamic Presence in Western Europe. London: Mansel.

Rex, J. (1996a). Transnational Migrant Communities and Ethnic Minorities in Modern Multicultural Societies. J. Rex Ethnic Minorities in the Modern Nation State. London: Macmillan, 96-113.

Rex, J. (1996b). Ethnic minorities in the modern nation state: working papers in the theory of multiculturalism and political integration. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Rex, John (1996c). 'The Integration of Muslim Immigrants in Britain' in John Rex, Ethnic Minotities in the Modern Nation State, London: Macmillan.

Rex, J., & Samad, Y. (1996). Multiculturalism and political integration in Birmingham and Bradford. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, *9*(1), 11-31.

Richardson, J. E., (2004). (Mis)Representing Islam: The racism and rhetoric of British broadsheet newspapers. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin Publishing Company.

Robinson, F. (1988). Varieties of South Asian Islam (No. 8). Coventry: Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick.

Robinson, Francis, (2001). The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia. London: Hurst and Company.

Saeed, S. (2007), Pakistani Nationalism and the State Marginalisation of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan. Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism, Volume 7 Issue 3: 132–152.

Sahih Al-Bukhari: The translation of the meanings of Sahih Al-Bukhari: Arabic-English, Volume 1 by Dr Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Lahore: Kazi Publications.

Sahlins, M. D. (1973) Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia. Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Apr., 1963), pp. 285-303 Published by: Cambridge University Press. URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/177650 .

Said, E. (1978) Orientalism. London; Penguin.

Said, E., (1981). Covering Islam: How the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Saifullah-Khan, V. (1976a). Pakistanis in Britain: perceptions of a population. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 5(3), 222-229.

Saifullah-Khan, V. (1976b). Pakistani women in Britain. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 5(1-2), 99-108.

Saifullah-Khan, V. (1976c). 'Purdah in the British situation' in Barker, D. L., & Allen, S. (Eds.). (1976). Dependence and exploitation in work and marriage. London: Longman. 224-245.

Khan, V. S. (1977). The Pakistanis: Mirpuri villagers at home and in Bradford. Between two cultures: Migrants and minorities in Britain, 57-89.

Saifullah-Khan, V (1979) Minority Families in Britain. London, Tavistock

Samad, Y. (1992). Book burning and race relations: political mobilisation of Bradford Muslims. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 18(4), 507-519.

Samad, Y. (1998a). Media and Muslim identity: Intersections of generation and gender. Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research, 11(4), 425-438.

Samad, Y. (1998b). 'Imagining a British Muslim Identification'. In Steven Vertovec & Alisdair Rodgers (edited), Muslim European Youth, Reproducing ethnicity, religion, culture. Ashgate: Aldershot.

Samad, Y. (2007). "Ethnicization of Religion" in Yunas Samad / Kasturi Sen (eds.), Islam in the European Union. Transnationalism, Youth and the War on Terror (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 160-169.

Sardar, Ziauddin (2008) New statesman [1364-7431] Vol: 137 Issue: 4900 pg: 25.

Sayeed, A. (2001). Early Sunni Discourse on Women's Mosque Attendance. ISIM Newsletter, 7, 10."

Scantlebury, E. (1995). "Muslims in Manchester: The depiction of a religious community." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 21(3): 425-435.

Scourfield, J., C. Taylor, et al. (2012). "The Intergenerational Transmission of Islam in England and Wales: Evidence from the Citizenship Survey." Sociology 46(1): 91-108.

Selltiz, C. e. a., Ed. (1965). Research methods in social relations. New York : London :, Holt, Rinehart and Winston ; Methuen.

Seddon, M. S., (2007) Muslim and Jewish Communities in Nineteenth Century Manchester, in Humayan Ansari & David Cesarani (editors) Muslim Jewish Dialogue in a 21st Century World. Workshop held at Royal Holloway University 22-23 April 2006. Last accessed 24/08/2013 - http://digirep.rhul.ac.uk/file/c1ea3d55-848a-76c9-1d6b-b53291233f30/3/Muslim_Jewish_dialogue_CMS_ebook_2007.pdf

Seddon M. S., (2012). Arab Communities 1839 2012- A Brief history. Paper presented as part of the Cafe Historique's Manchester Men series on 28/01/12. Accessed 14/11/12 -
http://issuu.com/newobjectlessons/docs/arab_communities_in_manchester_1839_201 2

Shaikh, F. (2008) From Islamisation to Shariatisation: cultural transnationalism in Pakistan. Third World Quarterly Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 593-609.

