



**‘The perfect racism’:**

**Young citizens’ perspectives on the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’**

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## **Abstract**

The notion of 'fundamental British values' first appeared in the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition government's revised Prevent strategy in 2011. It stated that 'fundamental British values' are 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'. The following year, in 2012, the Teachers' Standards included these values and required all teachers 'not to undermine fundamental British values'. In November 2014, the Coalition government produced guidelines on promoting 'fundamental British values'. In September 2015, the newly elected Conservative government transformed this guidance to a full duty, as defined in Section 26 of the new Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This legislative journey has taken place in the context of broader social, political and economic developments in Britain and the wider world.

This qualitative research, explored young people's understandings of 'fundamental British values' within and outside of their educational settings. The empirical data was collected through five unstructured focus groups interviews with forty-six A level students aged between seventeen and nineteen. This critical realist study investigated the conditions under which 'fundamental British values' have become part of young people's educational experiences and evidenced how 'fundamental British values' form an important element of structural racism within British society. The research attempted to capture what the participants' subjective understandings could contribute to an analysis

of the social structures within which the promotion of 'fundamental British values' emerged.

Findings from the empirical data suggest that the promotion of 'fundamental British values' is underpinned by:

- the imperialist ideology of 'the war on terror';
- the colonialist conception of the 'superiority' of the 'dominant culture';
- structural racism in the education system and wider society.

This research provides new insights into the compulsory promotion of 'fundamental British values' in schools and colleges from young citizens' perspectives.

**Keywords:** Fundamental British Values, Education, Prevent, Racism, Critical Realism

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## Glossary

**Common sense (*senso commune*) knowledge:** The incoherent set of generally held assumptions and beliefs to be found in every human community generated by the dominant class and benefits for their interests. This term is used by Gramsci to 'mean the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become "common" in any given epoch'. (see Gramsci, 1986: 322-323)

**Emergence:** 'The appearance of something new; objects composed of other objects so that new structures, powers and mechanisms have appeared'. (see Danermark et al., 2002: 205)

**Epistemology:** 'From the Greek *episteme*, meaning certain knowledge as opposed to *doxa*, which indicates assumption or belief. Epistemology is one part of the theory of science. Epistemology is examination of the conditions, possibilities, nature and limits of knowledge'. (see Danermark et al., 2002: 205)

**Generative mechanisms:** 'What makes something happen in the world'. (see Danermark et al. 2002: 206)

**Good sense (*buon senso*) knowledge:** It is 'the creative spirits of people' against the incoherent assumptions of 'common sense'. This is the knowledge produced 'consciously and critically' one's own conception of the world through taking an active part in the

creation of it. This is a transformative way of generating knowledge which breaks the cycle of 'common sense' knowledge production. (see Gramsci, 1986: 322-323)

**Hegemony:** According to Gramsci, it is a condition in which a dominant class/group exercise a political, intellectual, and moral supremacy within a hegemonic system cemented by a 'common sense' world-view. (see Gramsci, 1986: 5-27)

**Intransitive / transitive dimensions:** 'The intransitive dimension is that which primarily is the object of scientific knowledge, but it can be extended to comprising all that exists, that is, the ontological side. The transitive dimension is our conception of that which exists, that is the epistemological side'. (see Danermark et al., 2002: 206)

**Ontology:** 'Notions about the nature of the world. Indicates the necessary features of that which exists. Bhaskar uses the word to designate what the nature of reality must be like for science to be possible'. (see Danermark et al., 2002: 206)

**The epistemic fallacy:** 'Reducing reality to empirical observation, that is, apprehending and defining reality as identical with empirically grounded conceptions'. (see Danermark et al., 2002: 205)

# Chapter 1

## Overview of the thesis

## 1.1 Introduction

In this chapter I provide a context and overview of the thesis. Firstly, I present the aims and the focus of the research. I then proceed to introduce the rationale for the study and I situate myself as a reflexive researcher in relation to it. Finally, this chapter provides a brief overview of the contents of the subsequent chapters comprising the thesis: my critical investigation of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’.

## 1.2 The purpose of the study

‘Fundamental British values’ are identified as *‘democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs’* (HO, 2011: 107).

The purpose of this research is to explore the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ through listening to the frequently marginalised voices of young citizens aged 16-20 from a selection of Bradford schools. The aim is to allow the unheard to be heard, as Allen reminds us: ‘we must learn to listen to the silent, and make the hidden visible’ (2005:64). In the process of making the hidden visible, I will highlight the historical, political and social perspectives which have influenced the young participants in shaping and constructing their views on ‘fundamental British values’. The research will go beyond the empirical evidence provided by the participants; it will identify the social structures which influence perceptions of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’, thus providing a deep insight. In Hiro’s (1971) words my purpose is:

general and modest: to create a better understanding of the problem by highlighting the historical perspective and providing some previously unknown information and fresh insight. If at the end of [this study] the reader feels that [s]he is able to see the wood instead of the tree, the purpose of [this study] will have been amply served. (Hiro, 1971: vii-viii)

### **1.3 The aims of the research**

The aims of this study are to critically explore:

- young peoples' understandings of 'fundamental British values';
- the historical, social, economic and political conditions under which the notion of 'fundamental British values' emerged as a compulsory element of the curriculum.

This research seeks to unravel and illuminate the links between the young people's perspectives on 'fundamental British values' and the prevailing historical, political, social and economic structures. This is achieved through the collection and analysis of qualitative empirical data obtained through field work at three research locations.

### **1.4 The background to the research**

Neither the participants nor the researcher exist in a vacuum; my history and my experiences have shaped my ideological positioning and indeed my motivation for undertaking this research. When I reflect on the discussion and debates on controversial issues between myself and my former students, when I was an FE lecturer teaching politics and citizenship, it is possible that, had the current Prevent Duty and the promotion of 'fundamental British values' existed, I may have been questioned by the college's Prevent officer regarding 'radicalisation' and 'extremism'. One of my former students, Piers Telemacque, who was a leading campaigner and national vice-president of the National Union of Students (NUS), said to a packed meeting:

if I hadn't been radicalised during my Politics and Citizenship classes at the college, I wouldn't be here talking to you about your human rights, we need more radicals not blind folded followers. We need more people standing up for their rights and

fighting back against injustice and racism and Islamophobia. We need humans not sheep. We are Black, we are Brown, we are Muslims, we are students not suspects. (Telemacque, 2015)

Since July 2015, the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ has been part of the Prevent Duty (HO, 2015). The Duty requires that lecturers, teachers, college and school staff observe any evidence of ‘radicalisation’ or ‘extremism’ amongst learners. Opposition to ‘fundamental British values’ is regarded as evidence of ‘extremism’. Whilst teachers’ perspectives on the teaching of ‘fundamental British values’ have been explored by Habib (2018), Farrell (2018, 2019), Panjwanani (2018) and Lander (2016), students’ perspectives have hitherto not been explored. I aim to bridge this gap by exploring how young people understand and experience ‘fundamental British values’ in their lives and illuminate the multifaceted explanations thereof.

### **1.5 Berxwedan Jîyane<sup>1</sup>: My personal and professional positioning**

Marx argued in his preface to the Critique of Political economy that ‘it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness’ (Marx 1977 [1859] p: V). In this regard, my positioning, ideological stance and beliefs are influenced by my social background and my position within the social structure. I would further argue that, as a researcher, I am not impartial as an individual; I am part of wider society. Indeed, my social class, ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender, sexuality and my political views will exert an influence on every aspect of my research design.

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<sup>1</sup> Kurdish: Resistance is life.



This study is the outcome of my personal and professional experiences in Turkey and the United Kingdom. It is the product of the intersections of 'biography and history, of self and world' (Mills, 2000: 10). Through remembering the past, I will be explaining the present.

## **1.6 Turkey**

I was born into a working class family in Turkey and I grew up in an industrialised, conservative city, Kayseri, in central Turkey. My father migrated from the Kurdish region of Eastern Turkey in the 1950s to seek better work opportunities. My mother was born in Kayseri; her family had migrated in the 1920s due to their land, which is in today's Azerbaijan, being seized by the Bolsheviks following the Russian Revolution. My father died at the age of 44 due to a heart attack. My father's premature death resulted in the absence of a regular income for the family so I was required to work after school, weekends and holidays to contribute to the household's basic needs. My working life began at the age of 13. Although I was the youngest, my older brother was completing his military service and my sister was not able to work.

Reflecting on my life as a young boy growing up in the 1970s and 80s, and considering my family's socioeconomic conditions, I can comprehend how the conditions and experiences of my youth have impacted on my personal and professional development in the past and in the present. For example, through exposure to the workplace at a young age, I met many interesting people who influenced me in various ways. Some of these were new immigrants from the Kurdish towns and had fresh memories of brutal oppression in their

villages and towns perpetrated by the Turkish army, following the 1980 military coup, and some were members of the persecuted religious minority, Alevis<sup>2</sup>. The most noteworthy workplace in this regard was the wholesale vegetable market in Kayseri. At the market, the shop owners were Turkish and the labourers were mostly Kurdish migrants from eastern Turkey.

In the workplace my co-workers and I discussed and debated many issues considered controversial at the time, for example religion, nationalism, revolution, left wing politics, ideologies and the question of ethnic minorities. I would not have had the opportunity to engage in this way at school due to a strict state sanctioned national curriculum designed to suppress free debate following the military coup (Altınay 2004, p:156). After the coup, the emergency government suspended parliament and the constitution and closed down political parties; their democratically elected leaders were jailed (TBMM<sup>3</sup>, 2012). The generals appointed army officers to positions to oversee the day to day running of state affairs (TBMM, 2012: 839-849). Güven (2008), Caymaz (2008) and Altınay (2004) argue that the impact of the coup on schooling and academia was severe: 3,854 teachers and lecturers were dismissed from their posts and the army clamped down on academic freedom and freedom of speech at universities and in schools (see image 1). The TBMM report on coups in Turkey identified the clamp down on freedom of speech as a systematic silencing (TBMM,2012: 839-849). My personal experience was that my parents told me not to share my own opinions at all in school<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Alevis are the heterodox Muslims.

<sup>3</sup> Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (The Grand National Assembly of Turkey)

<sup>4</sup> These are my personal experiences; similar experiences are described in the writings of Hasan Cemal, *Tank Sesiyle Uyanmak* (Waking up with the noise of tanks) (2000).



Image 1.1 – High school students leaving school at the end of a teaching day at Ferikoy High School in Istanbul<sup>5</sup>.

My after school employment became more than a job; it was a form of political activity for me and the other teenage workers. Between 1981 and 1988 I had long discussions after every work day. I developed a political outlook through conversations with my co-workers; we exchanged books, music and ideas. When I reflect on discussions and debates I had with my fellow Kurdish workers, I regard those evenings as a form of supplementary schooling. They were probably instrumental in the formation of my desire to challenge the military regime's aim which, as Yetkin (1995) identifies, was the construction of an apolitical generation through formal schooling.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ozgur-gundem.com/haber/118441/turkiyenin-uzerine-coken-34-yillik-kabus-12-eylul-darbesi-i>

In a sense, my workplaces had become the social and political educational spaces where I developed class consciousness, discovered my ethnic identity and took part in my first political activity. Above all, these workplaces were where I learned how solidarity and 'good sense knowledge' (Gramsci, 1986) are produced and how people devise means of challenging injustice in their own ways. For example, we used to 'steal' fruit and vegetables from the market to compensate for our inadequate payment; we referred to it as 'nationalisation'. One could explain this through the child worker's lens as resistance to what could be regarded as injustice. My experiences were not occurring in isolation, they were a product of a particular social, economic and historical milieu.

### **1.7 Imposed identity: Turkishness**

Spivak (1995) poses the question, 'Can the subaltern speak?'. To which she replies 'No!'. The subaltern, as an oppressed subject, cannot speak because 'the structures of oppression neither permit these voices to be heard, nor provide a space for their articulation' (Kilomba, 2010: 26). In her ethnographic study on militarism, gender and education in Turkey Altinay (2004) articulates Spivak's question as 'silencing the present'. She argues that one of the structures of oppression and the 'silencing' of ethnic minorities in Turkey was schooling (pp: 141-160). For example, between 1933 and 2013, Turkish law (COTROT, 1982) required primary school children to sing an oath every Monday morning before the start of the school day and every Friday at the end of the school week: 'I am Turkish, I am honest, I am diligent'. Children recited 'their pledge' to uphold the Turkish Republic and the principles of Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the modern Turkish republic; this culminated in shouting 'how happy is he who says I am a

Turk'. Whether one's ethnic background was Armenian, Greek, Arab or Kurd, the children of Turkish citizens had to recite this. Only foreign nationals were excluded from this practice (Radikal, 18 October 2013). Even until 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1991, speaking Kurdish was a crime punishable by law and the use of the word 'Kurd' would be grounds for a publication to be banned (Margulies, 2015) in Turkey.

I was one of those children growing up in the 1970s who chanted 'our oath'. When I reflect upon this practice in schools I recognise its impact on my identity as a member of the Kurdish minority in Turkey. The Turkish education system was endowing me with an acceptable identity: a majoritarian state sanctioned secular Turkishness. Altinay (2004) argues that the Turkish nationalist myth, the vision of belonging to the best, strongest nation in the world was propagated through the education system. Turkish values were identified by the state and the Turkish Constitution of 1982, e.g. braveness, honesty, diligence and having the greatest sense of justice. Those values have 'been entrusted by the TURKISH NATION [sic] to the democracy-loving Turkish sons' and daughters' love for the motherland and nation' (COTROT, 1982: 1). Baskaya (1991) suggests that Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (Ataturk means, Father of Turks) consciously propagated the myth that those values were an integral part of Turkish genetic make-up, running through the Turkish people's blood. The last line of Ataturk's thirty-six hour speech (over a six day span) to MPs in the Turkish Parliament between 15 and 20 October 1927 supports Baskaya's argument: 'The strength that you need is in the noble blood that flows in your veins' (Ataturk, 1969 [1927]: 898). Altinay (204) and Bruinessen (2019) note that, since the establishment of the Turkish republic in 1923, following the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Turkish nationalism has been the official state ideology in Turkey and the

prevailing vision was, and continues to be, that the Turks have to be defended against internal and external enemies at all cost.

My ideological positioning has been shaped under these social, political and economic conditions and my political outlook has, in turn shaped my view of education from the perspective of a student, then later as a trainee philosophy teacher in Istanbul, Turkey.

### **1.8 The UK**

In 1995 I emigrated to West Yorkshire in the North of England and I have, since then, been living in Keighley, a Yorkshire town. I had minimal knowledge about the area or the political situation, however it did not take long to learn that I would face discrimination in my new home in various ways: from the state, local authority, employers and people. It took twelve months to obtain a work visa, it took another six months to get my first job; my university qualifications were not recognised. I worked as a cleaner, dish washer, play worker, postal worker in Keighley and studied for my second degree at the University of Bradford between 1997 and 2001. During this period, I was involved in anti-racist political activities through the local Anti-Nazi League and became a trade union activist and a branch shop steward (1999-2001) in the Communication Workers Union at Keighley post office. These activities helped me to understand the local political situation and participate in the wider community in Bradford.

In 2001, the summer of the 'race riots' took place in a number of northern towns in England. Oldham (26th May) and Burnley (23th June) witnessed clashes between local

Asian youth and police and racist groups but the most serious clashes took place in Bradford between 7 and 9 July 2001 which resulted in the imprisonment of 200 youths for several years (Kundnani, 2001). The riot created a tense atmosphere in Bradford. The impact of 'the riot' on local communities would be felt in the coming years and it was evident that the wounds would not be healed quickly (Cantle, 2006; Finney and Simpson, 2010; Ouseley, 2001).

I graduated from Bradford University in June 2001 and I was offered a teaching post at one of the largest and ethnically diverse further education colleges in England, Bradford College (Ofsted, 2017). I taught at Bradford College for fourteen years. My first day of teaching in England was on 11 September 2001<sup>6</sup> (9/11) at Bradford College. I was excited about returning to teaching again after five years of working in various sectors. It did not cross my mind that my first day was going to be an important historical and political turning point for millions of people around the globe, including myself and my students. I was time-tabled to teach an evening AS level Government and Politics class, however I did not teach the scheduled syllabus on that day; neither myself nor the students were interested in the introduction to the course. We discussed the attacks in the USA and speculated about what might happen in the coming days, weeks, months and years for three hours without a break. We talked about many possibilities awaiting us in the UK in the near future. The discussion was heated and multidimensional. At the end of the lesson, there was consensus that the world peace we all wanted was not going to be on the agenda for some time because we were certain that there would be retaliation from

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<sup>6</sup> The day of the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in the USA (see chapter 3)

the USA and its allies. This is now known as ‘the war on terror’. Since then I have been involved in organising and campaigning against British involvement in wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria. I participated in the historically largest anti-war demonstration in London on 15 February 2003, immediately before the USA, the UK and their allies waged a war in Iraq, and the many subsequent protests. Two thirds of the learners in my class were from Pakistani Muslim backgrounds and lived in Manningham, Toller and Bradford Moor wards where over sixty percent (BMC, 2018) of the population has Pakistani Muslim heritage. The demographics of my learners did not change significantly during the fourteen years of teaching at the college.

When suicide bombings took place in London on 7 July 2005<sup>7</sup> (7/7), I was on a train from Shipley to London for a conference. Unfortunately, my hotel room looked onto the street where the number 30 bus had been blown up. I could see the wreckage of the bus; I can never forget it. I can also not forget the racist abuse I, and some of my Asian contemporaries, faced during the vigil we attended outside the Friends Meeting House in Euston, in memory of the Londoners who lost their lives, later that same day. A group of white men draped in British flags shouted at us: ‘Paki Muslim lovers’, ‘terrorists’.

Both personally and professionally, I experienced first-hand the consequences of these political events within my profession and my community. For example, I witnessed how the fascist British National Party (BNP) capitalised on the anti-Muslim sentiment following the 9/11 and 7 July 2005 attacks and gained electoral victories. The BNP campaigned

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<sup>7</sup> The day of the terrorist attacks on busses and the Underground in London (see chapter 3).



openly on an anti-Muslim ticket, gaining four council seats. Many of their candidates polled second place in the 2004 local elections. The following year, in the general election of 2005, Nick Griffin, the leader of the BNP, contested the Keighley Worth Valley seat. He gained 9.2 percent of the total votes<sup>8</sup>. One of the council seats gained by the BNP was my ward, the Worth Valley, Haworth ward. Following the election of a racist councillor, local racists gained more confidence. I was a known local anti-racist, anti-fascist campaigner so every conversation I had turned into a race issue, for example, even when talking about the weather one encounter concluded with 'if you don't like it go back to where you come from'. In 2004, my house windows in Haworth were covered with bacon rashers on the first day of Eid. My Muslim students at college reported that they had been spat on, their headscarves pulled off and that they were verbally abused on the way to college. Some of my male students stopped using rucksacks as people were staring at them on their bus journeys.

There were also national policy changes which affected teachers' day to day practices. The most important of these was the Prevent Strategy, the incorporation of anti-terrorism legislation within education, which was introduced in 2007 and updated in 2011 and 2015. I personally organised and became involved in anti-Prevent campaigning from 2011 onwards, both locally and nationally through my own trade union, the UCU. This resulted in UCU adopting an anti-Prevent position in 2015 and the Union agreed to actively campaign against the policy alongside the NUS and anti-racist organisations.

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<https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD220&ID=220&RPID=6105424&sch=doc&cat=13282&path=13282>

My teaching career began with ‘the war on terror’ and was subsequently affected by the introduction of the Prevent Strategy (HO, 2007) and the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ (HO, 2015). In reflecting on my experience of teaching and working with young people in a multicultural college in the post-9/11, ‘war on terror’<sup>9</sup> and Prevent era I recognised that schooling under Prevent resonated with my own schooling in Turkey where state sanctioned Turkishness was imposed on everybody. This research was conceived from these experiences and my ontological and epistemological approaches to this investigation have been influenced and shaped by these experiences.

### **1.9 Overview and structure of the thesis**

To set the stage for the research, **Chapter two** presents a social, economic and political history of Bradford, the location of the research. The information in this chapter explains the changes in Bradford’s demography from the nineteenth century onwards in relation to the rise and decline of the Bradford textile industry. Particular attention is paid to the role of Asian immigrants in relation to social and political changes in the city.

In **Chapter three** I critically explore causal links between the introduction of ‘fundamental British values’ and political and social events in the particular historical context. This chapter presents the emergence of the ideology of ‘the war on terror’, ‘the clash of civilisations’, the new ‘enemy within’, namely the Muslims, and Prevent. I trace the possible causes behind different interpretations of the notion of ‘fundamental British

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<sup>9</sup> See chapters 3 and 4.

values' by combining Roy Bhaskar's critical realist approach with the concepts of 'Othering' and 'hegemony'.

**Chapter four** provides a critical investigation of the ontological framework of 'fundamental British values'. This chapter focuses on the literature produced in the political space of education and how the notion of 'fundamental British values' is utilised both within and outside the education system. Specifically, I critically consider the nature of complex interpretations and applications of 'fundamental British values' in relation to production and re-production of the new racialised 'Muslim Other' and 'hegemonic British culture'. Particular attention is paid to Edward Said and Antonio Gramsci, whose works provided the conceptual tools utilised in my analysis.

**Chapter five** presents the philosophical and methodological framework of the study. I begin with a brief history of critical realist ontological and epistemological approaches to research. This chapter introduces readers to the general concepts and processes of critical realist research. Particular attention is paid to the separation of ontology and epistemology. Critical realist ontology considers that social reality exists as 'mind independent', that it is multi-layered and one can only know the social reality indirectly through one's interpretation of it. This chapter explains and justifies the methods used to conduct and analyse qualitative research with young people in Bradford.

**Chapter six** presents a methodological design using the practical application of the critical realist approach to research in the field of education. There is little research utilising critical realist methodology in educational research. This chapter will empower

researchers seeking to apply a critical realist methodology in educational research, in particular, those seeking a critical realist analytical framework. The chapter outlines the process of identifying the emergent contrastive demi-regularities and the substantive generative relations which are the necessary conditions under which 'fundamental British values' emerged.

**Chapters seven, eight and nine present** the emergence of three substantive generative relations from the empirical findings of the research. Chapter seven illustrates the link between 'fundamental British values' and 'the war on terror'. Chapter eight demonstrates that the notion of 'fundamental British values' is a structural tool which serves to reinforce the dominant culture. Chapter nine traces the link between 'fundamental British values' and structural racism.

**Chapter ten** employs the three emerged substantive generative relations to facilitate a deeper understanding of the promotion of 'fundamental British values'. As such, the chapter presents the critical realist process of retrodution. This process involves continual dialectical relations between the empirical level reality and the research analysis and conclusions at the deeper level. Ultimately, through a critical realist analysis of the empirical data in chapters seven, eight and nine, it became possible to identify the imperialist ideology of 'the war on terror', the promotion of hegemonic culture and structural racism as necessary conditions for the emergence of the notion of 'fundamental British values'.

The final chapter, **eleven**, contains a critical summary of my principal findings. It suggests directions for future research about 'fundamental British values' and discusses limitations of my research. Critical realist research strives for positive social change and social justice. Coherent with this aim, chapter eleven suggests policy implications and practical directions for future policy which is attentive to the needs of multicultural education in Britain.

## Chapter 2

### Why Bradford?

## **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a brief exploration of Bradford's social and economic conditions in order to provide an understanding of why it was selected as the location for the study.

Bradford is the fourth largest metropolitan city (in terms of population) in England with a population of 528,200, many of whom are from diverse ethnic backgrounds. 36.1 percent of its total population are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME). The district has the largest proportion of people of Pakistani ethnic origin (20.3 percent) in England. Nearly one quarter of the population (24.7 percent) are Muslim. The largest religious group in Bradford is Christian (45.9 percent of the population). Bradford also has one of the youngest populations in England, 23.6 per cent of the population is under 16 years old (BMC, 2017).

## **2.2 Multicultural Bradford**

Bradford was an important industrial town and, like other industrialised towns in England, its history is interwoven with British colonialism. The mills in Bradford and Keighley processed wool and cotton imported from all parts of the British Empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of Bradford's mills were the largest of their kind; Manningham (Listers) Mill was the largest silk mill in the world where 11,000 men, women and children were employed at its peak (BBC, 2014). Bradford was a centre of textile excellence (Valentine, 2006:3). This played an important role in attracting immigrants from different parts of the world (Ansari, 2004).

Bradford's ethnically diverse demography has evolved throughout the twentieth century. Various immigrant communities settled in the city including Irish, German, Jewish, Polish, Ukrainian and Italian peoples. Bradford writer, J.B. Priestly, in his book *'English Journey'* refers to Bradford's multicultural nineteenth, and much of the twentieth, century:

... mid-Victorian periods, a number of German and German-Jewish merchants, ...came to settle in the town. Bradford became - as it still remained when I was a boy there [1914] - at once one of the most provincial and yet one of the most cosmopolitan of English provincial cities. (Priestly, [1933]1994: 158)

A hundred years on from Priestley's childhood experience, Bradford remains a cosmopolitan city. Bradford's most lively areas remain those where immigrant communities opened cafés, restaurants and sweet and fashion shops. Areas such as Manningham, Leeds Road, Great Horton Road display a thriving multiculturalism.

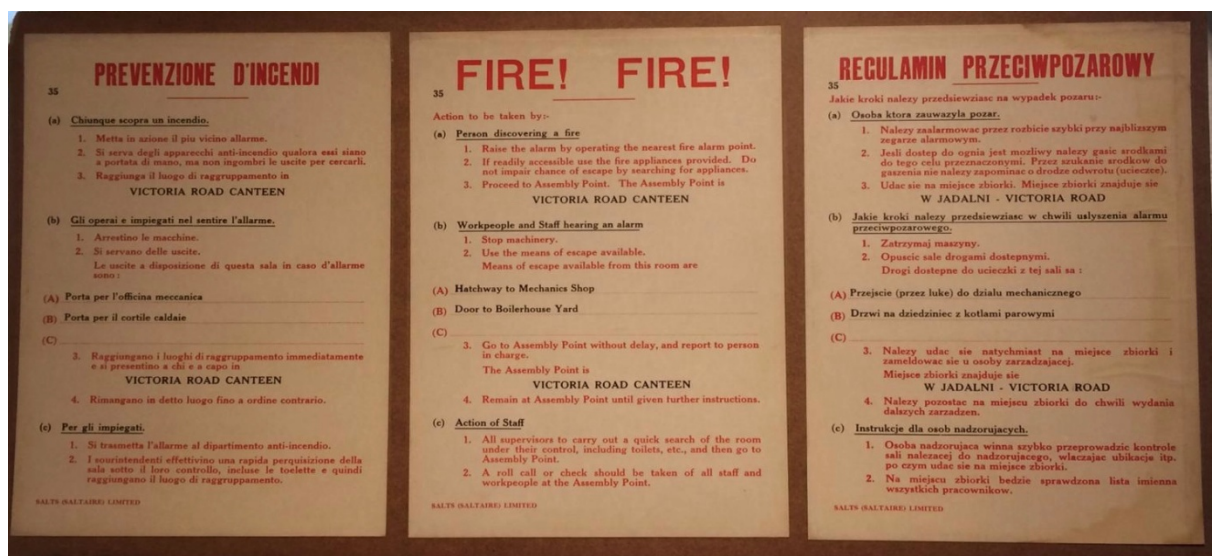


Image 2.1 A health and safety poster from the 1930s in Italian, English and Polish at Salts Mill, Shipley, Bradford.

The immigration pattern changed after the Second World War. From the 1940s onwards, workers from the Asian sub-continent migrated to Bradford to work in textile mills and foundries (Winder, 2004). This was the beginning of what Lord Parekh called a 'multi-



ethnic, multi-faith, multi-cultural, multi-community society' (Parekh, 2000). Since the fifth expansion of the European Union in 2004, Eastern European immigrants from Poland, Bulgaria, Romania and Latvia have settled in Bradford.

Bradford's immigration pattern is not unique, it has similarities with other multicultural industrial areas such as Manchester<sup>10</sup>, Birmingham<sup>11</sup> or Kirklees<sup>12</sup>. Birmingham and Bradford also rank the highest in the Government's Prevent funding list (see chapter 3 for a detail discussion on Prevent); Kirklees and Manchester occupy fifth and sixth place respectively (Kundnani, 2009: 13). Kundnani (2009) argues that the allocation of funding was based on the percentage of Muslims living in an area: the more Muslims, the more funding. The most recent race riot in July 2001 put Bradford at the heart of the 'segregated communities' debate (Finney and Simpson, 2009).

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[https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/4220/corporate\\_research\\_and\\_intelligence\\_population\\_publications](https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/4220/corporate_research_and_intelligence_population_publications)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/183446/cyp-jsna-chapter-one-setting-the-context.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/information-and-data/pdf/minority-ethnic-groups.pdf>

In 2017 Bradford's population of Pakistani ethnic origin was concentrated in the following council wards:

Ward	Pakistani Population %
Toller	72.3
Bradford Moor	63.9
Manningham	60.3
Heaton	49.7
Little Horton	48.5
Keighley Central	43.3
City	42.7

Table 2.1

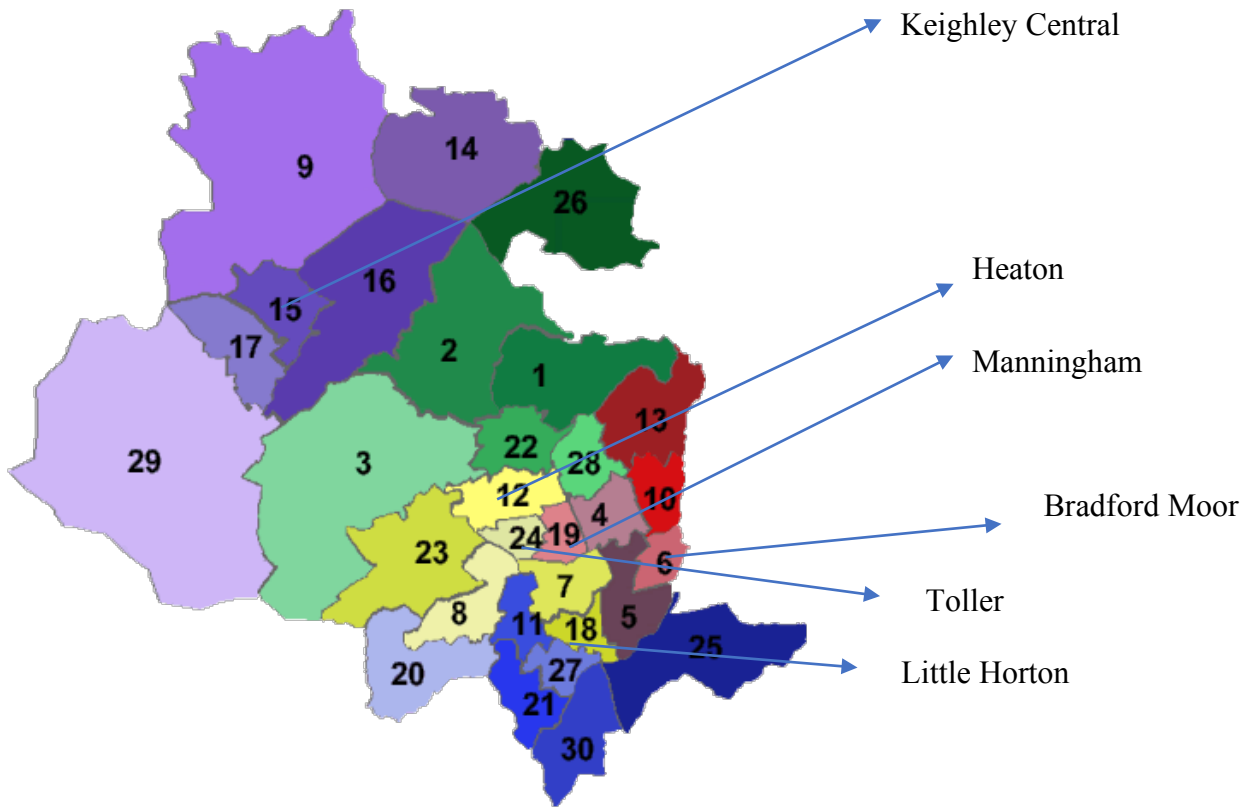


Image 2.2 Map of Bradford council wards (BMC, 2017)

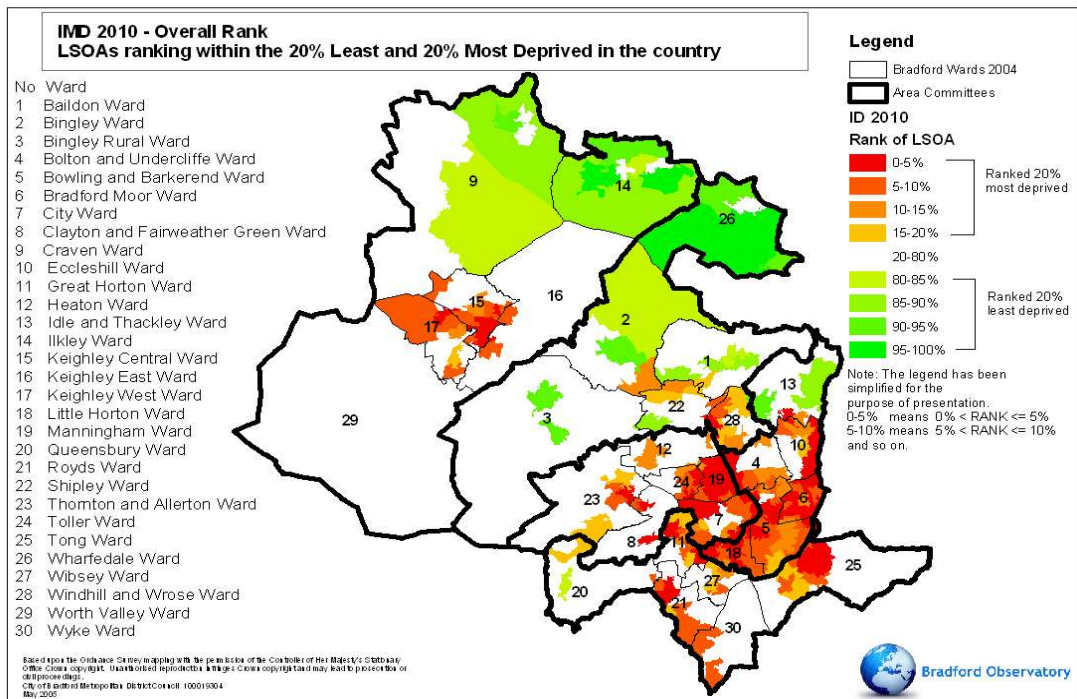


Image 2.3 Map of social deprivation in Bradford (BMC, 2017)

### 2.3 The struggle for social change

Historically Bradford's Pakistani, and Asian population in general, has been an active community in campaigning for minority rights in England. Their campaigns have resulted in positive developments. For example, the Bradford Council for Mosques, supported by the City Council through grants, was constituted in 1981 and negotiated for religious and social rights (Ansari, 2004: 235). In 1982 the Bradford Muslim population successfully campaigned for the provision of halal meat for Muslim students, with Bradford local authority becoming the first council to introduce halal meat into its school meal services (Ansari, 2004). In 1985 Britain's first Asian mayor was elected in Bradford (Finney and Simpson, 2009).

This does not mean that, in the 1980s, everything was fine in Bradford. Bradford, and the UK in general, was undergoing economic and social change. The decline in industry and the closure of many mills created high unemployment. This affected the whole of Bradford's population but, in particular, the Asian population as many of them were employed in the mills (Ansari, 2004). Unemployment remains high amongst the Asian population. According to Bradford Metropolitan Council, 58.4 percent of the Pakistani population lives in deprived neighbourhoods and unemployment among 25-49 year olds is greater amongst the Pakistani population than amongst the White British population living outside Bradford's deprived neighbourhoods (BMC, 2017).

Immigrant communities faced cultural and social pressures alongside their economic strains. The infamous anti-multicultural 'Honeyford Affair' occurred in 1984. Ray

Honeyford (2006 [1984]), a middle school head teacher, wrote a series of articles arguing that Asian culture was not compatible with modern British life. This was 'racism' of a 'new kind' (Barker, 1981; Gilroy, 1987), 'culture' was replacing 'race'. I would argue that this 'new kind of racism' contained the seeds of today's anti-Muslim racism<sup>13</sup> (see chapters 3, 4 and 10 for more discussion on anti-Muslim racism). Honeyford also argued that if White children were the minority in a classroom with a majority of Asian children, this would be detrimental to the White children's education. Scruton (2014) argued in the Spectator that Honeyford was right about the cultural and religious differences of the immigrant Muslim community and the problems this may cause for the population of Bradford and for the rest of the UK. The Salman Rushdie Affair in 1989, and the reaction to it, a public burning of his book *the Satanic Verses*, put Bradford at the centre of national media attention. Bradford also experienced riots, particularly amongst youth from the Asian population, in the summers of 1995 and 2001. Finney and Simpson (2009: 122) have argued that both riots were responses to inequalities, poverty and activities of racist and fascist organisations such as Combat 18, the National Front and the British National Party. Since August 2010 the English Defence League (EDL) has been organising rallies in Bradford.

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<sup>13</sup> Although 'Islamophobia' is the widely-used term, I utilise 'anti-Muslim racism' in this research in order to emphasise its structural nature. The term 'Islamophobia' leads to confusion as Islam is a religion, a system of beliefs not a race therefore some claim that criticism of Islam is not racism. This argument ignores the real impact of Islamophobia that Muslims experience in their day to day lives. Hence, the latest Runnymede (2017) report on Islamophobia described Islamophobia as anti-Muslim racism.

## 2.4 Chapter summary

The implementation of the Prevent Strategy and Duty (HO, 2015) in delivering 'fundamental British values' in schools has implications for Bradford's young citizens (23.6 percent of Bradford's population is under 16). National policies frequently ignore the views of young people on issues directly affecting them. This research will shed light on the views of this often neglected group on 'fundamental British values'. Bradford's ethnic, social and historical background makes the city a suitable location for this research.

## Chapter 3

From 'the war on terror'  
to 'fundamental British values'

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a critical review of the Prevent Strategy which was the catalyst for the notion of ‘fundamental British values’. It traces the Prevent Strategy’s origins and the conditions under which it emerged as a government policy. The first section of this chapter is a critical exploration and analysis of the international context which gave rise to the introduction of the Prevent Strategy in the UK. The second section is a critical investigation of the Prevent Strategy and its implementation within the education system.

### **3.2 The emergence of Prevent**

The 9/11 and 7/7 attacks altered the UK government’s policies in relation to national security and challenging terrorism at home and abroad (Kundnani, 2015, 2017; Qureshi, 2017). Although anti-terrorism laws had been repeatedly revised by successive governments prior to these events, nonetheless the events impacted significantly on the state’s efforts to define, explain and tackle terrorism and its causes (Qureshi, 2017). Following the 9/11 attacks, the UK government, under the Labour Party (1997-2010), developed its first comprehensive counter terrorism strategy in 2003. It was known as CONTEST (HO, 2009).

CONTEST contains four key areas: Pursue, Prevent, Protect, Prepare (HO, 2011). The ‘Prevent’ aspect of the strategy concentrates on the ‘pre-crime’ space. This involves preventing individuals becoming terrorists in the future. It is also known as the de-radicalisation programme. This strategy attracted increased attention when some young



British school students travelled to Syria to join Islamic State (ISIS) in 2014 (Holmwood & O’Toole, 2018). Although the Prevent Strategy was known and used in different ways, such as community projects, youth projects etc. (see below for a detailed discussion), its de-radicalisation element was not utilised as much as the Home Office had intended (HO, 2011; Holmwood & O’Toole, 2018). Hence, in 2011, Teresa May, who was then the Home Secretary, criticised the Labour Party in the updated version of the Prevent Strategy (HO, 2011) for not implementing Prevent properly.

The UK government’s aim was to address ‘home grown terrorism’ at a stage before people become drawn into it. Since publication of the revised version of the Prevent Strategy in 2011<sup>14</sup> a considerable amount of academic writing on the Prevent Strategy was produced (Busher et al., 2017; Holmwood & O’Toole, 2018). This programme has attracted both criticism and support from academics, politicians, civil rights movements and trade unions (UCU, 2017; UN, 2018; Runnymede, 2016). The main criticism of the Prevent Strategy is that it targets, and is potentially discriminatory against, the Muslim population. Murtuja and Tufail (2017) argue that its practical implementation can be interpreted as anti-Muslim racism.

Successive governments (Labour, 1997-2010; Conservative and Liberal Democrats Coalition 2010-2015; Conservative 2015-2017; Conservative 2017-present) have adopted the tactic of utilising the education system to tackle the threat of terrorism (Farrell, 2018; Fekete, 2017; Holmwood and O’Toole, 2018; Kundnani, 2017; Lander, 2016; Sian, 2013).

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<sup>14</sup> By the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition government

In effect, education institutions have become the frontline of national security policies as teachers are required to identify any sign of 'extremism' and 'radicalisation' amongst students and report it to the Prevent officer (Bunglawala, 2017; Qureshi, 2017). A number of scholars have argued that the Ajebo Report (2007) was the first attempt to make a direct link between challenging terrorism and strengthening national identity and British values through secondary schooling (Osler, 2008:12). Whilst others have argued that it was a necessary move to create a unified British identity to fill the gap which the multicultural education system had created for so long (Cameron, 2011; Gove 2015; Philips, 2006).

### **3.3 From the 'war on terror' to Prevent: International context**

The Prevent Strategy, as part of the wider counter terrorism strategy, was not designed in a vacuum (Ahmed, 2013; Callinicos, 2013; Hussain & Bagguley 2012; Kundnani, 2015; Massoumi et al., 2017). The pretext for the Prevent Strategy was the 9/11 attacks in the USA and subsequently the declaration of the 'war on terror' (Kumar, 2012; 2017). Tony Benn, the former Labour MP for Chesterfield, notes in his diary on 11 September 2001:

I've seen American planes on television bombing Hanoi and bombing Baghdad and bombing Belgrade, but never thought I'd see New York being bombed. I think this is going to have a profound effect on thinking of people about politics and peace. (Benn, 2007: 6)

His prediction was insightful. In many ways, the trajectory of world affairs has shifted significantly since the 9/11 attacks in the United States. Donald Rumsfeld, then the Secretary of Defence (2001-2006), and George Bush, the President of the USA, (2001-

2009) explicitly stated that they would do anything and everything to punish the terrorists responsible. Rumsfeld stated: 'I don't care what the international lawyer [sic] says', and Bush backed him by declaring: 'we are going to kick some ass' (cited in Ahmed, 2013: 183). The 'war on terror' was declared in defence of 'our way of life' (Bush, 2001). And this 'war on terror' is still with us.

Scholars have argued that the 'war on terror' was a 'good excuse' to justify US imperialism and the consolidation of its power base in the Middle East (Callinicos, 2003; 2009; 2010; Chomsky, 2003; Pilger, 2003). Herring and Stokes (2011) argue that one of the most important legacies of the 'war on terror' is 'the elevation of "counterterrorism" to the status of a central dogma of governance' (2011: 6). The 'counterterrorism' terminology has had some profound effects in many countries. The Turkish government has used the term in its oppression of the Kurds (Margulies, 2015), the Israeli State justified its attacks on Palestinians as counterterrorist operations (Pape, 2009). The Chinese government's ban on Muslim 'appearances' e.g long beards, amongst young Muslim Uighur Turks was in the name of counterterrorism<sup>15</sup> and, recently, the Burmese government referred to their 'war on terror' when it was criticised for its mistreatment of the Muslim Rohingya minority (Smith, 2017).

