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Feeling at Home and Seeing the Other Side

Muslim Responses to Right-Wing Populism

PhD Thesis
Yahya Barry



The Edinburgh Alwaleed Centre
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FEELING AT HOME AND SEEING THE OTHER SIDE
Muslim Responses to Right-Wing Populism

Thesis Submitted to the Department of Islamic & Middle Eastern Studies,
The University of Edinburgh
Supervisors: Professor Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila & Dr. Alistair Hunter

Date Submitted: December 21st 2018

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Abstract

Is it going to be an Islamised Europe or Europeanised Islam? This is a question, a final ultimatum, almost apocalyptic, posed by commentators on Right-wing populism (RWP) across both sides of the Atlantic. RWP has stimulated profound structural shifts in European politics. What isn't disputed is that at its embryonic phase, this particular socio-political phenomenon was responding to everyday voices at the microsocial level. For the most part, academia has however focused on the macrosocial level. Regards the Muslims – a key target of RWP ideology – their voices in response are absent in the current literature. I therefore asked: has RWP affected Muslim identity? If so, why and how has this occurred?

This thesis applies an interpretative sociological approach and qualitative methodology to conduct fieldwork in three European cities: Malmö, Copenhagen and Edinburgh. The data constituting the empirical basis of the study is from a subset of 28 participants (second-generation and converts) from a total 45 who participated. The data was subjected to narrative analysis to identify the main factors influencing the participants' responses to RWP.

Although the participants' exhibited a range of 'social creative responses', these were in response to stigmatisation primarily. The data showed no 'reactive' Muslim identity emerging as a response to RWP. The participants perceived other factors as having a far greater impact on their everyday lives than RWP activism. Two main factors emerged: (segregation and second-class citizenship) influencing the production of Muslim identities. Malmö and Copenhagen, characterised by ethno-cultural segregation created more obstacles impeding equal citizenship by comparison to Edinburgh, where a small dispersed Muslim community benefitted from a civic nationalism and aspirational pluralism.

To Mukhtar Barry.

You made me realise that we have little time to waste and so much to achieve. I hope to be united with you in Jannah.

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Preface

A Soft-Hard Beginning

I still recall watching the breaking news of the Oslo bomb and Utøya shootings in the lounge of the Muslim World League's Institute for Imams in Makkah, July 2011. I stood there saying to myself 'o Allah, let it not be a Muslim.' My training at the seminaries in Madinah and Makkah resulted in a near 10-year absence from Europe and the western world although I kept a close eye on the events shaping the relations with Islam and Muslims. Visiting friends and colleagues returning from home trips brought back stories, sentiments and premonitions. Although having grown up in Leyton, East London from the age of 11 till 18, the decision to return 'home' to Gambia and then pursue Islamic studies in Saudi Arabia meant I had missed out on what many told me was a 'golden opportunity' to become a British citizen. It meant that I wouldn't return to the UK, and indeed Europe for another decade when I had 'entry clearance'.

I did feel antagonised to a certain extent because the religion I ascribed to, and furthermore, one I am trained to represent in official ceremony was being implicated in a series of atrocities. One other reason I kept my finger on the pulse was my approaching return to Europe in August 2011 for a Master's degree in the Religious Roots of Europe at the University of Copenhagen. I was soon to be an immigrant again, travelling to Europe post-9/11 in a climate where being Muslim, Black and African presented certain stumbling blocks, three to be precise.

I see it important to share these insights at the beginning of this thesis because I now realise that my work is influenced in varying ways by my 'baggage'. Although speaking in the first-person here, I invite the reader to participate in this reflexive exercise. Our worldviews and experiences shape our perceptions and interpretations. The ways we articulate our research problems, the theoretical and methodological approaches we adopt and the eventual conclusions we reach are all part of these individual

subjectivities. As long as we are studying human expressions, thoughts and feelings, there is no 'third safe space' where we can stand to objectively engage our subjects of study. Rather, we need to embrace the fact that we are embedded within the contexts of our studies.

As I continued along my journey, I was led to question the way I was researching and producing knowledge, for whom I did this and the impact it had on society. These questions came from two sources: exposure to academic literature around methodology; but more profoundly, it came from my experiences of 'living' the academic life. Attending conferences, participating in workshops and even just sitting in lectures, and realising that I stood out in a number of ways. My ethnicity, background and career trajectory were a blend which tended to be not so commonly shared with those I was rubbing shoulders with. Of course, this never hindered me; to the contrary, it was motivational and very enjoyable. What it made me realise was that academia had an inclination towards being something of an ivory tower. What about the wider society who were the subject of much research - especially in the social sciences? Surely, they were stakeholders in the production of knowledge, and yet their voices were mostly heard in the third person.