Shaw, A. (1988). A Pakistani Community in Britain. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Inc.

Shaw, Alison (200). Kinship and continuity: Pakistani families in Britain. London: Routledge.

Shaw, Alison (2002). 'Why might young British Muslims support the Taliban?' Anthropology Today, Vol. 18, No. 1, February 2002.

Sibai, Mohamed Makki (1987). Mosque libraries. London: Mansell.

Siddiqui, A. (1995). Muslims in Britain: past and present. *The Bulletin, Organ of the Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies*, *3*.
http://www.teachislam.com/dmdocuments/History/Muslims%20In%20Britain.pdf

Sikand, Y. S. (1998). "The origins and growth of the Tablighi Jamaat in Britain." Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations 9(2): 171-192.

Singh,Gurharpal (2003). Multiculturalism in Contemporary Britain: Reflections on the "Leicester Model". International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), Vol. 5, No.1. pp 40-54.

Sokefeld, M. & Bolognani, M. (2011). 'Kashmiris in Britain: A Political Project or a Social Reality' in Pakistani and its DiasporaMultidisciplinary Approaches. Bolognani, M. & Lyon, S. (eds), New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Spradley, J. (1980). Participant observer. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Spiers, Maurice (1976). Victoria Park Manchester: A Nineteenth Century Suburb in its Social and Administrative Context. Manchester University Press; Manchester. P. 27

Statham, P., & Koopmans, R. (2004). Problems of Cohesion?: Multiculturalism and Migrants' Claims-making for Group Demands in Britain and the Netherlands. Centre for European Political Communications.

Stevens, D. (2011). "Reasons to be Fearful, One, Two, Three: The 'Preventing Violent Extremism' Agenda." The British Journal of Politics & International Relations 13(2): 165-188.

Suleiman Yasir 2009. Contextualising Islam in Britain. Centre of Islamic Studies, Cambridge.

Sulaiman, Yasir 2012 Contextualising Islam in Britain II: Exploratory Perspectives. Centre of Islamic Studies, Cambridge.

Tahir-ul-Qadri, M. (2010). Fatwa on Suicide Bombings and Terrorism. Minhaj-ul-Quran Publications.

The Runnymede Trust Report 1997 'Islamophobia – a challenge for us all'.

Thomas, P. (2010). "Failed and Friendless: The UK's 'Preventing Violent Extremism' Programme." The British Journal of Politics & International Relations 12(3): 442-458.

Turner, B. S. (2007). "Religious Authority and the New Media." Theory, Culture & Society 24(2): 117-134.

Uberoi, V. and T. Modood (2009). "Who Doesn't Feel British? Divisions over Muslims." Parliamentary Affairs 63(2): 302-320.

Van Ginkel, R. (1998). The repatriation of anthropology: Some observations on Endo-ethnography. Anthropology & Medicine, 5(3), 251-267.

Verkaaik, O. (2012). "Designing the 'anti-mosque': identity, religion and affect in contemporary European mosque design." Social Anthropology 20(2): 161-176.

Vertigans, S. (2010). "British Muslims and the UK government's 'war on terror' within: evidence of a clash of civilizations or emergent de-civilizing processes?" British Journal of Sociology 61(1): 26-44.

Vertovec, S., (1997). 'Muslims, the State, and the Public Sphere in Britain' in Gerd Nonneman, Tim Niblock, Bogdan Szjks (edited), Muslim Communities in the New Europe. Lebanon: ITHACA Press.

Vertovec, S., (2002). 'Islamophobia and Muslim Recognition in Britain' in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (edited) Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vertovec, S & Peach, C (ed.) 1997. <u>Islam in Europe: The Politics of Religion and Community</u>. London: Macmillan Press.

Vertovec, S. (1998). Multi-multiculturalisms. Multicultural Policies and the State: A Comparison of two European societies. Utrecht: Utrecht University, ERCOMER, pp. 25-38.

Vertovec, S., & Rogers, A. (1998). <u>Muslim European Youth: Reproducing Religion, Ethnicity and Culture.</u> Aldershot; Ashgate.