The terminology resurrected in the post-9/11 period such as: 'defending democracy', 'our way of life', 'freedom of speech' and 'tolerance' has been utilised by past US Presidents prior to 9/11 during times of imperialist invasions. Callinicos (2003) and Kumar (2012)

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-45474279>

argue that such liberal terminology has been a smoke screen for the US and its allies; a tool, continued from the cold war era (see section 3.3.1), to propagate their 'free market capitalism' ideology and consolidate US hegemony (Callinicos, 2003) in different parts of the world. The West's<sup>16</sup> post-9/11 internal and external politics has provided justification for numerous governments' oppression of their citizens in the name of counter terrorism (Callinicos, 2003, 2010; Kumar, 2012; Sayyid, 2015). However, the most profound contribution of the notion of the 'war on terror' in the Western world has been the creation of a new 'enemy within and abroad': Islam and the Muslims (Kundnani, 2015). The politics of 'counter terrorism' has been externally materialised through the US and its allies' foreign policy activity, such as the invasions of Afghanistan (2002) and Iraq (2003). Its internal dimension has been the rise and acceptance of anti-Muslim racism.

### **3.4 The changing face of the 'enemy within' and abroad**

Kumar (2012) argues that, during the post-war period, the main identified 'enemy' for the USA was the USSR (United States of Soviet Republics) and the communist ideology. This viewpoint was common to the state apparatuses of the USA and its allies around the world (Harman, 1999b; Hobsbawm, 1994). This epoch is known as 'the Cold War' period (1947-1989). The establishment of the defence body, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), was the materialisation of the view that the Western World was under threat from the Eastern bloc, led by the USSR (Harman, 1999b). It reflected a power struggle between highly-militarised super powers. Chomsky (2001, 2016) and

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<sup>16</sup> The West refers to the USA, the North America, the European Union, Australia.

Pilger (1999) argue that the US administrations would have supported any regimes that were anti-Communist anywhere in the world, hence, the US and its allies supported the governments of Pinochet in Chile, Mubarak in Egypt and the Islamist fighters, the Mujahedeen, in Afghanistan. Their commonality was that they were all anti-communists (Chomsky 2016; Pilger, 1999, 2002). US policy was to intervene in any country which looked likely to be falling into the hands of a left-wing government or communist sympathisers (Harman, 1999b). They did so in Korea in 1950-53, Vietnam in 1955-75, Chile in 1974 and Cuba in 1956 and many more. These Cold War aims have extended into US policy in the Middle East being determined by the extent of a regime's alignment with US interests (Kumar, 2012).

US support for anti-Communist regimes continued until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Eastern Block in the early 1990s. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall, Fukuyama (1989) argued that Western style liberal democracy had conquered all other rival ideologies, such as hereditary monarchy, fascism and communism. In 1992 he went further, stating: 'the ideal of liberal democracy could not be improved on' (Fukuyama, 1992: XI). He contended that free market capitalism is the only viable economic system and that, sooner or later, every country must accept its superiority. The fall of the Berlin Wall signified the end of the Cold War and became the symbol of the victory of 'liberal democracy' over economic and political ideologies, such as socialism and communism (Fukuyama, 1992; Lewis, 1990). This viewpoint has become the accepted vision of the capitalist West (the USA, the North America, the European Union, Australia) in the post-Cold War period to the present.

Bernard Lewis<sup>17</sup> in his article *'The Roots of Muslim rage'* (1990), argues that, following the victory of Western liberal democracy, future conflicts will not be between political ideologies, but between cultures and religion (Lewis, 1990). He identified the new enemy for the West as Islam. Islam was a 'backward', 'unevolved' religion and Muslims were its 'raging', angry followers. He called this conflict 'a clash of civilisations'<sup>18</sup> (Lewis, 1990: 56). I would argue that Lewis represents what Said (2003) described as orientalism<sup>19</sup>. His orientalist views capitalised on the notion of 'inherited rage of the Islam' (Lewis, 1990: 59). He wrote:

There is something in the religious culture of Islam which inspired, in even the humblest peasant or peddler, a dignity and a courtesy toward others never exceeded and rarely equalled in other civilisations. And yet, in moments of upheaval and disruption, when deeper passions are stirred, this dignity and courtesy toward others can give way to an explosive mixture of rage and hatred ... (Lewis, 1990: 59)

Lewis's essay was no more than justification of the West's superiority over the 'backward barbarians' as espoused by the colonialists in the past (Said, 2003). He argues throughout that Christian teaching has been advancing over centuries, e.g. by separating Church from the state, which in his view made Christian communities more civilised. His essay was constructed against the backdrop of the changing face of racism in the 1980s in the Western world. During this period racism, as a dynamic phenomenon, shifted its emphasis from colour' to 'culture', 'creed' and 'religion' in the US, Britain and Europe

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<sup>17</sup> A leading British/American neo-conservative historian in Middle East history and politics.

<sup>18</sup> The phrase itself used before Bernard Lewis see B. Matthews, 1928, *Young Islam on Trek: A Study in the Clash of Civilisations*. Church Missionary society

<sup>19</sup> Orientalism is a Eurocentric view that people and cultures outside of Europe are less worthy and inferior to European civilisation. Orientalism also 'Others' and exoticises non-European cultures.

(Barker, 1981; Gilroy, 1987; Feteke, 2012; Taras, 2013). 'The clash of civilisations' was the manifestation of an emerging new form of racism: anti-Muslim racism (or *Islamophobia*). The US and Western governments already had their reasons to justify hostility towards some Muslim countries. The Iranian (Islamic) Revolution in 1979 and the Salman Rushdie Affair in the UK (1989) were enough to legitimise the West's hostility to Islam, but they were selective in identifying their targeted countries. The West's Muslim allies were not targeted, for example, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey were presented as friendly countries (Kumar, 2012).

The notion of 'clash of civilisations' was later addressed by another influential neo-conservative Harvard professor, Samuel Huntington, and developed into a more-or-less coherent theory. In 1993 he published an essay titled, 'The Clash of Civilisations?'. It was a response to his former student, Francis Fukuyama's, book, *The end of History and the Last Man* (1992). Huntington's essay was later expanded to book-length. In it he argued that changes in the political climate had created a new historic phase whereby the primary struggle would be between the 'Christian West' and the 'Islamic East'. This was a logical continuation of Lewis's argument. Huntington has also argued that Muslims have a 'high propensity to resort to violence' (Huntington, 1996: 258). This essay was written after the first Gulf War<sup>20</sup> when Western powers, under the leadership of the US, attacked Iraq in defence of Kuwait which Iraq had invaded.

The West portrayed their war against Iraq in terms of democracies fighting against tyranny and the irrational ideology of Saddam Hussain, President of Iraq and the West's

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<sup>20</sup> The Persian Gulf War began with the US led air offensive known as Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

former ally in the war against Iran (Harman, 1999b; Kumar 2012). Once again, the West had the burden of delivering civilisation to the Middle East. I would argue that this was consistent with Western portrayals of the colonised Muslim countries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as ‘barbaric’, ‘uncivilised’ tribes (Fromkin, 1989; Harman 1999a). During the late twentieth century, these stereotypes were being revived (Harman, 1999b). Lewis, Huntington and Fukuyama were all influential thinkers amongst the neo-conservative<sup>21</sup> political circle. Huntington was adviser to the US government on security issues during the Carter administration (1977-1981), Lewis advised the G.W. Bush administration (2001-2009) and Fukuyama was influential during the Reagan administration and was involved in the theorisation of the Reagan Doctrine<sup>22</sup> (1981-1989). Their theoretical views aligned closely with successive US administrations and their defence and foreign policies. As the NATO secretary-general Willy Claes claimed in 1995:

Muslim Fundamentalism is at least as dangerous as communism was. Please do not underestimate the risk...because it represents terrorism, religious fanaticism and exploitation of social and economic justice... (Cited in Haynes, 2004: 2)

However, the same people who were criticising Muslim fundamentalism had trained the Mujahedeen of Afghanistan against the Russians between 1979 and 1989 (Callinicos, 2003; Kundnani, 2015). The US and its allies’ foreign policies were determined by

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<sup>21</sup> Someone whose politics are conservative or right wing, who believes strongly in the free market and thinks that their country should use its military power to become involved with or try to control problems in other countries.

<sup>22</sup> The Reagan Doctrine was a strategy used during the Reagan administration (1981-1989) against the Communist threat. The USA provided overt and covert aid to anti-communist groups and governments in Africa, Asia and Latin America.



prevailing ideological positions in the post-war era and this has continued to the present day.

The US administrations' and Western governments' relationship with Islam and Muslims has internal and external dimensions. Externally, the US and the West have been supportive of some Muslim countries since the end of the second world war - as long as they were useful to Western interests (Harman, 1999b). Internally, these governments' treatment of Muslim citizens did not differ from that of any other minority group either in the USA or in the West; they were discriminated against in various ways (Kumar, 2012; Kundnani 2015). However, the process of 'othering' Muslims in the USA and the West intensified following the hostage crisis in Iran after the revolution in 1979<sup>23</sup> (Ahmad, 2013). The public representation of Muslims and the Islamic world re-emerged as that of 'uncivilised', 'angry' and 'barbaric' people (Said, 1997). This colonialist perception was re-packaged as 'the clash of civilisations' for the Western public which Negri and Hardt (2000), Harvey (2003) and Callinicos (2009; 2010) all argue was one way of justifying the West's new imperialism in the Middle East. The 'new' – at the same time a continuation of the past- representation of Muslims and Islam in the media was part of the new-imperialism.

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<sup>23</sup> The occupation of the US embassy in Tehran by students allied to Khomeini in November 1979 changed the political atmosphere. The students held 51 US citizens hostage in November 1979 and the siege ended in January 1980. The siege was televised around the western world.

### 3.5 The representation of Muslims and Islam in the West

The changing public perception of Islam and Muslims finds its historic roots in the West's colonial past in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Said (1997) argued that the representation of Islam and Muslims in the public sphere has been 'Orientalist' and therefore selective. This argument has been prominent in the broadcast media (Ahmad, 2013; Poole, 2002, 2011; Said, 1997). Marxists have argued similarly that the media portrayals of Islam and Muslims have been determined by the wider political agenda of Western governments towards the Middle East (Hobsbawm, 1994, 1997; Harvey, 2003; Harman, 1999, 1999a). According to Marxist historians and social theorists, this was not an accidental development, as the Middle East was colonised by the French and the British after the First World War, to be replaced by the domination of the United States after World War Two (Callinicos, 2003, 2010; Harvey, 2003). Marxist theorist, Harman (2002), claimed that the 9/11 terrorist attacks provided the opportunity for the West to propagate the (post) colonialist notion of the 'barbaric' teachings of Islam and the Muslims as its 'inherently raging' (Huntington, 1996) followers. They have all highlighted the historical continuity of Western foreign policy in the Middle East as an important factor in their analysis. The important factor in this analysis is that the West ('occident') needed to portray their own side as 'civilised' and 'the defender of democracy', in contrast to the Muslims in the Middle Eastern states (excluding the state of Israel) and other Muslim countries, as people needing to be saved from tyranny (Butler, 2016). Poole's (2002, 2011) research on how Muslims have featured in the British media in the pre- and post-9/11 periods illustrates a continuation of negative representations of Muslims and Islam. Poole (2011) argues that the media played a substantial role in the

reproduction of political power through the negative representation of the Islamic world and Muslims, who were singled out because of their 'religion' and 'culture'. In the pre-9/11 period the coverage was mainly related to immigration control and the negative impact of Muslim immigration on British society. However, Poole's (2011) investigations demonstrated that the media was already homogenising Muslims. She wrote: 'in articles about British Muslims world events were frequently cited reinforcing ideas about a worldwide collective and having a homogenising effect... they [*Muslims*] could all be understood in the same way' (Poole, 2011: 50-51). In a Gramscian (1986) sense the media was fulfilling its role as a producer of 'common sense knowledge' about Muslims, reinforcing the hegemonic political viewpoint. This is a discursive process of 'othering'. Hall (1997) argues that the continuation of negative reporting of immigrant and ethnic minority groups in the UK finds its roots in Britain's colonial past. Hall (1997; 2016), Gilroy (1981, 2011), Barker (1987), Young (2016) and Kundnani (2017) all argue that, while racist ideas were being re-shaped, and adapted from 'skin colour' to 'culture' or 'religion' according to changes in the national and global politics, their essence, racism, never changed.

The Iranian revolution of 1979 illustrates how the western media re-shaped their image of Muslims during and after the revolution. The Daily Mail (3 December 1979) reported the Iranian student demonstration in London with phrases such as 'That Hate-filled Demonstration', and 'Muslim hordes', and highlighted a banner that read: 'I am ready for martyrdom' (cited in Ahmed, 2013: 189). Ahmed (2013: 189) argues that the newspaper was conveying the message that 'Islam as a creed is bloodthirsty and inhumane'. This style of journalism about the revolution set the scene for contemporary negative and

stereotypical representations of Islam and future anti-Muslim racism (Allen: 2010). As

Said observed:

Since the events in Iran caught European and American attention so strongly...they have portrayed [Islam], characterised it, analysed it ... licensing not only patent inaccuracy but also expression of unrestrained ethnocentrism, cultural and even racial hatred. (Said, 1997: XI)

The Iranian Revolution was also a direct challenge to American hegemony in the Middle East and so it needed to be confronted. Hence, the superior 'Occident' had to teach the inferior 'Orient' how to behave. This challenge determined future foreign policies of the US and the UK in the region which, again, laid the ground for framing contemporary notions regarding Muslims and Islam in the western world (Harman, 1999a).

Since the Iranian revolution the US and its allies have been reinforcing the new imperialism by various means in the Middle East. Pilger (1999), after the first Gulf war (1991), argued that the West's foreign policies in the Middle East would result in negative repercussions in the future.

Jean Paul Sartre's writing on French imperialism in 1961 serves as a useful explanation for the 9/11 attacks. He said:

it is the moment of the boomerang; it is the third face of violence; it comes back on us, it strikes us, and we do not realise any more than we did the other times that it's we that have launched it. (Sartre, 2001 [1961]: 17)

If the 9/11 terrorist attacks were the US's 'boomerang moment', the 7/7 attacks in London could be considered Britain's equivalent. Ali (2005), German and Murray (2005) and Kundnani (2015) cite the years of interventionist British foreign policies and the

British government's unconditional support for Bush's 'war on terror' as the significant factor resulting in these attacks. The attacks have also influenced how Muslims and Islam are portrayed in print and broadcast media. Lewis' and Huntington's notion of the international 'raging Muslim' became 'the Muslim terrorist'. In Britain, Poole's (2011) fifteen year analysis of the representation of Muslims revealed that, following the 9/11 attacks, both the tabloid and broadsheet media shifted their interest from the international 'raging Muslim' to Muslims in Britain (2011: 55-56). This was a significant shift because, following 9/11 and 7/7, Muslimness and anything linked to Islam became an important racial signifier in the Western world.

Nilüfer Göle (2017) argued in her book, *The Daily Lives of Muslims*, that, since the 9/11 attacks and subsequent Islamist terrorist attacks in European cities, Muslim visibility in the public sphere has been regarded as problematic for Western societies. This has led Muslims to be treated differently in their day to day lives, with Islam being racialised<sup>24</sup>.

Many (Fekete, 2009; Kundnani, 2007, 2015, 2017; Qureshi, 2017) have also argued that racialisation of Islam has become the acceptable face of racism in the Western world.

According to Massoumi et al. (2017) the West's anti-Muslim and anti-Islam sentiment has been nothing but a continuation of the structural racism of Western societies.

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<sup>24</sup> As Garner and Selod (2014: 12) outline: 'The process of racialisation entails ascribing sets of characteristics viewed as inherent to members of a group because of their physical or cultural traits. These are not limited to skin tone or pigmentation, but include a myriad of attributes including cultural traits such as language, clothing, and religious practices. The characteristics thus emerge as "racial" as an outcome of the process...Muslims have historically been one of these groups that experience racism, as have other faith-based groups, most obviously Jews. Their racialisation is accomplished not only by reference to religion but other aspects of culture such as physical appearance (including but not limited to dress).'

Lean (2012), Tyrer (2013), Kundnani (2015) argue that Western governments' post-9/11 anti-terror legislation, which focuses on Islamic terrorism, has been legitimised by the media representation of Muslims in the West. In the UK, following the 9/11 and 7/7 terror attacks, the Prevent strategy emerged as a part of the anti-terrorism legislation (CONTEST). The Prevent strategy has become one of the most debated parts of CONTEST. It was supported by the UK state apparatus and propagated by state sponsored organisations and anti-Muslim think tanks (Griffing et al., 2017; Marusek, 2017). It has been heavily criticised by academics (Farrell, 2016; Kundnani, 2015; Lander 2016; Poole 2002; Sian, 2013; Virdee, 2015), human- and civil rights campaigners (Cage, 2016; IHRC, 2015,2016, 2017; MEND 2016), trade unions (NUT, 2016, 2017; UCU, 2015, 2016) and members of Muslim communities (Muslim Council of Britain, 2014). Hence, any examination of the emergence and implementation of the strategy needs to consider the complex political, economic, social and historical changes taking place in the background.

### **3.6 Prevent, the 'toxic brand': National context**

There has been a burgeoning interest in research concerning the 'Prevent Duty' and its impact on education (Kundnani, 2015; Busher et al., 2017). Since 2007 CONTEST has provided funding opportunities for academics, think-tanks and local organisations, creating what could be regarded as a 'Prevent' industry. Although the annual Prevent budget is not officially announced, according to the BBC, it is around £40 million per year (June 2017 estimate)<sup>25</sup>. The pro-Prevent *Quilliam Foundation*, the *Henry Jackson Society*

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2017-40151991>

and *Inspire* have been recipients of Prevent funding (Kundnani, 2009). There were 7,500 referrals to Prevent's deradicalisation scheme between March 2015 and March 2016. Fifty-four percent of these were related to Islamic extremism (Sky News, 27 December 2016) and the programme's anti-radicalisation training reached 42,000 people in the same period (BBC, 4 June 2017).

The Prevent strategy operates as a 'pre-crime' intervention tool within CONTEST. It aims to prevent individuals becoming terrorists in the future. It is within this space that communities directly interface with CONTEST. In its earlier incarnation it was a programme to mobilise (Muslim) communities against the ideology of violent extremism, with central government allocating a large budget for some local councils to carry out 'targeted capacity building of Muslim communities'. Events and courses were organised, particularly for young people, women and mosques. In 2015 the Prevent Strategy became a duty<sup>26</sup>, a part of the *Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015*, which requires teachers, library workers, school administrative staff, GPs, social workers and other professionals to play an active role in countering terrorism. It required public sector workers to report to the dedicated Prevent officers people who they suspected of being at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Whilst the Prevent Duty applies to the whole public sector, this section will examine its utilisation in schools, colleges and universities.

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<sup>26</sup> This was a significant change as the earlier version of Prevent focused on its 'voluntary' aspect; it was utilising its resources to win the 'hearts and minds' of the Muslim communities.

The Prevent Duty has been promoted as a 'positive' initiative by the government and state apparatus which purports to support 'vulnerable' young people from all backgrounds (HO, 2011). A BBC Radio 4 programme (Sunday, 30 July 2017)<sup>27</sup> on the 'de-radicalisation' of a right-wing extremist, outlined how Prevent officers helped a particular individual and won him back to the community. It highlighted a further example of a positive implementation of the programme in Carlton Bolling College in Bradford after the school was named as one of the Trojan Horse schools in 2014. The school's Prevent officer explained that the programme had helped people to discuss 'controversial' issues openly, in order to challenge any undesirable views. The programme omitted to mention that the same school suspended a worker for raising funds for the charity *Interpal*, which sends donations to occupied Palestinian territories; the school justified this on the grounds of Interpal's 'radical' associations<sup>28</sup>.

The University of Greenwich provides a further example of the positive promotion of the Duty. '[T]he University of Greenwich is complying with the Government's Prevent Duty by looking at it through a wellbeing lens. It's working so far' (HEFCE, 2017). This approach aims to depoliticise the Prevent Duty and portray it as a kind of individually tailored 'wellbeing' programme, omitting to acknowledge its relationship to CONTEST. Qureshi (2017) argues that the stratagem of separating the Prevent Duty from the UK government's overall counter terrorism strategy has been regularly used by officials in

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08yp16m>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.asiansunday.co.uk/demo-held-in-support-of-college-worker-suspended-for-pro-palestinian-views/>



order to clear the name of the ‘toxic brand’<sup>29</sup>. The Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, David Anderson QC, said that the Muslim community had no confidence in Prevent and feels targeted by the scheme<sup>30</sup> (Anderson, 2016). In June 2017 the ‘United Nations Human Rights Report’ stated that the application of the policy (the Prevent Duty) is ‘unpredictably and potentially arbitrary’ (Greenwood, 2017). Critiques of the Prevent Duty extend from national human rights organisations to the United Nations’ International Human Rights Report, but it remains in operation and its implementation is more wide-reaching than ever and is constantly increasing. When it was introduced in 2007, there were only five referrals to the Prevent de-radicalisation programme. In 2015 the number had increased to 3955, of these 415 were children aged 10 or under (NPCC, 2016). Even though Muslims make up only five per cent of the British population, fifty-six per cent of referrals were those belonging to the Muslim faith (this figure may be higher as the religious background of thirty-three per cent of those referred was not known). According to a report by the neo-Conservative *Henry Jackson Society* (2015) referrals have increased because schools have realised the danger that ‘Islamist radicalisation’ poses for Britain, and the Islamist ideology must be challenged by schools before it radicalises young Muslims.

Qureshi (2017) describes the use of the Prevent Duty in the public sector as a part of ‘the UK counter-terrorism matrix’ whereby different agencies profess to be working

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/mar/09/anti-radicalisation-prevent-strategy-a-toxic-brandavid>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/feb/03/prevent-strategy-sowing-mistrust-fear-muslim-communities>

separately but in reality, are part of the same discourse of wider terrorism legislation. Qureshi, alongside other researchers (Kundnani 2009, 2015; Lean, 2012; Massoumi et al 2017; Sian, 2013; Tyrer, 2013), has also argued that Prevent is more than just anti-terror legislation, it represents the institutionalised racism within the British state. In education, much research has been conducted and numerous academic papers published, however I would argue that the racist nature of the Prevent Duty has not been addressed in depth. For example, Hussain and Bagguley (2012) claim that Prevent should not be considered as racist legislation, but should be discussed as a part of the ‘securitisation’ of educational space. O’Donnell (2016) and Durodie (2016) suggest that issue within the educational space is one of ‘securitisation and the silencing of dissent’ and some have discussed the Prevent agenda within the discourse of radicalisation.

### **3.7 Prevent in UK schools: Securitisation and radicalisation discourses**

As discussed in 3.4 above, some academics have argued that Prevent needs to be analysed primarily within the discourse of securitisation. The securitisation perspective examines the conditions under which an issue or a group becomes a security threat for the state apparatus, so the organs of government and society can be organised to counter it (Buzan et al., 1998; Ingram and Dodds, 2009; Hussain and Bagguley, 2012). Countering the identified issue or group requires building support for the state’s argument amongst the public. This process can be identified as developing a ‘common sense’ view about the issue or the group through a top down process (Gramsci, 1986). However, this can only be achieved through the coordinated efforts of the organs of state (parliament, judiciary, police, army, education etc.) and civic society (media, think-tanks

etc). Once the securitisation process has matured enough it ‘becomes impossible to speak of the securitised group without implying the security thereat’ (Hussain and Bagguley, 2012: 717).

In the UK, following the 9/11 and 7/7 attacks, the construction of the Muslims and of Islam as a security threat has followed this process. Within the political and media discourse, Muslims were identified as the ‘fifth column’<sup>31</sup>, ‘the enemy within’<sup>32</sup>. The analyses of the Prevent Duty through the securitisation lens highlighted some of the problems caused by the Duty in education. These comprise a clamp down on free debate in classrooms (NUS, 2015); suppressing dissent (O’Donnell, 2016); or abandoning the ‘true spirit of education, which necessarily confronts individuals with occasionally discomfiting aspects of reality for a less challenging existence’ (Durodie, 2016:30). Some have argued that it is about surveillance of the Muslim population (Sian, 2013) and others approach the issue from a human rights and justice perspective (Davies, 2016). Whilst these approaches have explained some aspects of the negative impact of the Prevent Duty within education, they have not sought to explain the conditions under which it emerged and has been implemented in the educational arena.

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<sup>31</sup> Nigel Farage’s comments on Muslims  
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/12/nigel-farage-muslim-fifth-column-ukip>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/the-enemy-within-fear-of-islam-britains-new-disease-859996.html>

### 3.8 Prevent: Safeguarding or silencing?

In the summer of 2017 two contrasting studies on the Prevent Duty were published. The first focussed on educationalists' experiences of Prevent in English schools. The second study investigated the impacts of the Prevent Duty in Muslim communities. These two studies represent the duty from different perspectives and are therefore worthy of in depth analysis to illustrate the current competing views on the subject.

Busher et al. (2017) published a research article titled '*What the Prevent Duty means for schools and colleges in England: An analysis of educationalists' experiences*'. The researchers utilised in-depth qualitative interviews with 70 education professionals in West Yorkshire and London. The majority of the participants were White British, fifteen professionals were from BME backgrounds and the number of Muslim participants was seven. One of the study conclusions was:

We did find some criticism of, and scepticism about the efficacy of the Prevent Duty, particularly among senior leaders and BME respondents. A small number of respondents even argued that the practice engendered by the duty might, in fact, be counter-productive to the prevention of extremism ... In general, however, very few respondents directly questioned the legitimacy of the duty or expressed wholesale opposition to it. (Busher et al., 2017: 7)

One of the concluding remarks was:

...most respondents expressed the view that there was a need for something like the Prevent Duty, and where criticisms were voiced, they were usually conditional and/or fairly subtle, e.g. *if done badly*, the duty has the potential to be problematic or cause harm. (ibid: 65)

These two quotes give readers the impression that teachers, lecturers and support workers in schools/colleges are mostly content with the Prevent Duty, that they get along with it and are content for it to be implemented. However, one of the participant's (a manager's) comments suggests otherwise:

They haven't challenged me on the duty because this is a duty, okay? 'This is a duty and we have to implement it, and if we don't implement it the college could be closed down. So, there's your facts, okay?' (Ibid: 63)

This suggests that dissent against the duty has been clamped down upon. If you do not comply with it, there will be consequences, punishment. The participant refers to the college using the legal system to discipline its staff (Foucault, 2007). The response also highlights the role of the state in propagating the hegemonic view of the Prevent Duty. It is a sign of state sanctioned suppression. The researchers claim to have found that the implementation of the duty has created a space for 'free discussions' amongst learners. Although there may be kernels of truth within this claim, the quote above suggests that the duty has suppressed dissent amongst the staff.

It is also noteworthy that, throughout the report, the researchers gave the impression that there is a problem of 'extremism' and 'radicalisation' (see definitions of extremism and radicalisation in HO, 2011: 107). They suggest that the state needs to do something about these problems and that education institutions are a good place to start, yet many of their interviewees mention that they do not directly tell parents or students about the institution's involvement with the Prevent Duty. It appears that schools are concealing the implementation of Prevent through use of 'safeguarding' and other acceptable phrases:

We don't say 'we are teaching Prevent'. We're talking about tolerance and respect and liberty and all the things that we think are really important that every school's got a duty to empower their kids to know about. (Ibid:57)

This suggests that even people who are keen to implement the duty have doubts about mentioning Prevent. The researchers' (Busher et al., 2017) limited analysis results from a lack of depth in understanding why the Prevent Duty was introduced and its place within the development of current anti-Muslim sentiment. As Sivanandan wrote:

Racism is not an isolate. It is imbricated in the socio-economic structure and political culture of a society... the war on terror, following on from September 11 and July 7, has created a populist anti-Muslim, anti-asylum culture, based on the politics of fear – which in turn has led to the erosion of civil liberties and the ushering in of a new state racism. (Sivanandan, 2007: VII)

Busher et al. (2017) have underplayed the role of the duty in propagating and legitimising anti-Muslim racism. They have done so through emphasising that the Prevent Duty applies to 'all' kinds of extremism, e.g. right wing extremism<sup>33</sup> as well as Islamic extremism, without considering its disproportionate effect on the Muslim population (Mend 2016; Murtuja and Tufail, 2017). By operating within the state promoted definition of 'extremism' and presenting themselves as 'neutral', the researchers have contributed to the maintainance of the status quo and the reproduction of the hegemonic view of the necessity for Prevent. One could also argue that they are implicitly

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<sup>33</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/15/one-four-extremists-reported-governments-deradicalisation-programme/>

compliant with what Peter Neumann<sup>34</sup> describes as ‘new radicalisation’ discourse. He argues that, following the 9/11 attacks, discussion about the roots of terrorism has become problematic as some commentators have claimed that this would amount to a justification of killing innocent people. The term ‘radicalisation’ emerged as an explanation for the causes of terrorism whenever experts wanted to talk about what goes on before the bomb goes off (Neumann, 2016). Kundnani wrote: ‘...the radicalisation discourse was, from the beginning, circumscribed to the demands of counterterrorism policy makers rather than an attempt to objectively study how terrorism comes into being’ (2015:117). This meant that ‘radicalisation’ was individualised and reduced to the psychological or theological journey of a person. It has been removed from its socio-economic, historical and political causes and grievances.

Murtuja and Tufail’s (2017) report, *‘Rethinking Prevent: A case for an alternative approach’* adopted a very different approach. Their starting point was the community which was named and singled out by the Prevent Duty: Muslims. Instead of accepting the ‘common sense’ dominant narrative of the theory of ‘clash of civilisations’ and individualisation of the ‘radicalisation’ process, they explored the deeper causes contributing to the emergence of the Prevent Duty and how it has changed Muslims’ engagement with their day to day life, from the sphere of education through to health. The researchers gave voice to the views of the oppressed ie. Muslim students. They also made and explored connections between Prevent and the austerity policies of successive Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition (2010- 2015) and Conservative governments

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<sup>34</sup> Peter Neumann, director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation at Kings College, London, is one of the founders of the new radicalisation discourse.

(2015-2017; 2017 – present), institutionalised racism and the foreign policies of UK governments. The strength of the report is in highlighting that Prevent should not be understood in isolation; it is the product of government policies, socio-economic and historical conditions (Murtuja and Tufail, 2017: 9-41). They wrote:

By entrenching Prevent into every facet of society, from schooling to health to public spaces, the government has arguably legitimised the exercise of Islamophobia... implementation of Prevent has directly resulted in making the Muslim community as a whole potentially suspect, therefore leading to the embedding of institutionalised Islamophobia (ibid:15).

Their findings from participants' interviews have provided evidence for the 'chilling effects'<sup>35</sup> of the Prevent Duty in education. They spoke about self-censorship among Muslim students and academics within universities (ibid:19-21). They revealed that Muslim students and academics are more careful about what they say and how it might be interpreted by other students or staff. Self-censorship also means that Muslim academics are 'effectively withdrawing themselves from certain debates' (Ibid: 20). Similar arguments were made by the National Union of Teachers (2017) and the University and College Union (2015-2016) in their annual conferences. They highlighted that their members had been complaining about the implementation of Prevent in their institutions but their voices were being shut down by senior management. The suppression of dissenting teachers' voices has also been highlighted by Busher et al. (2017:62) but not explored in detail, nor critically analysed.

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/feb/07/anti-terror-laws-academic-debate-oxford-college-ken-macdonald-prevent-strategy-university>



These recent studies of Prevent have also referred to the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ and their promotion in schools and colleges. It is evident from these studies that, whenever a teacher participant is asked a question about Prevent, they refer to ‘fundamental British values’ (Busher et al., 2017; Murtuja and Tufail, 2017). While some of the participants clearly express their discomfort with the relationship between Prevent and ‘fundamental British values’, others had concerns about the ambiguous definition of the concept of ‘fundamental British values’ itself. The next chapter will explore the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ and critically evaluate why some people feel discomfort at, and are unhappy with, the ambiguous definition of ‘fundamental British values’.

### **3.9 Chapter summary**

This chapter traced the historical and political roots of the Prevent strategy. It provided an analysis highlighting the historical, political and social conditions which gave rise to the Prevent Strategy. In doing this, it has identified the link between ‘the war on terror’ and the UK’s counter terrorism strategy CONTEST. It draws on theories of the securitisation of educational spaces to provide a critical analysis of CONTEST’s influence on education policy via implementation of the Prevent Strategy. The chapter also offered a critical analysis of contemporary studies on the impact of the implementation of Prevent in schools, colleges and universities.

## Chapter 4

# 'Fundamental British values': Another brick in the hegemonic wall

## **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a critical investigation of the ontological framework of ‘fundamental British values’. It traces the origins of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ and the conditions under which it emerged as a major educational policy in 2015. It provides a critical realist analysis of the purpose of the policy and its association with the counter terrorism strategy. The chapter includes a critical analysis of current academic debate on the purpose and definition of ‘fundamental British values’.

## **4.2 A brief history of ‘fundamental British values’**

At the surface level, the current notion of ‘fundamental British values’ is a project to create a unified national identity in the UK (Gove, 2015; Spielman, 2017) but the notion of ‘British values’ has been a feature of the British political landscape for a number of years. Although a detailed historiography of the notion of ‘British values’ is not the focus of this chapter, it is important to highlight that the formation of this notion has its roots in the history of the British Empire. Hall (2002), Gopal (2019), MacKenzie (1984) and Thompson (2005) emphasise the role of Britain’s imperial history in the making of the ‘British’ identity at home. MacKenzie (1984) observes that the empire created an illusion of imperial ‘over-classes’ for the domestic ‘under-classes’ so that they could feel they were part of a bigger, national project (1984: 253-258). This project was conducted by ‘the State and great commercial companies, protected by the army and navy, and sanctified by the church’ (MacKenzie, 1984: 255). Thompson (2005) argues that ‘the empire’s “impact”, far from being forceful and aggressive, was often subtle and unobtrusive’

(2005: 241) but it was always there. Hall (2002) and Gopal (2019) emphasise how 'Britishness' was made in the colonies, as the myth of 'the nation of givers and liberators' was created to propagate the 'superiority' of the 'white British' over the colonised 'Others'.

The notion of 'British values' has been a changing phenomenon. In the late twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century, it was utilised in political discourse in an ostensibly more 'inclusive' way. For example, after the landslide victory of Tony Blair's New Labour Party in the general election of 1997, he proclaimed that 'fighting poverty and unemployment', 'securing justice and opportunity and being a 'compassionate society' were main tenets of British values (Blair, 1997). In 2000, in his 'Britain speech', Tony Blair announced new 'core British values'. They were: 'fair play, creativity, tolerance and an outward-looking approach to the world' (Blair, 2000). In 2004, Gordon Brown, then the Chancellor of the Exchequer, contributed to these 'core British values' arguing that these should include: 'a strong sense of national identity', 'a passion for liberty anchored in a sense of duty and an intrinsic commitment to tolerance and fair play' and 'the idea of duty as the virtue that reinforces neighbourliness and enshrines the idea of a public realm and public service' (Brown, 2004). Within the first seven years of the New Labour government (1997-2004) the notion of 'British values' shifted from a focus on 'fighting poverty and unemployment' to emphasising 'a national identity'.

I would argue that this shift was not an inadvertent move but rather a response to the changing social, economic and political climate. There were deeper causes, which made possible the politicians' public announcements about 'British values'. The 'notion of

British values' was propagated by the Labour governments until they lost office in 2010. Since then, the concept of 'core British values' evolved under successive governments: the 2010-15 Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition government, the 2015-2017 Conservative government and the current, since 2017, Conservative minority government.

There were several influential turning points in the evolution of the current notion of 'British values'<sup>36</sup>:

- 1- The riots in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford in the summer of 2001 (see chapter 2).
- 2- The 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York.
- 3- The 7/7 terrorist attacks in London.
- 4- Young people from Britain travelling to Syria and Iraq to join Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) following the unsuccessful uprising in Syria (2014).
- 5- The so-called 'Trojan Horse' affair in Birmingham and Bradford schools (2014).

The riots in the northern towns in the summer of 2001 had multiple causes, including industrial decline, poverty, and racism (especially anti-Muslim racism) (Finney and Simpson, 2009). Kundnani (2001) argue that they were the direct result of a combination of the implementation of neo-liberal policies by the Thatcher and subsequent Conservative and New Labour governments and the structural racism faced by Black and Minority Ethnic communities. However, Cattle (2001), Ouseley (2001) and Nazir-Ali

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<sup>36</sup> This is not a definitive list. However, within this study I have used these events as markers to unpack the notion of 'fundamental British values'.

(2008) postulate that multiculturalism and the 'self-segregation' of Asian communities were the main factors underlying the riots. According to Cattle (2001), Ouseley (2001) and Nazir-Ali (2008) the solution is the abandonment of multiculturalism in favour of 'community cohesion' and the promotion of 'British national identity'. Whilst the riots in northern towns and the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in New York were the catalyst for the discourse on British values (Blair, 2001), the political abandonment of multiculturalism in favour of the notion of 'British values' was initiated by the, then, Prime Minister, David Cameron (Cameron, 2011).

Following the 9/11 attacks George W. Bush, President of the USA from 2001 to 2009, announced that 'we will defend our way of life', and he declared a 'war on terror' (Bush, 2001). In his speech to Congress, with the British Prime Minister Tony Blair present, he highlighted some of the elements of his notion of 'our way of life': 'a democratically elected government ...our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other ... I ask you to uphold the values of America' (Bush, 2001). The notion of 'our way of life' was not new in US politics, George H. W. Bush (Bush senior), President of the USA from 1989 to 1993, had used the same language in 1990 when the USA was planning to attack Iraq during the first Gulf War (Bush, 1990). The British government, under New Labour's Tony Blair, embraced Bush's (junior) notion of 'our way of life' by supporting the 'war on terror' (Blair, 2001). The late Tony Benn, former Labour MP for Chesterfield, noted in his diary on 14 September 2001:

...I sat in the Gallery and watched Blair make his statement, which was really a sort of *Daily Mail* editorial. I didn't think there was any depth or historical understanding about it. George Galloway said every time you bomb the Arab world, you recruit

more suicide bombers, and said Muslim blood doesn't count in the same way that Western blood counts, which is a vivid way of putting it. (Benn, 2007: 8)

Indeed, one could argue that history proved Galloway right. London woke up to bombs on 7 July 2005, when 'home grown terrorist' attacks shocked the British population. This was a new kind of terrorist attack (Kundnani, 2017) as, until 2005, terrorist attacks in Britain had been largely related to Irish nationalism, carried out by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) or its splinter groups (Kundnani, 2015b, 2017). This time the suicide bombers were identified as Asian British citizens and Muslims.

The 7/7 attacks in London by 'home grown terrorists' were another significant landmark in relation to defining these values. In his speech on multiculturalism (Blair, 2006), following the 7/7 attacks, the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, redefined 'core British values' as: 'the belief in democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, equal treatment for all, respect for this country and its shared heritage'. Some of these concepts were reinforced through government policies such as the introduction of compulsory citizenship education in secondary schools in 2002 (Keating et al., 2010) and the introduction of the teaching of Britishness following the Ajegbo Report of 2007<sup>37</sup>. However, the current conception of 'fundamental British values' first appeared in the UK government's main counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST) in 2011. The definition of the notion of 'fundamental British values' emerged from the definition of extremism in CONTEST, which states that:

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<sup>37</sup> This report reviewed ethnic, religious and racial diversity throughout the English secondary curriculum and advised the Government to introduce teaching Britishness as part of citizenship education (DfES, 2007).

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to *fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs*<sup>38</sup>. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the deaths of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. (HO, 2011:107)

According to this definition, the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ is pivotal to the identification of extremism and identifying extremists is an important aspect of counter-terrorism. Therefore, contextualisation and the emergence of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ must be understood here in relation to wider counter-terrorism policies and changes in political, socio-economic and historical conditions following the 9/11 and 7/7 attacks (see chapter 3). I would argue that the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ constitutes something deeper than its surface appearance. The following sections present a critical realist depth analysis (Bhaskar, 1975; Crinson, 2007) of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’.

### **4.3 Identifying ‘fundamental British Values’: Identifying the ‘Other’**

The dominant discourse on British values in political, media and academic spheres is one of identifying the ‘Other’. For example, former Prime Minister David Cameron’s (2010-June 2016) 2015 Christmas and 2016 Easter messages referred to the values the British public hold. Both messages emphasised that Britain is a ‘Christian’<sup>39</sup> country and the

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<sup>38</sup> Italics are mine

<sup>39</sup> Although ‘fundamental British values’ was presented as a secular, nation binding notion, there is an apparent interplay between the hegemonic religion, Christianity, and ‘fundamental British values’. This is much more explicit in politicians’ speeches but implicit in the educational context. For a more detailed discussion on Western secularism and religion see Talal Asad’s *‘Secular Translations’* and Tariq Modood’s *‘Multiculturalism’*.



values that the British hold are derived from Christianity. In his Christmas speech he said, 'it is because of these important religious roots and Christian values that Britain has been such a successful home to people of all faiths and none'<sup>40</sup>. At Easter he repeated again, 'we are a Christian country and we are proud of it'<sup>41</sup>. Based on this former Prime Minister's messages, non-Christians, particularly Muslim citizens, may justifiably ask: Are 'fundamental British values', as identified within the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, ie. democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and belief, Christian values? In doing so, was Cameron suggesting that these values derive from Christian beliefs and other faiths (in particular, Islam) must learn from Christianity or their fellow 'Christian Britons'? Or was he simply implying that other faiths are not compatible with these values? Perhaps he was referring to a superior 'occident' and inferior 'orient', where 'orient' is denied space within the discourse of 'fundamental British values'. Cameron's message was repeated by his successor, Theresa May, the current Prime Minister (July 2016 to the present) in her 2017 Christmas message. She stressed the 'values we share: Christian values of love, service and compassion'<sup>42</sup>. Once again the hegemonic ideology is promoted as the unifying superior element of society and the 'Other' is identified by their absence (Dabashi, 2011).

A Channel 4 documentary, 'What British Muslims really think'<sup>43</sup>, presented by Trevor Phillips (former chairman of the Equality and Human Rights Commission) reinforced this

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<sup>40</sup> See PM's Christmas message <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/christmas-2015-prime-ministers-message> ,

<sup>41</sup> See PM's Easter message <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/easter-2016-david-camerons-message>.

<sup>42</sup> See PM's Christmas message <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-theresa-mays-christmas-message-2017>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/what-british-muslims-really-think>

idea of the 'superiority' of Christian values. Standing outside a church in London, he said 'This is the church where I was Christened, what I learned here guides my attitudes and behaviour'. He referred to his 'Christian values', then proceeded to compare his 'values' with Muslims' values. He refers to Muslims as one homogeneous community: 'down the road at Finsbury Park Mosque attitudes are very different. For the believers in here the Quran provides teaching and guidance for Muslims to follow in all aspects of their lives'. He uses differences in religious beliefs as a form of 'Othering' to establish that 'Muslims' are different and live in a 'parallel world' (Cameron, 2011; Cattle, 2001; Nazir-Ali, 2008; Ouseley, 2001) in the UK.

Linking ill-defined 'British values' (Lander, 2016) to Christian values is an example of 'Othering' and is likely to further marginalise religious minorities in the UK. This is not a new means of 'Othering' and discriminating against minorities in the West; there have been numerous previous examples (Dabashi, 2012; Kumar, 2012; Sayyid 2015; Virdee 2015). Edward Said argued that 'hostility to Islam in the modern Christian West has historically gone hand in hand with, has stemmed from the same source, has been nourished at the same stream as anti-Semitism' (Said, 1985: 99).

The 'Othering' process of Muslim communities exemplified above has not materialised in a vacuum. Baker et al. (2012) carried out a detailed study investigating the representation of the word 'Muslim' in the British media which identified a propensity of associating Muslims with negative nouns such as 'terrorism' and 'extremism'. The study also highlighted that the media and policy makers treat Muslims as one homogenous entity, frequently using the term 'Muslim World' to describe the range of Muslim communities and countries across the globe. This use of negative word associations in

relation to Muslims and Islam is tied in with a process of dehumanisation of Muslim communities and immigrants in the UK and the rest of the Western World (Bhattacharyya, 2008: 78-82). This process has been accelerated since the Syrian civil war began in 2011, from which the majority of immigrants to the UK and the EU have been Muslim<sup>44</sup>.