This questioning behind how and for whom knowledge is created and who owns it inspired me to make a conscious effort to consider the relations of power involved in the creation of this knowledge. This became particularly relevant in my engagement with the study and the way I have reported its findings. Secondly, I recognised that I had to be careful in not projecting my own initial insecurities onto my study's participants concerning anti-Islam populism. This was a research interest borne out of what I later came to recognise was a coping mechanism for things I found threatening to myself. I traced it back to my time studying for a Bachelor's in Islamic Theology in Madinah from 2003 when I found myself spending hours in an internet cafe browsing articles on racism, colourism and colonialism. A decade later, for my Master's dissertation in the Religious Roots of Europe, I chose the English Defence League in a case study of Far-

Right activism. When I felt threatened by something, I studied it, in order to try and understand what it wanted from me and, therefore, how I should act in response to it.

Now, the challenge remained in making a case of my own individual understanding and justifying why and how that may contribute to the public understanding. Reflexivity became a crucial part of this. I was guided to the importance of allowing the reader in on aspects of the behind-the-scenes matters around the project's maturation because it indeed forms part of the data (knowledge) being created. At this juncture, I begin to outline what my study has sought to address. The research project I embarked on for this piece of doctoral research looks at a particular phenomenon of populist activism which has sought to mobilise using a discourse of exclusion which targets Islam and Muslims. This particular phenomenon is Right-wing populism. Specifically, I was interested in studying how Muslims were responding to it.

As the PhD progressed, a noticeable whirl of Right-wing populist rhetoric has emerged within the public discourse, shaping the socio-political cleavages of a significant number of European nations, the United States and other western contexts. Just as I began to bring the study to its conclusion, former UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson in August 2018 voiced his personal views about the burka in a way which many across the political and social worlds interpreted as pandering to the Right-wing and - specifically - with alleged influence from Steve Bannon, former strategist of US president Donald Trump. His success in the US presidential election was a pivotal moment in the relations between Islam/Muslims and Right-wing populism. Also important in the British and European context was the No vote in the 2016 Referendum on UK's membership of the European Union (Brexit). And within five years of embarking upon this project, I have seen the Right-wing gain significant positions of power - politically and popularly - in Europe.

Noteworthy examples of this surge of the Right in Europe are the success of the Northern League in Italy (2018) and the Austrian Freedom Party forming a coalition government with the Austrian People's Party (2017). Over the years of my research, I

have seen the huge and unprecedented electoral gains of the Danish People's Party (2015) and the Swedish Democrats (2014). In France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany, Right-wing rhetoric and populist parties continue to assert themselves and garner support from the public. This dazzling plethora and flurry of Right-wing populism across the western world is certainly interesting to me insofar as the Muslim world is a key target - in terms of immigration, ideology, culture and religion.

So far, I have made the case about myself, telling the reader upfront about me. Academic research is however about the wider implications that personal (individual) claims have to the public understanding. So why this study? How does it contribute to the public understanding? This is what I will outline in brief in the next section. I will present an overview of the state of the art, reserving a detailed engagement with the scholarship for the section defining what Right-wing populism is.

Introductions

Rationale for the Study

‘Will it be an Islamised Europe or Europeanised Islam?’ This is a question posed by ‘scholars’¹ and commentators on Right-wing populism across both sides of the Atlantic (Zuquete 2017: 117). It has an ominous apocalyptic tone to it, almost like a final ultimatum in black and white (Griffin 2017: 15-16). To my surprise, I found that this question indeed featured in the ‘script[s] for the last days of Europe’ written by ‘established scholars’ regarding the role of Islam in Europe (Zuquete 2017: 117 cf. Lucassen & Lubbers 2012; Marranci 2004). A certain ‘spirit of decadence’ is indeed in the air as perceptions of declining European nations and western civilisation have precipitated the rise of groups seeing themselves as a vanguard, the last line of defence for ‘their beleaguered communities, whose cultural identity, authenticity, and independence are threatened by national and global forces’ (Zuquete 2017: 116; see also Betz 2017; Rydgren 2007; Mols & Jetten 2016).