Walker, M, (2006). Europe's Mosque Hysteria. The Wilson Quarterly, Vol. 0, No. 2 (spring 2006), pp. 14-22

Ward, Robin and Richard Jenkins (eds) (1984). <u>Ethnic communities in business: strategies for economic survival</u> / ed. by Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weber, Max (1948) <u>From Max Weber: essays in sociology</u> / translated and edited and with an introduced, by H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills. London, Routledge.

Weber, Max (1968) <u>Economy and Society</u>. Totowa, New Jersey: Bedminster.

Werbner, P. (1979). Avoiding the ghetto: Pakistani migrants and settlement shifts in Manchester. New Community Vol. 7, pp. 376-389.

Werbner, P. (1980). From rags to riches: Manchester Pakistanis in the textile trade. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, Vol. 8, No. 1-2, pp. 84-95.

Werbner, P. (1981). Manchester Pakistanis: Life styles, ritual and the making of social distinctions. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 216-229.

Werbner, P. (1984). Business on trust: Pakistani entrepreneurship in the Manchester garment trade. In Ward, R. & Jenkins, R. (eds.) <u>Ethnic communities in business: Strategies for Economic Survival.</u> Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp 166-188.

Werbner, P. (1988). Sealing the Koran: Offering and Sacrifice among Pakistani Labour Migrants. Cultural Dynamics, Vol. 1:1, pp. 77-97.

Werbner, P. (1989) The Ranking of Brotherhoods: The Dialectics of Muslim Caste among Overseas Pakistanis. Contributions to Indian Sociology 1989; 23; 285-315.

Werbner P. (1990). *<u>The Migration Process: Capital, Gifts and Offerings among British Pakistanis.</u>* Oxford: Berg.

Werbner, P. (1990a). Renewing an industrial past: British Pakistani entrepreneurship in Manchester. Mitigation, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 17-41.

Werbner, P. (1991). Shattered Bridges: The dialectics of progress and alienation among British Muslims. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 331-346.

Werbner P. (1992). Fun spaces: on identity and social empowerment among British Muslims. In Sport and Identity: comparative perspectives, Providence and. Oxford: Berg.

Werbner, Pnina (1994). 'Islamic Radicalism and the Gulf War: Lay Preachers and Political Dissent Among British Pakistanis' in Bernard Lewis & Dominique Schnapper, Muslims in Europe, London: Pinter.

Werbner, P. (1996). The making of Muslim dissent: hybridized discourses, Lay preachers, and radical rhetoric among British Pakistani. American Ethnologist, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 102-129.

Werbner, P. (1998). Exoticing Citizenship: Anthropology and the New Citizenship Debate. Canberra Anthropology, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 1-27.

Werbner, P. (1999). What colour 'success'? Distorting value in studies of ethnic entrepreneurship. The sociological review, 47(3), 548-579.

Werbner, P. (2000). Divided Loyalties, Empowered Citizenship? Muslims in Britain. Citizenship Studies, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 307-324.

Werbner, P. (2000). Introduction: The Materiality of Diaspora – Between Aesthetic and "Real" Politics. Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies, Vol. 9, No.1, pp. 5-20.

Werbner, Pnina (2002). Imagined Diaspora Among Manchester Muslims: The Public Performance of Pakistani Transnational Identity Politics. Oxford; James Currey.

Werbner, P. (2003). Pilgrims of love: The anthropology of a global Sufi cult. Indiana University Press.

Werbner, Pnina (2010). Notes from a Small Place: Anthropological Blues in the Face of Global Terror. Current Anthropology, Vol. 51: No. 2, pp 193-221.

Whyte, W. F., (1993). Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum. Fourth edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wint, G. (1947). The British in Asia. London: Faber & Faber.

Yilmaz, Ihsan (2012). 'An analysis of the factors that pave the way for the radicalization of British Muslim youth from a comparative perspective' in Fauzia Ahmad & Mohammad Siddique Seddon, Muslim Youth: Challenges, Opportunities and Expectations. London: Continium.

Zahab, M. A. (2002). The regional dimension of sectarian conflicts in Pakistan. Pakistan in Christophe Jaffrelot (edited) Nationalism without a nation. London: Zed Books, pp. 115-128.

Zaman, M. Q. (2007). The ulama in contemporary Islam: custodians of change. Princeton; University of Princeton.