Since 2012 the notion of 'fundamental British values' has been part of Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012) and since 2015 there is a duty to promote 'fundamental British values' in schools and colleges in England and Wales (CTAS, 2015). I would argue that the introduction of the promotion of 'fundamental British values' through the national curriculum is an essential tool for identifying the new 'Other', namely Muslims (see chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10). The active promotion of the notion of 'fundamental British values' is therefore a controversial issue (Farrell and Lander, 2018; Habib, 2017) within the educational context. The controversy can be encapsulated within the following two inter-related strands:

- 1- the definition of 'fundamental British values' emerged directly from CONTEST, bringing education within the realm of the counter terrorism strategy (Farrell, 2018; Tomlinson, 2015);
- 2- working around the CONTEST definition of 'fundamental British values' is problematic as it is 'muddled' and 'hollow' (Richardson, 2015); hence the interpretations and application of 'fundamental British values' both by academics and practitioners are varied and 'muddled'.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/asylum-in-the-uk.html>

Both of the above strands have their own historical, socio-economic and political contexts outside of, and within, the educational sphere (e.g 'Trojan Horse' affair, young people travelling to Syria to join Islamic State in Syria) which have resulted in the 'active promotion' of 'fundamental British values' within the education system. The next sections will unpack the above strands of criticism.

#### **4.4 Counter terrorism and 'fundamental British values'**

The definition of 'fundamental British values' has been transferred directly from the UK's anti-terrorism legislation, the Prevent strategy, into the educational arena. Therefore it cannot be assumed that its prominence is solely aiming to 'glue together' 'the British nation' (Cameron, 2011). It is necessary to contextualise and explore the emergence of the notion of 'fundamental British values' within the context of the counter terrorism strategy and its founding political, economic, historical and social structures. It is evident that what has been promoted as 'fundamental British values' and what this promotion of 'fundamental British values' is really about are two different things. I would argue that, in order to understand what lies beneath the notion of 'fundamental British values', it is necessary to briefly discuss the transformation of the concept of extremism. This is a salient factor in explaining the notion of 'fundamental British values'.

#### **4.5 Extremism**

British governments used the term extremism at the beginning of the twentieth century to define the anti-colonialists who wanted full independence for India from British rule

(Kundnani, 2014). Following the Second World War, during the Cold War period, the term was used to define communists on the left and anti-democratic extremists on the right. From 1989, with the end of the Cold War, the definition was transferred from right and left 'extremism' to defining political groups working outside of parliamentary politics: Trotskyist groups, anti-Fascist groups, radical environmentalists, animal right activists, Irish nationalists and Islamic political movements (Kundnani, 2017: 148). The 9/11 attacks in the USA and the 7/7 bombing in the UK transformed the concept of extremism in the UK again. The new definition combined the term extremism with an ideology. According to Sir Norman Bettison<sup>45</sup>, extremism is a kind of infectious illness that spreads from one person to another; subsequently the illness turns the infected person into a terrorist (Bettison, 2009). According to this formulation, in contrast to previous definitions, one does not need to be a member of a particular political group or an organisation or be involved in direct action to be identified as an extremist; holding a particular ideology, albeit non-violent, is enough to be deemed an extremist.

The current narrative has been propagated by British politicians, (Tony Blair, 2005; Ruth Kelly, 2006; Hazel Blears, 2009; David Cameron, 2011 and 2015; Theresa May 2015 and 2017), newspapers (Daily Mail ; The Sun; The Times), think-tanks (The Henry Jackson Society; The Quilliam Foundations) and even by a former chairman of the Equality and Human Rights Commission Trevor Philips (2006). In the Gramscian sense, those in power have created a consensus 'common sense' argument about extremism and any counter arguments to the hegemonic narrative are dismissed as irrelevant. Kundnani stated that

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<sup>45</sup> Sir Norman Bettison was Chief Constable of West Yorkshire Police and the ACPO Lead for Preventing Violent Extremism.

‘counter-definition had a certain presence but it nevertheless faltered over time in the face of the state’s better organised capacity to assert a different narrative’ (2017: 150).

In 2011 the Conservative government, under the Home Secretary Theresa May, defined the concept of extremism as ‘vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values’ (HO, 2011:107). The new definition of extremism was directly aimed at UK citizens because the perpetrators of the 7/7 bombings were born and brought up in Britain. The term ‘home grown terrorist’ entered political discourse; the change in objective conditions necessitated a new way of defining the phenomenon. The new definition served to provide ‘meaning to disturbing and troubling events and restoring a sense of control over the world’ (Kundnani, 2017: 149). The definition of extremism as opposition to ‘fundamental British values’ provided the state apparatus with a justification for identifying citizens with ‘undesirable’ views. However, ‘fundamental British values’ were not utilised as a means of ‘restoring control’ through education until the so called ‘Trojan Horse’ affair (Holmwood and O’Toole, 2018).

#### **4.6 The ‘Trojan Horse’ affair**

The notion of ‘fundamental British values’ identified in the revised Prevent strategy in 2011 took a different turn after the alleged Muslim plot to take over the governing bodies of certain Birmingham schools in March 2014 (Richardson, 2015). The events were named the ‘Trojan Horse’ affair. The Birmingham Mail reported the events as a ‘Jihadist

plot to take over schools'<sup>46</sup>. The 'Trojan Horse' affair was not limited to one city.

Following the investigation in Birmingham, Ofsted suggested that there might be a link between Tahir Alam, former chairman of the Park View Educational Trust (Birmingham), and some school governors in Bradford (Clarke, 2014). However, following police investigations, evidence proved that the whole affair was a hoax (HOCEC, 2015: 3). Those accused of involvement in the 'Trojan Horse' affair were cleared of any wrong doing<sup>47</sup>, however the detrimental stigma tainted the schools and the communities.

James Arthur (2015) maintains that the so called 'Trojan Horse' affair in some Birmingham schools was a clear example of central government's political intervention in education. The 'Trojan horse' affair centered on an alleged hard-line 'extremist' Islamist takeover of the schools. The issue was reported to Birmingham Council by an anonymous and most likely 'hoax', letter in November 2013 (Baxter, 2015). This led to emergency inspections of the schools believed to be identified in the letter and multiple formal investigations of the issue (Clarke, 2014; Trojan Horse Review Group, 2014). Twenty-one out of a total of 430 schools in Birmingham were inspected: seven secondary, twelve primary, one primary/nursery and one nursery. The common factor amongst these schools was that all had a majority of Muslim pupils and were located in socio-economically deprived areas of the city (Arthur, 2015).

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<sup>46</sup> <http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/trojan-horse-jihadist-plot-take-6782881>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/may/30/trojan-horse-tribunal-five-birmingham-teachers-islam>

Five out of the twenty-one schools inspected by Ofsted were placed in special measures (Clarke, 2014; Trojan Horse Review Group, 2014). They became the central focus of the affair but the emergency Ofsted inspections found no evidence of 'extremism' or hard-line 'Islamist' takeover in any of the schools. Following the Ofsted, and two independent reports (Clarke, 2014 and Trojan Horse Review Group, 2014) the Education Select Committee noted that, 'no evidence of extremism or radicalisation, apart from a single isolated incident, was found by any of the inquiries' (HOCEC, 2015: 3).

The schools involved in the 'Trojan horse' affair were part of an academy trust in Birmingham. During the special Ofsted inspection they were mainly criticised over 'safeguarding' and management issues. The Ofsted inspectors also picked up on some conservative religious and cultural practices in these schools such as: segregation of the sexes, posters extolling the virtue of prayer and school visit to Mecca in Saudi Arabia (see HOCEC, 2015). Arthur (2015: 322-324) argued that some of those practices reflected the learners' religious background, which raises the question: if learners had been taken on a skiing trip to Switzerland or to visit the Vatican in Rome instead of Mecca, would they have been criticised? The Ofsted inspectors used what Foucault (1980) described as 'the technology of language' to integrate the Prevent strategy, as a new form of control, into the existing 'safeguarding' structure. In doing this Ofsted started to become, in effect, an arm of the UK's counter terrorism strategy. The policing of Prevent and its implementation in education have become part of the remit of Ofsted. This development has sanctioned the role of education in fighting against terrorism.

Although the Ofsted inspections did not discover any elements of extremism or radicalisation in the schools (HOCEC, 2015), the governors were criticised for safeguarding



and management issues and for failing to deliver 'British' values. This was notwithstanding the fact that the schools involved in the 'Trojan Horse' affair had been graded as good or outstanding in their previous inspections with the one exception of Laisterdyke School which had been judged as requiring improvement. Ofsted's judgments from its previous inspections were not questioned and the issue of what had materially changed between inspections was neither explained nor explored (Arthur, 2015). Holmwood and O'Toole's (2018) detailed study concludes that the whole affair was an attack on multiculturalism and a justification of the implementation of 'muscular liberalism'<sup>48</sup> (Cameron, 2011) in education and wider society.

This hoax affair was significant as it led to important policy changes for schools (Holmwood and O'Toole, 2018; O'Toole et al., 2016). Michael Gove, the then Secretary of State for Education, played an important role in this respect. His department, the Department for Education issued guidance on promoting British values in both independent and state-maintained schools. The guidance highlighted that teachers, managers and other staff working in educational institutions all have a duty to 'actively promote' the 'fundamental British values' of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs as part of the wider curriculum (DfE, 2014b). Lord Nash, the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools, explained that the changes were introduced to 'tighten up the standards on pupil welfare to improve safeguarding, and the standards on spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils to strengthen the barriers to

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<sup>48</sup> David Cameron's speech in Munich in 2011, in which he challenges 'the doctrine of state multiculturalism'.

extremism' (DfE, 2014c). A head teacher, Richard Cairns of Brighton College, identifies the true focus of the 'fundamental British values' enterprise:

Gove's stated values are written too precisely with young militant Muslims in mind...the Government's focus is not on Brighton College or schools like mine. Its gaze is on the many thousands of young British Muslims who share the same fundamental values as I do but are much more vulnerable than my pupils are to the poisonous whisperings of a perverted few. (Cairns, 2015).

Subsequently Prevent (and 'fundamental British values') became part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which requires teachers, General Practitioners and other professionals to report people who they suspect are at risk of being drawn into terrorism to Prevent officers. Webber (2015) argues that, in effect, the duty aims to use public sector workers to act on behalf of the security services and monitor citizens, in particular, Muslim citizens.

In 1977 Deluze stated in conversation with Foucault that, 'a wide range of professionals, teachers, psychiatrists, educators of all kinds, will be called upon to exercise functions that have traditionally belonged to the police' (Foucault, 1980: 207). Prevent heralds the realization of the Deluzian prediction as teachers and other 'servants of the state' exercise this imposition of control over its subjects. In his critique, Kundnani (2015) highlights similarities between Prevent and the McCarthyian 'red witch hunts' of the 1950s in the US which demonised anyone opposed to US foreign policy and holding left wing views. Poole (2018) argued that the 'Trojan Horse' affair has been used by the state apparatus to justify the dominant narrative of extremism and radicalisation. He explains:

'ideology is responsible for extremism and that this led to terrorism, therefore any extreme ideas should be challenged' (Poole, 2018: 6). In the case of the UK 'fundamental British values' is to be used to tackle 'extreme' ideology at every level of compulsory education, including nursery level. It became clear after the Trojan horse affair that:

- the state intended to firmly implement the dominant ideology of 'muscular liberalism' (Cameron, 2011) in order to propagate an anti-multiculturalist, nationalist, anti-Muslim and assimilationist agenda; and
- Ofsted and Prevent would be instruments to 'discipline' and 'control' schools, teachers and students against 'undesirable' views which might conflict with the notion of 'fundamental British values'.

Education institutions and educators have become active agents in promoting the notion of 'fundamental British values'. It could be argued that they are now required to actively contribute to the reproduction of the common sense, hegemonic narrative of 'extremism' and 'radicalisation' identified within CONTEST.

#### **4.7 Impact of the transformation of Prevent to a duty**

The link between anti-terrorism strategies and the education system existed before the 'Trojan Horse' affair; Prevent was introduced in 2007 by the New Labour Government (1997-2010). It was not a duty during this period, nevertheless it aimed to prevent 'radicalisation' amongst Muslim youth. It was a project to win the 'hearts and minds' of Muslim communities (Kundnani, 2015; 2017; Thomas, 2016). The guidance to schools on

how to implement Prevent was not officially issued until July 2015 (Holmwood and O'Toole, 2018: 45).

Between 2007 and 2010 there were 726 referrals to Prevent's Channel programme. This number increased to 2653<sup>49</sup> between 2010 (election of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition government) and 2014 (the Trojan Horse affair). In 2015, the year Prevent became a fully Duty, the number of referrals rose to 3995; 415 of these were children aged 10 or under. The number of Prevent referrals between June and August 2015 was greater than for the whole of 2012-13, the year the Prevent strategy was rolled out across England and Wales. The increase in referrals in this period clearly coincides with the introduction of the new statutory Duty for schools to tackle extremist radicalisation. The latest figures, published in November 2017, reveal that, between 2015 and 2016, 7,631 people have been referred to the Channel de-radicalisation programme; 65 per cent of these were related to Islamist extremism. This suggests that they were Muslim (recording the religion of the referred individuals is not mandatory) even though Muslims only constitute 5 per cent of the UK population<sup>50</sup>. Most referrals have been made from the education sector (HO, 2017): amounting to 33 per cent of all referrals, with the median age being 14.

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<http://www.npcc.police.uk/FreedomofInformation/NationalChannelReferralFigures.aspx>

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus/transparencyandgovernance/freedomofinformationfoi/muslimpopulationintheuk/>

Qureshi (2017) identifies the relationship between Prevent and the education system as part of 'the UK's counter terrorism matrix' and a manifestation of state sponsored structural racism. The 'Trojan Horse' schools were the victims of the structural racism of the British state. 'Fundamental British values' as a notion and a practice has been one of the major instruments in producing and reproducing structural racism. The official introduction, in 2012, of the notion of 'fundamental British values' within the education system in the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012), represents the materialisation of 'muscular liberalism' in education.

'Fundamental British values' plays a dual role, firstly as a tool to identify the signs of 'radicalisation' and 'extremism' amongst young (and sometimes old) predominantly Muslim people. Secondly, it acts as an assimilationist, racist educational policy which promotes the superiority of 'British values' over covertly identified 'Other' values.

'Fundamental British values' operates not just within the education system. The notion is routinely promoted by Parliament, the Police, public services, education (HO, 2011; HoC, 2015, 2016; Gove, 2014; Casey, 2016; Spielman, 2017), media, internet etc. (Channel 4, 2016; BBC 2015, 2016; Daily Mail, 2016; The Times 2017; Spectator, 2016) and academia (Cantle 2008; Thomas, 2016; Busher et al., 2017). This pervasive propagation has contributed to the normalisation of the binary position of 'fundamental British values': 'our values' and 'their values'. Similar processes have been occurring in European countries in recent years e.g. *laïcité*<sup>51</sup> in France (Wolfreys, 2018) and *leitkultur*<sup>52</sup> in Germany (Fekete, 2009; Göle, 2017). It could be argued that this is a reflection of what

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<sup>51</sup> French republican secularism.

<sup>52</sup> German dominant culture.

President George W. Bush articulated when he declared his ‘war on terror’: ‘you are either with us or against us’ (Bush, 2001). The powerful state structure and its organs have produced the dominant narrative of ‘fundamental British values’. However, counter narratives have been developed in response (Farrell, 2016; Habib, 2016; Holmwood and O’Toole, 2018; Lander, 2016; Massoumi et al., 2017; Murtuja and Tufail, 2017; Titley et al. 2017). The focus of most of these alternative narratives is Prevent, rather than the other side of the coin: the notion of ‘fundamental British values’.

#### **4.8 The muddled definition of ‘fundamental British values’**

It has been a difficult task for many educators to operate within the official definition of ‘fundamental British values’ because it is muddled (Richardson, 2015) and ill-defined (Lander, 2016). Struchers, (2016) and Vanderbeck and Johnson, (2016) attempt to project the positive aspects of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’. Richardson (2015) argues that the difficulty does not lie in the promotion of ‘democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs’ themselves but in the adjectives attached to these values: ‘fundamental’ and ‘British’. The etymology of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ is not the concern of this study, however studies carried out amongst teachers and trainee teachers have highlighted the problematic nature of associating ‘fundamental’ and ‘British’ with these values (Farrell, 2016; Habib, 2017; Revell and Bryan, 2016; Panjwani, 2016). Empirical studies have also suggested (Revell and Bryan, 2016; Taylor and Soni, 2017) that the DfE’s requirement for teachers not to engage in ‘undermining fundamental British values’ (DfE, 2012) and to promote them both inside and outside of schools (DfE, 2014a) has created a

culture of fear and avoidance of honest discussion of controversial issues (Taylor and Soni, 2017: 245). Even though many educators (Farrell, 2018; Habib, 2017), academics and teaching unions (NUT, UCU) reject these state prescribed values and their promotion, 'fundamental British values' have become part of teachers' (and other public sector workers in identifying radicalisation) day to day classroom practices in England and Wales (Teachers' Standard 2012; Elton-Chalcraft *et al* 2016; Habib, 2017; Holmwood and O'Toole, 2018) since promoting 'fundamental British values' became a duty.

The interpretation and utilisation of 'fundamental British values' by teachers and education institutions has proved problematic in practice. Recent empirical studies conducted with teachers have revealed that educators and schools are not clear about what 'fundamental British values' are, how they should be delivered and their relevance (Elton-Chalcraft *et al* 2016; Farrell, 2016; Habib, 2017; Lander, 2016; Maylor, 2016; McCully & Clarke, 2016; Panjwani, 2016). These empirical studies conclude that the notion of 'fundamental British values' is ambiguous, and has resulted in various interpretations depending on a schools' locality or the pupils' religious and ethnic backgrounds. Its muddled and incoherent nature makes the notion problematic. Kundnani (2017) makes the following point in relation to the definition of extremism which gave rise to 'fundamental British values':

Thus, the incoherence of the definition was not a barrier to the term's proliferation in policymaking and public discussion but necessary for it. The consistency needed was not in the word's definition but in its political effects. And the consistency of those effects was secured by the consistency of those with the power to shape the word's meanings. (Kundnani, 2017: 156)

This argument is also relevant to the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ itself. The utilisation of the term ‘fundamental British values’ has been shaped by people with power within, (education ministers, Ofsted, head teachers and educators) and outside of the education system (Parliament, the Home Office and the media). They have promoted a paradoxical notion of ‘fundamental British values’ which simultaneously contains both ambiguity and clarity. It is ambiguous precisely because of its muddled definition. It is clear because it identifies the new ‘Other’: Muslims. ‘Fundamental British values’ also provides a potential impetus for people to identify other ‘Others’ e.g. blacks, ethnic minorities and certain European immigrants (Eastern Europeans, Roma people) in the absence of the new racialised Muslim ‘Other’ (Dabashi, 2011; Göle, 2017; Sayyid, 2015).

Some argue that the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ presents an opportunity to promote other positive agendas. It can be interpreted and utilised to teach issues such as human rights (Struchers, 2016), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) rights (Vanderbeck and Johnson, 2016) and cosmopolitanism (Hildebrand, 2016). They claim that the intentions behind the introduction of ‘fundamental British values’ are not negative, on the contrary they are beneficial for young people and the communities in which they live. Others have contested use of the words ‘fundamental’ and ‘British’ within the concept, in favour of ‘universal values’ or ‘human values’ (Richardson, 2015; Struthers, 2017). In doing so they are adopting a dual stance: criticism of elements of the notion on the one hand and refurbishing it on the other.

Struthers (2017) promotes the teaching of ‘human rights values’ and criticises the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ for its lack of reference to the broader human rights



framework. She rightly notes that the ‘fundamental British values’ guidance is arguably a threat to the teaching of human rights values’ (Struthers, 2017: 100). Whilst she recognises the discriminatory nature of ‘fundamental British values’, she has not been able to provide explicit answers to the questions: ‘who has/have been discriminated against?’ and ‘why have they been discriminated against?’. Struthers’ solution to the problems ‘fundamental British values’ creates for educators is to adopt a different interpretation of ‘fundamental British values’. She suggests that: ‘Interpreting ‘fundamental British values’ within the broader context of human rights values, such as universality, equality and common humanity, would arguably provide a solution’ (Struthers, 2017: 103). I will define this type of approach as ‘a positive critical interpretation’ where the interpreter is in agreement that there should be some teaching of ‘values’ and that there are some grounds to link these to Britishness.

Richardson (2015) also promotes a ‘positive critical interpretation’ of ‘fundamental British values’. He argues that the policy of ‘fundamental British values’ has caused much damage in schools, colleges and universities therefore ‘much critical, corrective, and restorative work’ (Richardson, 2015: 37) needs to be done. Richardson even proposed an alternative phrasing of ‘fundamental British values’ for the Home Office: ‘the fundamental values and principles which underline public life in the United Kingdom’ (Richardson, 2015: 41). Even though Richardson is openly critical of ‘fundamental British values’ (Bolloten and Richardson, 2014), he has not succeeded in extricating himself from the framework of hegemonic thinking. He has thus arrived at a position of working around a policy aligned to state interests rather than representing the interests of the affected people.

I would argue that even ‘a positive critical interpretation’ of ‘fundamental British values’ can have a damaging role in educational institutions, because the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ itself is divisive and serves to promote a subtle discriminatory rhetoric. The nature of ‘Fundamental British values’ has been veiled behind the ‘good cause’ of protecting ‘vulnerable’ young people from the dangers of ‘radicalisation’. It can be argued that those who have justified ‘fundamental British values’ in line with their own interests and those who have attempted to refurbish/rebrand ‘fundamental British values’ have lost (or never had) sight of the underlying state interests behind the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ in schools, namely the advancing of ‘muscular liberalism’ (Cameron, 2011) and a tool to tackle ‘non-violent terrorism’ (HO, 2015) and radicalisation (HO, 2011). The notion of ‘fundamental British values’ explicitly defines what should and should not be part of the ‘imagined<sup>53</sup>’ British values. Accepting the notion means accommodation to the hegemonic ‘common sense’. This ‘common sense’ narrative of ‘fundamental British values’ is discriminative in its nature (see the United Nations report on UK, 2018 and Runnymede, 2017). In light of its inherent ‘Othering’ (Said, 2003), the promotion of the notion can be identified as a racist educational practice (see chapters 7, 8 and 9). Attempts to reform the notion result in justifying, intentionally or unintentionally, an inherently racist endeavour.

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<sup>53</sup> I borrowed the term ‘imagined’ from Benedict Anderson’s (2016 [1983]) seminal book *Imagined Communities*.

#### **4.9 Wider interpretations and utilisation of ‘fundamental British values’ (within and outside the education system)**

The notion of ‘fundamental British values’ was introduced as part of an anti-radicalisation agenda within the education system however, following the ‘Trojan Horse’ affair, the notion has been explicitly used to explain and challenge a broad and flexible spectrum of deeply rooted social problems within British society. Examples include challenging homophobia (‘Trojan Horse’ affair: see Holmwood and O’Toole, 2018), child sex abuse (Sarah Champion Labour MP<sup>54</sup>, The Sun article) and women’s oppression (Spielman and Home Office<sup>55</sup>). Whenever the absence of ‘fundamental British values’ has been used to explain a societal problem, a particular group has been the focus of the criticism, namely Muslims. In 2017 the Department of Education announced that it was developing a specific “fundamental British values’ curriculum, which will assist school staff in ‘building pupils’ resilience to extremist ideologies’<sup>56</sup>. The head of Ofsted, Amanda Spielman, said that, ‘the education system has a vital role in upholding the principles that make us a beacon of liberalism, tolerance and fairness to the rest of the world’ (Guardian, 22, September, 2017). She was effectively arguing for a form of social engineering, claiming that schools have ‘a vital role in inculcating and upholding them (‘fundamental British values’)’ (Guardian, 22, September, 2017). Whilst promoting the ‘fundamental British values’ of ‘tolerance and fairness’, Spielman announced that Ofsted inspectors will be

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<sup>54</sup> <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/4218648/british-pakistani-men-raping-exploiting-white-girls/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/schools-be-trained-spot-radicalisation-new-government-commission>

<sup>56</sup> <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/government-developing-fundamental-british-values-curriculum/>

questioning pupils wearing a 'hijab' in schools, because it 'could be interpreted as sexualisation' and '...fundamentalist groups influencing school policy'. Spielman argued that:

in seeking to address these concerns, and in line with our current practice in terms of assessing whether the school promotes equality for their children, inspectors will talk to girls who wear such garments to ascertain why they do so in the school. (Guardian, 19 November, 2017)

Both leading campaigners against the hijab in schools, Amina Lone from The Social Action and Research Foundation and Spielman have used the same arguments of 'liberal values' and promotion of equality in schools<sup>57</sup>. However, their sensitiveness about Muslim girls wearing the hijab does not appear to extend to other religious symbols worn by school children e.g. the Jewish kippah or Sikh turban<sup>58</sup>. The announcement, in November 2017, by a grammar school in Kent of its plans to create 'unsafe space' where learners can discuss the pros and cons of Hitler's Mein Kampf and subjects such as 'Women versus feminism' and 'not all cultures are created equal'<sup>59</sup> did not cause concern for Ofsted.

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<sup>57</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/nov/19/school-inspectors-to-question-primary-school-girls-who-wear-hijab>

<sup>58</sup> There was no legislation protecting against religious discrimination in Britain until the full incorporation of the Human Rights Act of 1998. The Race Relations Act 1976 regarded Jews and Sikhs as ethnic groups whereas Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus were not. Tariq Modood (2007) highlighted anti-Muslim discrimination following the Salman Rushdie affair and the Runnymede Trust initiated discussion on Islamophobia in 1997, but Muslims were not legally protected until the introduction of the Equality Act 2010.

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/nov/20/kent-grammar-school-announces-plans-for-unsafe-space-including-mein-kampf>

Spielman's comments on the hijab can be considered an attempt at politicisation and securitisation of Muslim women's choice of dress. The banning of the wearing of the 'niqab' in public in France and some other EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Bulgaria<sup>60</sup>) or targeting Muslim style swim wear, the 'burkini', on French beaches are other examples of this agenda. Saeed (2016) argues that Muslim women studying at UK universities have been securitised because of their choice of dress code. She identifies the attack on Muslim women's dress code as gendered anti-Muslim racism. Saeed comments that 'the right to practise Islam is often portrayed as antithetical to Britishness' (2016:26). It can be argued that, within the educational context, Ofsted has interpreted visible Muslimness in primary schools from the perspective of neo-colonialist and racist narratives. Spielman's comments support the superior 'Occident' over the inferior 'Orient' argument. She said that, 'we know that even in the UK some children are being brought up in an environment that is actively hostile to some of these values (*'fundamental British values'*)' (22 September 2017). She does not explicitly talk about Muslim families, however her constant reference to the 'Trojan Horse' affair indicates what she means by 'some children'. She was referring to 'subaltern' Muslim families.

The introduction of 'fundamental British values' in the school curriculum is not simply the end result of factors (e.g. security needs) outside of the education system but is also part of the wider political, social, economic and historical conditions of the current epoch. And the current epoch has its roots in Britain's colonial history (social, political and economic

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<sup>60</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/19/world/europe/quebec-burqa-ban-europe.html>

aspects included). Alongside its discriminative ‘anti-radicalisation’<sup>61</sup> function, the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ can be understood as ‘colonial nostalgia’ (Lander, 2016).

#### **4.10 Chapter summary**

This chapter has explored the complex interpretations and applications of the concept of ‘fundamental British values’ both within and outside the education system. It has reviewed, from a critical perspective, some of the current academic interpretations. Fault lines within these interpretations have been identified. In so doing, the role of ‘fundamental British values’ in creating the new racialised ‘Other’ and its racist nature within the social structure has been exposed. The chapter has identified the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ as a racist product of ‘reciprocal and mutual interactions within and between *[state]* institutions’ (Powell, 2007: 796).

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<sup>61</sup> <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/exclusive-school-anti-terror-referrals-surge-amid-climate-fear>

# Chapter 5

## Methodological framework

## **5.1 Introduction**

The methodological framework delineates the researcher's ontological and epistemological orientation. Ontology is the branch of metaphysics which is concerned with assumptions about the intrinsic nature of reality, of 'what exists' and of the 'essence of things'. Epistemology addresses assumptions about the nature of knowledge, of how people acquire knowledge and how people 'can know that they know'. The researcher's answers to these questions require an acknowledgement that the researcher is not ideologically neutral. Researchers approach a study with pre-existing values, beliefs and assumptions and through the lens of their life histories; I would argue these shape a philosophical path and determine the key foci of the research (Archer, 2000; Danermark et al., 2002; Grzanka, 2014). Furthermore, in relation to the above, the ideological positioning of the researcher informs the methodology.

The methodological framework underpinning this research is critical realism. The aim of this chapter is to outline the main tenets of critical realism as exemplified in the work of its key theorists. I will, therefore, present the heuristic devices of critical realism used to interpret and analyse the empirical data.

## **5.2 Critical realism**

The critical realist perspective was developed during the 1970s and 1980s by Roy Bhaskar (1978, 1979, 1998); his ideas were later expanded upon by critical realists such as Margaret Archer (1995, 1998), Andrew Sayer (1992), Andrew Collier (1994), Tony Lawson



(1997), Sean Craven (2000), Danermark et al. (2002), David Scott (2010) and Grand Banfield (2015). The emergence of critical realism coincided with what Denzin and Lincoln (2011) referred to as the 'paradigm wars' of the 1980s, in which the previously dominant positivist research approach was challenged by constructivist and interpretivist methodologies. Positivism is defined by Hammond and Wellington (2003: 120) as a philosophical doctrine which firstly promotes the view that the world is capable of objective interpretation and, secondly, that social science should follow the methodologies and methods established in natural science. In contrast, constructionist and interpretivist methodologies view the world as accessible to multiple interpretations and seek to determine the reasons why human beings invest in social activity (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 8). Critical realism proposed an alternative to both positivist and constructivist/interpretivist methodologies (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011), which draws elements from both these major methodological strands.

Critical realism sets a relevant methodological course for my research on 'fundamental British values'. It claims that it can 'combine and reconcile *ontological realism*, *epistemological relativism* and *judgemental rationalism*' (Bhaskar, 1998: xi). However, how they are combined and reconciled varies (e.g. Danermark et al. 2002; Wight, 2006; Joseph, 2011; Porpora 2011). *Ontological realism* considers that social reality exists as 'mind independent' that it is multi-layered and that there is much more than one's subjective knowledge claims about it. *Epistemological relativism* claims that one can know the social only indirectly through one's interpretation of it. *Judgemental rationalism* argues that knowledge claims can be tested against social reality, although always in an indirect, interpreted and fallible way (Bhaskar, 1989a; Danermark et al., 2002).

By adopting this framework, I aim to achieve *ontological depth*. In other words, I intend to enable analyses that create knowledge about the structures at work in relation to ‘fundamental British values’. By conceiving of social structures in these terms, I can also exercise *judgemental rationalism* and assess the relative value of different explanations of those structures. I concur with Bhaskar’s argument that we can only ‘understand – and so change – the social world if we identify the structures at work that generates those events or discourses’ (1989a: 3). Furthermore, the critical realist ‘transformational model of social activity’ (Bhaskar, 1998: 127 - see figure 1.1) is a useful tool to explain agency/structure relations. Bhaskar (1975, 1989a, 1989b) argued that social structures are established through human practices and there is a dialectical relationship between them.

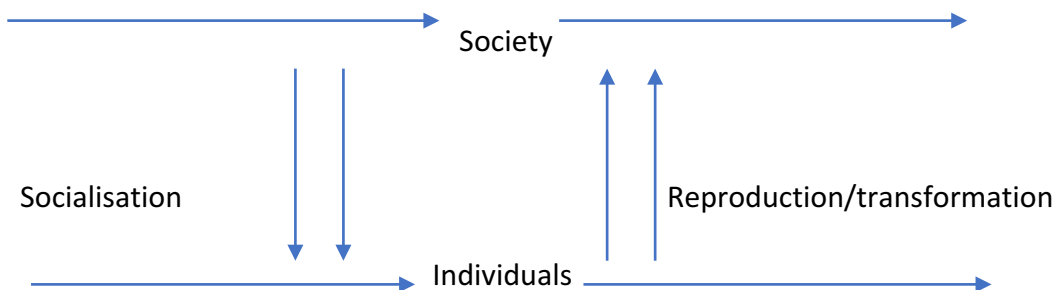


Figure 5.1 Transformation Model of Social Activity (Bhaskar, 1998: 127)

Subsequent human practices are both constrained and enabled by the pre-existing social structures such as education and the family. At the same time those structures are preserved, altered or transformed through the practices of human agents, who may or may not be aware of the effects they are having. More importantly, Bhaskar (1989a) attributes an *a priori* reality to the accounts and reasons people use in order to explain

their experiences. For example, a teacher may have believed themselves to be promoting 'fundamental British values' as described in the 2012 Teachers' Standards and 2015 Counter Terrorism and Security Act for a variety of reasons (patriotism, challenging 'Islamic radicalisation' or fear of not complying with the law ) or framed their involvement in such terms. However, the long-standing social and cultural narratives of Britishness and national belonging which give rise to such practices, predate their participation. Their involvement both preserves or transforms these social structures even if they are not conscious of, and indeed reject, the discourse of Britishness and national belonging. Marx (1977 [1855]) succinctly summarised this point in his statement that 'men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past' (146).

Given that any description of social practices makes 'irreducible reference to human beliefs and intention' (Callinicos, 1985), a process of interpretation must be essential in any analysis and explanation of human behaviour. However, I would argue that the researcher needs to acknowledge that the participants' accounts of their social experiences constitute knowledge of these social processes. As Bhaskar argues:

actors' accounts are both corrigible and limited by the existence of unacknowledged conditions, unintended consequences, tacit skills and unconscious motivations; but in opposition to the positivist view, actors' accounts form the indispensable starting point of social enquiry. (Bhaskar, 1998: xvi)

Therefore, I would further argue that the interpretation of participants' reports is not an end in itself but rather a starting point to begin to illuminate interpretations of 'fundamental British values' and the effects of this policy discourse on social subjects' lives and the institutions that they live and work in. This underlies the explanation of how structural, contextual and ideological factors are significant influences on an individual's perception of their experience of the promotion of such values. By adopting this stand point, I aim to offer a deeper analysis of a concrete social reality. I am proposing the possibility of a realist and objective inquiry into interpretations of 'fundamental British values'.

The notion of objectivity here does not entail a commitment to value-free neutrality (such as in positivism) or a belief that human beings can acquire absolute truth and certain knowledge about either social or natural phenomena (Collier, 2003; Jones, 2006). As Haraway (1988: 590) argued, an objective view of reality can be obtained by embracing our own subjectivity and acknowledging our own position. She describes this as 'situated knowledges' (Haraway, 1988: 590). This is about accepting that the researcher can only ever claim a partial view of the world. However, the researcher can expand their view by learning to see from the other's perspective while acknowledging their own position. She describes this as being able to 'see together'. For her, researchers can 'see together' with others while not claiming to be in the very same position or circumstances as another (Haraway, 1988:590). For researchers the possibility of obtaining an objective view of reality goes through embracing their own subjectivity and values at the same time as seeking to understand others' as well. Other concepts and notions may be correct, as well as false. All information needs to be treated as 'real' in order to explain the issue under

investigation. As Danermark et al. (2002: 37) argue, 'it is the job of the social scientist to "read" these "other", often quite varying but still informative, notions and concepts'. It is important, because human beings are 'knowing' and reflective subjects. They continually evaluate the situations they are making. This may or may not lead to any change in their actions and practices. Therefore 'even the social phenomena under study might themselves change through people's learning of and adapting to – or rejecting and opposing – knowledge continually being produced in society' (Danermark et al., 2002: 35). This reflexive approach is also an acknowledgement that the researcher is a member of society and is an actor who is shaped by, and shapes, the world around themselves (Caterino and Hansen, 2009; Keane, 2015; Sayer, 2011).

This section has provided a brief introduction to critical realism. The next section will explore the key concepts associated with critical realism and establish how they relate to research conducted on a particular social phenomenon.

### **5.3 Critical realist ontology: Depth realism, structure, mechanism and powers**

One of the most significant aspects of critical realism is that ontology (i.e. the theory of being or reality) is not reducible to epistemology (i.e. our knowledge of reality). Critical realists make the assumption that an ontological theory is presupposed by epistemological theory because all knowledge is always about something, even if it is about an abstract concept, e.g. love or hate (Collier, 1994). In critical realist terminology, 'reality/realism' refers to a metaphysical doctrine that the world exists independently of

the human mind (Devitt, 1984) and that human knowledge (epistemology) can capture only a small section of reality.

Bhaskar (1978: 56) draws an ‘ontological map’ to illustrate the argument that reality possesses a ‘deep’ dimension. He makes a distinction between three ontological domains: the *empirical*, the *actual* and the *real* (see the table 1).

Table 5. 1 Domains of reality

Domains of Reality	Experiences	Events	Mechanisms
Empirical Domain	X		
Actual Domain	X	X	
Real Domain	X	X	X

Source: Bhaskar (1978: 13)

The *empirical* domain consists of people’s direct or indirect experiences, it is separate from the *actual* domain where events happen regardless of whether people experience them or not. What happens in the world is not the same as that which is experienced or observed. The actual domain ‘is in its turn separated from the *real* domain. In this domain there is also that which can produce events in the world, that which metaphorically can be called ‘*mechanisms*’ (Danermark et al., 2002: 20). According to Lawson:

A *mechanism* is basically the way of acting or working of a structured thing ... Mechanisms then exist as the causal powers of things. Structured things ... possess causal powers which, when triggered or released, act as generative mechanisms to determine the actual phenomena of the world. (Lawson, 1997:21)

Mechanisms are the inherent properties in an object or structure that act as causal forces to produce events in the world – i.e., those appearing at the empirical level (Brown et al., 2002). These are the object’s *causal powers*. Fleetwood (2002) argues that structures

endowed with these *powers* can do certain things, but not others. However, just because an object has a particular power it does not mean that the power is always exercised and has an observable effect in the world.

According to Brown et al. (2002: 5), causal powers ‘may *be possessed, exercised or actualised*’. These three types of powers each correspond to a particular level of reality. At the deepest level, the real domain, all powers are *possessed*, but they generate no effects, they exist transfactly i.e. are not observable at the empirical level. For example, the working class, as a class, has the power to stop production, cause disruption and more in any workplace. Whether this power is exercised or not, it exists regardless of the circumstances surrounding it.

The mid-level of reality, the actual domain, is where a ‘possessed power’ is *exercised*. This is the domain in which *exercised* power is triggered to generate effects. Fleetwood (2002: 6) argues that, ‘being triggered is, typically, a complex process requiring that the entity enters into a web of relations with other relevant entities’. The example of the migrant cleaners’ strike at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in 2014 illustrates this notion. It was a successful action. It resulted in workers gaining better working conditions and longer holidays<sup>62</sup>. The workers possessed power was triggered by entering into appropriate relations with other entities, such as their wages, working conditions, trade unions, political climate, government policies, family structures, education, management structure so on. Then the *possessed* power became *exercised* power. This exercised power is called a *tendency* (Psillos, 2007 and see the section on causation in this chapter).

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<sup>62</sup> <https://socialistworker.co.uk/art/37961/Victory+for+striking+cleaners+at+Soas>

However, exercised power can have no observable effect at the *empirical* level until it is *actualised*. This means workers have to actualise their power by performing an action, so there can be an observable effect at the empirical level. In the SOAS cleaners' case this was three days of strike action. At the end, they won their demands.

Table 5.2 Powers

Powers	
Actualised (Empirical)	Strike action – successful or not
Exercised (Actual)	Possessed power is triggered by entering into appropriate relations with other entities.
Possessed (Real – deep)	It exists transfactually – SOAS cleaners' inherited power – power of the working class

Collier (1994) refers to Bhaskar's concept of 'layered realism' as 'depth realism'. 'Depth realism' entails the view that 'the real' cannot be reduced to individual experience. When informed by critical realist ontology, social science aims to 'investigate and identify relationships, respectively, between what we experience, what actually happens and the underlying mechanisms that produce the events in the world' (Danermark et al., 2002: 21).

Critical realist ontology explores beyond the course of events, investigating the actual mechanisms which generate them. In the example of a Muslim woman wearing a headscarf being attacked in a London shopping centre<sup>63</sup>, the critical realist ontologically analyses this event in the following order (see table 3):

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63 See The Guardian 16 December 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/dec/16/muslim-woman-dragged-hijab-chingford-east-london-assault>



Table 5.3 Stratified ontology of a racist attack

Domain	Entity
Empirical	Observable attack on a Muslim woman.
Actual	Racism exists but is not triggered yet. Racism exists in relation to other mechanisms, structures, powers. Actualisation happens when these mechanisms work together to generate effects. They are visible at the empirical level.
Real (deep)	Causes make the empirical level possible – socio-economic relations; imperialism; colonialism; slave trade; education; the media; the state; nationalism and so on.

The first is the *empirical* level. This level can be defined as the domain of experience, and is comprised of events as people personally experience them. This is the level where events, phenomena or objects can be measured empirically - where social ideas, meanings, decisions and actions occur. At this level, although the majority of events can be explained by adopting ‘common sense’, these explanations are mediated through the filters of human experience and interpretation (Sayer, 2000). Therefore, the attack on the Muslim woman may be interpreted in various ways according to different perspectives. However, different interpretations do not have any influence on the actual event itself: the event took place, it happened, and was experienced by the woman.

The second level is the *actual*. At this level, there is no ‘filter’ of human experience (Fletcher, 2016): events take place, whether people experience them or not. For example, race and religious hate crimes increased by 41percent following the European Union Referendum<sup>64</sup> in the United Kingdom; regardless of whether or not some people have experienced a racist hate attack, such attacks are nonetheless occurring.

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64 See BBC 13 October 2016 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-37640982>

The third level is the *real*. This is the *deepest* level, where critical realists can locate *causes which produce events* in the world, which are otherwise known as '*mechanisms*' (Danermark et al., 2002: 20). At this level, critical realism uncovers the underlying mechanisms which produce an event. These are the inherent properties of an object or structure which act as causal forces to produce events and include notions, concepts and ideas. At this level, critical realist researchers 'dig deep' to uncover mechanisms, e.g. why and how racist attacks occur and what makes them possible are investigated.

In this section, I have explained the ontological claims of critical realism by using the preceding examples of an industrial strike and a racist attack. These claims are: that reality and things have an objective existence; reality is layered and the knowledge people can attain about it through observation is limited due to the deep dimension of reality; and reality cannot be reduced to observation of phenomena at the empirical level. In order to explain why a social phenomenon under investigation occurs, critical realists utilise the concept of '*emergence*'. The concept of emergence in critical realism will be presented in the following section.

#### **5.4 Emergence**

The critical realist stratified ontology is characterised by *emergence*, meaning that the interactions between multiple generative mechanisms give rise to new phenomena. In other words, objects can combine to form new entities which often have powers irreducible to those of their components, while each original component comprises multiple mechanisms. The start of this new and unique occurrence is called emergence

(Bhaskar, 1978; Danermark et al 2002). For instance, Fletcher's (2016) empirical study of female farm workers in Canada uncovers and explains the loss of control of their farms by the workers. Fletcher (ibid.) demonstrates how interactions between expanding farm size (causal mechanism 1), the Canadian government's agricultural policies (causal mechanism 2), the rising costs of seeds and machinery (causal mechanism 3) and competition (causal mechanism 4) have produced a new entity: the corporatisation of farming. Fletcher (ibid.) further posits that the identification of each structure and explanation of their power amongst female farm workers were made possible through the application of critical realism.

In this section, the concept of emergence in critical realism is explored. The next section will explain intransitive and transitive dimensions in critical realist philosophy.