The notion of a gradual decadence, a driving force of extreme-right ideology has now gained the respectability of occupying the centre, having once been a fringe voice (Betz 2017; Ignazi 2017; Mudde 2017a). Its position has been legitimised by the conservative mainstream increasingly adopting its rhetoric, (Eatwell 2017; Fukuyama 2006; Hainsworth 2000; Hossay & Zolberg 2002; Laurence 2008) to the extent its influence on other parties within the European electoral systems has been identified as ‘contagious’ (van Spanje 2017). There are other voices as well, conservative and from the left, more

¹ Zúquete (2017) uses the term ‘established scholars’ and cites Ferguson (2006), Lewis (2007), Peters (2006), and Prager (2007). I note that while some of them may be academics, I observed that the specialists in Right-wing political movements like Roger Griffin, Roger Eatwell, Cas Mudde, Jens Ryggren, Hans-Georg Betz, Piero Ignazi, Matthew Goodwin and others along their area of expertise refrained from such sensationalism.

dramatic in their premonition of violence triggered by an ‘indigenous backlash’ against Muslims (Zuquete 2017: 117)

Far from enjoying the prospect of taking over Europe by having babies, Europe's Muslims are living on borrowed time ... I have no difficulty imagining a scenario in which U.S. navy ships are at anchor and U.S. marines have gone ashore at Brest, Bremerhaven or Bari to guarantee the safe evacuation of Europe's Muslims’ (Peters 2006 cited in Zuquete 2017: 117).

Since the turn of the millennium, social and political scientists observed a new trend in Western European politics amalgamating anti-Muslim sentiment with cultural/ethnocentric viewpoints (Betz 2017; Cherribi 2011; Deacon *et al.* 2017; Mudde 2017a; Skenderovic 2007; Krzyzanowski 2013; Yilmaz 2012). What began as cells of embryonic networks at the fringes of the electoral arena evolved and matured to occupy central influential roles in European politics (Betz & Meret 2009; De Lange 2017a; Hainsworth 2000). The profound macrostructural transformation of the western European nation-states in the post-war period from industrial societies to post-industrial societies created ‘new loser groups’ and hence ‘floating voters’ (Kitschelt 1995; Rydgren 2007). Traditionally, manual workers had always been at odds with their left-wing parties’ liberal positions on sociocultural issues. Despite this, it did not impact on voting patterns as such. The parties were clearly seen as defenders of the working-class interest (Clark & Lipset 2001; cf. Mols & Jetten 2016). As decades of adjustment to a post-industrial Europe ensued and the dust settled, the contours of the political landscape had all but changed.

The once prominent socioeconomic cleavage started to diminish, and the sociocultural cleavage rose in salience (Blomqvist & Green-Pedersen 2002; Rydgren 2007). And hence issues such as immigration, law and order, abortion, the EU, security and so on started to matter more than ever before. The left-wing, socialist and social democratic parties struggled to retain the working-class voters who now started to look for more authoritarian and less liberal alternatives to the social problems they faced or saw society as facing (Andersen & Bjørklund 1990, 2000). One of these problems was

immigration, especially from Muslim-majority nations. It has become a heavily politicised issue, leading scholars such as Zuquete (2017: 103) to call it a ‘spectre’ – almost as though it had been incarnated, ready to be redacted into an apocalyptic eschatology.

In explaining the emergence of Right-wing populism, scholarship has done a remarkable job in devising models and describing the contexts and results of the rise of the Right (Betz 2017; De Lange 2017a; Eatwell 2017; Taggart 2017; Klandermans 2017; Mudde 2017a, Mudde 2017b). Political opportunity structures, de/realignment processes and the sociocultural dimensions of the political cleavages are outlined as key factors facilitating the grounds for the emergence of Right-wing populism (Lucassen & Lubbers 2012; Mammone *et al.* 2013; Rydgren 2007; Vossen 2011). The ability to mobilise the working class and youth without being stigmatised as racist and anti-democratic proved to be a potent combination of pull factors contributing to the rise of such groups and movements across Western Europe (Goodwin 2011; Mudde 2017a; Rydgren 2007).

The flurry of recent literature on Right-wing populism has therefore clarified a number of key points in understanding this unique socio-political phenomenon. It has explained the emergence of Right-wing populism by mapping, elaborating on its varieties and even classifying the ideologies of its key figureheads (Mayer *et al.* 2014; Vossen 2011). It has outlined for us prime contexts of interest as far as the salience of Right-wing rhetoric is concerned - Scandinavia, France, Britain, Germany, Italy and Austria are noteworthy contexts in this regard (Akkerman 2011; Meret & Siim 2013; Rydgren 2007, 2010). The literature has also highlighted the essential characterisations of Right-wing populist thought: xenophobia, exclusionary populism and identity politics (Betz 2003; Mudde 2017a; Rydgren 2007; Williams 2010). It has shown the political mobilisations that unite the Far-Right as well as considering the resulting electoral changes (Betz & Meret 2009; Ivarsflaten 2008; Williams 2010). Then there is the mediatisation aspect (political campaigning and appeal) (Akkerman 2011; Forchtner *et al.* 2013) which has

been a core part of Right-wing populist mobilisation. What have the consequences been?