### **5.5 Intransitive and transitive dimensions**

The realist social scientists claim that reality and the things of which it is comprised have an objective existence (Danermark et al., 2002). However, amongst them there are different views on the nature of reality and therefore of how to gain knowledge of it. For example, the empiricist view is that a scientist can claim knowledge of reality through observation (Danermark et al., 2002). In opposition to this the critical realist approach claims that a scientific method necessarily involves observation of events, but that reality cannot be reduced to observations. Bhaskar (1975) argues that scientists should avoid the epistemic fallacy by not reducing questions of 'what is' to questions of 'how we can

know'. As such, ontology should not be reduced to epistemology because empirical knowledge of the real world is contestable. Knowledge can be changed in the light of new findings or theories. The epistemic fallacy could possibly be overcome by paying attention to the critical realist argument that a scientific study has two dimensions: the '*intransitive*' and '*transitive*' (Bhaskar, 1975; Sayer, 2000). The *intransitive* dimension is formed by objects (physical processes or social phenomena) of science or, in other words, the world that exists independently from our knowledge or theories. The *transitive* dimension consists of the theories, discourses and interpretive resources of the world which exist in the *intransitive* realm. They compete in order to explain and give meaning to the intransitive dimension.

For example, the *intransitive* dimension of my study is 'fundamental British values', and the structures and mechanisms which make it possible for them to be investigated in the empirical world, its *transitive* dimension is the competing views and interpretations of 'fundamental British values'. For example the official definition of the notion of 'fundamental British values' has been propagated by the Conservative Party (May, 2017), Henry Jackson Society (2015; 2016), Quilliam Foundation (2016; 2017), Casey Report (2017) but has been challenged by various academics (Farrell, 2016; Kundnani, 2015; Lander, 2016; Poole, 2002; Sian, 2013; Virdee, 2015) and human rights organisations (Cage, 2016; IHRC, 2015, 2016, 2017; MEND, 2016), trade unions (NUT, 2016, 2017; UCU, 2015, 2016) and student union (NUS, 2016). The transitive dimension always consists of a set of theories concerning the intransitive dimension. Scientists and social scientists aim to transform these theories 'into a deeper knowledge of reality' (Collier, 1994:52-4). Thus, theories can always be challenged by new theories. This means that any knowledge

‘may be wrong at any moment when it makes statements of its objects, and so theories in science can only be regarded as the best truth about reality we have for the moment’ (Danermark et al., 2002: 23). All knowledge is open to revision in the light of new theories. Collier makes the following formulation:

Rival scientific theories necessarily have different transitive objects, or they would not be different; but they are not about different worlds – otherwise how could they be rivals? They would not be scientific theories at all if they were not aimed at deepening our knowledge of the intransitive object of science. (Collier, 1994: 51)

The critical realist approach, unlike positivism, accepts that ideas and knowledge in the transitive world are both real and causal (see the section on causality) and like any other knowledge they are social products. They are influenced by many different social mechanisms such as, social, economic and political conditions of the time. Maxwell places emphasis on how ‘the ideas and meanings held by individuals – their concepts, beliefs, intentions, and so on’ are ‘as equally real to physical objects and processes’ (Maxwell, 2012: viii). Critical realists regard these two aspects of reality not as being inherently independent and separate realms, but rather as interacting in social life and mutually influencing one another’.

From the critical realist perspective knowledge ‘can be seen as one instrument among others to help us to deal with reality in a practical way’ (Danermark et al., 2002:24). In the social world (and in the natural world), this practicality means explanation and understanding of social phenomena at hand. In doing this people develop many different kinds of knowledge which are necessary to live in a particular time and space (Danermark et al., 2002; Sayer, 1992; Scott, 2010). The critical realists claim that knowledge

production is a practical social activity about reality but reality is not anything given.

Reality has a deep dimension. It is this deep dimension of reality, which is not immediately available to observers, that forces us to investigate the phenomena at hand and seek knowledge of it. The next section will explore how the critical realist approach facilitates knowledge production.

## 5.6 The hermeneutic process

Critical realism recognises that social phenomena and knowledge of them are intrinsically meaningful and complex. Danermark et al. argued that:

[m]eaning arises because it is innate in human practice that it is *conscious and intentional*. As human beings we always have at least some notion of aims and means for our daily toil, that is, we give it some sort of meaning. (Danermark et al., 2002: 28)

This process of meaning making of the social world comes about because of human interaction and intervention in the material world (Bourdieu, 1984; Giddens, 2013; Marx 1973 [1858]). In sociological field studies the meanings subjects give to their situation have to be understood; they are not quantifiable and therefore its interpretive and hermeneutic nature requires acknowledgement.

This interpretive hermeneutic process is most obvious in ethnography. Social science operates in a double hermeneutic (Sayer, 2000). There is the two-way relationship in which researchers interpret their participant's interpretation of the phenomena.

However, a researcher's interpretation of a participant's interpretation of a social phenomenon requires an analysis of the specific mechanisms that are operating in a

concrete research setting. This is due to the fact that when a person offers their viewpoint on actual empirical events which they experience on a daily basis, they provide reasons for their beliefs in order to justify their actions and views according to these beliefs in response to the current issue (Billig et al., 1988: 16). Danermark et al. describe the complexity of this process:

Because knowledge does not only have meaning but also different meaning to people with different practices developing/using knowledge. Since reality is differentiated, structured and stratified, and involves many different and sometimes conflicting practices and interests, there also exist several parallel conceptual frameworks and different and sometimes competing interpretations. (Danermark et al., 2002: 29)

Therefore, research of a social phenomenon is a concept and context dependent activity. Concepts are produced, reproduced or transformed through complex social relations (Sayer, 1992; Collier, 1994; Archer, 1998).

It is also important to recognise the existence of power struggles in social life. This represents itself clearly in the construction of political discourses in social life and the power to define social reality (Ballibar & Wallerstein, 1991; Bidet, 2016; Collins, 1998; Fanon 2001 [1965]; Foucault, 1972; Grzanka, 2014; Haraway, 1988; Marx, 1977 [1855]). Volosinov claimed that ‘...each living ideological sign (*words and language*) has two faces, like Janus. Any current curse word can become a word of praise, any current truth must inevitably sound to many other people as the greatest lie’ (1973: 23). Therefore, the researcher should attempt to uncover the contradictory causal powers which delimit social subjects’ interpretations of a concrete social event (Volosinov, 1973; Bakhtin and Medvene, 1978). In any social enquiry, the social scientist’s task is to ‘interpret other

people's interpretations' of the phenomenon at hand. For instance, the government's widely debated policy of actively promoting 'fundamental British values' (DfE, 2015; Farrell 2016; Lander, 2016) in schools and colleges can be interpreted and implemented by teachers in different schools located in the same city in various ways. Furthermore, young citizens who object to this policy may have a different interpretation of 'fundamental British values' than that of their teachers (Lander, 2016; Farrell, 2016). Moreover, compulsory teaching of 'fundamental British values' will have different impacts upon different communities in the UK (see chapters 7, 8 and 9).

When utilising critical realism in my research, I recognise that it is necessary to incorporate '*verstehen*' or 'interpretive understanding' into my social enquiry. However, these meanings are related to material conditions and the social contexts in which an interaction takes place. Whilst accepting hermeneutics I also place emphasis and recognise the interrelationship between a) 'the material commitments and settings of communicative interactions and b) the presence of a non-discursive, material dimension to social life' (Sayer, 2000:18). These two points highlight the distinction between the transitive and intransitive dimensions of science, which is very useful for researchers in social science, because it allows us to consider that the meaning people give to things and the reasoning people use in their decision-making can have *causal* impact on the world. The next section will discuss what *causal* means from the critical realist perspective.



## 5.7 Causation in critical realism

The critical realist approach employs causal analysis to explain why certain events take place. For the critical realist, an explanation is about causes, and a cause is that which can make something happen in the world. However, critical realism rejects the conventional empiricist conception of causality (Harré & Madden, 1975; Bhaskar, 1975). This is a rejection of Humean empirical realism (see Figure 5.2). Hume (1978 [1888]) assumes that events of one type are always conjoined with events of a second type which consist of regularities amongst sequences of events, that is to say universal/law like regularities between events. This can be formulised as '*whenever event x then event y*' (Brown et al., 2002: 65). For instance, if water is heated (cause) it will be boiled (effect) at 100 degrees Celsius at sea level. Whenever water is heated at sea level at 100 degrees Celsius it boils (regularity).

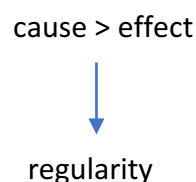


Figure 5.2 Positivist or 'successionist' view of causation (adopted from Sayer, 2000: 14)

Researchers can conduct experiments on natural events such as repeatedly boiling water under laboratory conditions by creating a '*closed system*' (this is an artificial laboratory environment) which provides them with the means to claim knowledge of an event. According to the critical realist, providing a thorough empirical description of a given context is not sufficient and researchers are required to seek empirically unobservable

causes of the events. For Bhaskar, there is a clear distinction between the events (which may be observable) and the mechanisms which make it possible for these particular events to occur (which may be empirically unobservable). For example, let us consider the relationship between an apple falling from a tree and the natural phenomenon of gravity. Does a falling apple represent gravitational force? The event is a 'falling apple', while the mechanism is 'gravity'; these are two distinct kinds of being. The researcher's job is to find out what makes the apple fall: the unobservable cause(s) (Callinicos, 2016: 168). This argument is in line with Marx's claim that (1981[1894]: 956) 'all science would be superfluous if the form of appearance of things directly coincided with their essence'.

From a realist perspective, causation is 'not a matter of a relation between two events, separated and demarcated from each other, [they] are about objects or relations and their nature' (Danermark et al., 2002: 54). Therefore, when the critical realist wishes to find out the type of mechanism responsible for causing an action, they have to ask what "makes it happen", what "produced", "generates" or "determines" it (Sayer, 1992: 104), while they also elaborate upon the causation of the action or event. Therefore, they will argue that the world is not just made up of regular patterns and events, but it also has an ontological depth (see Table 1). Interactions between different mechanisms and structures result in the emergence (see the section on emergence, p: 106-7) of new mechanisms and events (Bhaskar, 1975; Collier, 1994; Danermark et al. 2002; Scott, 2010). For instance, anyone who has had experience of flying in an aeroplane or has observed birds will notice that aeroplanes and birds break the law of gravity; however, people do not consider this to indicate that gravity is invalidated, but rather that it is temporarily modified by another mechanism (see Figure 5.3).

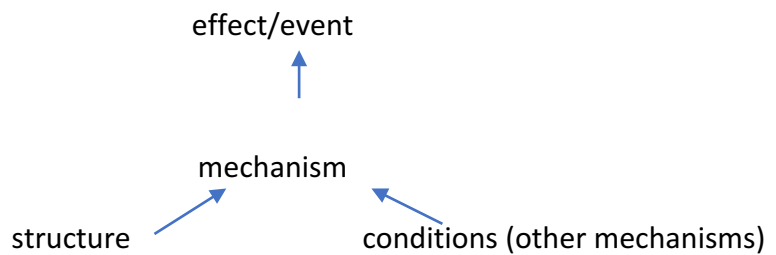


Figure 5.3 Critical Realist view of causation (adopted from Sayer, 2000: 15)

The same principles apply to social events; however, social events and structures cannot exist independently of people's actions. Therefore, events that occur within society are not predetermined before they happen but depend on interacting factors and their conditions. Indeed, social events cannot be re-created in a '*closed system*', whereas social relations take place in an '*open system*'. The same social events can produce different outcomes. For example, economic crises can prompt firms to close or to restructure and reinvent themselves. Hence, the critical realist claims that, in social science, causality 'must be analysed as *tendencies*' not universal law (Bhaskar, 1978: 50), because there is always a possibility of a tendency being interfered with by other mechanisms. However, this does not suggest that social events are impossible to explain, because they are occurring in the '*open system*'. Archer (1998) describes social events as '*morphogenetic*'. Social events are products of social interactions. The agents of social interactions possess 'a reflexivity towards and creativity about any social context which they confront', therefore social scientists have to apply different parameters (Archer et al., 1998: 190). Bhaskar argues that:

the real methodological import of the absence of closed systems is strictly limited: it is that the social sciences are denied, in principle, decisive test situations for their theories. This means that criteria for the rational development and replacement of theories in social sciences must be explanatory and non-predictive. (Bhaskar, 1979: 57-8)

It is this explanatory aspect of critical realism which I seek to apply in the interpretation and analysis of my data.

The critical realist view of causation is beneficial to social scientists in explaining the causes and conditions of any particular social phenomenon within a specific time period while investigating it within the social/economic/geo-political/historic conditions in which the event takes place. The concept of critical realism is significant due to its insistence on objectivity and understanding of the material and social world. By underpinning my empirical research with critical realism, I will seek to uncover the mechanisms which made it possible for 'fundamental British values' to emerge as part of a wider hegemonic political ideology in the UK.

So far in this chapter, I have clarified the primary philosophical tenets of the critical realist approach towards empirical research. I have presented critical realism primarily as a metatheory which offers a specific ontology and epistemology. I have not explored any association between critical realism and any specific empirical enquiry method because critical realism argues that the method(s) depend(s) on the nature of the phenomenon under investigation. Choice of method 'should be governed, on the one hand, by what we want to know and, on the other, by what we can learn with the help of different methods' (Danermark et al., 2002: 204). The following section will discuss which

strategies were employed, how and why they were utilised and why I chose to employ them in this research.

## **5.8 Research design methodology**

My research, underpinned by critical realist philosophy, adopts qualitative strategies to explore the concept of ‘fundamental British values’ and to collect evidence of how the concept has been interpreted by young citizens. Moreover, the mechanisms which make these interpretations possible will also be explored (Danermark et al., 2002: 74). The critical realist refers to this process as *intensive* data collection (i.e., in-depth interpretive data, as obtained through one to one interviews or group interviews). In order to explore the highly complex research topic, I have drawn upon my own life history and narratives of young citizens. My main data collection methods consist of five unstructured group interviews. The data collected through interviews will help to identify empirical *demi-regularities* (i.e., trends or themes).

A number of factors shaped the decision to use qualitative methods to collect the intensive data. First, I did not want to bury young citizens’ voices under vast amounts of quantitative data. This would have undermined one of the aims of this research which is to uncover mechanisms which influence young citizens’ interpretations of ‘fundamental British values’. Second, I wanted to uncover young citizens’ lived experiences. This section considers the complexity of conducting life history, group and one-to-one interviews using a critical realist approach.

## 5.9 Life history

Life history provides rich opportunities for individuals to re-consider and re-construct their own understandings of their personal experiences. Life histories are visualised, theorised and told as a story by their own makers. The researcher turns the story into a life history through analysing its historical, social, political and economic context (Goodson and Sikes, 2001; Powles, 2004; Haque, 2015; Duckworth, 2017). It is the task of making, re-making, learning and unlearning (Goodson and Sikes, 2001). Life history takes this task seriously. In the Derridean sense, life history becomes a type of architecture, an extensive array of impulses, instincts, memories and dreams (Derrida, 1988).

My own '*life history*' is the starting point of this research. As the American writer James Baldwin explained: 'history is not the past ... it is the present. We carry our history with us. We are our history' (2017 [1987]). I had multiple interests in researching young citizens' understandings of 'fundamental British values' in Bradford schools. The first is that I can see some similarities between my educational experiences in Turkey and the current British government's policy of the active promotion (DfE, 2012) of 'fundamental British values' in schools and colleges in the UK. When I was undergoing my primary and secondary education, we were taught the official understanding of 'Turkishness'.

Everybody had to accept Turkish identity, even though there were millions of ethnic minorities, such as Kurds, living in Turkey. The second is my observation of the political and social impact of the 9/11 and 7/7 attacks on my students in a further education college. The third is the impact of these attacks on myself as an immigrant and a teacher in Bradford. Upon reflection on my own life history, I have better understood the effect

on my own being of state sanctioned 'Turkishness' during my schooling in Turkey. This led me to question the effects of promoting 'fundamental British values' (DfE, 2012; HO, 2015) to young people in schools and colleges in multicultural Bradford. Goodley et al.

note:

Researching life stories offers opportunities for drawing on our own and others' narratives in ways that can illuminate key theoretical, policy and practice considerations. Researching life stories allows us to bring in parts of us. (Goodley et al., 2004: 167)

Casey (1995), in her collection of biographies of women teachers, reminds the researcher that life histories are also an important tool for challenging hegemonic ideologies from the grassroots. My research, informed by critical realist methodology, life history and personal narrative methods, explores and challenges the hegemonic meaning of 'fundamental British values' defined by the British state (DfE, 2012; HO, 2011; HO, 2015). In the words of Berfin, a young participant from Bradford, the state sanctioned notion of Britishness is challenged:

They are shoving Britishness down our throat. They are trying to show us (Asians – Muslims) this is what Britishness is – this is what is going to happen... But they don't even know what it is.

Feelings like Berfin's will provide rich empirical material which can then be interpreted as new knowledge. Such interpretations also direct the researcher to go further than recording the participant's statement by investigating under which social, political and historic conditions these interpretations are possible. For example, life histories and narratives of the participants will:

- allow for the communication of young citizens' day to day experiences in a powerful and relatively direct way;
- enable the researcher to capture the complexity and richness of an individual's life experiences of 'fundamental British values';
- highlight young citizens' concerns and can challenge the researcher and the wider public to think creatively about ways to address them;
- help the researcher to understand the impact of the implementation of 'fundamental British values' on young citizens' day to day life.

Through application of life history and personal narratives methods I aim to uncover the unheard, unrecognised voices of young citizens as agents in society.

### **5.10 Data collection**

This research conducted unstructured group and one-to-one in-depth interviews as the main data collection method. Interviews are considered to be an efficient tool for acquiring information and it is the most frequently adopted method in social research (Briggs, 1986; Mishler, 1991; Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Holstein and Gubrium, 1997; Pawson and Tilley, 1998; Mason 2002; Gubrium, 2012). There is wide ranging literature on the subject, from the organisation of interviews to the analysis of data: the dramaturgical 'performer' (Goffman, 1959), the 'miner' of knowledge (Kvale, 1996), or 'the maker of quilts' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). However, one approach, in particular, has been ignored or undermined: the realist approach to interviews. For instance, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) argue that the realist approach towards qualitative research is no



more than positivism or foundationalism in disguise. Hammersley and Atkinson's (1995) work on ethnography has analysed the use of interviews in different methodologies: positivist, naturalistic, post-modern and realist, advocating a realist approach. Although I draw on their work in discussing the different approaches presented below, I have employed a critical realist approach (Bhaskar, 1974; Outhwaite, 1987; Archer, 2012) when conducting the interviews; in addition, I have incorporated Pawson and Tilley's (1998), Elger and Smith's (2005; 2012), Iosifides', (2005, 2011) and Fletcher's (2016) studies in my research.

By adopting the critical realist approach, I regard the collected data, such as narratives, texts, meanings and social norms relating to 'fundamental British values' as real concrete social objects. Sayer argues that:

By 'concrete' we mean something real, but not something which is reducible to the empirical: we mean far more than just 'factual'. The concrete object is concrete not simply because it exists, but because it is a combination of many diverse forces or processes. (Sayer, 1998: 123)

The critical realist position of interpreting concepts, beliefs, and intentions as 'real concrete objects' makes it an effective tool for social science. This stance allows researchers to consider people's decisions along with their causal impact on the world. For example, a political choice in an election can make a difference to people's lives; it is not merely a cross on a ballot paper since the choice can have an impact on people in the form of 'real' events e.g. public sector cuts, having a detrimental effect on working conditions and wages, and discriminative government policies. Either way, the critical

realist argues that people's knowledge, reasons or motivations (combination of diverse forces or processes) for carrying out actions can have a real effect on events in the world.

The reality of these textuality-grounded objects is verified via the analysis of what types of social outcomes appeared to be caused by them (Outhwaite, 1987; Sayer, 1992). By conducting group and one-to-one in-depth interviews, I explore morphogenetic causal mechanisms (Archer, 1998, 2000, 2012) by examining patterns, sequences, and tendencies which are evident in my participants' responses to questions relating to 'fundamental British values'. This approach enables me to:

- appreciate the interpretations of 'fundamental British values' by my participants;
- analyse the social context, constraints and resources where my participants act and interpret the world;
- uncover structural mechanisms behind the events which were interpreted by my participants.

Below I will explore different approaches and differentiate between the critical realist, post-modernist (Holstein and Gubrium, 1997, 2011, 2012; Gubrium, 2012) and realist approaches (Hammersley and Atkinson: 1995; Hammersley, 1992, 2009a, 2009b) to characterisations of interviews.

### **5.11 A constructionist view**

In accordance with interpretivist tradition, researchers conduct interviews in order to gain access to their participants' subjective understanding of specific events, social

relations and social contexts. During a constructionist interview, the researcher and participants mutually construct a meaning of events. Within this tradition, several feminists and other theorists (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000; Holstein and Gubrium, 1997, 2011, 2012; Montel, 1999) argue that there are divergences in the social characteristics of the researcher and participant in terms of gender, race or class, which are likely to influence the process of the interviews and the mutual meaning behind the construction. Furthermore, contemporary constructionists often integrate these approaches into a post-modernist view. Smith and Elger (2012:6) highlighted the fact that a post-modernist view 'emphasises that such subjective understandings involve varied narratives; although they coexist, they cannot be assessed against an external or objective social reality that is independent of the individual's interpretation. Holstein and Gubrium (1997, 2011, 2012) illustrate an exemplary utilisation of this tradition through conducting interviews. They developed this method in opposition to a positivist model of neutral interviewers.

According to Holstein and Gubrium (1997:116), neutral interviewers regard participants as mere holders of 'the unadulterated facts and details of experience'. The researchers' job is to extract this information from the participants. In contrast to this approach, Holstein and Gubrium emphasise the process involved in the construction of meanings and narratives through collaboration and interaction between researchers and previously researched materials. This approach encourages an active provocation of the participants by the researcher in order to draw upon participants 'stock of experiential materials' (ibid: 116). Holstein and Gubrium (1997: 122) argue that the researcher's active involvement will 'activate, stimulate and cultivate' the participant's 'interpretative capabilities'. Smith and Elger (2012) highlight that this approach contains various

similarities with 'naturally occurring talk'; however, it is still representative of a distinctive method due to its provocative nature. Holstein and Gubrium further expand upon the active interview:

The consciously active interviewer intentionally provokes responses by indicating – even suggesting – narrative positions, resources, orientations and precedents. In the broadest sense, the interviewer attempts to activate the respondent's stock of knowledge...and bring it to bear on the discussion at hand in ways that are appropriate to the research agenda. (Holstein and Gubrium, 1997:123)

Therefore, the social researchers who employ the active interview approach keep the research agenda for themselves. They employ this approach so as not to impose an interpretation but rather to create an environment in which both the participants and the researcher can create meanings from a complex issue (Holstein and Gubrium, 1997).

However, it does not mean that the participants are permitted to dominate the interview since the researchers are still responsible for the direction which the interview takes 'as well as provoking answers that are germane to the researchers' interests' (ibid: 125).

Furthermore, Smith and Elgar (2012: 9) argue that, when establishing meaning from 'the formulation of a research topic, through the selection of interviewees and the interchange of questions and answers, to the process of interpretation and analysis', the researcher will have more control than the participants. However, this asymmetry has not been addressed by the active interview approach.

For me, as a researcher, conducting an active interview offers some insight into a social inquiry, while their critique of positivist 'straw man' is a sufficient one. However, from a realist perspective, Holstein and Gubrium's (1997, 2011, 2012) approach has a tendency

to deny 'the existence of any social reality other than that which exists throughout the interactive processes (Smith and Elger, 2012: 9). It does not go far enough to address the possibilities for critical evaluations of events and rival narratives, neither during the interview nor in the post-interview analysis. Furthermore, whilst Holstein and Gubrium (2012: 32) acknowledge that the respondents' meaning is largely dependent on social circumstances, they fail to conduct further analysis into the mechanisms behind the participants' interpretations of the events. Such considerations underpin the accounts of the interviews which are considered in the next two sections below.

### **5.12 A realist view**

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) have formulated their explicitly realist qualitative research method and its practical utilisation within ethnography. They deliberated on different approaches with regards to the interview as a research method. Their realist approach is proposed in opposition to both positivism and the anti-realism of radical constructionism and post-modernism; however, they appreciated the argument that the importance of researchers' reflexivity and ethnographies are socially constructed (Hammersley, 2009a, 2009b; Smith and Elger, 2012). Furthermore, they insisted that 1) the researchers cannot accept the research findings at face value and 2) the research findings are subject to alternative interpretations. Hammersley and Atkinsons state that:

We can work with what 'knowledge' we have, while recognising that it may be erroneous and engaging in systematic inquiry where doubts seem justified; and in so doing , we can still make the reasonable assumption that we are trying to describe phenomena as they are, and not merely how we perceive them or how we would like them to be. (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 17-18)

In relation to these claims, Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) argued that a qualitative ethnographic interview is 'an active process of listening and asking questions to gather insider accounts' (Smith and Elger, 2012: 10). They also emphasised how the researchers need to build rapport and provide a flexible environment for the participant so that the researcher can extract the required information and retain some control of the interview process (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 152). Their distinctiveness is in their commitment to the researcher's control of the interview process. For instance, they suggest that the researcher can ask some probing questions, such as asking the participants to discuss a specific event, comment on alternative accounts or pose (carefully) leading questions so as to clarify vague points or directly challenge the participants' claims. Such interventions provide opportunities for the researcher to be able to conduct a 'frank and substantive interview' (ibid: 142).

Hammersley and Atkinson's realist approach promotes a 'process of joint meaning *and* knowledge production' (Smith and Elger, 2012: 11). In this approach, researchers set the parameters of the interview while their agenda takes priority; however, the researchers' agenda must include 'a critical appraisal of the adequacy of informants' accounts and explanations' (ibid: 11). It advocates comparison and evaluation of other data gathered from different interviews and from other research methods. In doing this, Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) argue that the researchers contribute towards the adequate understanding of social structures and processes. They also highlight that any such analysis is in itself a social construct as well as being fallible; any type of knowledge can be challenged in the face of emerging new evidence or theories. Taking this into consideration, Smith and Elger (2012) argue that Hammersley and Atkinson provide a

powerful overview and justification for conducting a realist interview; however, their proposed 'quite diverse styles of analysis and methods of presenting those analyses' (Ibid.11) has several shortcomings (see Hammersley, 1992; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, chapters 8-9). For example, Banfield (2004: 53-62) argued how their representation of reality descends into constructivism and is ontologically lacking in comparison to critical realist depth ontology. Smith and Elger (2012) argue a similar point and describe Hammersley and Atkinson's (1995) realism as weak. The major difference between Hammersley and Atkinson's 'weak realism' and critical realism is their approach towards the evaluation of subjects. Hammersley (1992) argues that the objective of conducting an interview (within an ethnographic study) is to understand the perspective of others rather than judge them. In contrast, Bhaskar (1989) is explicit in his assertion that critical realism logically entails evaluation, which he regards as being an imperative for social research.

In the next section I consider the arguments put forward by Pawson and Tilley (1997) draw directly on Bhaskar's (1975, 1979) critical realist conception of investigation and theorising in social research as the basis for an alternative approach to interviews.

### **5.13 A critical realist view**

Examples which reveal the distinctiveness of a critical realist interview includes its 'ontological depth' in that it prioritises the multi-layered character of social reality.

Pawson and Tilley (1997) utilised this approach in their interviews in order to investigate the 'relationship between underlying causal mechanism, the varying contexts in which such mechanisms operate and the resultant outcomes, anticipated and unanticipated'

(Smith and Elger, 2012: 11). In doing this they argued that researchers will uncover the ways in which social events emerge from interactions between different layers of social reality (Pawson, 1996).

Pawson and Tilley (1997, 2004) support Hammersley and Atkinson's (1995) argument which states that both the researcher and participant play active roles in an interview, while both parties have a range of experiences and levels of subjectivity. However, Pawson and Tilley offered a more precise definition of their respective roles. Their relationship is described as a 'teacher-learner cycle' (Manzano, 2016:2). They argued that:

People are always knowledgeable about the reasons for their conducts but in a way which can never carry total awareness of the entire set of structural conditions which prompt an action, nor the full set of consequences of that action...In attempting to construct explanations for the patterning social activity, the researcher is thus attempting to develop an understanding which includes hypotheses about their subjects' reasons within a wider model of their causes and consequences. (Pawson and Tilley, 1997: 162-3)

After presenting their argument, Pawson and Tilley insist that interviews should be explicitly 'theory-driven'. The subject matter of the interview is the researcher's theory and participants are there 'to confirm or falsify, above all refine that theory' (Pawson, 1996: 299). This suggests that the researcher has more control over the interview in comparison to constructivist or realist approaches. However, it does not necessarily mean that participants are merely passive respondents to the researcher throughout an interview. In actual fact, the researcher's and participant's roles are interchangeable during the process involved in understanding the complexities of social phenomena



(Pawson and Tilley, 2004). Therefore, a theory-driven interview appreciates the fact that participants and researchers are in control of a particular expertise. Together, they determine that 'communicative interaction is negotiated' (Smith and Elger, 2012: 12). For instance, Pawson (1996: 303) argues that the expertise of the participants is more likely to be in relation to explanatory mechanisms, such as 'reasoning, choices, and motivations'. Meanwhile, the researcher is regarded as having specific expertise in areas such as characterising wider contexts and the outcomes of action; therefore, discussion of these features 'should be led by the researchers' conceptualisations' (Ibid: 303).

In my research, Pawson and Tilley's didactic account of the interview process may pose several challenges, particularly in the representation of the participants' accounts of the phenomena. However, it is not impossible to overcome this challenge. Pawson and Tilley's framework can be formulated in rather more open and flexible terms by saying that they mandate the researcher to help the participant to appreciate the different aspects and the distinctive layers of the social processes the researcher is seeking to understand, and to do this in terms that both can recognise so that participant responses can throw maximum light on these features. Smith and Elger (2012; 14) suggest that the 'researcher might pursue focused discussion of specific, apparently pivotal, processes and their different interpretations within the research setting...Such recommendations highlight the importance of connecting analytical agendas with actors' own experiences and reflexivity'. For me, adopting a critical realist approach to interviews provides an important basis for gaining access not only to the attitudes and emotions of participants but crucially to richly textured accounts of events, experiences and underlying conditions or processes, which represent different facets of a complex and multi-layered social reality (Outhwaite, 1987; Sayer, 1992; Archer, 1998, 2000, 2003a,

2003b; 2012). From this vantage point I will uncover the underlying mechanism of interpretation of 'fundamental British values' by young citizens.

#### **5.14 The process of critical realist analysis**

Critical realist methodology is an explanatory approach; a researcher adopts this position and, as for most other researchers, begins the study with a concrete social phenomenon, a particular question or problem. In the social science context 'concrete' refers to something real, but real is not reducible to the empirical – it means more than just 'factual'. As Marx (1973 [1858], 101) argues: 'the concrete concept is concrete because it is a synthesis of many definitions, thus representing the unit of diverse aspects'. In this case, the concrete social problem is the understanding of 'fundamental British values' by young citizens.

The critical realists' vision of structured reality assigns a particular role for empirical data (Sayer 1997). For example, the themes derived from qualitative interviews reveal certain trends or patterns which are worthy of further analysis; these emerging patterns are called '*demi-regularities*' (Crinson, 2007: 39). A researcher gains a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study through investigating these patterns. This process consists of moving through the multiple levels of reality by employing complex tools of analysis: *description, analytical resolution, demi-regularities, retroduction and concretisation* (Danermark et al., 2002; Crinson, 2007). The aim of this process is to develop a causal explanation and identify the interrelations between the distinct levels of reality (empirical, actual and deep) that lead to the emergence of the concrete social

phenomenon of this study (Diagram 1 - Analytical Framework). This section will outline the proposed stages in an explanatory research project based on critical realist analysis, which draws on the contribution of a range of critical realist writers such as Lawson (1997), Danermark et al (2002) and Crinson (2007).

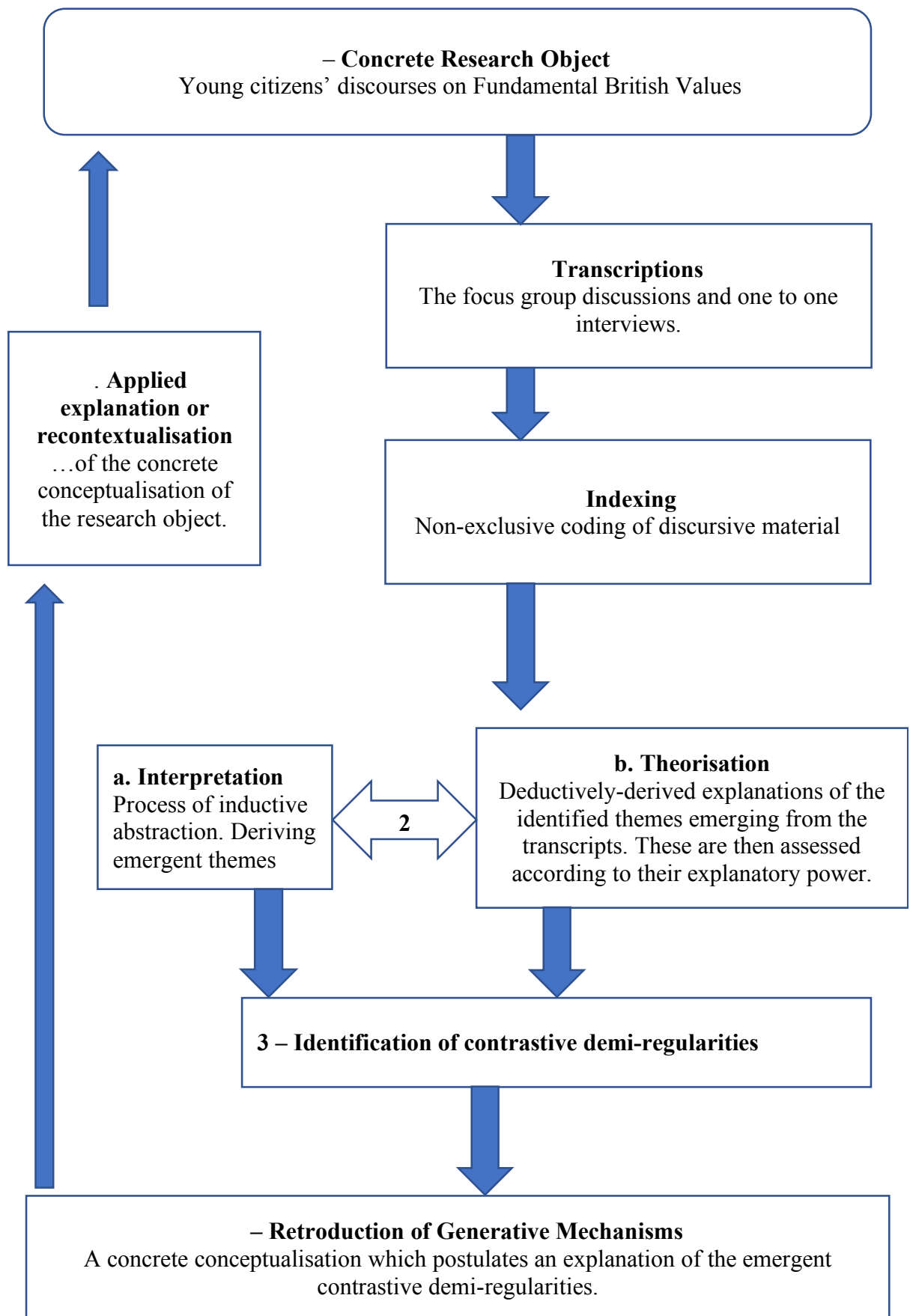


Figure 5.4 – Critical realist analytical framework - Adapted from Crinson (2007: 39)

### **5.15 Description**

Description is the first stage in explanatory analysis. Here, a researcher begins to 'describe the often complex and composite event or situation we intend to study' (Danermark et al., 2002:109): i.e. the concrete social problem/question. This is the stage in which researchers describe the empirical, or surface, level of reality. In this research this is achieved by using a qualitative method, which critical realists call an 'intensive method'. At this stage we examine participants' interpretations of the phenomena under study and 'their way of describing the current situation' is explored. At this stage the researcher makes use of the participants' 'everyday concepts'. This empirical data will be the main source for the researcher to identify emerging observable 'demi-regularities' (Lawson, 1997; Crinson, 2007), which will be used as departure points for further and deeper critical analysis by the researcher (see Demi-regularities and retrodution).

### **5.16 Analytical resolution**

In this phase the researcher will 'separate or dissolve the complex by distinguishing the various components, aspects or dimensions' (Danermark et al.,2002: 109). This means that the researcher needs to make a decision about the key themes associated with the concrete social phenomena that will be pursued within the analysis. This is a necessary part of explanatory research because it is not possible to study all aspects of a social phenomenon at once. Crinson (2007) divides this phase into two parts within the framework: interpretation and theorisation. Interpretation comprises a process of inductive abstraction, deriving from the emergent themes and data provided by the

participants. The inductive mode of inference is problematic at the empirical surface level, because social reality is often unstable and uncertain: its underlying structures and mechanisms depend on a range of specific circumstances. This means that researchers cannot draw empirically generalised conclusions from individual observations.

The theorising aspect is the deductively-derived best possible explanations of the themes that were emergent from the qualitative material. The critical realist equally cannot rely solely upon a theoretical-deductive analysis either, because 'it tends to produce [a] generalised conceptualisation of what are complex social phenomena' (Crinson 2007: 38). This means it lacks an analysis of specificity. It fails to explain the centrality of social context where tensions and contradictions influence the discourses of participants as social agents. Participants are in constant interactions with structures, and therefore, utilisation of only a deductive approach will not be enough to identify the conditions under which a concrete social phenomenon emerges (Sayer, 1992, 1997; Lawson, 1997; Danermark et al., 2002; Crinson, 2007).

Whilst inductive inference can direct a researcher towards the common understandings or perceptions of participants' interpretations of social phenomena, deductive inference can direct a researcher to 'the way in which generalised social structural features may be reproduced in the discourse of such social agents' (Crinson, 2007: 39). However, critical realist researchers rely solely on neither the inductive mode nor the deductive mode, because they acknowledge that reality is stratified. Their analytical process needs to move beyond the inductive and deductive to 'the causal-explanatory mode of theorisation' (Archer et al., 1998: 14; Crinson, 2007: 39; Danermark et al., 2007:109-112).

This is a necessary move in order to identify and understand the structures or mechanisms underlying the concrete social problem. This mode of inference is called '*retroduction*'.

### **5.17 Demi-regularities and retroduction**

Identification of contrasting demi-regularities is work that needs to be done before the retroduction stage in the analytical framework. In this phase, which is also described as '*abduction*', inductively derived themes (participant's interpretations) and deductively-derived theories (best explanations of the interpretations) that connect to the concrete social phenomena under study are brought together in order to identify contrasting and continuing themes in a particular period and social context (this mode of inference appears in the work of Marx e.g. 1981 [1854]). This is the theoretical redescription of the subject under study, where the phenomena under study are analysed through the existence of theoretical interpretations and explanations in order to develop new perspectives. During this process:

underlying generative social mechanisms may come to attention through their effects at the empirical level of the contrasts that exist between two similar situations, or between two similar social groups in the same situation. (Crisnon, 2007:40)

Through this process the critical realist researcher can identify 'rough and ready generalities' about a particular social situation, which Lawson (1997) describes as 'demi-regularities'. In Bhaskar's words these are 'a class of potentially epistemically significant

non-random patterns or results' (Archer et al., 1998:14), but they are not understood as universal, empirical regularities or patterns of events. They are '*tendencies*' (Sayer, 1998:125). These tendencies provide evidence for the occasional, but not universal, actualisation of generative mechanisms (Danermark et al., 2002; Crinson, 2007). The process of 'abduction' is useful for exploring the plurality of theorisations of specific phenomena. It also ensures that selection of the most appropriate theory through using a process of rational thought. This leads to the 'retroduction' stage.

Retroduction is the 'central mode of inference' in the critical realist analytical framework (Lawson, 1998: 156). It is premised on reasoned and rational thought (Brown et al., 2002: 13-15). Retroduction is a process of moving from concrete empirical data at the surface level to the more abstract transfactual level, where theorising of structures and mechanisms take place. In this study, retroduction will be the central mode of inference in order to investigate the causal mechanisms affecting young citizens' discourses of the notion of 'fundamental British values', which will be discussed further in the data analysis chapter.

### **5.18 Concretisation**

This is the final stage of the theoretical framework. This stage is concerned with 'applying or re-contextualising the retroduced generative structures in order to explain causally the concrete phenomenon itself' (Crinson, 2007: 40). It is here where researchers highlight the importance of the way in which mechanisms interact with other mechanisms at



different levels under specific social, cultural and historical contexts and manifest themselves in concrete cases (Danermark et al., 2002).

### **5.19 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, I have presented a critical realist approach to methodology and methods. I have argued that layered ontology and hermeneutics are central in order to understand young citizens' interpretations of 'fundamental British values'. I have discussed the collection of data and its analysis in relation to critical realist ontology and hermeneutics. A key thread running through this chapter is that social reality is structured and layered and that knowledge of social reality is always contested but it is possible, nevertheless, to explain it.

## Chapter 6

# Application of a critical realist method in practice

## 6.1 Introduction

When analysing empirical research data, the critical realist researcher attempts to discover causal explanations of the phenomenon under investigation. The critical realist approach claims that reality is layered (see chapter 5), therefore its application to empirical research requires an explanation of the phenomenon at these multiple levels of reality (see table 5.1). This analytical process is known as retrodution or abduction.

From the critical realist perspective (Archer, 1995; Banfield, 2015; Bashkar, 1995; Danermark et al. 2010) day to day social interactions in schools, such as classroom teaching, debates, individual conversations, general school assemblies or disciplining pupils can be situated at the *empirical* level of reality (see chapter 5). They can be shaped by a school's intake, its social and cultural make up or its geographical location. It can be argued that these social interactions in schools are a visible element of social relations but they are not free from the wider social structures at play (Ball 2013a, b; Foucault, 2015; Gramsci, 1986; Wrigley, 2006). These interlinked social interactions can help researchers to uncover *generative mechanisms* – which may not be observable in the empirical data but which ultimately cause events to occur. From this premise, it can be argued that students' and staff' social interactions occur under pre-existing social conditions. However, even under pre-existing conditions, staff and students are not simply passive recipients of these conditions, they are also agents who make, re-make or break these conditions. This does not mean, however, that this process of social practice provides the same opportunity for every actor within it to influence the working of the process equally. Some of the actors are more powerful than others e.g. the Secretary of

State for Education is more powerful than head teachers; head teachers are more powerful than teachers; teachers are more powerful than students etc. (Callinicos, 2006; Foucault, 2015; Gramsci, 1986; Marx, 1977). There are hierarchical power relations within the education system but this does not mean that the cycle of hierarchy cannot be broken.

In this chapter I will present a brief overview of each of the schools participating in this study in order to provide the context for the research. I will also introduce the participants; their names are pseudonyms. I have identified schools as school A, B and C. The focus groups are labelled A1, A2, B1, B2 and C. After introducing the institutions and participants I will present the process of data analysis to indicate how the theory introduced in chapter five has been applied in practice.

## **6.2 A brief background of the institutions where interviews took place**

As a former further education (FE) lecturer and teacher trainer I have networks within a wide range of schools and FE colleges throughout West Yorkshire. I approached institutions in Bradford with sixth-form centres, utilising these previous work-related contacts and these gate keepers arranged the groups for me. I recruited three institutions in which I had no influence in the selection of the individual participants. Two of the institutions were schools and one was an FE college. All three institutions will be referred to as schools throughout this thesis. Student participation was from the gate keeper's A level cohorts, however, participation was voluntary and students in the cohort had the right to non-participation or withdrawal at any stage. I conducted five focus group

interviews in three different institutions. I interviewed forty-six young citizens, all of whom (except three young women) were born and grew up in Bradford or its environs. Nineteen of those were of White English/Scottish heritage; the rest were of Black or Asian heritage. Forty of the participants were female. Of the six male participants five were of white English heritage and one of them was of Asian Pakistani heritage. Participants' ages ranged between seventeen and nineteen. Eight were eighteen and above and thirty-eight participants were aged seventeen. The focus groups were conducted between June 2016 and May 2017.

Table 6.1 Demographics of participants

	16-17	18+	Male	Female	BAME <sup>65</sup>	White
Age	38	8				
Gender			6	40		
Race/Ethnicity					27	19

### 6.3 Focus group interview question

During the focus group interviews I posed one main question: What do you understand by 'fundamental British values'? Interviews were unstructured (see chapter 5) and I, as facilitator of the focus groups, became involved in the discussion only when I thought a point required further explanation. In doing so I attempted to capture what the participants' subjective understandings could contribute to an analysis of the social structures within which the promotion of 'fundamental British values' had emerged.

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<sup>65</sup> Black, Asian and minority ethnic

With this aim I asked follow up questions such as ‘what do you mean by ....?’ ‘can you expand upon your point?’.

#### **6.4 School A**

School A is a Catholic secondary school but students from other faith backgrounds are strongly represented in the school. There are 1429 students at the school; 29percent are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, which is a significantly higher percentage than that for the local area, and nearly half come from areas of high deprivation<sup>66</sup> where, according to the council, unemployment is above the local and national average. I conducted two focus group interviews (A1 and A2) in school A; both groups were studying A Level Sociology. This school has a strong Catholic ethos so religious symbols are clearly displayed in the school’s corridors and its entrance. The school also visibly promotes the building of ‘a community based on faith and trust, respect for each individual, and full development of each person’s potential, as found in the teaching and example of Our Lord Jesus Christ’ (from a school information leaflet). During my visits to the school, I did not observe any example of displays or an event which directly promoted ‘fundamental British values’. It could be argued that perhaps the school’s Catholic ethos overrides ‘fundamental British values’. This is in line with the advice provided by the Catholic Education Service (CES). According to CES, every school should clearly express that they are Catholic schools and that they, ‘seek to live out the values of Jesus Christ. We promote these values by our words and deeds, and Catholic doctrine and practice

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<sup>66</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/media/1289/poverty-and-deprivation-ubd-20170206.pdf>

therefore permeates every aspect of the school’s activity’ (CES, 2015: 4). Young people did not mention that they had been made aware of ‘fundamental British values’ or Prevent in their lessons. However, the school’s inspection reports clearly mentioned promotion of ‘fundamental British values and Prevent’ and their Ofsted report praised the school’s efforts to implement Prevent through PHSE activities and staff training.

The following young people participated in two focus group interviews. Participants selected pseudonyms reflecting their ethnic, religious and cultural heritage to identify them and these names are used whenever they are mentioned.

School A group 1: Annie, Rosie (Black Jamaican heritage), Nita (Asian, Indian heritage), Waheeda (Asian, Pakistani Heritage), Sally (White British), Louise (Black British), Meghan (White British), Julie (White British), Andy (White British), Tom (White British), Jenny (White British), Claire (White British) and Heather (Black British).

School A group 2: Kenan (Asian, Pakistani), Karen (White British), Sadie (Black British), Jess (White British), Victoria (White British), Rachael (Asian, Chinese heritage), Lucy (White British), Liz (Black, Zimbabwean heritage), Georgina (White British), Christine (Black, British), Dusty (White British), Anna (White British), Ashley (White British).

Table 6.2 School A: age breakdown of participants

AGE	
16-17	26
18+	0

Table 6.3 School A: gender breakdown of participants

Gender	
Female	21
Male	5

Table 6.4 School A: ethnic breakdown of participants

Race	
BAME	10
White	16

## 6.5 School B

School B is a larger than an average-sized girls' secondary school. At the time the research was conducted there were 1163 students (the school's capacity is 1050) and 23.5percent of students were eligible for free school meals<sup>67</sup>. Almost all students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly of Pakistani heritage. I conducted two focus group (B1 and B2) interviews with A Level Psychology students. The catchment area of the school is socially diverse. While some of the students come from one of the twenty most deprived council wards of England, there are also very affluent neighbourhoods within the school's catchment area (see chapter 2 deprivation map). In this respect, it is truly a comprehensive school. As with school A, I did not notice any evidence of the visible promotion of 'fundamental British values'. I observed the presence of the 'poppy appeal' and the 'remembrance of World War 1 (WW1)'. This may have been a coincidence as it was the centenary of the end of WW1. Nevertheless, every display

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<sup>67</sup> <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/benefits/applying-for-benefits/free-school-meals/>



about WW1 was accompanied with a positive message relating to the British Empire. In one case, one of the displays was a celebration of soldiers from the colonies. The following A level Psychology students participated in the two focus group interviews.

School B group 1: Saima, Zunerra, Komal, Sara, Kaainat, Ruqaiyah (all Asian, Pakistani), Berfin (Kurdish, Iraq).

School B group 2: Mahmoona, Yasmin, Fatima, Kauser, Juwaid, Sonia (all Asian, Pakistani).

Table 6.5 School B: age breakdown of participants

Age	
16-17	12
18+	1

Table 6.6 School B: gender breakdown of participants

Gender	
Female	13
Male	0

Table 6.7 School B: ethnic breakdown of participants

Race	
BAME	13
White	0

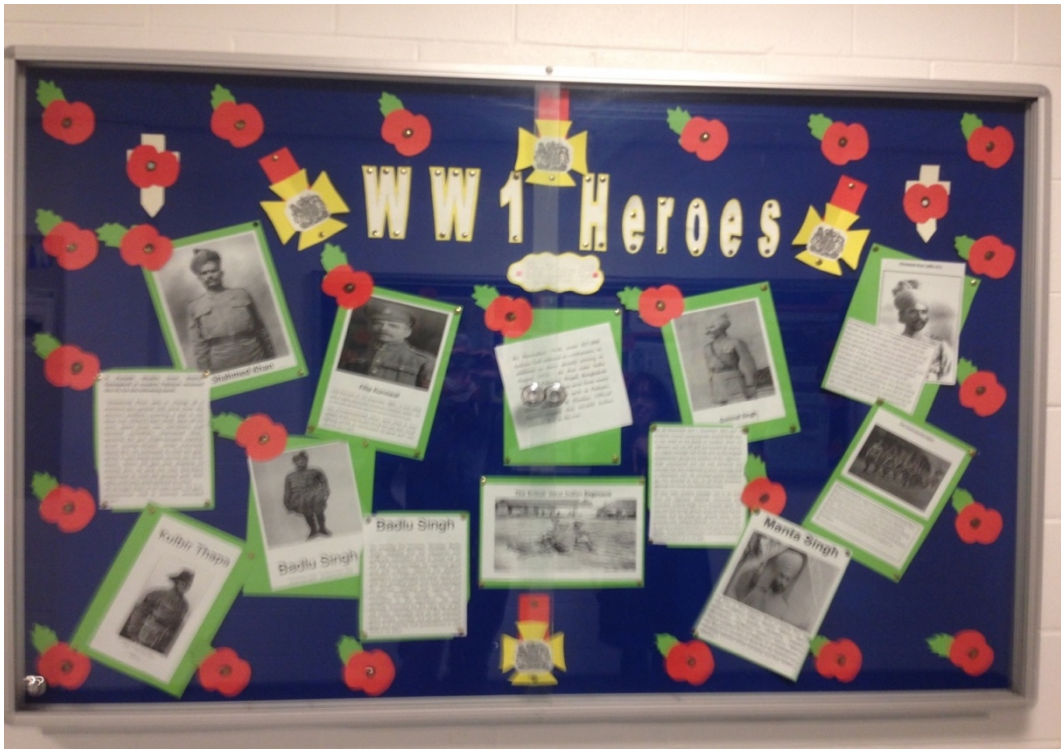


Image 6.1 A display from school B



Image 6.2 A display from school B.

## 6.6 School C

Educational Institution C is a very large further education college. At the time of the interview (2016) there were 16,669 learners enrolled on courses; 44 percent of these are from Black and ethnic minority groups from 89 different countries. Students of Pakistani heritage are the largest minority group in the college; they comprise 35 percent of the enrolled students. I conducted one group interview with a group of Citizenship A level students in this institution. In the three institutions in which I conducted interviews, only in this institution did I observe 'fundamental British values' being visibly promoted through posters in and outside of classrooms. The theme was promoted under the banner of 'united' values. It is also noteworthy that Bradford Council Prevent guidance has omitted 'British' when it describes 'fundamental British values'<sup>68</sup>. As part of its teaching programme, School C was also delivering a specific Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) for learners. All participants were aware of the Prevent programme and of the official justification for its existence. Bradford has been identified as one of the thirty 'high risk areas'<sup>69</sup> of radicalisation and extremism. The last Ofsted inspection report specifically referred to, and commended, the institution's Prevent training programme. The following participants took part in the focus group interview.

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<sup>68</sup> <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/media/4500/bradford-prevent-referral-guidance-for-partners.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/feb/13/prevent-counter-terrorism-support>

School C: Naz (Asian, Pakistani), Aneesa (Asian, Pakistani), Sumbul (Asian, Pakistani), Mariam (Asian, Pakistani), Leslie (White British), Kathryn (White British), Vic (White, British).

Table 6.8 School C: age breakdown of participants

Age	
16-17	0
18+	7

Table 6.9 School C: gender breakdown of participants

Gender	
Female	6
Male	1

Table 6.10 School C: ethnic breakdown of participants

Race	
BAME	4
White	3

### **6.7 ‘Digging for the deep real’: Presenting and coding the data within a critical realist framework**

As discussed in the methodology chapter (Chapter 5), the critical realist approach maintains that what is visible at the ‘appearance’ level of social relations exists because of their relations to ‘deeper’ social structures (Bhaskar, 1998; Collier, 1994; Danermark et al. 2010). The qualitative data analysis informed by critical realism aims to uncover those structures at work. Crinson (2007) states that:

Such qualitative material, if utilised within a broader realist framework of inquiry, has the potential to contribute to a transcendental (beyond the subject-object/agency-structure divide) understanding of causal relations and social processes operating at a particular social and historical conjuncture. (2007: 6)

In the analysis chapters I will uncover the social structures which made possible the emergence of the notion of 'fundamental British values'. My assertion is that these structures are dependent or built upon social relations. They were pre-existing for the participants I interviewed and they operate below the surface (see chapter 5). I would argue that the empirical data (views of my participants) collected through my focus group interviews are influenced by pre-existing material conditions. This premise enables me to situate my participants' discourses within a conception of reality that, '... does not explain practice from the idea but explains the formation of ideas from material practice' (Marx, 1999: 58). In order to explain the formation of my participants' ideas and generate a concrete concept from my qualitative focus group data I utilised the critical realist analytical schema (see chapter 5, figure 5.4).

The schema consists of five stages. Each stage is a tool for the researcher to uncover the multiple levels of reality discussed in chapter 5. I shall briefly explain them here to illustrate the operation of the theory in practice.

Table 6.11: A realist analytical schema adopted from Crinson (2007: 10)

Stage 1 (Empirical)	a) Transcription b) Indexing
Stage 2 (Actual)	a) Interpretation b) Theorisation
Stage 3 (Deep real)	Identification of contrastive demi-regularities.
Stage 4 (Deep real)	Retroduction
Stage 5	Re-contextualisation of the concrete research object.

### 6.8 Transcription and non-exclusive coding of focus group discursive material

In the analytical schema above, the first stage is the non-exclusive indexing of the focus group transcript material. This is the domain of the ‘surface/empirical level’ of ‘fundamental British values’. During this stage, transcribed materials were not assigned a single code, but each segment was assigned to several non-exclusive index codes (Hammersley and Atkinson: 1995; Crinson, 2007). In doing this, each individual point articulated by the participants was indexed to ensure the inclusion of all the points and issues discussed by the focus group participants. This process enabled me to embrace contradictory and deviant elements within the collected data rather than just selective data (see table 6.12). This approach is in line with Bhaskar’s premise that:

actors accounts are both corrigible and limited by the existence of unacknowledged conditions, unintended consequences, tacit skills and unconscious motivations; but in opposition to the positivist view, actors accounts form the indispensable starting point of social enquiry. (Bhaskar, 1998: XVI)

Below is a sample of transcribed data from participants' discussions in the left column.

The non-exclusive coding of the transcription is in the right hand column. Non-exclusive index codes aim to capture every point made by the participants (see table 6.12).

Table 6.12 An example of transcribed data from the interviews: stage 1 from group B1

Transcription	Non-exclusive index codes
<p><b>Berfin:</b> So I don't think we should be calling them British values but more likely English values because it's different between British and English.</p> <p><b>Kaainat:</b> No. We're born in England and so, yes, we're British but we're not really English, we were born into different background of families, some of our families will be from Pakistan. So, do we identify as Pakistanis, do we not?</p> <p><b>Sara:</b> I don't understand why, but on forms there it's like Afro-Caribbean British, or it's Asian-British, I always tick that section as British because not even as British-Asian even though that's what I am, I'm British. But I don't see why there has to be [ <b>00:16:39</b>], everyone has to fit into a little box. Because we are British, I was born in Britain. It's different say for example if my dad was filling out that form because he was born in Pakistan and he came over to England. But I was born and now I've been raised in England so I'm British.</p> <p><b>Zunerra:</b> There is never a box just British-white, British-Asian. British [ <b>00:17:00</b>] European colour, African-American colour, Caribbean-British. [cross-talk] [laughter]</p> <p><b>Berfin:</b> Have you? [cross-talk]</p> <p><b>Berfin:</b> On paper it might do but maybe not inside here, if you know what I mean. Like I feel British to the person but I don't look British.</p> <p><b>Saima:</b> White.</p> <p><b>Berfin:</b> But I think that's the way they've transmitted the idea. You've got to be white to be British. But I think that's all to do with propaganda and how the government and the media portray a British person. But I don't think that's the case though.</p> <p><b>Sara:</b> But then it's not only to do with skin colour, it's the dress. You're all saying Berfin is white, but Berfin</p>	<p>These values are English values, not British.</p> <p>We were born in England but we are not English.</p> <p>Why do we have to say Asian-British, Afro-Caribbean British, I am British.</p> <p>My dad may tick a different box but I was born and raised here – therefore I am British.</p> <p>One can be British on paper but do they feel British? I don't look British (Kurdish heritage Muslim woman).</p>

<p>wears a scarf. So, she's obviously not going to be seen as British. That's what I mean by Britain being a...</p> <p><b>Ruqaiyah:</b> ...Christian country. Because she's wearing a scarf so she's just not British.</p> <p><b>Sara:</b> Wasn't she living in India?</p> <p><b>Saima:</b> In England, even though Berfin is white, she still wouldn't be seen as, or even her accent, if she spoke to someone, she wouldn't be seen as probably white. Whereas me, say for example, like we were saying, Berfin is white because she wears a scarf and she has an accent. Whereas me, I have a British accent and I don't wear a scarf or any religious clothing. Well, I'm not Muslim but either way, I don't wear religious clothing. But Berfin would be cast as more British than me because of her skin colour. Do you know what I mean?</p>	<p>British means white but it is not all about skin colour. You can be white but if you are wearing a Hijab – it is a different matter. This is a Christian country.</p> <p>There are different ways of separating people – skin colour, accent, clothing.</p>
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## 6.9 Interpretation and theorisation of data

The second stage has its own two designated sub-stages. Initially the issues/points highlighted in the first stage were interpreted as they would be using any hermeneutical approach (see chapter 5). The participants' ideas/views were abstracted into themes or conceptual categories. This is the process of inductive abstraction which is 'the first stage in the retroduction of a concrete conceptualisation' in the schema discussed in chapter 5. These themes are abstracted from the concrete. They are important for the whole analysis because they represent young citizens' understandings of 'fundamental British values'. At stage two, the second level is to establish 'those theoretically deduced categories drawn from the literature' (Crinson, 2007: 11). This is the process of moving from the abstract to the concrete. This is the theoretical deductive level of the analytical schema. The interpretation and theorisation stage is the examination of the 'domain of actual level' (see table 6.13 below). Both stages at this level allowed identification of the



‘demi regularities’ (emerging themes) within the discursive material collected from each focus group and between the different focus group interviews (see tables 6.14 -6.17 below).

Table 6.13 An example of Stage 2 from group B1

Interpretation - Inductive explanation	Theorising - Deductive explanation
<p>The official definition of FBVs and their interpretation at the social level presents contradictions. However, British people have more freedoms than some other countries. People also need to think about their responsibilities, for example you can have freedom of speech but you can't say everything.</p> <p>There is democracy in Britain but who does it work for? They think they have no control over anything. They have no say over laws, economy etc. Their future has been decided by old white men in Parliament. Equality is a good value but it has not been achieved: women and ethnic minorities are still not equal.</p> <p>They mention and blame the ‘white working class’ for Brexit.</p> <p>They think that a ‘normal’ family in Britain is a white family.</p> <p>The Dominant culture, Christian culture, dominates society.</p> <p>They feel that Islamophobia is very strong in Britain. Some blame Muslims for ‘taking their jobs’, others blame them for various crimes. Whenever there is a Muslim, an Asian or a Black person who has done something wrong, the media focuses on their religion or ethnicity. This only happens to immigrants (Muslims, Blacks). It never happens to a white British person. If there are FBVs why are they not applied to everybody. Where is the mutual respect and tolerance?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hypocritical nature of the government’s official definition of FBV (state sanctioned values).</li> <li>2. Britishness and Englishness related to being ‘White’. (the Invention of White)</li> <li>3. Citizenship, Muslimness and belonging. (Identity, belonging and structural barriers)</li> <li>4. Attacks on multiculturalism and equality since 9/11 and other terrorist attacks. (Neo-liberal, assimilationist and nationalist theories – civic nationalism)</li> <li>5. Systematic discrimination against immigrants and ethnic minorities in every aspect of life (structural racism).</li> <li>6. Anti-Muslim racism (structural racism – changing face of racism).</li> <li>7. Hegemonic culture and ideology which defines what is acceptable and what is not acceptable within institutions from education to the judiciary (dominant ideology).</li> <li>8. Imperialism, colonialism cultural imperialism and</li> </ol>

The judiciary and related structures are biased towards whites. White British people think that they are better than Asians, Blacks and immigrants. White relates to British and English.

We are here because the British were in India. Our grandparents fought in WW2 for the Empire. But history always taught us about the great white soldiers.

The curriculum does not tell us what we have contributed to world history. We only learn tokenistic things in Black History Month.

They want to identify themselves as British but they can't explain that they feel different. They also question why they should be called: Asian British, Afro-Caribbean British etc.

Black, Asian Individuals can have a British passport but can they feel British? Can a Muslim woman, a 'hijabi' be accepted as British? It is not just about skin colour but how you look as well.

There are very different ways people can be separated.

There are stereotypes of Muslim, Pakistani young women. People think that our families are very oppressive – even some Asian Middle class 'Westernised' women have the same ideas. They think they know better than us. They don't know anything about our lives in Bradford.

The media is biased against Muslims.

FBVs are not just British, they are human values. We are still asked where we are from. If people don't accept us as British, how can we talk about British values. White British people don't accept Black and Brown people as British.

If white British people treat me equally I will accept their values.

They think their hijabs/clothing are politicised. People think that we can't speak English because we are

(Colonialism, post-colonialism).

9. Muslims are the new 'Other'.
10. Politicisation of Muslim bodies, clothing and sexuality. Dangerous 'Brown men and women' (Structural racism).

<p>wearing hijabs. And this idea is not only amongst adults but even children have these kinds of views. They are entrenched in society.</p> <p>We have had enough of being told what Britishness is and how we should behave to be accepted.</p> <p>We are educated but we are still Pakistani, Muslim, immigrants.</p> <p>They want to capitalise on positive experiences as well. They don't want to be negative all the time.</p> <p>On paper we are all British, the point is whether we feel British.</p>	
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Table 6.14 Emerging demi regularities from groups A1 and A2

A1	A2
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. British Imperialism</li> <li>2. Structural racism</li> <li>3. The War on Terror</li> <li>4. Class and racism</li> <li>5. English means White</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FBVs are promoting the idea of 'them' and 'us'. This is resulting in the othering process</li> <li>2. Multiculturalism under attack</li> <li>3. Dominant ideology/culture promotes colonialist views</li> <li>4. FBVs are leading to structural racism being acceptable</li> <li>5. FBVs are forced on people from above. People in power have nothing in common with the people with no power</li> <li>6. Promotion of FBVs is a justification for state racism.</li> </ol>

Table 6.15. Emerging demi regularities from groups B1 and B2

B1	B2
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FBVs are a tool of oppression and they signify superiority of the dominant culture/ideology</li> <li>2. English means White</li> <li>3. Feeling of being undermined and excluded by dominant culture/ideology and not being accepted as equal citizens</li> <li>4. FBVs are anti-multiculturalism</li> <li>5. The War on Terror</li> <li>6. Structural anti-Muslim racism – institutionalised state racism</li> <li>7. Hegemony defines FBVs and the process of ‘othering’</li> <li>8. British Imperialism.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English means White</li> <li>2. Hegemonic culture/ideology</li> <li>3. Structural racism</li> <li>4. Colonialism and imperialism</li> <li>5. Equal citizenship</li> <li>6. Multiculturalism</li> <li>7. FBVs are sophisticated racism</li> <li>8. FBVs are as a tool of ‘othering’.</li> </ol>

Table 6.16 Emerging demi regularities from group C1

C1
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FBVs are a state sanctioned national identity. They are enforced on us by the powerful people (class)</li> <li>2. English means White</li> <li>3. FBVs are reminiscent of the colonial past and are tools of ‘othering’</li> <li>4. Equal citizenship is an essential part of belonging</li> <li>5. Structural racism exists in every aspect of society</li> <li>6. FBVs are also a part of a wider anti-multiculturalist, assimilationist project.</li> </ol>

Table 6.17 Identified demi regularities from five focus group interviews

Demi regularities	
1.	Colonialism and British Imperialism
2.	Structural racism
3.	Othering
4.	English means White
5.	Hegemony/dominant ideology
6.	The War on Terror and attacks on multiculturalism.
7.	Equal citizenship

### 6.10 Retroduction and re-contextualisation

This is the stage where the process of inference occurs. It is where I explain the conditions in which the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ emerged. I achieved this through the postulation of a set of generative mechanisms. At this level the necessary social relations are analysed and brought to the surface level to re-contextualise the notion of ‘fundamental British values’. Crinson (2007) and Danermark et al (2000) note that retroduction is not simply the combination of categories that emerge from inductive and deductive reasoning to constitute the retroduced concrete concept. It is:

Rather than representation, beliefs, and shared meanings which constitute the discourse of the social groups under investigation, arise out of the shared material practices and habitus of these social agents, and it is the shared understandings associated with these practices that inductive theorising through a process of interpretation can effectively draw attention to. Whilst deductive theorising can draw attention to the ways in which social structural features are reproduced in the discourse of such social agents. (Crinson, 2007:11)

In this section I have presented how inductive and deductive reasoning (see chapter 5) - *the surface level reality* – resulted in identification of the following three substantive

generative relations from my participants' narratives. It is not my proposition that the generative relations below are the sole structural relations which explain the notion of 'fundamental British values'. These generative relations interplay with other objects 'including social agents and result in non-predictable, but potentially explicable, outcomes (Crinson, 2007: 7)'. They are complex interactions between social agents and structures in specific material contexts. The analytical process of retroduction is necessarily influenced by my social background, political outlook and experiences (see chapter 1).

These are the necessary conditions in which the subject matter emerged.

1. The notion of 'fundamental British values' is part of a wider imperialist political ideology linked to successive British Governments' involvement in 'the war on terror' since 9/11.
2. The dominant/hegemonic ideology promoted through the teaching 'fundamental British values' is a structural tool to reinforce the superiority of the 'dominant culture' over the 'Other' culture/s.
3. Structural racism within British society has resulted in public institutions favouring 'White' citizens over Blacks, Asians and other minority groups which de-facto produces an un-equal citizenship based on racism. The promotion of 'fundamental British values' through schooling is an essential element of structural racism.

In the next three chapters I will present my re-conceptualised concrete research object: 'fundamental British values'. The substantive generative relations identified above will form the framework of the next three chapters.

## **6.11 Chapter summary**

This chapter demonstrated the practical application of a critical realist approach to the analysis of qualitative data. It highlighted the emergence (inductively) of demi-regularities from participants' narratives and (deductively) associated these with appropriate theoretical explanations. It then postulates three substantive generative relations which are the necessary conditions for 'fundamental British values' to emerge at the empirical level.

# Chapter 7

## Emergent substantive generative relation 1

*The notion of 'fundamental British values' is a part of a wider imperialist political ideology linked to successive British Governments' involvement in 'the War on Terror' since 9/11.*



## 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will demonstrate how the critical realist analysis of my participants' narratives – *the empirical level of reality* – allows me to identify the first substantive generative relation (see p 153), one of the three generative relations of the *deep real*, in order to explain the emergence of the notion of 'fundamental British values' (see chapters 5 and 6).

At the surface level, the link between the notion of 'fundamental British values' and 'the War on Terror' and 'imperialism' is not always clear. However, in every focus group interview, participants deliberated on the impact of 9/11 and 7/7 within their lives and wider society. This connection has also been made by teachers in another study (Farrell and Lander, 2018). One of the participant's comments on 9/11 summarises the sentiments of group A1 when discussing these atrocities of recent history. Rosie from A1 compared the devastation caused by the attacks in New York and the retaliation to these attacks.

I would say that wars retaliated from 9/11 because if you think about how many people have died, it was about what, 3000? In those wars since, it's been millions. It's millions of innocent people that have just been slaughtered and blown up. I would say 9/11 because it's like the catalyst, everything's come from it.

In another interview, Sadie (A2) linked the 7/7 bombings to her neighbourhood, Beeston, in Leeds. Two of the bombers involved in the 7/7 attacks were from Beeston<sup>70</sup>. She said

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<sup>70</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-33329988>

that young Muslim men are referred to as *'the Beeston bombers'*. Twelve years on, some people are still abusing Muslims by referring to the 7/7 bombings in Beeston. This anti-Muslim racist sentiment she was referring to has been fuelled and kept alive since 9/11 and 7/7 by the media (Fekete, 2017; Kundnani, 2015; Massoumi et al. 2017), racist organisations (Richardson, 2013) and successive governments (Göle, 2017; Kapoor, 2018) (see also chapter 4 for a detailed analysis). The residents of Beeston have been a target of racist attacks, for example, following an anti-Muslim racist march by the English Defence League in Leeds on 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2018, a mosque and a Sikh gurdwara were firebombed in Beeston on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018<sup>71</sup>. While the perpetrators were targeting the Muslim 'Other', they also targeted the Muslim-look-alike Sikh 'Other'. This has parallels with the racist attack on a Sikh taxi driver following the 9/11 bombings in New York when the attackers mixed up the Sikh 'Other' with the Muslim 'Other' (Dabashi, 2011; Kundnani, 2015).

Rosie from A1 and Sadie from A2 were reflecting on their subjective understanding of the material conditions created by the 9/11 and 7/7 attacks (see chapter 3). Their reflections on their experiences also provide a critical view of the ideology of the 'war on terror' which is discussed in chapter 3 (Callinicos, 2003, 2009; Harvey, 2003). The participants' comments were only their expressions of the visible surface level phenomena. The invisible *generative relations* still require investigation. Participants' discourses on the 9/11 and 7/7 events brought two key concepts to the surface: 'British imperialism' and the 'war on terror'. While the discourse was about current events, I would argue from a

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<sup>71</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/leeds-arson-attack-hate-crimes-mosque-muslim-sikh-gurdwara-a8385176.html>

critical realist perspective, that the participants' views were influenced by their pre-existing knowledge and understanding of these concepts and their own personal and family histories (Archer, 1995; Bhaskar, 1995; Collier 1991; Gramsci, 1975; Marx, 1975).

## 7.2 'Oh, let's take over the world': The 'war on terror' and Imperialism

In group A1 the participants' discussions highlighted that the justification for the 'war on terror' is a continuation of the colonialist concept of the superiority of the Western world (see chapters 4 and 10). They also believed that this idea of superiority gives confidence to the Western world to propagate their 'way of life' and 'their values' to the rest of the world (Bhattacharyya, 2008; Høgsbjerg, 2014; Kundnani 2015; Said, 2003; Wood, 2003). This assertion of the moral rightness of Western values over 'Other' values could be claimed to be imperialist arrogance. Annie from group A1, a young white British woman, commented on the arrogance of the powerful Western countries in regards to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, referring to them as 'white people':

...White people do that, we're like, "Oh, let's take over the world." I'm not saying, I am white, but they're like, "Let's take over the world," and then we're just saying, "Your culture is bad. This is what you're given," and they (*people in power*) just decided we have the power to do this now and they just decided everyone else is inferior.

In her comment about the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, she expressed succinctly what she characterises as the imperialist and colonialist arrogance of militaristically and economically superior Western governments over the invaded countries. Callinicos

(2003, 2009), Wood (2003) Kumar (2012) and many other academics<sup>72</sup> have argued that, since the end of World War 2, the USA has been an imperial power without creating an actual empire. It has utilised other imperial means e.g. globalisation, the promotion of free trade, neo-liberalism and humanitarian interventions around the globe (Callinicos et al., 1994; Harman, 2002; Monbiot, 2012; Rees et al. 2001; Wood, 2003).

During the focus group interviews, none of the participants made a direct link between the US imperialism of the post-war twentieth (and twenty-first) centuries and British imperialism. Neither did they mention or express any opinions about theories of imperialism or the US and Britain's involvement in the historical events which prepared the ground for the development of the US's economic and military dominance. Two participants had some knowledge about the Cold War and some knew why the fall of the Berlin Wall was important; they remembered this from their GCSE history lessons. However, they all knew what happened on 9/11, how the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq had begun and they had some personal opinions about these events. It can be argued that this is the case because they have been living with the legacy of these events and face some of the consequences within their social relations. Nita, a female participant of Indian heritage, from group A1 reflects on her family visit to the US:

When I went to New York, I got checked twice and they had a list of names, all Muslim names. We got patted down, our bags got checked, and *I guess it's just stuff from 9/11*<sup>73</sup>, actually, and racist as well...They checked me in England, and then they checked me again when I got there, and when I went back too - I got checked three times.

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<sup>72</sup> See David Harvey, 2003, Chris Harman, 2003.

<sup>73</sup> Author's emphasis.

In every focus group the discussions about the 9/11 attacks and the wars that followed had one theme in common; this was terrorism. There were ideas expressed about what terrorism means, who should be called a terrorist and how one's race might be an influential factor in relation to being labelled a terrorist. The participants also used the terms terrorism and extremism interchangeably. Using Gramsci's (1986) concept of 'hegemony', the participants' use of the terminology can be explained as a result of the hegemonic discourse on extremism in the media (Fekete, 2017; Kundnani, 2015; Titley et al., 2017). The discussion around how one's race or ethnic background impacts on media reporting became more focused when participants exchanged their views on the murder of Jo Cox, the local Labour MP for Batley and Spen (May 2015-June 2016). The participants' emphasis was on the selective use of the term terrorist and terrorism. The question they posed was: why was the murderer not immediately identified as a terrorist? Aneesa, a female Asian participant, from group C1 noted:

Jo Cox's killer – he was CNN's mentally unstable guy... if he was a Muslim he would have been a terrorist...it would have been different.

Leslie, a White British male participant, from group C1, sitting next to Aneesa, elaborates on terrorism:

that has to do with the fact that terrorism is not properly defined. If, from your own country (*he means white*), and you do something like that, branding it as terrorism is kind of difficult... because if he's gone and killed someone from his own country (*another white person*) and he's a terrorist, that would put everyone thinking, 'Well, anyone can be a terrorist.' ...if it's a white guy from England it's hard to describe these things as terrorism.

Leslie's comment on the definition of terrorism is valid. His implicit discomfort at the possibility of attaching the term 'terrorist' to a white British person is not uncommon in

the present epoch. Since the 9/11 and 7/7 events, terror and terrorism have been analysed as a product of Islamic culture and the term is attached to Islam and Muslims (Göle, 2017; Kapoor; 2018; Kundnani, 2015; Lean, 2015; May, 2011; Titley et al. 2017). During the focus groups, each time the terms terrorism and terrorists were used by the participants, it was in relation to the official narrative associated with these terms (see chapter 4). Even though the participants wanted to separate the officially constructed link between Islam, Muslims and terrorism, the dominant ideological narrative continued to influence their own use of the terminology. Kenan from group A2 commented:

When someone says 'terrorist', I can only think of Muslims.

Georgina (A2) adds, '9/11'.

Kenan (A2):

A brown person. Yes, a brown person with a beard. Big beard.

In group A1, discussion centred around 'radicalism' and 'terrorism'. Annie (A1) said:

Who are the radicals? You think of ISIS (*Islamic State in Iraq and Syria*) ... Definitely.

There was evidence of recognition of the construction of the 'new enemy' (Kundnani, 2015; Mahamdallie et al., 2011; Richardson et al. 2013) during the focus group interviews. Participants' responses were satirical; nevertheless they represented 'the acceptable public discourse' (Fekete, 2018). Liz's (A2) comments on the Cox murderer echoed comments from another group interview (see Aneesa's comment from group C1 above) about the selective use of the terms and their attachment to the Muslim 'Other':

Whereas if he was a Muslim man or he was a black person or an Asian person that had been killed here, then see what would they (*media* and politicians) say? When the black man - I think - it was a few years ago, he killed that soldier<sup>74</sup>. It was a really... He beheaded him. They (*the media and politicians*) called him a sick, murderous, twisted, blah-blah-blah. But then when this white man did it, he was mentally ill and he needed help and no one gave him help. It is sole racism through the media that they're trying to get their point because he was British ...that man was part of the mentally ill. He was not a terrorist.

The evidence from the focus group interviews at an empirical level suggests that my participants were aware of the selective use of the terms terrorism and terrorist and how their association with 'a dangerous brown man with big beard' (Bhattacharyya, 2008) was constructed. Annie, from group A1 commented:

If you Google three white teenagers, you will get all these stock photos of happy children playing. If you Google three Black teenagers, it's mugshots. If you Google Muslims? You get 'terrorists'; terrorist is like the first thing that comes up.

The Black and Asian participants also stressed the racist nature of the selective use of not only the terms terrorist and terror, but other vocabulary used by the media (and politicians) to describe black, Asian and Muslim people e.g. Asian grooming gangs (Dabashi, 2011; Fekete, 2012, 2018; Lean, 2012; Massoumi et al., 2017; Sayyid, 2015; Tyrer, 2013). As Tina (A1) put it:

You will get people ... if they commit a crime, that they are not white, being described as animals and stuff, and it is just anyone that commits a crime that is extremely severe, obviously, is not a nice person.

From the critical realist perspective, the participants' discussions about the prevalent understanding of the terms 'terrorist' and 'terrorism' find their roots in the ideology of

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<sup>74</sup> She is referring to the murder of fusilier Lee Rigby on 22 May 2013.

the 'war on terror'. From this perspective, it can also be argued that, without the pre-existing material conditions (Bhaskar, 1975; Danermark et al., 2010; Marx, 1973 [1858]) of the ideology of othering (Said, 2003; Sayyid, 2015), selective use of these terms for specific social groups would have not been possible and justifiable by the powerful states and institutions (Eddo-Lodge, 2017; Kapoor, 2018; Kundnani, 2017; Wolfreys, 2018).

### **7.3 'My granddad was called here to work in a mill in Manningham'**

In an unstructured group interview about a specific subject, discussion can be broad and sometimes participants may appear to be talking about issues not related to the main subject matter. From a critical realist standpoint, those moments are as important as those elements of the discussion focussed directly on the main subject. Those seemingly unrelated discussions may contain evidence of the '*deep real*' of the main subject itself. During my focus group interviews participants spoke about their personal and common identities without being questioned on this. Although my research is not about how young people describe their personal or their 'national' identities, every young citizen involved in the focus group interviews identified themselves with their geographical location: Yorkshire and Britain. They strongly believed they belong to the place where they were born and grew up. However, they also questioned whether they had been accepted in their location by the majority (for a detailed discussion, see chapter 8). Hall (1996:2) refers to this situation as the 'politics of location'. A common factor in every group was that Black and Asian participants were more enthusiastically engaged in this discourse. They discussed their existence in Britain and in Bradford. These conversations



led them to ask themselves the question 'why did our parents, grandparents choose to live in Britain?' Their answers directed them (mostly without realising or mentioning it) to the British Empire. Listening to the participants' discussion was akin to reading the Leeds author, Caryl Phillips' (2001: 241) personal memories about his parent's arrival in the *mother country* in 1958 from the West Indies and Afua Hirsch's (2018) self-exploration of her Ghanaian identity and their linking of their 'Brit(ish)ness' to the British Empire. Their stories were not dissimilar to the participants' personal histories. Liz from group A2, a Black Zimbabwean-born woman explained her nurse mother's migration to England:

I think originally she knew that British people came over to Zimbabwe so she knew about British people.

Another young woman, Sara from group B1, with Asian heritage, described her grandfather's move to Bradford from Pakistan in the early 1960s:

my granddad was called here to work in a mill in Manningham. My grandma still lives in the same house right near the mill and my granddad used to go there. He used to make silk - I don't know. I think it's silk. That's what he used to make. He was called here to do that. He didn't just turn up here.

Other participants referred to their grandparents' involvement in the Second World War and serving in the British army. Kaainat from group B1 said:

My granddad fought in the war (*World War 2*) and protected this country. They [*British*] needed more soldiers, obviously so they called on the Indians to fight for Britain. Because Britain was in control of India, wasn't it?

They were all referring to the British Empire, its imperialism and colonialism. In a way, they were discussing their own social reality, in other words, their presence in Britain.

Indeed, these young people's existence in Britain would not have materialised without the legacy of the Empire. Their discussions echoed esteemed academic, the late Ambalavaner Sivanandan's formulation of immigrants in Britain: 'we are here because you were there' (Sivanandan, 2008). The main subject matter of the focus groups was the notion of 'fundamental British values', however participants' explorations of the topic was not possible without discussion of pre-existing socio-economic, historical conditions and relations between them. It was noticeable that the focus group interviews were not merely expressing empirical level reality, but were also helping young citizens from Bradford to identify themselves within their own contexts of historical, social, economic relations. The focus group interviews provided the participants a space to explore the legacy of the Empire in relation to the present and on their lives in Bradford. From the critical realist standpoint, it can be argued that my participants were recognising their ancestors and themselves as active social agents in society (see chapter 5 figure 5.1). In the words of Liz from group A2, a Zimbabwean-born woman:

so we have stuff, but I think it's mainly been brought about by the movement of the British colonisation and stuff as in how Britain has moved around which is generally what makes us Britain. I don't know how to explain it, but the things that we value the most come from other people.

As a child of a Black immigrant nurse, she was arguing that Britain's wealth came from the colonies of the British Empire. The British Empire, at its peak in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, has long gone but its imperialist history, practices and legacy remain and live in every corner of the United Kingdom (Anderson, 2016; Hall, 2017; Harman, 1999b; Hobsbawm, 1997; Kapoor, 2018; Newsinger, 2010). Even though the British Empire has been dismantled since 1947, when the Empire's jewel in the crown, India,

gained its independence, successive British governments have behaved like imperial rulers alongside the newer imperial power, the United States of America (Callinicos, 2003, 2009; Harman, 1994, 1999b; Kumar, 2012; Kundnani, 2015; Newsinger, 2010; Rees, 1994). This partnership is often referred to as 'a special relationship'. British involvement in numerous wars (since World War 2 to the present) in recent history is evidence of successive British governments' desire for Britain to continue to be regarded as a major player in world politics. Despite those wars having been justified on grounds of either defending western democracy (e.g. Korean War), humanitarian intervention or the 'war on terror' (e.g. military intervention in Bosnia 1998, Afghanistan 2001, Iraq 2003, Libya 2015 and Syria 2018) they were/are the continuation of the Empire and imperialism (Harvey 2003; Hobsbawm, 1997; Newsinger, 2010).

#### **7.4 Chapter summery**

In this chapter, the evidence which emerged from the collected data enabled me to identify the complex causal relations between the national (constructed) phenomenon of 'fundamental British values' and the international ideology of the 'war on terror'. The participants' discourses, combined with the literature on the 'war on terror', identify the imperialist nature of the ideology of the 'war on terror'. They provide the empirical evidence for identifying imperialism as one of the necessary material pre-conditions for the emergence of 'fundamental British values'.

# Chapter 8

## Emergent substantive generative relation 2

*The dominant/hegemonic ideology promoted through teaching 'fundamental British values' is a structural tool to reinforce the superiority of the 'dominant culture' over the 'Other' culture/s.*

## 8.1 Introduction

Chapter 7 discussed how British Imperialism and the ‘war on terror’ formed the bases for the emergence of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’. This chapter will discuss the links between the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ and the power of ‘hegemonic culture’ over the cultures of ‘Others’ (see chapter 4). The space of ‘Others’ in this context has predominantly been occupied by Muslims, regardless of their race or ethnic origins (Fekete, 2017; Göle, 2017; Haider, 2018; Mourad, 2016; Wolfreys, 2018). Discussions among young people during five focus groups about ‘fundamental British values’ revealed their scepticism towards the branding or associating of certain attitudes and values to Britain alone or to one nation. In this chapter I will analyse my participants’ discussions to explore how the British government’s policy of teaching, and the active promotion of, the ‘fundamental British values’ of ‘democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faith and beliefs’ (HO, 2011: 107) in schools emerged as part of a structural means to reinforce the superiority of the hegemonic white British Christian culture over ‘Other’ cultures. The evidence presented here indicates that the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ can be regarded as active suppression and devaluation of minority cultures by the hegemonic culture which finds its roots in British colonialism and imperialism (Fekete, 2017; Finney and Simpson, 2010; Gilroy, 1987; Hall, 2017; Kapoor, 2018; Massoumi et al. 2017; Said, 2003).

## 8.2 'Whose values are they anyway?'

During the sessions to introduce the research, which were organised one week before the focus group interviews, I asked participants to think about the notion of 'fundamental British values' for the focus group interviews. Most of the participants gave this some consideration, however, during the focus groups I noticed that many of them dropped the 'fundamental' and 'values' aspects of the question in their own personal reflections. Participants focused on the notion of Britishness and what makes Britain, Britain. They also expressed their confusion about Britishness; Mariam from group C1 said: '*We do not know what British is; what is it, British?*'.

Their thoughts on these concepts generated discussion amongst participants which produced rich qualitative data relating to 'fundamental British values'. Ashley from group A2 described what makes Britain, Britain as 'the uniqueness of Britain'. He expanded on this, arguing that:

It is what separates Britain from every other country. The accents, the TV, the food and it is what makes us different from America, because if we had the exact same stuff then we wouldn't have British values that make us different.

This notion of 'uniqueness' was reinforced by Lucy (A2). She added, '*I love Britain ... I am proud of it*'. Another participant, Jenny (A2), commented with friendly irony, '*Aren't you Scottish?*'. This brief interaction unearthed Lucy's (A2) feelings about her 'Britishness' and she reasoned why she is proud of being British and her understanding of Britain's 'uniqueness'.

We have a lot of stuff. Yes, we are lucky with what we have. We have the Parliament, we are doing okay with money, enough to hand it out to people. We have got big monuments...we have got the NHS, the welfare system, we have got tea.

Lucy's (A2) explanation provides a political and economic reasoning related to the benefits of being a British citizen, including a stereotype of Britishness: '*we have got tea*'. She was expressing a view that Britain is not like 'Other' countries. She supported her argument further, stating 'we've just got things that we can all have, there is always enough'. This was her reflection on Britain's economic 'superiority' over 'Other' countries which are not fortunate enough to look after their citizens. Her argument was challenged by Liz (A2), a British citizen born in Zimbabwe. She argued:

But, you normally say that Britain's got stuff. I am from Zimbabwe and I know a lot of diamonds was taken by British people from Zimbabwe, so we have stuff, but I think it has mainly been brought about by the movement of British colonisation and stuff as in how Britain has moved around which is generally what makes us Britain. I do not know how to explain it, but the things that we value the most come from other people and I think that is what's at the core of Britain, the people, people coming in and going out and stuff.