The literature has focused on the structural effects/consequences in terms of: agenda-setting policies (Minkenberg 2017; Schain 2017), impact on other parties within the various European national contexts (Schain 2017; van Spanje 2017; Akkerman 2017) and impact on the broader national electoral systems (Albertazzi & Mueller 2017; Mudde 2017c). And with this focus, research studying 'responses' to Right-wing populism has likewise followed a structural trajectory, outlining the adaptations of political parties within the electoral systems (Deze 2017), the 'new alliances' forged with mainstream governing parties (de Lange 2017b) and how political discourse in specific national contexts has reacted (Art 2017; van Donselaar 2017).

The spectre of the rising crescent of Islam in the West is undoubtedly going to cause some reaction somewhere.² The changing political landscape briefly described above is reflective of this - generally speaking. And, it is here I see a disparity and lack of correlation. Whilst the outlined changes came about due to *everyday* voices making themselves heard through votes, it is difficult to discern – from the literature – whether the picture depicted represents the views of these very people in their day-to-day lives. Of course, we have to *map* in order to make sense of the terrain (Pelinka 2013), and this calls for sweeping generalisations at the expense of fine detail. But as long as we are talking about people and communities, it is important for these everyday voices, contingencies and relationships to be heard. Is the apocalyptic script one shared by

² To offset what could be read as a speculative statement, I cite the following scholarship: Givens (2017), Jackman and Volpert (1996) and Lewis-Beck and Mitchell (1993) highlighted the congruence between 'immigration and the radical right vote' (Givens 2017: 297) in Austria, France and Germany. Minkenberg (2017: 444-5) used statistics from national parliamentary elections in Western Europe to illustrate the 'significant electoral upswing of the radical right in nearly all countries'. And according to the recent Pew opinion poll (2016) which surveyed the perceptions of Muslims in Europe, majorities in Hungary (72%), Italy (69%), Poland (66%), Greece (65%) said they view Muslims unfavorably. In Spain (50%), Netherlands (35%), Sweden (35%), while negative attitudes toward Muslims were relatively less in France (29%), Germany (29%), the United Kingdom (28%) and elsewhere in Northern and Western Europe.

people going about their normal lives or is it one that is being ‘written by established scholars and commentators’ (Zuquete 2017: 117)?

No matter to what extent the explanatory models attribute the tectonic changes of the political landscape to structural forces, the one thing that is clear is that such groups and networks at their embryonic phases were responding to the everyday concerns of people at the microsocial level (Arzheimer 2017; Goodwin 2011; Mols & Jetten 2016; Mulinari & Neergaard 2014). With its focus on macro-structural issues, the literature has ignored the micro-level.³ And this oversight applies to both those attracted to Right-wing populist rhetoric and those who are the targets of such rhetoric. European citizens and residents who happen to self-identify with Islam as a religion/faith are surely among these ‘everyday people’. A piercing question that therefore needs consideration is: where are the Muslim voices and responses to these shifting socio-political realities? The targets of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment surely will be affected in one way or another by the increasing ubiquity of Right-wing populist rhetoric. At the very least, they surely must have something to say. Right?

A literature review of the scholarly work studying the consequences and responses to Right-wing populism returned no results as far as Muslim responses are concerned. Is academia complicit in the marginalisation of Muslim voices in the Right-wing populist debate? By being referred to in the third person, it is almost as though the grounds for a graveyard slot where Muslims are left behind to die a quiet death⁴ were being prepared. I argue that the preoccupation with mapping and charting the rise of Right-wing populism does not warrant exclusion of the study of Muslim responses. If contact theory

³ An exception to this is Leddy-Owen (2016) whose study focused on white working class voters situated on a peninsula between the cities of Southampton and Portsmouth.

⁴ Goffman (1952) made a piercing analysis of stigmatised peoples, especially those living in ‘segregated’ environments as living in ‘graveyards’ where they live until they die their natural deaths because they have already died their ‘social deaths’. Such places/spaces, he pointed out, ‘tend to be ending places where persons of certain kinds, starting from different places, can come to rest’ (Goffman [1952] 2001:19).

and social interaction theory (Achbari 2015; Bevelander & Otterbeck 2010; Bonino 2017) are to go by, different social groups establish reciprocal relations of influence through varying levels of power and authority. One possibility could be there hasn't been much scholarly (research) interest in Muslim responses. But another, and I believe, more penetrating insight could be that the silence is reflective of the status of Islam/Muslims as a minority community. They might as well deserve 'a poor man's science' befitting their status as a poor, weak and problematic people as Hunter (2011: 102) cited from Sayad (2006: 27):