Liz's contribution on what makes Britain changed the direction of the discussion from the 'uniqueness' of Britain to British colonialism. She presented an explanation about what makes Britain, from a perspective which has been systematically silenced (Kilombo, 2010; Spivak, 1995) within the education system and wider society (Gillborn, 2006; Newsinger, 2010; Wrigley 2006). She deconstructed Britishness and offered an anti-colonial

perspective<sup>75</sup>. This was not only a challenge to her peers but a challenge to the dominant narrative which advances the greatness of the British nation (Ferguson, 2003; Gove, 2015). The other participants from A2, Ashley and Lucy, contributed a positive perspective on British colonial history by linking diversity in Britain to the British Empire. They believed that other countries are not as diverse as Britain. Ashley (A2) argued:

if you look at China, most people look exactly the same ...if you went to certain parts of Africa, you would notice they are predominantly the same.

This was not a conscious attempt to undermine their peer's viewpoint or China or African countries. They were simply reflecting how history has been taught within the British education system (Richardson, 2007; Wrigley, 2006). Their views have been shaped by the modified<sup>76</sup> history of the powerful (Anderson, 2016; Said, 2003; Kumar, 2012; Newsinger, 2010).

In group A1 another participant, Annie, said:

just like the stuff that makes us [British] up. I know that sounds really obvious, but you think it and think about things like what is on here ...tea, cakes, and roses.

Other participants in A1 contributed to these stereotypical images of Britishness

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<sup>75</sup> See the National Union of Students campaign <https://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/why-is-my-curriculum-white/>

<sup>76</sup> For a good example of revisionist history writing, see Niall Ferguson, 2003, *How Britain Made the Modern World*.



Tom (A1):

we always say sorry

Claire (A1):

we are very positive

Meghan (A1):

we talk about the weather

These stereotypical images of Britain were also mentioned by participants in groups B1, B2 and C1. Sumbul from C1 said '*fish and chips*' and Vic added '*Oh you have tea, you have the Queen*'. Annie from A1 also commented on the Queen:

Even if you are not patriotic, everyone loves the Queen. Even if you are not one of those people that listen to the Queen's speech or it is her birthday and stuff, people would just be like "I love the Queen. She is so lovely".

Andy (A1) was not in agreement with Annie; he offered a different view of the Queen. For him she represented something more than a cute old woman. He argued:

She is a figurehead of [British] imperialism and wealth.

He convinced Annie (A1); she agreed with him and considered whether the act of not thinking in depth about issues is a very British thing:

The Queen, she is cute, rather than, the Queen, colonialism, the British Empire.

Rosie from A1 (a Black woman with Jamaican heritage) picked up on colonialism and steered the discussion onto the legacy of the British Empire in the present period and linked colonialism to her complex understanding of Britishness. She added:

Lots of countries were basically involved with that [*Empire*] so many have included enslavement of other peoples that now call themselves British now but they were not classed as British. It changes over time of who is British and who is not.

Rosie from A1, like Liz (Zimbabwean heritage) from A2, recognised that Britishness is a complex concept and should be discussed within the context of British colonialism. Their comments indicate that both participants' understandings of the concept have been influenced by their race and ethnicity. Rosie and Liz are both Black women and identified themselves as 'British' but they also had strong feelings about their own history. Liz (A2) explained how her Zimbabwean heritage was important for her:

I came to England when I was about one and a half, so I have grown up here, but I quite like my heritage. I am obviously not saying being British is a bad thing; I quite like being from somewhere that is different, if you know what I mean. That makes me feel a bit different.

The evidence from the participants' interactions with each other indicates that opinions on 'fundamental British values' are linked to the question of identity. Hall highlighted that 'identities are never completed, never finished; that they are always as subjectivity itself is, in process (1991: 47). Hall's point was evident in my participants' discussions on Britishness. It was also evident during these discussions that the white British participants' approaches to Britishness were different to those of the Black participants. The white British participants' departure point was, what makes 'us' British different and 'unique' and on some occasions, they resorted to popular stereotypes of Britishness such

as eating fish and chips, drinking tea, being polite. The Black participants' starting point was to question this imagined (Anderson, 2016) 'us'. They provided an alternative perspective to the common-sense (Gramsci, 1986) stereotypes and popular narratives on what makes 'us' unique. Black participants' views, like those of their white British counterparts, were extracted from their own histories, however there were significant differences in their histories. Their ancestors had been colonised by the British Empire so, for them, colonisation played a profound role in their explanations of the meaning of Britishness. The white British participants needed reminding that it is 'still not easy being British' (Modood, 2010) in Britain for Blacks. During the interviews some of the white British participants (Leslie C1 and Vic C1) were, unconsciously asserting the established narrative of 'imagined' Britishness which has been promoted within and outside the education system. It could be argued that the participants' explorations of their own identities are a political process and that this is a part of their wider social relations (Hall, 1991).

The French Marxist philosopher, Louis Althusser, wrote, 'we all have to be born someday, somewhere, and begin thinking ... in a given world' (2005: 74). No one chooses where and in which social conditions they are born, however the place, the history and social conditions influence peoples' lives and world views (Marx, 1975). Although some of the white British participants, such as Andy from A1, had a greater understanding of what the British empire had done in the past and he was uncomfortable with it, most did not make any links between the notion of Britishness and colonialism.

The discussion on Britishness amongst participants in every group led to another question: what is the difference between British and English? This topic emerged spontaneously in all the focus group interviews and generated a rich discussion. The next section will analyse this discussion within the context of ‘fundamental British values’ in relation to participants’ understanding of being ‘English’.

### **8.3 ‘Andy is English, right? He is White’**

The participants interviewed, tended to adopt a clear separation between British and English<sup>77</sup>. This distinction was particularly clear when Black and minority ethnic participants described what an English person would look like. They held a certain image of English in their minds. A major tenet of being English was being white. Nita from group A1 commented on Britishness and Englishness:

I am basically Indian. I do not know, but I am British because I was born in England, born in London so I am British. It is my nationality but I am not English. There is a big difference to me. They are two separate things. Andy is English, right? He is white. Do you know what I mean? People get confused between the two but I would never say I am English.

In group C1, a similar conversation took place. Leslie said:

I would probably say English instead of British because British is like the collective Scotland, Wales and Ireland, everything is British. I think English is just England.

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<sup>77</sup> Here, English and White are used to refer to the dominant group and their visible identification. In this context participants also refer to authority and power. Catherine Hall argues that ‘the identity of the coloniser is a constitutive part of Englishness’ (2009: 12).

His colleague, Aneesa (an Asian Muslim woman), hesitantly agrees with him and contributes:

I feel like I could classify myself as being an English person because I have a passport. Do you understand me? But, do you need to say English? Because I feel weird to say English. Because I see English as a typical white, why? I do not know.

Mariam from group C1 elaborated on Aneesa's comment; she argued that Asians would not identify themselves as English. For her, English is associated with racist groups such as 'the English Defence League (EDL). She said:

I would feel weird to say I am English.

Leslie (C1) argued:

If you ask someone all the way from England born and bred they would say 'we are proud to be English, we are proud to be that cyber [*he is referring to British Empire*]'. ...The whole idea of being English is now being tossed out the window. We are now being classed as British. We have been seen as British, as the collective now.

Leslie's argument was problematic. In one sense, he was positive about the collective identity of Britishness but, in another, he was feeling that his national pride, as an English person, has been taken away from him in recent years. Pilkington (2016) makes the same point regarding defence of national pride and Englishness, in her 'very friendly' academic study of the English Defence League '*Loud and Proud*'. She points out that 'a key motivating factor in support for the EDL is a "*love of England, commitment to preservation of traditional national and cultural values*"' (2016: 109). She also argues that

English people are marginalised by economic and social insecurity and loss of a sense of identity (2016: 92-177).

English identity, its historical construction and its definition are subject to complex debate (Colls, 2002; Hall, 2009; Kumar, 2003). Hall (2009) argues that the development of an English identity was linked to the British Empire and within this discourse England was represented as the centre of the British Empire, superiority and power. Colls (2002) makes a link between English identity and the English (British) state. He argues that, historically, England means 'the authority and durability of the state' (2002:3) but he also highlights that 'not all English identity was made in England' (2002:7) but in the Empire. Colls (2002) and Kumar (2003) also argue that the terms English and British are used interchangeably and, in most cases, British means English (Colls, 2002: 376-381; Kumar, 2003: 226-273). Following the Second World War, where the USA emerged as a super power, and the collapse of the British Empire following the independence of India in 1947, the discourse surrounding English and British identity intensified. This was part of a process of discovery of a post-imperial English identity (Kumar, 2003). The devolution in 1997 of the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly and the European referendum of 2016 are a continuation of this journey.

In school B, where all participants were Muslim women, perceptions of who would be English and British were connected to the question raised previously by Berfin (B1): 'people can be British on paper but what does it take for someone to feel British?'. The question of acceptance was the pertinent one for these young women. Saima from B1, who volunteers in the local hospital on Saturdays, shared her own experience at work:

When I am working in the hospital on Saturdays, I am often asked by the patients who are often white: 'where are you from?', 'England'. 'No, where are you from, where were you born?' England.

She was the third generation in her family living in Bradford. Her grandfather came to Bradford following the Second World War and he fought in the war for the British Empire. Both her parents were born in England. Her first language is English. She also described herself as 'non-traditional', she meant that she does not wear a hijab and her outlook is what she called 'Western', however she was still asked the question 'where are you from'. Komal from B1 commented:

The reason, there is always going to be a sense of superiority for a white British person; someone who is originally from Britain. Their parents are from Britain. Their ancestors are from Britain.

Kaainat (B1), added:

We were born in England and so, yes, we are British. But we are not really English, we were born into a different background of families, some of our families will be from Pakistan.

Saima (B1) was adamant in her argument:

I was born in England, I have been raised in England so I am British'.

Berfin (B1), a Kurdish woman, argued:

You've got to be white to be British.

Within this group there was a consensus that none of the women in the room would describe themselves as English. English was a white person. Berfin also argued that British

is associated with white skin. Habib's (2018) research on British values amongst trainee art teachers in London highlighted the same point that Berfin was making. Habib said, 'the white students felt they "owned" Britishness' (p:256).

Sara from B1 added another dimension to the physical attributes of a British person, namely clothing. She argued that:

It is not only to do with skin colour. It is the dress. You are all saying Berfin is white, but Berfin wears a scarf (*hijab*). So, she is obviously not going to be as British. That is what I mean by Britain being a Christian country.

Their visibility, as Muslims, in the public space was in question. Sara's addition of a religious dimension to her description of British people is important. She highlighted Christianity and its influence in descriptions of what constitutes a British person. Her notion of linking Christianity with white British people is flawed, but what she was stressing was that Christianity is the dominant religion in Britain. Göle (2017) has made similar points about Muslim women and their visibility in European countries. She pointed out that the Christian West feels threatened by the visibility of Islam in public spaces: women in scarves, mosques with minarets, people praying on the streets on *cuma*<sup>78</sup> prayers and the *halal* sections in supermarkets. Similar points have been made by Wolfreys (2018) about the regulation of Muslims' 'look' in public spaces in France. For example, there was an outcry initiated by French parliamentary ministers over a student union leader's appearance on TV while wearing her hijab. The French Equality Minister and the Interior Minister both criticised her for this<sup>79</sup>. Another example is the Twitter

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<sup>78</sup> Friday is a special day for Muslims; there is an extra prayer at midday - *Cuma* prayer.

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-44195535>



storm, claiming that Muslims are invading Britain with their ‘barbaric culture’ when the Morrisons supermarket chain opened a *halal* meat section in 2017 in Bradford and Keighley, West Yorkshire.

Participants’ discussions on whether they would call themselves British or English and their associations with elements of Britishness and Englishness was, in essence, a discussion on ‘fundamental British values’. They were elaborating on what is involved in Britishness in order to identify whether the government’s definition of ‘fundamental British values’ is a valid definition. They identified skin colour, clothing, accent and ancestral history as markers of acceptance in British society. They also explored their own contradictory ideas about Britishness and Englishness. Saima’s (B1) response to Berfin’s (B1) comments highlighted important issues for Muslims and immigrants in Britain. She concluded:

In England, even though Berfin is white, she still would not be seen as, or even her accent, if she spoke to someone, she would not be seen as probably white. Whereas me for example, I have a British accent and I do not wear a scarf or religious clothing. Berfin would not be cast as more British than me because of her skin colour. Do you know what I mean?

Saima was highlighting the changing face of racism. If one is a Muslim, their white skin would not save them from discrimination or physical attacks in public places if they had worn signifiers related to being a Muslim (Fekete 2018; Göle, 2017; Holmwood and O’Toole, 2018). This does not mean that skin colour no longer influences people’s prejudice but it emphasises a new ‘acceptable’ face of racism (Bhattacharyya, 2008; Eddo-Lodge, 2018; Haider, 2018; Massoumi, Mills and Miller, 2017; Titley et al., 2017). In

group A1 a similar conversation about who would be acceptable as 'white' developed during discussion on white British racism towards Eastern European immigrants. As the group interview took place just before the 23 June 2016 referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union, participants reflected on the rise in anti-Eastern European racism (see chapter 10). Annie (A1) commented:

I think an interesting point is, we have been saying that when we think of British people we think of white people, but then yet when [*white British*] think of immigrants, they think of the Polish people.

Nita (A1):

Who is white?

Annie (A1):

Like he might be Polish, but he is still white. Obviously, I get that different ethnicities and stuff cannot be racist to white [*British/English*] people because it is built on a system of power, but then white people are racist to '*white*' people and it is kind of like... guys just do not understand.

Nita (A1):

But the thing is that you say that, but it is not white. Like we are fully aware if someone is Polish, you are 'white' but you are not white. Do you know what I mean? Like, you are not white. If you are Polish, you are not white. You [pointing to Annie and Andy] are white and you are white. You just know. It is like a universal thing ...

Ümit:

Could you just explain what you mean by 'a universal thing'?

Nita (A1):

It links in with being British and English. It is the English factor, or the American, like you are white. Two things that I think of someone who is white, I think either you are American or you are English. Or like Canadian, you know what I mean? You do not think of someone who is Polish.

Annie (A1):

As soon as you see a white person, then you learn that they are not English, American, Australian, then they are like, oh, you are different.

These discussions also brought out their views of what 'white' represented for them and how Black, Asian and minority ethnic participants were made to feel a sense of the 'superiority of white people' (Eddo-Lodge, 2017) in their daily lives. This was de facto a discussion about the hegemonic (Gramsci, 1986) notion of the supremacy of white British culture and how it represents itself in social relations. These Black and Asian female (and one male) participants felt that, before they enter into any social relations in wider British society, they know that they are already identified as the 'Other' by white British people because of their skin colour or choice of dress. As Saima from group B1 argued, the question of '*where are you from?*' is a signifier of being racially and culturally 'Othered' and still not being accepted as part of Britain by some white British people (Eddo-Lodge, 2017; Hirsch, 2018). The next section will evaluate how the promotion of 'fundamental British values', as part of the dominant culture, undermines and 'Others' minority cultures in practice.

#### 8.4 'Is it them adapting or is it us adapting them?'

The feeling of being 'Othered' (see chapter 4) in their own country by the white 'indigenous' population emerged as one of the demi-regularities of the Black and Asian participant's discourses in the five focus groups. The Black and Asian participants highlighted racist abuse they had repeatedly been subjected to in the street: '*go back to your own country*'. This was expressed in every discussion.

Kaainat (B1):

Every time something happens, they are like 'go back to your country', I am in my country.

Sonia (B2):

They might decide to look at you (*women wearing hijab or full niqab*) while you are walking or something and they shout at you 'go back to your country'.

Naz (C1):

They'll say, 'you don't belong here', 'go back to your own country'.

The Black and Asian participants, who were born and bred in the UK, expressed their anger and frustration at these types of comments. Their dominant question was, 'when do we get to be accepted as one of "them"?'. Berfin (B1), said:

Would our children still be called British if they were born brown?

It should be highlighted here that the terms 'us' and 'them' were not used by participants in a divisive way. They were simply expressing that they were not accepted as British by 'white British' people and had no other way of explaining their frustrations.

Following the discussions on these negative comments some participants argued that 'fundamental British values' are an extended form of othering. It is a continuation of their experiences on the streets and in their educational environments. Some felt that 'fundamental British values' exist to make Muslims and immigrants uncomfortable.

Kauser from C1 said:

They are there to show that British people have 'great values' ... to other people, other countries.

Berfin from B1 argued:

They are just shoving Britishness down our throats and trying to show you this is what Britishness is and this is what is going to happen.

The discussion in group C1 focused on the way the powerful (politicians) and the rich and upper class were implementing 'fundamental British values' to create a superficial division between peoples based on 'superiority'. In their discussion, they identified how 'fundamental British values' has been instrumental in creating the 'subaltern' (Gramsci, 1986; Harman, 1995; Kilomba, 2010; Spivak, 1995)

Waheeda from C1 began by arguing that:

I feel like it (*fundamental British values*) was constructed by the rich ... it is just a made-up concept.

Sumbul from C1 added:

Maybe they (*rich and powerful*) were trying to make the immigrants here look like - make them feel bad because they are not British.

Waheeda from C1:

And they are segregated, YES.

Sumbul (C1):

If British people, they probably don't even know what these British values are, but then the fact that government telling you that, 'Oh we've got these values,' ... with those values ... we are better than you. Then that could create some hatred towards people who are not British.

Naz (C1):

If you want to become a British citizen, you need to have these, you need to adapt. You cannot bring your ideas or beliefs to this country to become a certain way.

The sense of the power of 'fundamental British values' as an 'Othering' tool used by politicians, government and the British state (Fekete, 2017; Kapoor, 2018; Wolfreys, 2018) was reflected in the participants' discussions. Their understanding of the exclusionary impact of 'fundamental British values' led them onto a wider political discussion: the politics of racism in the UK (this will be discussed in detail in the next chapter). During the interviews participants simultaneously discussed dominant white British Christian culture and racism whilst beginning to shape their understandings of the meaning and implementation of 'fundamental British values' in their educational institutions. From a Gramscian perspective of knowledge production, it was a progression

from the 'common sense', hegemonic explanation of 'fundamental British values to a 'good sense', grassroots explanation of it (Crehan, 2016; Filippini, 2017; Gramsci, 1975).

For example, Waheeda from group C1, critically reflected on their school's way of promoting 'fundamental British values':

in school, we have the "united values". So instead of British, they put a "united" in front (*of values*) to stop the people believing all these values are for only the British citizens'.

Waheeda (C1) was referring to what I defined earlier in this research as a 'positive critical interpretation' of 'fundamental British values' (see chapter 4). Her school was trying to be inclusive by adapting the terminology. However, the participants acknowledged that changing the adjectives from 'fundamental British' to 'united' did not alter the divisive nature of the government policy. Participants problematised the promotion of 'fundamental British' or its adapted version, 'united' values. During their discussions, they scratched the surface and progressed from the argument of '*fundamental British values as a collective instead of separate cultures*' (Leslie, from group C1) to 'fundamental British values' as '*we are better than you*' (Sumbul, from group C1).

The problematic nature of 'fundamental British values' also prompted participants to discuss existing elements of the promotion of dominant white British Christian culture in their schooling. Participants acknowledged that the dominant culture is most visible in history teaching in schools (Gilroy, 1987; Mahamdallie, 2011; Richardson, 2007; Wrigley, 2006). The next section will examine participants' views on how the dominant culture has been represented in their curriculum and its impact on people from other cultures.

## 8.5 'The only time we've learned about Black people is either slavery or civil rights'

The negative impact of bias, and the white British Christian hegemony in the school curriculum, on the participants' knowledge of the superiority of white British and western culture emerged as a demi-regularity during the interviews. The participants I interviewed were aware of the lack of representation of Black history in their curriculum. It is noteworthy that, in school A, where groups one and two were multicultural, white British participants were also critical about their biased curriculum. The discussion about the curriculum in group A1 developed from Amy's comments on police racism in the US:

Yes, it is the white, it is just white privilege. Well, as white people just throughout history we always seem like we have the upper hand. We just – we have never been subjects to like racism whereas other people just have. So, we cannot really understand what it is like.

Nita (A1) agreed with Amy, and then interpreted her comments by linking racism and the power relations in society:

They (*whites*) are in power. They have control of everything. So, there is no way like – they have not suffered the kind of cultural, like devastation of Black people, especially Blacks have, the biggest is slavery.

Andy (A1) explained how power works in education and highlights how education promotes the dominant culture:

When you know Islam (*he means Muslims*) for being a founder of mathematics and stuff. [But] you do not credit them for what they do. And when you are learning history, all the influential people you learn about are all white people. You do not learn about them, so you get this mindset that only white people have ever been influential. And you just kind of brush aside anything that any other ethnic groups have done.



Rosie (A1) who has Jamaican heritage took a critical approach to learning about Black history in schools:

And even if we do learn, the only time we have learned about Black people is either slavery or civil rights. So, it is never anything about all Africa, or anything about Jamaica. It is always civil rights, or you guys were slaves ... I do not know one Black person's name that has done anything to contribute to society [other than civil rights campaigners]. I am sure there is, but I don't know any of them, I couldn't name them. They have been hidden.

Andy (A1) comes back:

I think it is kind of funny as well, how we have a 'Black History Month' like: Oh, how nice the way we (*white people in power*) give you...

Participants from group B1 made similar points about the hegemonic history curriculum:

Berfin (B1):

If you think about it in an educational context, if we think about a subject like history, what do we learn? It is quite Eurocentric.

Saima (B1) expands upon this:

It is like with Black History Month; you only ever learn about Martin Luther King and Malcolm X and only the oppressed areas of any other minority group and we do not learn about anything else they have contributed to the modern world.

Whilst the discussion between participants in groups A1 and B1 about the dominant culture centred on how the school curriculum promotes western hegemony, in group A2 it focussed on the hegemony of the majority religion, Christianity, and its influence on the organisation of the education system.

Victoria (A2) said:

I think religion is important. Not for me personally, but the traditional gatherings, celebrations and values in Britain are religious.

Dusty (A2) added:

I would say there is definitely some Christian values. The way the school system is based on [religious] holidays and how we get the weekends off, they are typically based on praying in church on Sundays, so we usually get the weekends off, Saturday and Sundays. And then the holidays, like for Christmas you have some school holidays, and Easter, and stuff like that ...

The dominance of Christianity in public life was approached critically in group A1. Annie, criticised the school's organisation around the Christian calendar:

A good one is that Ramadan takes place while schools and exams are still on. So, there are people that have to break fasting because they will pass out in their exams or they cannot focus enough.

Heather (A1) adds:

Yes, it is one of those things... It is a tradition, yes, but it happens when exams are, well sorry. Exams happen when it is, and it is not exactly good.

Tom (A1):

No one makes exceptions for it.

Heather (A1):

Whereas exams still happen at Christmas Day, do they?

Jenny (A1):

Or Easter

Heather (A1):

They [Christians] are prioritised.

Annie (A1):

Christmas, barely anyone I know celebrates it as an actual celebration of Christ's birth. It is just have presents, get drunk. Ramadan, almost every single person I know who are Muslim take it seriously and does it. Like they do it and they take part, so ..., it is just weird to me that because Christianity is the main religion, that everyone gets let off. But then, Ramadan you have got to go into your exams and you have got to like ... it is just harder.

The participants in school B, who were all Muslim, discussed and accepted Christianity as the dominant religion. They identified it as an integral part of the superior hegemonic culture. They also highlighted that Britain is a multicultural place and if there has to be British values, multiculturalism should be one of them. Zunerra from group B1 argued:

Another fundamental value should be that Britain is based on a multicultural society ... I was just talking about that with my form teacher and he was saying how even though Britain is a very multicultural place and accepts immigrants from everywhere and all kinds, it is still a Western society that has Christian traditions.

The participants in school B did not express negativity towards Christian traditions and their dominance in the public sphere, however they were concerned about the vilification and devaluation of Islam and the dehumanisation of Muslims in the media and the world of politics (Kundnani, 2015; Massoumi, Mills and Miller, 2017; Titley et al., 2017). During the interviews, another emerging demi-regularity was the media's emphasis on the

religious or ethnic background of criminals when they have a Muslim or immigrant background. As Berfin, from B1, put it:

I think there is something that you need to realise, if you think about it from the media perspective, if it is a Muslim person, they would say 'a Muslim man did this', or 'a Pakistani man did this'. However, if it is like a Christian or a Jewish, they never put the primary belief of the person.

They were also concerned about the moral panic created by politicians and the media towards Muslims, Blacks, Asians and immigrants in general. This has aided the propagation and acceptance of anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant racist rhetoric in every aspect of society from education to the health system to employment (Bhattacharyya, 2008; Eddo-Lodge, 2018; Fekete, 2015, 2018; Göle, 2017; Haider, 2018; Hall, 2017; Lean, 20015; Massoumi, Mills and Miller, 2017; Titley et al., 2017). The next chapter will examine participants' discourses around the issue of structural racism within British society.

## **8.6 Chapter summery**

In this chapter I have used critical realist analysis to present insights into the hegemonic white British Christian culture which was one of the significant themes to emerge from the participants' discourses. In doing so, I have explained that promoting 'fundamental British values' would not have been possible without the pre-existing dominant material cultural conditions. Education, as a means of disseminating the hegemonic culture over 'Other' culture/s is identified as a significant propagation tool.

## Chapter 9

# Emergent substantive generative relation 3

*'Structural racism within British society has resulted in publicly favouring 'White' citizens over Blacks, Asians and other minority groups which de-facto produces an un-equal citizenship based on racism. The promotion of 'fundamental British values' through schooling is an essential element of structural racism.'*

## 9.1 Introduction

Racism is a constantly changing phenomenon (Gilroy, 1987; Hall, 2017; Younge, 2009). As discussed in the introduction, since the 1980s, racism has evolved in focus from colour to creed to religion (Gilroy, 1987). A report published by Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) documented 1,201 verified attacks on Muslims in 2017. These attacks were heavily gendered: 57.5 percent of victims were female while 64.6 percent of perpetrators were male (Tell MAMA, 2018: 5). This report also highlighted that a clear majority of the perpetrators, 72 percent, were white men. The Yorkshire and Humberside region, experiencing twelve percent of the anti-Muslim attacks, occupied third place. Another report, conducted by Greater Manchester Council, noted that, following the terrorist attack on the Manchester Arena on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017, Manchester Police reported a 500 percent rise in anti-Muslim related crime (GMCA, 2018: 4). In advance of the publication of these reports, Dabashi (2010), Fekete (2017), Finney and Simpson (2009), Göle (2017), Kapoor (2018), Kundnani (2017), Massoumi et al. (2017), Sayyid (2015), Sian (2013) and Titley et al. (2017) argued that the rise in anti-Muslim racism was not an accidental phenomenon but a structural problem of British society. This is the context in which the research participants, the majority of whom were young Muslim women, felt that anti-Muslim racism was on the rise and was not recognised by the media and politicians. This section will examine the empirical data derived from the focus group interviews about structural racism (see chapters 4 and 10) in British public life and will investigate the link between the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ and structural racism.

## 9.2 'They are trying to create their own perfect racism'

The purposeful construction of separation lines between immigrant (Black, Asian and ethnic minority) communities and white British communities through race, ethnicity, religion and culture by policy-makers, politicians and the media was an emergent demi-regularity in the focus groups. As Du Bois argued at the beginning of the twentieth century '[t]he problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line' (1996 [1903]: 13). The research participants pointed out that being Muslim is the new racial marker in post-9/11 Britain and the Western World (and other parts of the world such as China, Israel and Russia<sup>80</sup>).

Discussions about this new marker allowed the participants to explore other prevalent political issues at the time of the interviews such as immigration, refugees, Brexit and how these interlinked with the promotion of 'fundamental British values'. The participants' comments on how the dominant culture has been enforced on the 'Others' (see chapter 8) seemed to follow a natural path which merged with another concept: racism. The transformation of their discourse from 'the state sanctioned identity' (Foucault, 2007, 2011; Farrell, 2018; Kundnani, 2015, 2017) to state racism (Eddo-Lodge, 2017; Kapoor, 2018; Massoumi et al. 2017; Wolfreys, 2018) was seamless. In group C1 Aneesa said:

They [fundamental British values] could be there just to make themselves [British politicians] look better in the eyes of all the other countries...

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<sup>80</sup> State sanctioned anti-Muslim policies are implemented in China, Russia and Israel.

Sumbul (C1) added:

The image.

Ümit:

What do you mean by the image?

Sumbul (C1):

Because the British are big headed, you know what I mean (they all laugh).

Naz (C1):

They [politicians and powerful people] are trying to bring a wow factor here. The fact that we have a British culture, we have values, we have something that we want people to become.

Mariam (C1):

They [politicians and powerful people] are trying to create their own perfect racism.

Mariam's linkage of 'fundamental British values' to the construction of 'perfect racism' is an attempt to explain how the prevailing social structures influence what is racism and what is not racism at any time in history. In this case, the 'perfect racism' refers to the acceptable 'Othering' of the new racialised 'Muslim Other'. 'The perfect racism' is perfect because it is racism without race (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991). It is so plausible and the 'majority' would not be troubled by it. Promoting and normalisation of racist views is not a new phenomenon within British society. Racism towards the Irish was acceptable until the 1980s and Jews faced persecution before (Marx & Engels, 1975; Ward, 2004) and



after the Holocaust (Williams, 1967; Virdee, 2014). Following the post-World War Two labour shortages, successive British governments invited Black and Asian immigrants from the former-colonial countries to work in Britain's hospitals, mills, factories and to drive the buses (Harman, 2000; Virdee, 2014). They encountered, and are still encountering, racism (Gilroy, 1987; Hall, 2017; Hirsh, 2018; Kapoor, 2018; Phillips, 2001). These 'outsiders' have been systematically racialised and discriminated against via the construction of economic and social 'fear' amongst the 'native' population (Callinicos, 1993; 31-40; Virdee, 2014: 9-32). For Mariam (school C) and her co-participants, the new 'perfect racism' has been constructed to target Muslims. This was revealed clearly when they were discussing the murder of Batley and Spen MP, Jo Cox (see chapter 8).

This process of constructing a hegemonic (Gramsci, 1986; Titley et al., 2017; Wolfreys, 2018) discourse of anti-Muslim racism has been propagated and exercised at different levels within societal structures. Examples include:

- the passing of legislation in parliament which can be used to discriminate against Muslim communities in Britain, e.g. the 2015 Counter Terrorism and Extremism Act (Kapoor, 2018; Kundnani, 2015; Massoumi, 2017);
- front bench politicians publishing news articles in popular newspapers which target Muslim communities and fuel anti-Muslim sentiment, e.g. Labour MP and former Shadow Secretary for Equality and Women, Sarah Champion's article on

'Asian grooming gangs' in the Sun<sup>81</sup> and the former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson's comments about Muslim women wearing the niqab<sup>82</sup> (see chapter 4);

- associating negative terms with Muslims and minority groups and normalising the use of these terms by referring to them in the media, e.g. Muslim terrorist, oppressed Muslim women, Black gangs, Pakistani paedophiles, illegal immigrants, bogus asylum seekers (Bhattacharya, 2010; Dabashi, 2010; Fekete, 2017; Göle, 2017; Haider, 2018; Hargreaves, 2016; Lean, 2012; Mend, 2017; Virdee, 2014).

### 9.3 'If he was a Muslim man? Or Black?'

The role of the media and its power to propagate selective information was a theme in all of the group interviews. Poole (2002), Kapoor (2018), Kundnani (2015), Haider (2018) and Wolfreys (2018) argue that the portrayal of Islam, Muslims, Muslim countries and anything relating to Islam in the media has been negative since the 9/11 and subsequent attacks in European cities: Berlin (2016), London (2005, 2017), Manchester (2017), Madrid (2017), Paris (2015, 2017). The impact of the creation by the media of a 'dangerous Muslim extremist' image or an 'oppressed Muslim woman' emerged as a demi-regularity in the participants' discussions.

In group B1 participants commented on an extra-curricular activity that their school had organised in conjunction with the BBC Asian Network where a presenter gave a talk.

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<sup>81</sup> <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/4218648/british-pakistani-men-raping-exploiting-white-girls/>

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45114368>

Participants expressed their disappointment with the BBC presenter. They thought that she was patronising and stereotypical towards Asian women, even though she had Asian ancestry. Ruqaiyah (B1) began by criticising her own school:

Wait, there is a huge population of Asian kids in school, let's get some Asian people in this school.

Zunerra (B1) commented:

If I'm being really honest right now, none of us listens to the Asian radio.

Ruqaiyah (B1):

She (BBC presenter) came around to school B to give talks but she was being quite oppressive towards us - even though she is Asian. She generalised everyone in the room and said you might get married at the age of 16. She was like, oh I know because you are from Bradford and because you are Asian your parents are probably going to force you to get married. I was like that is not even true. My dad who is from Pakistan and who follows Islam regularly has never said to me that you need to get married at this age. He has always said to me, complete your education and if then you find a man after that you want to marry then come to me. That is what he has always said.

Berfin (B1)

I think she was just being indoctrinated by the media, by saying oh yes because if you think about it.

Ruqaiyah (B1):

She is the media!

Berfin (B1) adds more to clarify what she meant:

Obviously, she works in the media. I know the fact that she does work in the media as well, but if you think about it, on the media we see an oppressed woman, why does it have to be a Muslim? We know that Islam does not teach extremism but peace..., but how does the media portray Islam? In a negative light.

What I am trying to say is that she has got all of these ideas into her head and is trying to generalise and say, "all Asian people are like this, forcing their children to get married at the age of 16 and God knows what." That is what I'm trying to say.

Berfin's rhetorical question 'an oppressed woman, why does it have to be a Muslim?' finds its parallel with 'terrorist' in Annie's comment (A1):

If you Google Muslims, you get terrorists; terrorists are like the first thing that comes up.

Nita (A1) elaborated on the issue:

I think this thing going around about ISIS and terrorism is literally just there to scare people. There is terrorism all through England from white people, there are murderers, there is rape from white people, but it does not get publicised as much as when it is from a Muslim person because of this fear of ISIS.

Fatima, from group B2, also articulated how media reports on ISIS impacted on Muslims in Britain:

More racism towards Muslims. Probably because of media reporting... But more confusion due to ISIS being reported in the media, and they are seen as Islamic, so basically whoever reads that I think believes that propaganda and thinks that all Muslims are violent because this is an Islamic state. So, whenever they see a Muslim they just automatically think that they must be connected to ISIS in some way. And then that is where it all stemmed from, basically it is media that plays a major part in anything.

Sara (B2) commented on hypocrisy in the media on the reporting of crimes:

I feel, you know how there was in America this guy, the white man, he killed quite a few black people in that black church. I wouldn't say every other white person or explain to me white supremacy now. Why do they feel the need to say to us or question our beliefs on Islam because of a few individuals in the Middle East doing something wrong?

Goldberg describes this construction as the 'Muslim image in contemporary Europe' (2009:165). it is:

overwhelmingly one of fanaticism, fundamentalism, female suppression, subjugation and repression. The Muslim in this view foments conflict ...He is a traditionalist, pre-modern, in the tradition of racial historicism difficult if not impossible to modernise, at least without ceasing to be "the Muslim". (2009: 166).

Brefo (2018), Titley et al. (2017) and Massoumi et al. (2017) argue similarly that Muslims have been portrayed by mainstream media outlets as untamed and inherently violent people. For example, Donald Trump, President of the US, tweeted about an unconfirmed 'Muslim' terrorist attack in London: 'Another terrorist attack in London. These animals are crazy and must be dealt with through toughness and strength'<sup>83</sup>. However, the history of the construction of negative representation of Muslims and Islam as a religion can be found in Western literature and the media (Said, 1985) long before the 9/11 attacks. The representation of Muslims and the Islamic world in the Western media and in its literature, is 'Orientalist' and therefore selective and racist (Bakan & Dua, 2014; Brefo, 2018; Callinicos, 1993; Dabashi, 2010; Fekete; 2017; Göle, 2017; Said, 1997; Sayyid, 2015; Poole, 2002). This structurally constructed and normalised image of the untamed, pre-modern Muslim was articulated by the Muslim participants' when they talked about their own experiences in Britain.

Participants also commented on the injustice that Black, Asian and ethnic minorities face within the judicial process. Kaainat from group B1 makes the link between the

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<sup>83</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/westminster-crash-terrorism-salih-khater-isis-sudan-police-extremist-latest-a8496716.html>

representation of Muslims in the Media and judicial bias towards Black people in the courts:

It is the same with Black people as well; they are so overpopulated in prison. It is to do with the different races, as well as religion.

Sara (B1):

It is racial profiling... and institutional racism.

Kaainat (B1) elaborates:

Yes, there is. Even for small amounts of traces of marijuana, if a white person was found with a small amount of marijuana which is just for them to smoke, they wouldn't necessarily get arrested. They'd maybe get a warning but they wouldn't get arrested. Whereas if it was a black person, the police are more likely to assume, "oh, he's dealing, he's going to give this to someone so we need to arrest him", or "he's a supplier", completely, which isn't always true.

Rosie, from group A1, makes a similar link:

It is not only just how they (*Black people*) are described. It's also why it actually happens like the actual sentencing because there's so much. It's not just the media and how the media portray it like

The data suggest that the binary representation of 'terrorist Muslims' and 'criminal Blacks' versus white victims in the media reflects itself in other parts of social and public relations such as the criminal justice system. The participants' discourses suggest that Blacks and Muslims have been systematically discriminated against because of their race and/or religion.

#### 9.4 Where are you ‘really’ from? Your English is ‘really’ good!

Discussions in school B, in both groups 1 and 2, in which all participants except one were young Muslim women of Pakistani heritage, highlighted that they felt they had been undermined and were not accepted by the white population. These Yorkshire born and bred women were regularly asked ‘where are they “really” from?’. Participants linked this act of ‘undermining’ their sense of identity and belonging to structural racism which manifests itself in day to day social interactions from workplaces to a visit to a seaside town in England. From the critical realist perspective, this also resembles the colonial arrogance of the British. As James F. Stephen<sup>84</sup> (1988) argued, people under British control (colonised) one way or another would accept the superiority of the British understanding of the rule of law, individual liberty, religion and organisation of society. It could be argued that the promotion of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ through the education system is a continuation of this colonial arrogance (see chapter 10). The following extracts of participants’ narratives emerged while they were discussing the question ‘who would be accepted as British?’.

Ruqaiyah from B1, who volunteers at the local hospital, reflected on her experience of working and engaging with patients:

I am often questioned about where I am from, ‘your English is really good’. Thanks, I have been practicing for eighteen years now.

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<sup>84</sup> James Fitzjames Stephen was the legal member of the Viceroy’s council in India between 1869 and 1872.

Komal (B1) added:

It is so unfair, just because we wear a scarf, does not mean we cannot speak English.

Saima (B1):

Just because you are brown or your skin colour is darker they immediately think this person was born somewhere else in Pakistan and they don't speak proper English. I spoke to a kid once and he, after a few minutes asked me, "are you born in England?", "yes, I am", "where were you born?", "I live down the street." "How long have you lived there?", and I'm like "I've been in England my whole life, I speak English", he goes "okay"... Just by looking at me he thought like I was some Pakistani Asian that didn't need to be there. He was shocked at my dress sense and English and everything else and I'm like I've been born and bred here, I'm not from Pakistan.

Zunerra (B1) elaborates on the impact of dress code:

If you wear a shalwar kameez and next to them was a person with a normal clothing like jeans and a shirt, immediately, someone would think that this person is this and that person is actually okay like, "They speak English and they understand us." It does happen. It happens a lot. I see it all the time. It happens to my mum; it happens to my auntie. My auntie teaches in an English school, speaks English and still children at school will assume she can't speak English. The students think it. Not even just the teachers, the students think it...She was born in Pakistan, she came here, she learned English, she speaks English, she's a qualified teacher and she teaches and she's a teaching assistant, there are two of them, but immediately, students will think these people cannot speak English because they wear a scarf and traditional clothing, so they can't speak English.

Sara (B1) recounted her, and her family's, experience in Blackpool:

When we went to Blackpool, my sister wears a veil and a niqab as well, this man literally came up and tried lifting it...he just came up to her and he lifted it up and she obviously felt quite scared. It's like anyone taking any part of your clothing up. It's like someone coming up to you and just taking your top off or something. It's the same thing that someone's going to feel... In Blackpool. At the beach. He just came and lifted the thing and she got really scared and my dad had to move him away and he was like, "No, I wasn't trying to be rude. I just wanted to ask her a



question about why she wears it and how she looks underneath it." He obviously didn't understand why she was wearing it or what it meant, but he still just came up and lifted it.

Berfin (B1) added her and her mother's experiences while they were shopping (her mother wears a veil):

I remember when my mum went shopping and an old couple who were British white, it wasn't the wife, it was the husband. The wife was telling the husband no, but the husband was making fun of religious sayings at my mum, he thought that mum couldn't understand. He was acting like a child, because my mum is not a British, he just assumed that my mum wouldn't understand what he's saying, but my mum did understand it and he was caught making fun of a religious declaration ... My mum said to him, "I do understand English." He got really embarrassed.

Zunerra (B1):

That's the best part when they realise that you do understand them... and you do speak English.

The group interview with the participants from group B1 took place in April 2016. They expressed concerns about the normalised racist stereotypical image of 'oppressed, submissive and uneducated' (Delphy, 2015: 11) Muslim women. These stereotypes have emerged as a direct result of constant orientalist and racist public representations of Muslim women by Western politicians and the Western media (Poole, 2002; Said, 1997; Titley et al., 2017; Tyrer, 2013). These racist representations are normalised and supported by politicians' speeches, government reports and reviews (see chapters 3, 4). One of these reviews was conducted by Dame Louise Casey and published in December 2016 under the name of *'The Casey Review: a review into opportunity and integration'*.

The Casey Review (2016) on integration put Pakistani and Bangladeshi women under the microscope because of their 'poor English language proficiency' (2016:94). Dame Louise also correlated individuals' faith and their English skills. She stated that 'there is a notable pattern of poorer English language among women of Muslim, Hindu and other non-Christian religions' (2016: 95). In her review, she mentioned Muslims 249 times, compared with 35 references to Christians, 23 for Hindus, 18 for Jewish, 11 for Sikhs and 5 for Buddhists. It is also important to highlight Casey's choice of terminology to identify the 'Other': she placed emphasis on '*non-Christian religions*'. The research participants' comments above, and in the previous chapters (7 and 8), emphasise the same point but from a different perspective: the perspective of the oppressed. They explained how Christianity played a vital role in identifying 'Britishness' and 'fundamental British values'. They highlighted that religion and religious symbols such as the hijab have been used as a tool of 'Othering'. However, Casey examines the issues from the hegemonic viewpoint and thus ignores racism in British society. She identifies Bradford, the participants' home town, as one of the problem areas with regards to integration and language proficiency.

According to the Casey Review, one needs to speak English to be considered 'truly British' (2016:97). In the same year, whilst Government-appointed Dame Louise was complaining about the language skills of women of 'non-Christian' religions, the same Conservative Government was implementing major funding cuts to the provision of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Marsden (2018) noted that 'funding for ESOL decreased from £203 million in 2010 to £90 million in 2016 – a real-terms cut of 60 per cent' (Marsden, 2018). In an interview on BBC Radio 4, Dame Louise claimed that she 'would set a target that says by "X" date we want everybody in the country to be able to

speak a common language' (BBC, 2018). I would argue that Dame Louise, a prominent public figure, should have acted more responsibly when she criticised the already marginalised Black, Asian and ethnic minority women for not been able to speak English. Her review and statements in the media will have had real impacts for minorities and for British Muslims in particular. The impact of the Casey Review should be considered in the context of increasing anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant sentiments, the rise in racist violence against Muslim women and political victories of far-right parties across the Western world e.g. Hungary, France, Germany, Austria, Italy.

Participants' narratives from B1 also highlighted how white people's conceptions about their hijab or shalwar kameez led to the stereotypical racist notion of 'uneducated, submissive, oppressed Muslim women'. It could be argued that the Casey Review has contributed to the misrepresentation of Muslim and immigrant women. Gus John described the Review as 'greater grist to the mill of the far right there never has been' (2016: 4). From a critical realist perspective the Casey Review provides researchers with an example of how structural racism operates from the top down (Corbin, 2017; Hall, 2017; Qureshi, 2017) within society and how responsibility and blame are placed on to the victims (Ouseley, 2016; Taylor, 2016).

Whilst participants were narrating their experiences about the racist treatment they have experienced in their home country, they were also trying to explore and understand 'why white people presume that women wearing a hijab or brown people cannot speak English'. They wanted to understand the root cause of this stereotype. They were not all negative about the society in which they live and they had hopes about the future.

Saima (B1) suggested:

That might not be their fault, it might just be the way they've grown and the area they are raised in... we can't really generalise to everyone, some people genuinely don't know about Islam because I met a man from Wales and where he lived there was no Muslims and he was really confused about what I was wearing on my head. He was like, "are you one of those Hindus?", and I'm like, "No I'm a Muslim." He questioned me about it again and again and I found it weird and I said, "I'm not offended by it by any means", but people need more exposure to this kind of thing.

Kaainat (B1) added a more positive comment:

Some people are really accepting. I went to Harrogate, a woman just came up to me and she was like, 'hi, how are you, as-salamu alaykum, I was like 'okay'.

Ruqaiyah (B1) expressed her mixed feelings about the changing Britain:

Now I feel like times are changing. Maybe not for Saima and Berfin because you wear head scarves ... but it's for people that dress westernised. Like me and Kaainat, for example, if we went out, I don't think people would assume that we're not British, whereas if Saima and Berfin went out, they would just assume that they're not British and they don't understand.

Saima (B1) added:

I used to wear English clothes and so do you Berfin, but you wear jeans and tops and Berfin wears long skirts and that might differentiate the way people perceive you. People might be like, "Oh, she's still British", but with Berfin, they might be like, "Oh, she's not British", because she's wearing Asian clothing.

Kaainat (B1), Ruqaiyah (B1) and Saima's (B1) narratives about how their visible

Muslimness might shape their social interactions and other peoples' perceptions about them probably reflect day to day experiences for many Muslim women (and men). They clearly expressed that their choice of clothing affects their social position in Britain, even

though young Muslim women's choice of dress is not fixed, it is fluid (Hoque, 2015), they change their look (like any other teenager) as noted by Ruqaiyah (B1), Saima (B1), Kaainat (B1) and Berfin (B1) who sometimes wear the hijab and sometimes do not. Their instincts about their visible Muslimness being a problem for the hegemonic culture (Göle, 2017; Hoque, 2015) were correct. For example, the former Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson (2016 - 2018), compared women wearing a niqab to 'bank robbers' and claimed that they 'look like letter boxes' (Johnson, 2018). He was not the first white male politician to complain about Muslim women; another former cabinet member of the (1997-2010) New Labour government, Jack Straw<sup>85</sup>, commented, in reference to one of his constituents, that, 'I felt uneasy talking to someone I couldn't see' (Straw, 2006). Essentialising and marginalising Muslim women in British politics is an ongoing process and has been a tool used to justify the dehumanisation of all Muslim communities since the 9/11 attacks (Delphy, 2015; Haw, 2009; Wolfreys, 2018).

Haw's (1995, 2009) two qualitative research studies with the same group of Muslim women highlighted that second and third generation Muslim women with Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Indian heritage have been more visible in Britain compared to their parents or grandparents. Their confident public appearances became problematic for the 'host' country. They were more educated and more articulate than their forbears. Haw argued that 'the debates about how excluded groups became drawn into democratic life have often coalesced around Muslim women and their dress, particularly the hijab'

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<sup>85</sup> Secretary of State for Justice Lord chancellor 2007-2010; Leader of the House of Commons Lord Privy Seal 2006-2007; Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs 2001-2006; Home Secretary 1997-2001.

(2009:365). Haw also argued that first generation immigrants kept their 'heads down' as they thought that they would be going back 'home' and they were less aware of their rights. Subsequent generations were well educated and they knew they were not going back anywhere, but were staying in Britain. Göle (2017) made similar observations about second or third generation Muslim immigrants living in the mainland European countries. Both Haw (2009) and Göle (2017) argue that, following 9/11, many young Muslim women have chosen to wear the hijab as a sign of resistance to the ongoing discrimination of identifiable Muslims in Britain and the Western world.

### **9.5 'Oh, I don't mean any offence to you, it is just a word'**

Participants' experiences of day to day, drip by drip racism (Eddo-Lodge, 2017) are a manifestation of racist ideas propagated through the media and by politicians (Kundnani 2015; Dabashi, 2010). Juwaid from group B2 remembers her day trip to Liverpool:

I remember going on a trip (*to Liverpool*) and these guys called us curry munchers and we didn't even do anything to them. This white guy was walking past and just called us curry munchers over here.

Yasmin (B2) talked about her experience in Bradford:

I've been called a Paki here in Bradford, so it happens everywhere...I was walking home from school so it was just my own street, and these girls were talking and they mentioned the word "Paki" and then she was like, "Oh, I don't mean any offence to you, it's just a word."

Juwaid (B2) adds:

Paki is a racist slur!

Fatima (B2):

They (*racists*) cannot associate themselves with you so they feel as if you (*Asians*) do not belong here...They want to make us feel we do not belong. [*Our*] skin colour, religion, culture language, language at home.

Juwaid (B2):

They want a white country, and they do not want to see you (*Asians, ethnic minorities*), isn't that what they want? They do not want people with different ethnic backgrounds here. Because they want a white country.

Yasmin (B2):

They want a pure country.

Participants' racist experiences were not limited to 'racist slurs' they heard on the streets, they extend to all aspects of their lives (see discussion in 9.3 and 9.4 and chapters 7 and 8). Naz, from group C1, explained how white people had moved out from her neighbourhood once Asians moved into the area:

In my street, before I moved there, it was predominantly white. Then, as the years went on by, more and more Asian people moved in. Then all the white people all of a sudden just disappeared. They are just trying to move away from diversity.

And Yasmin, from group B2, recounted how her family was treated in Manchester, which resulted in their moving to Bradford:

They are really racist there (the neighbourhood in which they lived in Manchester). When we lived in a certain area, and we used to live in an area where there was majority white people, and around that time they seemed pretty racist because sometimes they'd pass by our house or something and they'd just like shout

something or say a racist remark or something like that. And then even once they decided to egg our house because it was holy Ramadan or something, and our house was the only house that they egged just because we were the only Muslim Asians there. There are people who tend to be racist a lot. But I'm not saying all the parts of Manchester is, I'm just saying that part of the area was very racist.

Naz (C) and Yasmin's (B2) narratives about their families' experiences of housing is neither new nor an isolated incident for immigrant families. The housing of immigrant communities has been a political issue since the arrival of the Windrush generation and has continued with the arrival of other former colonial subjects to Britain (Finney and Simpson, 2009). Housing has been, and still is, a race issue (Jivraj and Simpson, 2015). Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities' concentration in particular neighbourhoods has been described by politicians and academics as 'ghettos', 'no-go areas' and 'self-segregated communities' without a deeper understanding of the phenomenon itself.

For example, following the riots in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford in the summer of 2001, just prior the 9/11 attacks, numerous reports were produced to explain the causes of the 'race riots'. Ousley (2001), Cantle (2001), Phillips (2005), Blair (2006) all argued that the problem lay with the 'self-segregated' immigrant communities and the idea of multiculturalism. The Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali, argued that multiculturalism created 'no-go' areas which have been the conduit from segregation to 'Islamic extremism' (Nazir-Ali, 2008). Three years later the same argument was used by David Cameron, when he was Prime Minister, in his 'Muscular Liberalism speech in Munich (2011). However, the evidence which emerged from participants' experiences is at variance with these arguments. Participants highlighted that racism, rather than



multiculturalism, is the problem. Their narratives were analogous to Finney and Simpson's (2009) rigorous analysis of the myths about race and migration in so called 'self-segregated ghetto communities'. They argue that the concentration of ethnic minorities in one area is a complex issue and that racism and poverty play a significant role in it. They approached the reality of segregation and integration from a different perspective; they argued that, if there is a such thing as a segregated community, the focal point for academics and politicians should be the all white middle class areas of Britain rather than the locations where ethnic minorities are concentrated (Finney and Simpson, 2009: 115-39). Finney and Simpson (2009) maintained that the so called 'self-segregation' of ethnic minorities is a result of the racist housing and educational policies of national and local governments.

#### **9.6 'She's working class and she talks like us.'**

In group C1 participants also made comments about mono-culturalism and the upper-classness of the politicians and Parliament. The socio-economic composition of the UK parliament and its impact on decision making was discussed by participants. Sumbul, from group C1, questioned politicians' understanding of 'fundamental British values':

The government also, they're not culturally diverse because when you look at the government, they're always white, they're always elderly white. They're not a true representation of the public. So how can you say, we want to bring in British values if they don't consider everyone's views? Most people in government, they are from upper middle class, they're not from the working class. They don't really know how people below them live their lives every single day. Then they just decide what these British values are...so they could control our views on things or our norms of values and opinions. I feel like assimilated.

Vic (C1) added:

Precisely. The laws that they put in place, impact people that have such low income, where they have a high income. So, they don't have a good understanding.

Leslie (C1):

Look how they speak and communicate with one another. Look, how Boris Johnson speaks... So the way they communicate with each other, you can't even sit there and go, "Yes, I know what he means." You sit there thinking, "What the hell is he on about?" The way they communicate with each other is just - you just don't understand what they're on about. I think if you get a working class MP. If a working class MP became the leader of, I do not know, the Labour Party, they're all like the working class of this that and the other, they'd be scared. They won't be, "Oh, welcome to Parliament." They'd be absolutely scared. I think it just shows that they're not as accepting as they're trying to make out that they are.

Sumbul (C1):

That MP ...*[she was referring to Angela Rayner]* she's working class and she talks like-- she's the one that talks like us. She doesn't talk posh like they talk, remember? She talks normal like a normal person. She doesn't talk like how they talk, posh. Which is nice to see. You don't always see it.

Annie (A1) extended the discussion on class to the Royal Family:

Like the queen made a speech about poverty while she was sat on her throne and crown because you don't understand anything, about like how you have no experience. Because you've just been brought up your whole life in luxury. I don't understand how she could represent the part like, you know the part like the working class people, like the poor people when she knows nothing about it.

Sumbul, Leslie and Vic (C1) suggest that most politicians have become cut off from the people they are supposed to be representing. They argue that politics is male dominated, white and upper middle class and their understanding of 'fundamental British values'

would not necessarily represent the values of the people they are supposed to represent. Parliament and democracy also emerged as themes for the participants from group B1. They began to discuss the topic by articulating their views on democracy because they knew that it was one of the identified 'fundamental British values'.

Berfin (B1) commented on democracy:

I think one of the values could be democracy in this country, a lot of people feel that they have a lot of freedom of speech so they've got the right to say what they want to, if they like a government law or don't like it, they can protest against it, but I don't think they can always be listened to.

Saima (B1) added:

Then that counteracts with mutual respect as being one of the fundamental British values, because you can't preach here but then say free speech and then have respect for each other and tolerance. It's not going to work out

Zunerra (B1) took a positive approach:

Compared to other countries, we have got more freedom and that is actually a really good thing as a British person, but you can't be given all the freedom in the world because then a lot of people would take advantage of that.

Ruqaiyah (B1) questioned Zunerra's view; she said:

But do we have freedom or are we just brainwashed into thinking that we have freedom just because we elect our own prime minister, we don't really have control over what happens in our country, they just name themselves like that and it's a capitalist country but we don't really have much say in what happens here, in the laws that are provided.

Komal (B1) added:

Even though, like what Ruqaiyah said, we know what is going to happen, even if we elect them, we don't know the rules and the consequences behind it, we just elect them because everybody is doing that.

Ruqaiyah (B1):

Technically we haven't elected them though. So technically, we don't have a democracy.

Komal (B1):

We don't have that freedom that we're supposed to have because we're not legally allowed to vote and we don't really have... Like with Brexit, you had no say but really, truly it's going to affect us the most.

Berfin (B1):

Most of the decisions that are made affect people of our age but we can't have a say in them.

Kenan from (B2) made a similar comment about democracy with a hint of optimism:

It is basically people having power... Certain countries are undemocratic, so people do not get a vote and they don't get to pick people that they want to be in charge, whereas we get like a democratic. We got the voting system, but the democracy is flawed in a certain way. For example, our election system, we can see that it is not fully democratic, 'because only a proportion of the country votes for who is in charge. So, it could always be more democratic, but it is better than nothing.

The evidence which emerged from the participants' narratives during the focus groups could be interpreted as participants' explorations of how the people in power are unrepresentative and how the whole democratic system undermines young people's opinions. Participants' views and discussions about the nature of 'democracy' and the

socio-economic composition of parliament were part of the 'surface level' reality of the existing social structures in Britain. They were, knowingly or unknowingly, 'digging deep' (Archer et al., 1995; Callinicos, 2006; Collier, 1994; Creaven, 2000) into their own social existence and their roles as social agents. Their discussion and the sharing of their narratives about 'fundamental British values' provided them with a space to articulate their views about wider political issues. Currently the opportunity to do this within educational institutions is restricted by government initiatives such as Prevent (Habib, 2017; Kundnani, 2015; Murtuja and Tufail, 2017; NUS, 2015; Sian, 2013). By participating in discussion and sharing their own narratives, participants were able to identify different causes for the events taking place in their day to day lives such as racism, oppression, local or national elections, lack of representation of 'ordinary people' (in their own words) in parliament and Brexit. This thinking and exploration process allowed them to identify the link between all of the issues they discussed and the promotion and identification of 'fundamental British values'. The focus group also served as a safe platform for them to question their own roles in the formal political process.

### **9.7 'I was quite shocked...There were foreign people'**

The secure environment created through the focus group interviews provided participants with opportunities to talk about their own misconceptions about immigrant communities who live in Bradford.

Aneesa, from group C1, reflected on her first thoughts, about school C:

I was quite shocked when I came to school C, seen all sorts of different people. There were foreign people.

Ümit:

What do you mean by foreign people?

Aneesa (C):

Polish, Eastern European. People from the Czech Republic, all those places. Those people are foreigners, but you could say we are foreigners too. Our elders, they came from Pakistan.

Mariam (C) added:

They (Eastern Europeans) probably see us as foreigners as well.

Sumbul (C) comments on Aneesa's (C) use of the term 'foreign people':

A lot of people have a negative view about the word immigrants. So obviously because of the media. I think media put across the view that we should not like immigrants.

Mariam (C) reflects about her own prejudice towards Eastern Europeans:

You know what else? The media immediately says there are Polish, Asians whatever from all different immigrants. They steal stuff, they rob stuff. They are obviously bad. I will not lie, like I will see Polish people and, call it, I will get a bit paranoid because of the media. Yesterday we went to the park; there was a Polish couple with a little kid, honestly, we thought they are going to come and steal our mobiles...we got paranoid because of media.

Sumbul (C):

It is because of the media. They portray a very bad picture.

Mariam (C):

It does affect you like, I will say it that I do not think they are like that, but I'll still get paranoid around them. There was a Polish woman with her son, and most of the other people had gone. The son came and started going round circles in our - around our phones. Even though he was like one or two years old, I got really paranoid thinking, What if his mom is telling him to come take our stuff, because of the media.

Sumbul (C):

When you rely on it too much, the media - we do not know - they can show anything.

The extract above provides an insight into the impact of the dominant 'dangerous aliens' discourse about immigrants in British public life. Since the expansion of the European Union borders in 2004 and 2007 and 2013<sup>86</sup> the concept of the 'dangerous aliens' (Virdee, 2010) has expanded to immigrants from Eastern European countries (see chapters 2 and 3). Aneesa and Mariam's honest reflections about how they felt in a social interaction with 'new immigrants' is an example of how the dominant (Gramsci, 1986) view about immigrants has been successfully constructed by the hegemonic structures: through the media outlets, films, political speeches and government initiatives (see chapters 2,3 and 4). However, when participants were provided with an opportunity to reflect upon their views, they deconstructed the 'dominant knowledge' and generated a new positive, progressive knowledge (Gramsci, 1986) about immigrants.

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<sup>86</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24367705>

## 9.8 Chapter summary

The evidence presented in this chapter has facilitated postulations on the function of structural racism impacting on the participants' experiences. The empirical 'surface level' exposition of participants' social relations has enabled me to identify how political structures, the media, judiciary and class structures have influenced the construction of the dangerous Muslim 'Other' and dangerous immigrants in general. The evidence also sheds light on the role of the promotion of 'fundamental British values' in the reproduction of racist ideas and the new 'Other'. This chapter has demonstrated a link between existing structural racism within British society and the promotion of 'fundamental British values'. From the critical realist perspective, participants' discourses about 'fundamental British values' (surface level reality) have presented an opportunity to identify the conditions (deep real) which made the compulsory promotion of 'fundamental British values' possible in schools and colleges.



## Chapter 10

# Recontextualisation of the notion of 'fundamental British values'

## 10.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss my findings and recontextualise the notion of ‘fundamental British values’. This chapter also will provide an alternative explanation of the notion’s purpose and promotion. This will be achieved by explaining the substantive generative relations drawn from empirical evidence derived from the focus group interviews. This analysis takes account of prevailing historical, social and economic conditions.

The substantive generative relations which emerged are:

1. The notion of ‘fundamental British values’ is part of a wider imperialist political ideology linked to successive British Governments’ involvement in the ‘war on terror’ since 9/11.
2. The dominant/hegemonic ideology promoted through teaching ‘fundamental British values’ is a structural tool serving to reinforce the superiority of the ‘dominant culture’ over the ‘Other’s’ culture/s.
3. Structural racism within British society has resulted in public institutions favouring ‘White’ citizens over Blacks, Asians and other minority groups which de-facto produces an un-equal citizenship based on racism. The promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ through schooling is an essential element of structural racism.

Throughout this research I have investigated the conditions under which the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ emerged, was incorporated into the curriculum (chapters 2,

3 and 4) and what it means for young citizens in Bradford schools (chapters 7, 8 and 9).

The above substantive generative relations emerged from the following demi-regularities:

- the 'war on terror',
- British colonialism,
- institutionalised racism,
- systematic 'Othering' of Muslim communities in Britain (see chapter 6).

A critical realist perspective (see chapters 5 and 6) requires a deeper investigation of these demi regularities. In doing so, I identified their explanatory powers (see chapters 5 and 6) and began to discern between 'what is known' and 'what it is' (Bhaskar, 1998).

Below I will discuss how the substantive generative relations which emerged from the empirical evidence have facilitated a re-contextualisation of the notion of 'fundamental British values'.

## **10.2 'Fundamental British values' as a part of the ideology of the 'war on terror'**

This section will explain how the ideology of the 'war on terror' emerged as one of the substantive generative relations in the formulation of the notion of 'fundamental British values'. On the surface, the notion only has a British dimension as it is a national initiative. However, I will argue that the demi regularities that emerged from the evidence indicate that the materialisation of the notion of 'fundamental British values' has an international context. The notion is a by-product of the imperialist ideology of the 'war on terror'. This aspect of 'fundamental British values' is encapsulated by Annie, Nita and

Rosie in group A1 during their discussion about the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq (see chapter 7). They identified that the aim of the 'war on terror' was (is) more than saving the oppressed women in Afghanistan or delivering democracy to Iraqis. They were aware that the people in power in the USA and the UK were propagating a certain ideology. Even though they did not use political terminology such as imperialism or colonialism, there was sufficient empirical evidence for me to 'dig deep' and identify what they were 'really' referring to. For me, Annie's (A1) words: *'...your culture is bad. This is what you're given. We (the USA and the UK) have the power to do this now and they (people in power) just decided everyone is inferior'*, indicate the imperialist roots of the 'war on terror'.

Francis Fukuyama (1992) argued that the Western capitalist economic and liberal social models are the best available systems for all nations (see chapter 4). He affirmed that 'liberal democracy may constitute the "end point of mankind's ideological evolution" and the "final form of human government"' (Fukuyama, 1992: XI). Accordingly, every nation will accept the superiority of liberal democracy and will implement capitalist economic structures, followed by the liberalisation<sup>87</sup> of society (Norberg, 2001). This argument forms the back-bone for the propagation of the 'war on terror'. George W. Bush (President of the USA 2001-2009) and his administration<sup>88</sup> echoed Fukuyama in a

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<sup>87</sup> For Fukuyama and Norberg, the term liberalisation refers to Western European style social norms.

<sup>88</sup> Condoleezza Rice, USA National Security Adviser, 2001-2005; Donald Rumsfeld, USA Secretary of Defence, 2001-2006; Colin Powell, USA Secretary of State, 2001-2005; Dick Cheney, Vice President, 2001-2009.

document titled *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (WH, 2002)*. It affirmed that:

The great struggles of the twentieth century between liberty and totalitarianism ended with a decisive victory for the forces of freedom – and a single sustainable model for national success: *freedom, democracy, and free enterprise*. (WH, 2002: IV)

The document also noted that: ‘The US national security strategy will be based on a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of *our values*<sup>89</sup> and our national success’ (WH, 2002: 26). In the UK, Tony Blair (Prime Minister, 1997-2010), Gordon Brown (Chancellor of Exchequer, 1997-2010) and Jack Straw (Various front bench positions 1997-2010) have also all argued that they were fighting to build a more democratic world for all with Western liberal values at its core (Callinicos, 2003; Harvey, 2003; Rees, 2001). Blair went on to avow the Bush administration’s ideology in his Labour Party conference speech:

So, I believe this is [*the ‘war on terror’*] a fight for freedom. And I want to make a fight for justice too. Justice not only to punish the guilty. But justice to bring those *same values of democracy and freedom to people around the world*. (Blair, 2001)

The US administration and the UK government used the same notion of the ‘values of democracy and freedom’ as justification for the ‘war on terror’. They were eager to spread their message to the world to defeat the enemies of ‘democracy and freedom’, by any means necessary (Callinicos, 2003, 2010; Hardt and Negri, 2000; Harvey, 2003; Kumar, 2012). The new era of propagating ‘democracy’ began with Afghanistan in 2001

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<sup>89</sup> Emphasis is mine.

and was continued in Iraq in 2003. Berfin, a Kurdish student whose family escaped the war in Iraq, from group B1, expressed it thus: *'the war did not bring peace or freedom for us but it brought death, misery and exile'*.

The stated aim of the bombing of Afghanistan in October 2001 was to liberate Afghan women from 'barbaric Mujahadins' and take democracy to the Afghan people (Rees, 2001). It was the beginning of a new epoch to defeat the evil of 'Islamist terrorism' in order for 'good' to triumph. Chomsky (2016) and Harvey (2003) argue that, since 9/11, the 'war on terror' has been used to justify US imperialism in the Middle East and Afghanistan. Arundhati Roy wrote that 'democracy has become Empire's euphemism for neo-liberal capitalism' (Roy, 2003). Bauman (2017), Callinicos (2003, 2010, 2017), Kumar (2012) and Dabashi (2010) have consistently maintained that the Bush administration and Blair's New Labour governments' 'just wars' were new imperialist interventions (Bauman, 2017; Butler, 2016; Chomsky, 2016; Callinicos, 2003, 2010; Dabashi, 2010; Harvey, 2003; Kumar, 2012). The rhetoric of 'freedom, democracy and individual liberty' has been utilised to describe 'Western' or 'our' values. I would argue that the notion of 'fundamental British values' is based on this new imperialist rhetoric.

### **10.3 New imperialism**

The evidence revealed through the interviews and the current literature suggest that, without the pre-existence of British imperialism, the notion of 'fundamental British values' would not have emerged at the empirical level. These data highlight that any discussion about 'fundamental British values' needs to address the colonial past as the

Black, Asian and Muslim participants referred to the Empire during their discussions about their parents and grandparents. They asked ‘wasn’t India part of Britain?’, ‘were the British in Zimbabwe?’. British colonialism was one of the factors that made it possible for my participants to engage with the subject matter in terms of their day to day lives. It can be argued that the ideology of the ‘war on terror’, as a part of new imperialism (Callinicos 2003, 2010; Hardt and Negri, 2000; Harvey, 2003; Kumar, 2012), played a significant role in the emergence of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’.

Harvey (2003) and Callinicos (2003; 2010) argue that there are broad and narrow meanings of imperialism. The broad meaning is referred to as a transhistorical conception of imperialism which is ‘the political, military and/or economic domination of small and/or weak countries by powerful states’ (Callinicos, 2003: 100). This definition would be applicable to Süleyman the magnificent of the Ottoman Empire, to George W. Bush or to Donald Trump. The narrower understanding seeks to explain modern day imperialism through the development of the capitalist mode of production. It is formulated within the Marxist tradition and is more historically (Bukharin, 2003 [1917]; Lenin, 1982 [1917]) focused: ‘its central claim was that, in unifying the planet, capitalism created a highly unequal world dominated by a handful of great powers that competed both economically and militarily’ (Callinicos, 2003:100). George Orwell’s description of imperialism in his novel *‘Burmese Days’* is noteworthy here: ‘imperialism consisted of the policeman and the soldier holding the “native” down, while the businessman went through his pockets’ (Orwell in Newsinger, 2010:8).

Two dimensions of imperialism can be identified from the above definitions. The first is the economic, geopolitical and security competitions between imperial powers, and the second is the relationship between the imperial power and the people under its domination. Domination here should be understood as militaristic invasion or any kind of dependency on the hegemonic power (Callinicos, 2010). The participants' discussions signify that the link between imperialism and the notion 'fundamental British values' is complex and falls within both dimensions of imperialism. I would argue that the notion rests on the relationship of past and present British imperialism and colonialism.

Twenty-seven out of the forty-six research participants' families were in the UK as a direct result of British imperialism and colonialism. Saima, Ruqaiyah and Sara's (B1) grandparents responded to invitations to work in the mills of Bradford. They came from Pakistan. Zimbabwean (former British colony) born Liz (A2) and her nurse mother came to UK because her mother was offered a job in the National Health Service (NHS). Rosie's (A1) grandmother was one of the Windrush generation; she came to the UK from Jamaica in the 1940s to do exactly what Liz's (A2) mother came to do in the 1990s. Kaainat's (B1) Indian grandfather fought in the Second World War for the British Empire and, in the aftermath of the War, he settled in Bradford. The data collected from the second or third generations of Black, Asian and ethnic minority participants indicate that the colonial past of the British Empire is still alive in the memory of the participants and their parents.

The imperialist and colonialist past was also present within the consciousness of the white British/English participants. This manifested itself in a contradictory manner during the interviews. The empirical evidence suggests that, whilst the white British/English



participants were critical of the British Empire, they also implicitly expressed their bruised feelings of national pride and nostalgia for Great Britain. This was evident in Leslie's comments from group C1 when he suggested that people '*are proud to be a part of the British Empire*'. They wanted to be remembered as part of the '*glorious empire*'. Gilroy (2004) describes this as 'melancholy'. Ashley and Lucy from group A2 focused on the revisionist interpretation of the benefits of the British Empire such as multicultural Britain. According to their interpretation, if there was no British Empire, there would not be a multicultural Britain. This interpretation captured the spirit of contemporary apologists for imperialism and colonialism such as Niall Ferguson (2003, 2004). In contrast to nostalgia for the past, stronger criticisms of the British Empire also emerged. This was manifest in a criticism of the British Royal family. It was illustrated in Andy's and Annie's comments from group A1, such as '*the Queen or the royal family do not represent us*'. An important finding from the evidence collected from the participants' discussions about 'fundamental British values' was that this concept directly relates to past and present British imperialism and colonialism.

One of the aforementioned dimensions of imperialism is economic, geopolitical and security competition between rival hegemonic powers. The British Empire was a significant player in this competition in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. A recent 'friendly' study about the English Defence League (Pilkington, 2016), a fascist organisation, reveals that supporters of racist and fascist organisations are longing for the '*glorious British Empire*'. They want to be part of a powerful past and future. British involvement in the 'war on terror' alongside the US is an important element of imperialist competition (Callinicos, 2015; Harvey, 2003).

The critical realist analysis of the study data suggests that the emergence of the notion of 'fundamental British values' has been an important factor in this competition following the 9/11 attacks in the US and the 7/7 bombings in the UK. The notion serves to reinforce that the 'white Christian British world view' is not only militaristically and financially superior, but also culturally and morally superior. The notion of moral and cultural superiority has served to justify imperialist conquest in the Middle East.

The new imperialism's economic, political and geographical competition in the Middle East and Asia were implicitly and explicitly referenced by the participants during the focus group interviews. Annie's (A1) comment that '*Oh, let's take over the world*' or Sara's (B1) rhetorical question '*what was the real reason behind the war in Iraq? Oil or democracy?*' exemplify the empirical data. A deeper investigation of the data sheds light on the second dimension of imperialism: the relationship between the imperial power and the people under imperialist domination. This emerged from the data in the form of the concept of the creation of the new enemy under the new imperialism.

Kumar (2012) argues that, whilst economic, political and geographical imperialism was reshaping itself within the globalisation context, it also created a new enemy for itself following the end of the Cold War. The new enemy was Islam and Muslims. This was theorised within the context of the 'clash of cultures and civilisations' (see chapter 4 for more detail) by neo-conservative academics and political advisers such as Bernard Lewis (1990), Samuel Huntington (1994) and Francis Fukuyama (1992). The analysis of evidence from the focus group interviews suggests that the compulsory promotion of 'fundamental

British values' builds on the notion of 'clash of cultures and civilisations' (see chapter 4). This theory has also laid the foundations for the notion of the new enemy of 'western democracy' and 'civilisation'.

#### **10.4 Constructing the new enemy: Muslims and Islam**

In 1997 the Runnymede Trust published its influential report: *Islamophobia: a challenge for us all: report of the Runnymede Trust Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*<sup>90</sup>. The report addressed the emergence of Islamophobia, the definition of the term itself, and the promotion of the inclusive society and inclusive nation. The report had its own flaws and has been subjected to criticism in terms of: selection of the committee membership, unclear definition of Islamophobia, excluding non-mainstream Muslim groups from the study and the sense of demonising the victims themselves and internalising blame and responsibility on Muslims (Allen, 2010: 54-59). Nevertheless, publication of the report has served as an important reference point. The events of 9/11 and 7/7 subsequently occurred. These events transformed Islamophobia/anti-Muslim racism to a commonplace phenomenon for politicians, academics and Muslims in their practical life. Of course, neither this report nor 9/11 were the beginning of Islamophobia/anti-Muslim racism. The phenomenon was present before 9/11 in a different form, as part of a 'new racism' (Barker, 1981; Gilroy, 1987; Allen, 2010; Kumar, 2012).

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<sup>90</sup> For a detailed analysis of the report see Allen, C., 2010.

The Muslim research participants highlighted that they have been singled out and made to feel that they are 'different' because of their 'religion' and 'culture'. Saima, Sara and Zunerra from group B1 referred to how their hijab has been an issue for wider society. Kenan from group A2 and Aneesa from group C1 expressed their frustrations at the way in which Islam has become synonymous with terrorism in the UK. Nita, from group A1, who has Indian heritage, shared her flight experience to New York and her treatment by the airport security services because she looked like a Muslim. Their discussions asserted that these participants faced direct and indirect 'Othering' in their social interactions. Their Muslimness (or look-alike Muslimness) was racialised.

There has been a similar 'Othering' processes in the past, for example, anti-Semitism.

Renton and Gidley (2017) argue that there are similarities between:

Western antisemitism and Islamophobia, we are left with the fact of unique traits held in common. Something about the Nazi Jewish enemy and the contemporary Western Muslim enemy demands complete surveillance—the power to see beneath the veil permanently and everywhere—an imperative that is not apparent with any other racialised enemy in history. To put it another way, few in the West speak or have spoken of the fanatical Gypsy, the protean menace of the Hindu, the world conspiracy of the Irish Catholic. We can, however, attach the Jew or Muslim interchangeably to these terms or goals and find ourselves with recognisable notions in Western thought. (Renton and Gidley, 2017: 5)

In 2017, twenty years on from its initial report, the Runnymede Trust published another report: *Islamophobia: still a challenge for us all*. This time, the report identified Islamophobia as anti-Muslim racism (Runnymede, 2017: 1). Following its publication, the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims (APPGBM) published its own definition in November 2018: 'Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expression of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness' (APPGBM, 2018: 50). However, the Home Office made it clear that the department had no intention of adopting the definition<sup>91</sup>. When the research interviews for the current study took place, neither of the definitions were in use, however Muslim research participants were clearly identifying some of their experiences as racism. Sara from group B1 called it 'institutional racism'. Participants also linked the rise in anti-Muslim racism, negative representation of Muslims and Islam in the media to the promotion of 'fundamental British values' through the education system. One of the participants, Mariam, from group C1, described the promotion of 'fundamental British values' as 'the perfect racism'. Whilst the media was portraying Muslims and Islam as 'dangerous', 'barbaric' and 'backward', the education system was promoting the 'enlightened', 'modern' and 'liberal' 'fundamental British values'. Those values have also been explicitly linked to the Christian culture of the UK and Europe by politicians (see David Cameron's 2015 and 2016 Christmas messages and Teresa May's 2017 Christmas and 2018 Easter messages).

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<sup>91</sup> See: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/dec/01/muslims-demand-full-legal-protection-from-islamophobia>

The data highlights that the changing public perception of Islam and Muslims in the UK, and the way that this occurred, is an important part of the development of anti-Muslim racism. Sian et al.'s (2012) study surveying four newspapers over a three-month period found that 70percent of articles published about Muslims and Islam were negative. Sara (B1), Berfin (B1), Kenan (A2) and Sumbul (C) all emphasised the negative representation of Muslims and Islam in the British media (see image 10.1). Fatima's (B2) personal observations on the impact of the constant use of the term 'Muslim ISIS terrorists' in news reporting on Muslims in the UK is worth quoting here again: *'whenever they (people on the street) see a Muslim they just automatically think that they must be connected to ISIS in some way. And then that is where it all stemmed from, basically it is the media that plays a major part in anything'*. Long before the emergence of ISIS, Said (1997) argued that the media has played an important role in shaping public opinion of Muslims and Islam. Poole (2002), Sian et al. (2012) and Versi (2018) also evidenced that the representation of Muslims and the Islamic world in the Western media has been selective.



Image 10.1 The Sun front page from 23 November 2015

Media portrayals are determined by the wider political agendas of Western governments in relation to the Middle East (Harman, 1999b). Kundnani (2015), Kumar (2012) and Dabashi (2011) argue that this is not an accidental development as the Middle East was colonised by the French and the British after the First World War, to be replaced by United States domination after the Second World War. Developing selective alliances and supporting 'friendly' Middle Eastern countries after the Second World War was the approach adopted by these imperialist nations' in order to protect their interests in the region, notably oil (Callinicos, 2003). The old-style colonialism, whereby a 'master' country directly ruled the colonised country's economic and political affairs, had passed its sell by date as one after another colonised country regained their independence in the post-war period (Hobsbawm, 1995; Harman, 1999b; Newsinger, 2010; Kumar, 2012). These changing political relations have played a central role in constructing Western

images of Muslims and Islam in the post-war period and these have continued into the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The critical realist method of data analysis was valuable in shedding light on the historical continuity of the current selective representations of Muslims and Islam in the media. For example, Dabashi (2011) and Newsinger (2010) argue that the Iranian Revolution of 1979<sup>92</sup> is a useful exemplar for elucidating the selection process of a 'friendly' nation and leader, in the form of Ayatollah Khomeini, in the Middle East. It illustrates how the Western media re-shaped their image of Muslims during and after the revolution. As Said observed:

Since the events in Iran caught European and American attention so strongly...they have portrayed [Islam], characterised it, analysed it ... licensing not only patent inaccuracy but also expression of unrestrained ethnocentrism, cultural and even racial hatred. (Said, 1997: XI)

The representation of Muslims and Islam in Iran set the scene for contemporary<sup>93</sup> negative and stereotypical representations of Islam and for future anti-Muslim racism (Allen: 2010; Kumar, 2012). It also laid the ground for legitimising attacks on multicultural

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<sup>92</sup> The Iranian Revolution was a direct challenge to American hegemony in the Middle East and so it needed to be challenged. This challenge determined future foreign policies of the US and the UK in the region which laid the ground for framing the contemporary notions of Muslims and Islam in the Western world (see Harman, 1999a and Kumar 2012).

<sup>93</sup> Historically negative representations of Muslims in European art and literature are not new phenomenon, for example 16<sup>th</sup> century Venetian paintings represents Muslim Ottomans as barbaric murderers.



education (see the Honeyford affair in chapter 2) during the 1980s in cities such as Bradford where a significant number of the Muslims lived.

Whilst the media was demonising 'barbaric' Muslims as 'terrorists', 'fanatics', 'extremists' and 'Islam with a fascist face' (Halliday, 1987) in Iran, the West, particularly the US, was supporting another group of Muslims against Soviet Russia, namely the Afghan mujahedeen<sup>94</sup> (Callinicos, 2003). The US was selective about which Muslims it needed in the region to maintain its hegemony (Kumar, 2012: 71). This appears contradictory but it was not illogical for US policymakers, as their overriding interest was establishing American domination against the Soviet Union (see section 10.2.1 above) in the region during the Cold War period (Harman, 1999b: 543-577).

The negative influences of the media were explicit in the research evidence (for example see sections 8.4 and 9.3). The evidence suggests that negative representations of Muslims in the media from the murder of British soldier Lee Rigby (2013) to the Charlie Hebdo attacks (2015), to the Rotherham child abuse cases (2017) have contributed to the creation of a 'barbaric', 'bloodthirsty' and 'inhumane' Muslim image. The data revealed that participants were critical of the media's eagerness to highlight the perpetrators Muslimness or skin colour rather than the crimes they had committed. The discussion in group B1 explicitly highlighted that negative portrayals of Muslims in the media have a direct effect on visible Muslims (see chapter 9).

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<sup>94</sup> Afghan guerrilla fighters.



Image 10.2 (15 October 2001)



Image 10.3 (24 September 2012)

Data gathered from the Muslim women participants indicates something specific about the negative representation of Muslim women in the media. Berfin and Saima from group B1, Yasmin, Fatima and Juwaid from group B2, Sumbul and Aneesa from group C1 all noted that the images of Muslim women in the media are either submissive, oppressed women or that they carry a bomb under their hijab (see sections 9.3, 9.4 and 9.5).



Image 10.4 'Holy hatred' 6 February 2006



Image 10.5 German charity poster  
'Oppressed women are easy to overlook'

Their observations have recently been confirmed in a popular TV drama on BBC1 'The Body Guard'<sup>95</sup> which began with a white police officer, the main protagonist, trying to convince a Muslim woman suicide bomber not to trigger her bomb by asking her *'your husband is forcing you to do this isn't he?'* (The Body Guard, 2018a) and he goes on to save her from her husband's evil act. However, in the following episodes of the drama the audience discovers that the 'oppressed Muslim woman' was not what she was thought to be. She says *'I am not the oppressed Muslim woman, I am an engineer and I built the bomb'* (The Body Guard, 2018b). Throughout the TV drama, viewers only see the submissive or the raged Muslim woman bomber. Although presenting a gripping storyline, the series promoted the image of stereotypical Muslim rage. The data suggest that these types of portrayals serve to reinforce existing notions of superior Western civilisation and culture. The combination of the media representation of Muslims and the

<sup>95</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p06crp3c>

hegemonic view of 'Western superiority' has been instrumental in creating the binary position of 'our culture (Western)' versus 'their culture (Islamic, Muslim, Other)'.

Furthermore, the data suggest that, following the Syrian civil war, which has resulted in the largest humanitarian crisis of the twenty-first century, Islam and Muslims are negatively linked to immigration, asylum and refugee issues within the media and by politicians in the UK and the EU. In the UK and European media, the term Islam has been used interchangeably with refugee, asylum seeker or immigrant (CIT, 2018; Fekete, 2009) forming a dominant narrative of derision (Goldberg, 2009; Göle, 2017; Merali, 2018). For example, during the discussion about immigration and immigrants in group C1, the general view was that the media runs negative news stories about immigrants. The participants were of the firm view that journalists routinely make links between crimes and the perpetrators' ethnicity, religion or their immigration status. This feeds into people's fear and hatred of immigrants on the streets (see chapters 8 and 9).

The media have even used tragic events to propagate cynicism about refugees. An example is the representation on two different occasions of the image of Aylan Kurdi, a drowned three-year-old Syrian Kurdish refugee, washed ashore a beach in Izmir, Turkey. The child's family was trying to reach a Greek island whilst escaping from the Syrian civil war. The first representation resulted in an outpouring of sympathy in the 'civilised Western' world. Many people asked themselves the question: How can we allow this to happen to a three-year-old child? Even anti-immigrant newspapers, the Sun<sup>96</sup> and Daily

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<sup>96</sup> <https://www.thesun.co.uk/archives/news/36107/for-aylan/>

Mail, were sympathetic towards Aylan (see image 10.5). The Sun set up a campaign to help ‘thousands of kids like drowned migrant boy’ (The Sun, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015) and the Daily Mail’s Piers Morgan wrote, ‘Don’t shut your eyes to this picture because WE did this. Now we have to make it right’<sup>97</sup>. Within four months, on 6 January 2016, Aylan’s image was used in another context by Charlie Hebdo cartoonist, Laurent Sourisseau, in the name of ‘satire’<sup>98</sup> (see image 10.6). The French caption reads: ‘What would little Aylan have grown up to be? Arse groper in Germany.’ The second image highlights how the hegemonic narrative can construct a dangerous enemy for ‘Western civilisation’ from a dead three-year-old Kurdish boy: From a victim of a civil war to a ‘dangerous brown man’<sup>99</sup>.



Image 10.6 The Sun, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015    Image 10.7

The way in which immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers are represented in the media propagates the view that they are dangerous/infectious to British/ Western European

<sup>97</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3221090/PIERS-MORGAN-Don-t-shut-eyes-picture-did-make-right.html>

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2016/01/14/01016-20160114ARTFIG00112-que-serait-devenu-le-petit-aylan-s-il-avait-grandi-charlie-hebdo-choque.php>

<sup>99</sup> I borrowed this term from Gargi Bhattacharyya. See Bhattacharyya, 2008.

societies. My critical realist analysis of the study data suggests a link between the creation of the 'Muslim enemy', the 'war on terror' and the introduction of the Prevent strategy. For example, Annie, Liz and Nita's comments from A1 (see sections 7.1, 7.2) indicate that their initial thoughts about an image of a terrorist are influenced by the dominant 'Muslim terrorist' narrative. They believed the media's narrative of the Muslim terrorist, it was a part of their memory from childhood, they grew up with it. The education institutions they attended indirectly promoted the dominant narrative through school assemblies, for example commemorations of the 9/11 and 7/7 attacks took place, to remember the victims of these atrocities. No corresponding commemoration for the dead civilians in the West's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan at British schools ever took place. Some of the participants have experienced the hegemonic 'Muslim terrorist' narrative explicitly. For example, participants from school C talked about their Prevent training, which was delivered by a dedicated Prevent officer. At the same school, at the beginning of every lesson during their Ofsted inspection, staff were required to remind students what extremism means by referring to the definition of extremism from the Prevent strategy and highlighting 'fundamental British values' (School C called it 'Our shared values'). School C was also where participant, Mariam, described 'fundamental British values' as *'the perfect racism'*.

The data from the Muslim research participants revealed that they feel that Muslims have been treated as suspects, both at an individual level and as a whole community(ies). For example, Sadie (A2) highlighted that the 'Beeston bomber' label has been attached to

young Muslim males in Beeston<sup>100</sup> (see section 7.1), or Juwaid's (B2) comments on how the actions of ISIS in the Middle East were linked to her burqa when she was verbally abused in the street. The discussion with group B1 around the future of Muslims and immigrants in the UK suggested that second or third generation Muslim women are still struggling to be accepted since they perceive they are not treated as equals in the UK. They questioned whether their 'brown' children will ever be equal citizens rather than treated as 'the enemy within' in British society (see section 8.2). These data reveal that the propagation of 'the enemy within' or 'the fifth column' narratives by the media and politicians have contributed to a hostile environment for Muslim communities in the UK. It could be argued that the roots of the hostile environment already existed in the UK as part of the emerging new racism (Gilroy, 1987; Goldberg, 2009), however it has taken a new direction since the 9/11 and 7/7 attacks.

The data also highlight that international events and the British government's response to these has a direct impact on people living in the UK. Participants, Annie (A1), Nita (A1), Kenan (A2), Berfin (B1), Saima (B1) and Mahmoona (C) have asserted that the British government's response to the 9/11 attacks in joining the 'war on terror' has had a negative influence on public attitudes towards Muslim communities in the UK. Ahmed (2010), Callinicos (2010) and Kundnani (2015) assert that there is a direct link between the 7/7 attacks and British involvement in the imperialist global 'war on terror'. It could be argued that the introduction of the Prevent programme (HO, 2007), following the 7/7 attacks in London, was the product of British foreign policy in the Middle East. In 2011 the

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<sup>100</sup> Two of the bombers involved in the 7/7 attacks were from Beeston, Leeds.

Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government's revised Prevent strategy explicitly highlighted that the programme's aim is to stop 'Islamic terrorism' in the UK (HO, 2011: 1) and it introduced the term 'fundamental British values' to the public. I would argue that, whilst Britain's involvement in the 'war on terror' in the Middle East was taming the 'Muslim' enemy abroad, the promotion of 'fundamental British values' was taming the 'Muslim enemy within'. It has provided an opportune tool for silencing Muslims at home.

### **10.5 Racism and 'fundamental British values' as parts of British hegemonic ideology**

Recent studies (APPGBM, 2018; CIT, 2018; Runnymede, 2017) have demonstrated that current anti-Muslim racism has been built on past racist narratives. Gilroy (1987) explains how racism adapts itself to changing social and political environments. He argues that, under the 'new racism', race is defined in terms of culture and identity. Balibar and Wallerstein (1991) refer to this as 'racism without race'. Cultural differences have become a smokescreen for racism and the daily use of certain coded words, such as illegal immigrant, bogus asylum seeker, extremist, Islamic extremist, patriotism have replaced crude racist terms<sup>101</sup>. Racist ideas have also been concealed behind the intellectual discourses of nationalism, Englishness, and Britishness<sup>102</sup>. These ideas have also included racist 'legitimate concerns' about immigration which has attracted supporters from right

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<sup>101</sup> UK daily newspapers contain numerous examples of coded language e.g. see the front page of the Sun (Illegals have landed) on 22 October 2015.

<sup>102</sup> Norman Tebbit's cricket test: 'Who would you support; Pakistan or England?' and the current Conservative government's 'fundamental British values' are examples of how culture is used as an 'Othering' tool in the UK.



and centre left (such as the Labour Party) politicians and academics (see chapter 2). The participants' discussions affirmed that increasing hostility towards Muslims and Islam is a part of the changing face of racism and anti-immigrant sentiment in the UK. Their testimonies about their parents' and grandparents' arrivals in the UK have highlighted how the second and third generations of Black, Asian and Muslim participants still carry the burden of being 'immigrant' in their birth place. Whilst they personally felt that they belong to Britain, their presence in the UK is constantly questioned by society at large and, to some extent, by the British state, particularly when one considers the illegal deportations of the Windrush generation and their children from the UK<sup>103</sup>. The data indicates that those participants who are regarded as 'immigrant' or the 'Other' by society regularly ask themselves: 'when are we going to be accepted in our own birth place?' When will we stop hearing 'why don't you go back to where you come from?' or 'Where are you *really* from?'. Whilst they explain that they have developed resistance mechanisms, such as laughing out loud at these comments, they also acknowledge the racist nature of these comments. Sara from group B1 succinctly described this as 'institutional racism' (see section 9.3).

The evidence from this research reveals that Black, Asian and Muslim participants' daily social interactions are affected by institutional racism. The data highlight that the participants experience racism during their schooling, shopping trips or whilst working as a volunteer. Their discourses suggest that racism has been propagated from the top down, implicitly, in a 'perfect' way, and that the promotion of 'fundamental British

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<sup>103</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/30/windrush-people-deported-from-uk-died-jamaica-foreign-minister>

values' has been a part of this process. As Naz (C) indicated, 'fundamental British values' are sold to us as a desirable commodity in order to be acceptable in twenty-first-century Britain (see section 9.2). Sumbul (C) described this desirability as an 'image', a mask which the British state sanctions on the 'Others'. However, this image would not fit everybody, despite it being strongly promoted. The research participants noted that the qualifying factor to be truly British is to be white and, to some extent, as Berfin (B1) and Fatima (B2) argued, to be Christian. The data also reveals that this image consists of a certain higher, superior type of citizenship. According to the data, this superiority manifests itself in the skin colour of people. I would argue that the roots of this superior image, as presented by the participants, can be found in racism and the colonial past of the British Empire.

Said argued that the white colonial masters believed that 'the actual colour of their skin set them off dramatically and reassuringly from the sea of natives' (2003: 226) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I would argue that this conviction still pertains in the twenty first century. The colonialists firmly believed that they were ontologically superior to the natives, such as Indians, African or Arabs (Fanon, 2001 [1961]; Fryer, 1984; Gilroy, 1987; Sivanandan, 1990; Zeilig, 2014). Their knowledge and epistemological standpoint rested on the European Enlightenment, its rationalism and the rhetoric of 'high cultural humanism' (Dabashi, 2011; Harman, 1999b; Hobsbawm, 1997; Kilomba, 2010; Said, 2003; Spivak, 1995). This self-belief in their superiority assured the White European colonialists that 'their' values were 'liberal, humane, correct. They were supported by the tradition of *belles-lettres*, informed scholarship, rational inquiry' (Said, 2003: 227). The notion of the ontological and epistemological superiority of Europeans

and white men existed in Western fiction and non-fiction writings. For example, David Hume, the famous Scottish philosopher, one of the pillars of the 'Enlightenment', argued that:

There never was a civilised nation of any other complexion than white... the most rude and barbarous of the whites, such as the ancient Germans, the present Tartars, have still something eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or some other particular... low people [white], without education, will start up amongst us, and distinguish themselves in every profession. In Jamaica, indeed, they talk of one negro as a man of parts and learning; but 'tis likely he is admired for very slender accomplishments, like a parrot, who speaks a few words. (Hume, [1753-1754] 1987: 208)

Hence Blacks, Asians, Arabs and others who were not 'white' could naturally be colonised and 'civilised' by Western imperialists (Williams, 1967; Fryer, 1984; Gilroy, 1987; Callinicos, 1993; Blackburn, 1998; Harman, 1999b; Fekete, 2009; Virdee, 2014; James, 2001). This was also evident in the writings of colonial bureaucrats, for example James Fitzjames Stephen, who was a legal member of the Viceroy's council in India between 1869 and 1872, commented on British colonialism in India:

The government of India was based on the assumption that Christianity was true and the native religion untrue. Effectively, that 'I am right and you are wrong, and your view shall give way to mine, quietly, gradually and peacefully; but one of us must rule and the other must obey; and I mean to rule'. (Stephen in Smith, 1988:169)

The research evidence affirmed that the colonial masters' belief in their 'superiority' over the colonised has been kept alive in different ways within social relations amongst young people in Bradford. Participants commented on their experiences of how some white people perceive women wearing the hijab, that Asian or Black people cannot speak

English, they cannot be from Britain or they cannot be teachers or doctors (even though more than 200,000 NHS nurses and doctors are from BME backgrounds)<sup>104</sup>. Their conversations indicated that the ontological superiority of being white is deeply entrenched in society and that, even primary school children's, perceptions of Black or Asian people are influenced by this ontological superiority. For example, Zunerra's (B1) auntie, who is a primary school teacher and wears the hijab and shalwar kameez, is regularly asked whether she is a teacher by pupils in her school. Sara's (B1) mum, who wears the veil, is perceived as being unable to speak English by white customers or shop assistants when she is shopping (see section 9.4). The perception of the inferiority of Black and Asian people is also present at the top level of state institutions, such as the Parliament. Dawn Butler, a Black Labour MP since 2005, was told, 'this lift really isn't for cleaners' by another MP in a members-only lift<sup>105</sup> in the Houses of Parliament in 2016. Research amongst Black trainee teachers has revealed that most of them have experienced the 'are you the new cleaner?' moment at their new posts (Lander, 2017).

Williams (1967) argued that the superior race theory finds its roots in slavery and the development of modern capitalism. The Transatlantic Slave Trade was a key phase within the development of capitalism. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, millions of people were enslaved and transported to sugar and cotton plantations in the colonised Americas and West-Indies to produce raw materials for the world market (Allen, 2012; Harman, 1999b; James, 2001; Ramdin, 1999; Roediger, 2015;). Historian, Eric Williams, explains the link between capitalism, slavery and racism:

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<sup>104</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jul/09/nhs-bme-staff-discrimination>

<sup>105</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-35685169>

The features of the man, his hair, his colour, his dentifrice, his 'subhuman' characteristics so widely pleaded, were only the later rationalisations to justify a simpler economic fact: that the colonies needed labour and resorted to Negro labour because it was the cheapest and the best. This was not a theory, it was a practical conclusion deduced from the personal experiences of the planter. He would have gone to the moon, if necessary, for labour. Africa was nearer than the moon. (Williams, 1967: 20)

Fryer (1984: 168-193) calls the nineteenth century ontological and epistemological 'superiority of the White Man' the 'pseudo-scientific mythology of race'. 'Pseudo-scientific racism' also provided arguments for the 'superior race' with the claim that Blacks and Asians were not biologically suited to organise and rule complicated state institutions, thus requiring the rule of civilised 'whites' throughout the epoch of 'the age of Empire' (Hobsbawm, 1997; Wolfreys, 2018). This is the '*mission civilisatrice*'<sup>106</sup>. The arguments associated with biological superiority lost their popularity after the 1940s. The horrors of the Holocaust shifted the emphases from biology to culture. This was the emergence of, what Barker (1981) called, 'new racism'. However, this shift in emphasis does not diminish the salience of biological racism. For example, lower IQ test results of Black Americans in the USA were used to highlight genetic differences between Black Americans and whites<sup>107</sup>. This is still very much part of modern day racism in the twenty-first century (Coard, 2005: 38).

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<sup>106</sup> The French version of the 'white man's burden'.

<sup>107</sup> For a detailed discussion of development of IQ see Murdoch, S., 2007.

The promotion of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ was built on this history of British imperialism, colonialism and slavery. The Black and Asian research participants’ comments about their own presence in the UK are directly linked to British colonialist history (even if this link was not always clear for them. See chapters 7, 8 and 9). It is evident that the British colonial past still haunts them. In the recent TV drama about the Rwandan Genocide, ‘Black Earth Rising’, the main protagonist Kate Ashby commented ‘The past isn’t dead, it isn’t even past’ (BBC2, 10 September 2018). Ashby’s observation was also present in the conversations amongst the research participants’ whose parents, grandparents or themselves originated from the former-British colonies. Their feelings of constantly being undermined, excluded, ‘Othered’ by politicians, the media and people on the streets (see chapter 9) are outcomes of the colonialist past. I would also argue that the notions of ‘The White Man’s burden’<sup>108</sup> and ‘*mission civilisatrice*’ in the nineteenth century to the promotion of ‘*litekultur*’<sup>109</sup> and ‘fundamental British values’ in the twenty first century are integral elements of the claims that white Westerners have ontological and epistemological superiority over ‘Others’. The findings from this research suggest that this belief in superiority currently manifests itself in the form of anti-Muslim racism (see chapter 9) and it could be argued that, the term ‘the perfect racism’, which was coined by Mariam (C), summarises the participants’ understanding and experiences of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’.

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<sup>108</sup> The White Man’s burden is a poem by Rudyard Kipling.

<sup>109</sup> Germany’s dominant culture

## 10.6 Racialising through CONTEST: Terrorising the Muslims

Leslie (C), in his comments about an image of a terrorist, infers that he could not picture a 'white British' terrorist in his mind, because it did not feel right to associate 'your own kind', a fellow white Briton with terrorism (see section 7.1). This is a logic that can be linked to the 'superior White Man' concept discussed above in 10.4. At the root of this logic is that white British people are modern, liberal and tolerant and they are committed to the democratic principles of the UK, therefore they cannot be linked to terrorism. It could be argued that Leslie's view represents the dominant narrative, propagated through the media and politicians, of associating terrorism with Islam and terrorist with the Muslims. White people do not fit the typical terrorist image propagated in the media or via a Google search. Data which emerged from Kenan's (A2), Annie's (A1), Nita's (B1), Saima's (B1), Fatima's (B2) and Sumbul's (C) dialogues suggests that, whenever people refer to terrorism or a terrorist, there is an unwritten agreement that they are referring to 'Islamic terrorism or a Muslim terrorist'. Even though many of the participants were highly critical of associating the term terrorism with Islam and Muslims, and they were aware of the dangers of stereotyping Muslims, they could not escape from the terminology themselves (see section 7.1). This indicates that the dominant narrative of 'Muslim terrorism' has shaped the participants' own use of vocabulary on terrorism.

The evidence also revealed that the dominant narrative has a profound effect on participants' understandings of prevailing national and international political and social issues. Their discussions on the events of 9/11 and 7/7, ISIS in the Middle East, the Charlie Hebdo attack, the European referendum debate and the murder of Jo Cox MP in Batley

were influenced by the dominant narrative. However, having a space to discuss these issues during the focus group interviews, provided them with a means to develop alternative narratives. Despite having limited time to discuss these issues, they were quick to engage in critical discourse. For example, participants were perplexed that MP Jo Cox's murderer was not identified immediately as a terrorist. He was described as a 'mentally unstable guy' (see section 7.1) and a series of positive articles about him were published in the media, such as: 'how he helped his neighbours' and 'he did gardening for the elderly' in his neighbourhood. These news pieces were accompanied with a positive smiling photograph of him<sup>110</sup>. The dominant narrative of the image of a terrorist was not applicable for Thomas Mair, Jo Cox's murderer, a fascist sympathiser. This example concurs with Leslie's (C) analysis, which explained that white people would not call another white person a terrorist; it does not sound right. Group A1 described the soft treatment of Thomas Mair as 'white privilege'. What emerged from each reference to the murder of Jo Cox in every focus group was that, if her murderer had been a Muslim or a Black person, the response of the media, the police and the politicians would have been different (see section 7.1). The analysis suggests that Thomas Mair's religious beliefs or skin colour were not relevant for the media and politicians because he was neither Black nor Asian, in particular he was neither a 'Muslim' nor an immigrant (see sections 7.1, 9.2 and 9.3).

Disassociating the negative terminology of murderer or terrorist from white perpetrators is not unique to the British media. For example, in Germany, a fascist organisation, the

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<sup>110</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jun/16/labour-mp-jo-cox-shot-in-west-yorkshire>



National Socialist Underground murdered nine immigrants and one police officer between 2000 and 2007 but the German police was adamant that the murderer/s were immigrant mafia members. The newspaper headlines used the term 'döner<sup>111</sup> killings'. In January 2007, the Baden-Württemberg State Office of Criminal Investigation wrote: 'Given that killing human beings is considered highly taboo within our cultural space, we can safely assume that the perpetrator is, in terms of his behavioural system, located far outside our local system of values and norms' (Foreign Policy, 16 March 2017). The case was not solved until some short film footage about the murders was discovered in 2011.

Analysis of the study data also indicates that young people have real concerns about the use of the term terrorism in the media. Furthermore, as discussed in section 10.3, the bias of the media against Blacks, Asians and Muslims emerged as a recurrent concern (see sections 9.2, 9.3). The participants' concerns are substantiated by research (Kapoor, 2018; Kundnani, 2017; Wolfreys, 2018) revealing that the dominant narrative of terrorism is still one of 'Islamic terrorism'. My research evidence also highlights that the dominant narrative is discriminatory and racist (see chapter 9). I would argue that these empirical findings are rooted in the utilisation of the government definition of terrorism.

Currently the UK's Counter Terrorism Act 2015 defines terrorism as 'an action or threat to influence the government or intimidate the public. Its purpose is to advance a political, religious or ideological cause' (HO, 2015). This definition was adopted from the Counter Terrorism Act 2008 (Greene, 2017). Ahmed (2006), Chomsky (2001), Callinicos (2003),

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<sup>111</sup> Turkish shawarma, a type of kebab.

Davis (2016) and Kundnani (2015, 2017) point out that ‘terrorism’ is a slippery and vague term. This is not because the term is impossible to define but due to the ‘selectivity with which it is applied’ (Callinicos, 2003:11). Kundnani (2017) also argues that the vagueness of the definition gives flexibility to those in power to apply it according to their own needs. This ambiguity resembles the conversation between Humpty Dumpty and Alice:

‘When I use a word,’ Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, ‘it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.’ ‘The question is’, said Alice, ‘whether you can make words mean so many different things.’ ‘The question is,’ said Humpty Dumpty, ‘which is to be the master – that’s all’. (Carroll, 1982: 196)

The evidence which emerged from this study concurs with this claim that the use of the term is political. In recent years, the vocabulary of terrorism has been extended. The terminology of terrorism in legal and day to day communications within politics, the media and public institutions encompasses ‘extremism’ and ‘radicalisation’ (Fekete, 2018; Kapoor, 2018; Qureshi, 2017). This has resulted in the state, by means of a hegemonic ideology, constructing a vocabulary of terrorism and producing a Gramscian ‘common sense’ meaning of the term which has then been applied within public services through Prevent and the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’. This is not an exclusively British phenomenon; other European countries have played their part in the production and promotion of the ‘common sense’ vocabulary of terrorism (Wolfreys, 2018). For example, following the killing of Charlie Hebdo journalists, the French government and media utilised the same ‘binary grid of extremism versus freedom of speech, their fanaticism versus our liberalism’ (Kundnani, 2017: 147). Angela Davis (2016) stated that ‘I am always so cautious about the use of the term “terrorist” ... because there is almost always a political motivation (Davis, 2016: 110).

Global geo-political, economic and security competition between the imperialist powers has defined, redefined and expanded the vocabulary of terrorism. The 9/11 and 7/7 attacks had an effect on successive British governments' (and those of many other countries) identification of the terrorist suspects or the 'new enemy'. These changes were reflected in the British governments' internal politics of counter-terrorism. The public discourse on terrorism identified the enemy as Muslims and their religion, Islam. However, the causes of terrorism remained unspoken (Ahmad, 2006; Butler, 2016; Chomsky, 2001; Kundnani, 2017; Sayyid 2015). The terminology also served to racialise Muslim communities. Martin Barker comments on the 'new racism':

...can refuse insults: it need never talk of 'niggers', 'wogs' or 'coons. It does not need to see Jews as morally degenerate, or blacks as 'jungle bunnies'. Nonetheless, in subtle but effective ways it authorises the very emotions of hostility that then get expressed in these terms. (Barker, 1981:4-5)

Regular use of the term terrorism in the media and in political speeches by those in positions of power has had a similar impact to that outlined by Barker (1981). The interview data highlight the existence of a hostile environment for Muslim communities. Furthermore, this hostility has been extended to immigrant communities living in the UK (MEND, 2018; Tell MAMA, 2017) during the series of national and international economic and political changes such as the financial crisis of 2009, the civil war in Syria (from 2011 to present day) and the European Union referendum (2016). The data also indicate that, whilst the main target of the hostility was Muslims, following the European referendum, there was also increased xenophobia towards non-Muslim immigrants, in particular, anti-Eastern European racism. The 'hierarchy of whiteness' emerged during discussions in

schools B and C about racism towards Eastern Europeans. The data suggest that, in the absence of Muslims, the dominant target group are currently Eastern Europeans. As discussed in section 10.3, the construction of the 'Other' is not a new development; it has been utilised against Jews, Blacks, Asians and currently Muslims and Eastern Europeans. 'Othering' occurs in many forms, for example, whoever is the new 'Other' in any particular epoch has been criminalised (Göle, 2017; Kapoor, 2018). This occurs through stereotyping and labelling of the whole community (Kundnani, 2015, 2017; Ward, 2004). Whilst Muslim communities were labelled as terrorist<sup>112</sup>, wife beaters<sup>113</sup> and sexual predators<sup>114</sup>, Romanians were labelled as shoplifters<sup>115</sup> and Slovakian Roma people as neighbours from hell<sup>116</sup>. The commonality in these examples is that the communities are identified as non-integrated peoples who need to understand the British way of life. This is precisely what David Blunkett, the former Home Secretary, suggested in 2013 when he commented on Slovakian Roma people living in his constituency in Sheffield. He said:

You've got to adhere to our standards and to our way of behaving and if you do this you'll get welcome. We have got to change the behaviour and the culture of the incoming community, the Roma community, because there's going to be an explosion otherwise. (Cited in Wintour, 2013)

Nick Clegg, another Sheffield MP, stated that:

We have every right to say if you are in Britain and are coming to live here...you have got to be sensitive to the way of life in this country. (Cited in Wintour, 2013)

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<sup>112</sup> <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8042323/terror-cops-on-high-alert-christmas-attack/>

<sup>113</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/30/donald-trump-muslims-public-health-crisis>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8063328/sajid-javid-rochdale-asian-paedophile-gang-british-citizenship/>

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3982616/Romanian-immigrants-film-STEALING-British-supermarket.html>

<sup>116</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/nov/15/sheffield-page-hall-roma-slovakia-immigration>

The data suggest that, whether one is a member of a Black, Asian, Muslim or Eastern European community, they are going to encounter racism. Racism is multifaceted and operates in different ways for different communities. I would argue that the promotion of the notion of 'fundamental British values' or, as Naz (C) called it, 'a wow' factor (see section 9.2) is a part of the multifaceted institutional racism.

### **10.7 Chapter summary**

In this chapter I have discussed the substantive generative relations which emerged from the study data. I have built on the emerging demi-regularities from the empirical data and demonstrate how these are linked to national and international historical, social, political and economic conditions. In doing so, I have recontextualised the notion of 'fundamental British values'. I have established that the roots of the promotion of 'fundamental British values' can be located in British colonial history, the structural racism existing in current British society and the imperialist ideology of the 'war on terror'. I have demonstrated that these tenets are interwoven and that the notion of 'fundamental British values' would not have been possible without their pre-existence.

# **Chapter 11**

## **Conclusion**

## **11.1 Introduction**

In this final chapter, I reflect on the research journey I embarked on three years ago to investigate ‘fundamental British values’. Although the aim of this research was to understand and explain young people’s perspectives on the notion of ‘fundamental British values’, the drive for the study emerged from my own personal and professional experiences of teaching and living in Bradford as a migrant from Turkey.

Below I present a general overview of the research findings, reflections on my personal positioning in relation to changes in the political landscape since 9/11, recommendations for future research and the limitations of the research design.

## **11.2 General conclusion of the research findings**

The notion of ‘fundamental British values’ entered the educational arena in 2012 with limited resistance (Elton-Chalcraft et al., 2016; Lander, 2016). However, its compulsory incorporation in the school curriculum in 2015 attracted a spectrum of responses from academics and practitioners. A number of academics welcomed the initiative, arguing that the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ could be used as a tool to teach human rights, LGBT rights and cosmopolitanism (Hildebrand, 2016; Struchers, 2016; Vanderbeck and Johnson, 2016). However, empirical studies with teachers and trainee teachers conducted by Farrell (2016), Habib (2017), Smith (2016) and Lander (2016) raised serious concerns about the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ (see chapter 4). My research findings align with the perspectives of the latter group.

In chapter 4 I critiqued the use of anti-terror legislation, Prevent, as the basis for educational policy. Prevent has attracted much criticism from academics, politicians, law professionals and the UN, resulting in the recent governmental announcement of an independent enquiry<sup>117</sup> into the strategy. Prevent has been described as a ‘toxic brand’ by Dal Babu<sup>118</sup>, a former chief superintendent with the Metropolitan Police, and a discriminatory policy (Kundnani, 2017; Qureshi, 2018; UN, 2018). However there has been limited critical analysis of the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’. My research addresses this theoretical and empirical deficit through the application of critical realism as a theoretical and methodological framework to capture and analyse the perspectives of young Bradford citizens.

Firstly, in focusing my examination on young citizens’ perspectives, my research revealed new insights into the compulsory promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ in schools and colleges.

Secondly, the research developed a distinct explanation of the representation of ‘fundamental British values’ from an anti-racist and anti-imperialist stand point.

Thirdly, utilisation of the critical realist theoretical and methodological framework uncovered some malignant facets underlying the notion of ‘fundamental British values’.

These have been obfuscated by its designation as a benign aspect of ‘a broad and

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<sup>117</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jan/22/prevent-strategy-on-radicalisation-faces-independent-review>

<sup>118</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/mar/09/anti-radicalisation-prevent-strategy-a-toxic-brand>



balanced curriculum, to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society' (DfE, 2014a: 3).

Critical realist analysis of the data led me to postulate the following three interrelated preconditions for the emergence of the compulsory promotion of 'fundamental British values':

- the imperialist ideology of 'the war on terror';
- the colonialist conception of the 'superiority' of the 'dominant culture';
- structural racism in the education system and wider society.

These generative relations present a challenge to the dominant discourse surrounding the notion of 'fundamental British values' and offer a unique alternative perspective (see chapter 10).

In chapter 4 I refute claims that the teaching of 'fundamental British values' merely represents the promotion of a positive national identity or part of a broad balanced curriculum (DfE, 2014a). My data analysis and literature review resulted in the conclusion that the notion of 'fundamental British values' is a means of directly promoting a hegemonic, superior culture which serves to undermine the multicultural and multi ethnic fabric of Britain (see chapters 4 and 10).

The study participants' interpretations of their social realities (see chapters 7, 8 and 9) provided rich data which generated new knowledge about the structures at work that resulted in the compulsory promotion of 'fundamental British values'. This new knowledge, produced through the process of a 'double hermeneutic' can be utilised by

practitioners and academics to conduct further research into the historical, political, economic and social factors behind the emergence of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’.

Said’s (2003) concept of ‘Othering’ and Gramsci’s (1986) concept of ‘hegemony’ provided the tools for identifying associations between the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ and Britain’s colonial and imperialist past, ‘the war on terror’ and structural racism.

Whilst the concept of ‘hegemony’ was useful in explaining how ‘fundamental British values’ are used as a tool to produce ‘common sense knowledge’<sup>119</sup> (see chapter 4), Said’s concept of ‘Othering’ has guided me in explaining the imperialist, colonialist and racist roots of the notion. Moreover, these concepts provided insights into how the participants’ understandings of ‘fundamental British values’ were shaped by their social relations (see chapters 7,8 and 9). In the following four sub-sections, I briefly summarise my original contribution to knowledge and understanding of ‘fundamental British values’.

### **11.3 Young peoples’ reflections on ‘fundamental British values’: empirical contribution**

The key arguments developed in this research emerged from the analysis of participants’ discussions. Since its introduction within the educational sphere in 2012, there has been a dearth of empirical research evidence on the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ from students’ perspectives. Previous studies have emphasised difficulties with

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<sup>119</sup> From a Gramscian perspective, it is the production and re-enforcement of hegemonic knowledge.

implementation of the policy and the problematic nature of the term ‘fundamental British values’ from teachers’ perspectives.

This study fills an empirical gap and is distinctive in presenting the policy of promoting ‘fundamental British values’ through the lens of young citizens, those directly affected by it. As Cairns (2015) identified, it is aimed at young Muslim citizens more than others (HO, 2011; HO, 2015; Spielman, 2017), however it affects all young citizens to varying degrees. In analysing the in-depth exploration by Black, Asian, Muslim and minority ethnic students of the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ in relation to their real-life experiences, the research revealed that the notion is another tool to ‘Other’ already marginalised BAME and Muslim communities.

White British participants from schools A and C were central in identifying the impact of the imperialist ideology of ‘the war on terror’ on young citizens’ constructions of an image of a terrorist (see chapter 8). Participants with White British Christian backgrounds, as members of the dominant group in society, do not experience racism or being ‘Othered’ because of their skin colour, ethnicity or religious belief in their day to day lives, therefore their perceptions of ‘fundamental British values’ emerged from the vantage point of the hegemonic group in Britain. The data derived from their discussions were pivotal in identifying an imperialist arrogance and superiority inherent in White British values at the root of the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’.

The focus group discussions, particularly those of the female Muslim participants, about their social interactions with people at voluntary or paid workplaces, shopping centres,

holidays and educational encounters captured their day to day real life experiences. It was revealed that female participants' visible Muslimness is a direct target for racists. Their experiences evidenced the new anti-Muslim racism. Although their skin colour remained a salient element in regards to racist attacks, their 'Muslim look' represents a trigger for racists. This 'Muslim look' has been repeatedly linked to terrorism by the visual and print media.

These narratives spontaneously emerged during the discussions about the notion of 'fundamental British values'. These outcomes are distinctive in that the participants were mapping the footprint of the promotion of 'fundamental British values'. This formed the basis for postulating the generative social relations underpinning the notion of 'fundamental British values' (see section 11.2).

#### **11.4 'Fundamental British values' and the imperialist ideology of the 'war on terror':**

##### **Epistemological contribution**

Previous literature on 'fundamental British values' has commented on terrorism (Panjwani, 2018), the securitisation of educational spaces (Durodie, 2016; Revell and Bryan, 2018) and their relationship to the promotion of 'fundamental British values'. However, these studies have not offered sufficient depth to identify the associations between the ideology of 'the war on terror' and 'fundamental British values'. My research findings have elucidated the ideological link between them. One of the demi-regularities that emerged from the focus group interviews was 'the war on terror'. Although my participants did not make a direct link between 'fundamental British values'

and 'the war on terror', the critical realist analysis method of retroduction revealed the connection. Unravelling the historical and political links between 'the war on terror' and the notion of 'fundamental British values' is a new contribution to the existing body of knowledge.

The data from the group interviews directed me towards an explanation of 'fundamental British values' through the paradigm of new imperialism (Callinicos, 2003; Hardt and Negri, 2000; Harvey, 2003). Analysis of the research findings indicated that the notion of 'fundamental British values' stems from Britain's contemporary imperialist aspirations as well as its imperialist history. This new approach sheds light on the significance of current British interventions in the Middle East in relation to educational policies. In doing so, the research exposes the normalisation of the new imperialist ideology through the education system.

### **11.5 'Fundamental British values' and the colonialist conception of the 'superiority' of the 'dominant culture': Epistemological contribution**

The promotion, via the national curriculum, of democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance and rule of law as 'fundamental British values' suggests that British people have been the main proprietors of these positive attributes. This viewpoint can be regarded as a continuation of the colonialist notion of Western ontological and epistemological superiority over 'Other' cultures. Some researchers (Richardson, 2015; Struthers, 2016, 2017; Vanderbeck and Johnson, 2016) maintain that 'fundamental British values' can be reformed by removal of the adjectives 'fundamental' and 'British'. They

argue that the words 'universal' or 'human' should replace the term 'fundamental British'. Analysis of the research findings indicates that adoption of a dual stance towards the notion of 'fundamental British values' provides a smokescreen for its colonialist roots. It is another way of imposing a dominant ontological and epistemological narrative on the racialised 'Others'. Comments made by participants from school C about the use of 'our values' instead of 'British values' in their institution highlight that changing the notion's adjective did not change its essence.

The critical realist in-depth analysis of the ontology of 'fundamental British values' uncovered some conditions underlying the promotion of the notion. In identifying colonialism, superiority and dominant culture as integral elements in the construction of 'fundamental British values' (see chapters 4 and 10) my research is extricated from the framework of hegemonic epistemology with which reformist research aligns. In doing so, my research poses a challenge, not only to the concept of the promotion of 'fundamental British values', but also to the dominant knowledge production process underpinning the notion. In a critical realist sense, my research actively breaks the cycle of re-construction of the dominant narrative and contributes to its transformation (see figure 5.1).

#### **11.6 'Fundamental British values' in relation to structural racism in the education system and wider society: Epistemological contribution**

One of the participants described 'fundamental British values' as 'the perfect racism'. The findings from the focus group interviews directed me to explore the relations between structural racism and the promotion of 'fundamental British values'. The racist

roots of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ have been explored by Habib (2018) and Smith (2018); my research proceeds to reveal the notion’s role in the reproduction of institutionalised racism within education. Smith (2016) has explored ‘fundamental British values’ from the prism of racist nativism, which is defined as:

the assigning of values to real or imagined differences, in order to justify the superiority of the native, who is perceived to be white, over that of the non-native, who is perceived to be People and Immigrants of Colour and thereby defend the rights of whites, or natives to dominance. (Perez Huber et al. cited in Smith, 2016: 299)

Habib (2018) highlighted teachers’ concerns about teaching ‘fundamental British values’ in multicultural classrooms. My research, whilst investigating the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ within the educational system, also revealed insights into the ways in which the notion has been utilised elsewhere as a de facto code for ‘Othering’ Black, Asian, minority ethnic communities, Muslims and immigrants. My empirical findings also highlight how the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ is directly associated with racist structures prevailing within the justice system, workplaces and the day to day social interactions of the participants.

This research unearths the ways in which different social mechanisms operate in harmony within the judiciary, education and police, serving to re-inforce the dominant anti-Muslim racist rhetoric through a wider utilisation of ‘fundamental British values’ (see chapter 9). As Archer (1995) argues, structures shaping our lives operate at different levels. Through investigating young people’s real-life micro level experiences at work, school or on the street (see chapter 9) in relation to the macro level forces such as newspaper headlines or British involvement in ‘the war on terror’ (see chapter 7), this research illustrates the role

‘fundamental British values’ plays in normalising institutionalised racism within the British education system (see chapter 10). Utilisation of critical realist methodology shed light on the ontological link between the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ and structural racism. Existing empirical studies have not directly identified this link. Distinct from previous studies, this research concludes that the compulsory promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ normalises the racist concept of the superiority of ‘White, British’ culture over cultures of ‘inferior’ ex-colonial subjects.

### **11.7 Critical realism as a novel approach to educational research: methodological contribution**

The application of a Bhaskarian critical realist ontological and epistemological (1975) approach is rare in educational research. A search of the terms critical and realism and education of the ERIC database for peer reviewed articles since 2000 yielded only 56 results (undertaken in February 2019) within the field of education, with most focusing on theoretical applications rather than actual empirical studies. My research represents a unique ontological and epistemological contribution to the field of educational research in its approach to qualitative data collection and analysis. Throughout this research I utilised critical realism as an explanatory tool in order to reveal the mechanisms behind ‘fundamental British values’.

My adaptation of the critical realist methodology revealed the generative social relations behind the emergence of notion of ‘fundamental British values’ from an innovative application of the methodological perspective (as discussed at the chapter 6).



Identification of the reasons behind the promotion 'fundamental British values' was enabled by the application of four critical realist theoretical principles (see chapter 5):

- 1- **Reality is layered:** observed elements of 'fundamental British values' at the surface (empirical) level are possible because of the mechanisms behind the empirical level. In order to understand and explain 'fundamental British values' the mechanisms which produced the phenomenon require exploration.
- 2- **Emergence:** 'fundamental British values' appeared as a new phenomenon at the empirical level because of interrelated hidden causes.
- 3- **The intransitive and transitive dimensions of reality:** the notion of 'fundamental British values' as a social phenomenon exists independently of our conception of it. This is the intransitive dimension of my research which is subjected to analysis. The theory applied to explain the promotion of 'fundamental British values' is the transitive dimension.
- 4- **All knowledge is fallible:** What is known about the notion of 'fundamental British values' is subject to change in light of new findings which may lead to new knowledge.

This research establishes a critical realist analytical framework in the field of education which seeks to go beyond deductively or inductively derived explanations of an emergence of a social phenomenon. Shipway (2011) described the potential contribution of critical realism in educational research thus:

when the reality of social structures is combined with the concept of explanatory critique, critical realism is able to reveal problems involved in the underlying structures and mechanisms of educational systems. (Shipway, 2011: 161)

The adaptation of a critical realist methodology within my empirical research has materialised Shipway's theoretical assumption. Furthermore, my theoretical and practical application of critical realism has demonstrated how theory meets with empirical research to uncover young citizen's perspectives on the promotion of 'fundamental British values'.

Utilisation of the critical realist methodology and analysis of qualitative data, as described in chapters 5 and 6, offers a methodological alternative for future critical realist research in the field of education. However, this presents new challenges. There is no established critical realist approach to the use of group interviews, therefore I modified other realist approaches to allow participants' narratives to form the starting point for re-contextualisation of the notion of 'fundamental British values'. Other realist approaches e.g Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), Pawson and Tilley (1997) accept that the interviewer has expertise therefore they should lead the interview and their agenda takes priority. My research, in contrast, utilised the unstructured interview technique combined with minimal researcher intervention during the interviews to achieve maximum input from participants into the outcomes of the research.

## 11.8 Limitations and future research

There were a number of limitations to this research, some of which could form the basis for future research. The study was carried out with young citizens aged 16 and above. This effectively excluded younger participants' views. I aimed to explore the conditions under which the notion of fundamental British values emerged and what young citizens can tell us about the notion itself. By asking young citizen about their experiences and perceptions of 'fundamental British values', I aimed to position them as experts in their own right. In doing this I aimed to challenge the state sanctioned view of 'fundamental British values'. Further research on perceptions of younger participants who have been subjected to compulsory teaching of 'fundamental British values' since July 2015 would augment the findings of the current research. This would provide a deeper understanding of the impact of the policy on normalising the state conception of 'fundamental British values' for future generations.

Participants in this research were either attending a multicultural education institution or one with a majority ethnic minority intake. I was unable to recruit White British participants from schools in Bradford with majority White British intakes due to lack of positive responses from the gate keepers of schools in this category. As members of the dominant culture in society, young White British citizens' perceptions of 'fundamental British values' would enhance the knowledge of the subject matter. Their dimension would provide a deeper understanding of similarities or differences in understandings about the notion between members of the dominant group and the minority groups in British society.

Some of the Muslim female participants discussed the link between increasing racist attacks on Muslim women and the racialisation of their visible Muslimness. Participants also highlighted the role of the negative, 'submissive', 'oppressed' images of Muslim women presented in the media. Although the research revealed the link between the promotion of 'fundamental British values' and construction of a negative Muslim image in the public sphere, this gendered dimension was not explored in detail. Further research is necessary to explore Muslim women's uniquely gendered experiences of the implementation of the policy.

My research findings could form the starting point for engagement with policy makers. The promotion of 'fundamental British values' will impact on future generations' conceptions of 'Britishness' and their relations to people within and outside of Britain'. Young citizens' perceptions about the notion of 'fundamental British values' should inform national educational policy and teaching practice. Although research on this educational policy may influence the decisions of policy makers, researchers should not limit themselves to generating empirical evidence but should combine this with research informed activism. In doing so, they will contribute to the active transformation of their social reality and society.

## 11.9 Concluding remarks and ideas for teacher activists

Based on the findings of this research, I conclude that the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ is a racist educational policy with its roots located within British colonialism and imperialism. It is a product of national and international historical, social, economic and political conditions. As an immigrant and teacher, I have experienced political and social events which influenced the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’. My personal positioning regarding the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ has developed from these experiences.

At the inception of this research Barack Obama<sup>120</sup>, a Black African American man, was the President of the USA. Britain was one of the leading members of the EU. The number of people referred to the Prevent anti radicalisation programme was 3,995 (HO, 2017) and ‘fundamental British values’ were a part of the Teacher’s Standards (DfE, 2012); their compulsory promotion was, however, at its formative stage.

At the time of writing this final chapter, Donald Trump, an anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, pro white-supremacist businessman is the President of the USA. On 23 June 2016 British people voted to leave the European Union after a racist, anti-immigrant<sup>121</sup> referendum

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<sup>120</sup> Although, Obama’s foreign policies were not dissimilar to those of his predecessors and, under his administration, Black communities faced intense police brutality, his election victory had generated some hope (even it was false hope) to oppressed peoples in the USA.

<sup>121</sup> Immigration control was the main campaign issue for both the main remain and leave campaign groups.

campaign<sup>122</sup> (Brexit) and were expecting to leave the EU on 29 March 2019<sup>123</sup>. The latest figures for Prevent referrals reveal an increase of 83% to 7,318 (HO, 2018) and the compulsory promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ is a key component of the school inspection framework.

Anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant racism has not subsided; on the contrary, it has received increased legitimacy within the European Union states (Law et al., 2018). The changing national and international political and economic landscape has influenced the social relations between white British and Muslim communities in the UK and Europe.

I maintain that these developments were not serendipitous; the normalisation of anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim racism, fused with austerity, resulted in this rise of far-right racist parties. The local, national and European elections have been the democratic voice of ‘new racism’ in Europe (Fekete, 2017; Kundnani, 2015) and the introduction of ‘fundamental British values’ into the education system is an integral component of these political developments.

From an academic activist perspective, I would argue that the findings of critical explanatory empirical research designed to reveal power asymmetries in social relations should be materialised via transformative collective action. This could take the form of a research informed campaign for a multicultural, anti-racist and inclusive curriculum in

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<sup>122</sup> There was also a small but relevant anti-racist, anti-capitalist and internationalist Left-exit position, however they were afforded no air time by the media, so the dominant narrative on the referendum built on an anti-immigrant and nationalist base.

<sup>123</sup> This date is subject to change.

education. Such an endeavour would have an impact on the wider community as opposition to ‘fundamental British values’ would involve simultaneous opposition to anti-Muslim racism, xenophobia and all forms of othering. In recent years campaigns have been initiated to highlight colonialism and racism in education. For example, in 2014, University College London Students’ Union organised the campaign ‘why is my curriculum white?’<sup>124</sup>. This campaign spread across higher education institutions in Britain and spawned other complementary campaigns such as ‘Rhodes Must Fall’ which aimed to ‘decolonise the space, the curriculum, and the institutional memory ... at Oxford’<sup>125</sup>. Although these campaigns have focused on challenging the hegemony within the education system of the imperialist and colonialist history of the British Empire and its resulting racism, they have also challenged entrenched institutionalised racism in British society. My research and proposals for campaigning are a contribution to the present struggle for liberation and the decolonisation of the curriculum and the wider anti-racist struggle.

In conducting this research, I have combined my theoretical development with involvement in anti-racist campaigns such as, ‘Students not Suspects’, ‘Stand Up To Racism’, ‘Stop The War’, ‘Love Music Hate Racism’, Care4Calais and have worked within my own trade union UCU’s Black Workers Standing Committee. This combination of theory and anti-racist practice has provided a unique lens through which to examine the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ in schools and colleges. In the spirit of anti-

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<sup>124</sup> See the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dscx4h2l-Pk> and <https://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/why-is-my-curriculum-white/>

<sup>125</sup> <https://rmfoxford.wordpress.com>

racist public intellectualism and social justice, I would recommend that educators should actively campaign to:

- abolish the policy of promoting ‘fundamental British values’;
- remove any reference to the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ from the Teachers’ Standards’;
- include anti-racist, anti-colonialist and multicultural teaching in the national curriculum;
- provide extensive training for trainee and experienced teachers to implement anti-racist, anti-colonialist and multi-cultural teaching.

I would argue that these aims cannot be achieved by isolated, individual actions. As the promotion of the notion of ‘fundamental British values’ is a duty (HO, 2015), Ofsted is policing its delivery and, in some schools, its promotion has become part of the appraisal structure (Revell and Bryan, 2016), individual actions could place practitioners in a vulnerable position. They could find themselves being isolated (Thomas, 2018) and may also place themselves in breach of their contracts. Opposition to the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ must therefore be delivered through organised collective trade union action. This could be built upon existing trade union policies concerning the Prevent strategy. All the major education unions, NUT (2016), UCU (2015) and NUS (2015) have anti-Prevent policies. The scope of these policies should be extended to active opposition to the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ i.e. operationalised. By campaigning, practitioners, academics, students and parents would be progressing beyond opposition to the notion of ‘fundamental British values’. They would be contributing to the creation of a present, and future, anti-racist, multi-cultural society.



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