For Sayad, himself an Algerian immigrant to France, the 'reconstituted biography' is one of the few avenues available to the student of migration when confronted with a lack of more 'noble' methodological options. His fear was that migrants – being an ignoble, marginal population, problematised not from lofty philosophical debates but as a problem in itself, a problem for the rest of society – received the social scientific treatment they 'deserved'.⁵

I argue, with this thesis that if I am to come closer to understanding intergroup dynamics and conflict, I have to look at the voices of people and communities across the board regardless of how much or little power they wield. Including such voices would open up new perspectives for us and potentially offer nuanced insights into these complex social dynamics. I therefore aim by this contribution to the literature, to include the voices of those who wield less power. Power is situational and relational. And with a complex globalised world, modes of communication have opened up possibilities of influence for individuals and minority groups to exercise their social agency and influence global human discourse like never before. This decision to focus on the individual, microsocial level tallied with methodological choices favouring more qualitative and interpretive approaches which I will outline in the second chapter.

⁵ I should clarify that Hunter (2011) made reference to Sayad (2006: 27) in the context of evaluating the methods used to study certain groups such as Muslim hostel residents – his target group. I recognised that there could exist a connection between these very methods, not held in particularly high esteem by some and the lack of attention given to such target populations in certain fields of research because of their relative marginal status.

Outlining the Central Research Question

The perception of others around the space we call ‘home’ and our ability to relate to them or not influences how we understand ourselves and configure our sense of belonging. The role of Islam in Europe has become an intensely debated issue within academia as well as the media and broader public discourse. The recent years have seen an increase in Right-wing anti-Islam populism as certain socio-economic factors in tandem with ground-breaking events like 9/11, 7/7, the Danish cartoon crisis, the Charlie Hebdo shootings, the November 2015 Paris attacks - the list goes on - created vacuums of fear and concern from the general public. Right-wing populist groups such as the English Defence League (EDL) actively sought to fill these vacuums by appealing to the sentiments of particular social groups by engaging with the wider public discourse. The influence dynamics went beyond two ‘minority’ entities – Muslims v the Far-Right - to actually begin to shape public discourse.

By evaluating EDL identity and engagement politics, we were able to come to the essential conclusions that Islam influences the group’s sense of identity when and where an Islamified religion is perceived as blurring social boundaries, swaying national loyalties, threatening social consensus and obstinately refusing to socially integrate. In response, a demand for the reassertion of socio-national boundaries exists and a vacuum for articulating the problems emerges. The EDL has emerged to respond to these demands and fill such vacuums. (Barry 2013: 79)

These perceptions led the EDL to put the challenge to the Muslim community to reform and integrate⁶ into British society. A number of problematic issues arise from the above conclusion and are at the very core where this thesis begins to address its own research problem. The first issue relates to the perception of Right-wing populists that Muslim identity formation has a tendency to ‘compromise’ a definitive sense of belonging to a

⁶ By integration, this thesis refers to the particular ‘mode of relations’ produced when individuals and groups in a society cooperate to collectively maintain its stability (Parsons 1954, cited in Scott 2014).

European nation state such as Britain. Being Muslim therefore entails being challenged to incorporate the element of belonging to Britain and incorporating ‘others’ in British society into one’s Islamic identity configuration. This is indeed problematic and we find it echoed in mainstream media and the wider public discourse. The second issue arising from Right-wing populist rhetoric is the claim that Muslims are yet to integrate. It is problematic because apart from reifying Islam by making ‘Muslims to be all about Islam’ (Jeldtoft 2012), it fails to recognise that Muslims are part and parcel of modernity. They exercise the same level of individual autonomy when it comes to identity negotiation and belonging to the nation state as anybody else.

This thesis addresses these assumptions and problematic issues by recognising them as being part of the definitions and redefinitions of collective membership, social grouping, social identity and intergroup relations involving both the Muslim community as a distinct religious/cultural group and the wider European society. By studying Muslim responses towards entities whose *raison d’être* revolves around the contestation and politicisation of these re/definitions, I argue that we can see the extent to which their identity configurations confirm or refute the assumptions around a problematised Muslim belonging to Europe. This study focuses on the impact of Right-wing populism on Muslim identities. I ask: has Right-wing populism affected Muslim identity within these European communities? And if so: why and how has this occurred?

The Muslims who Informed the Study

This story is shaped by the unique Muslim women and men I had the honour and pleasure of meeting over the period of my study. They gave me the precious gifts of time and knowledge as they shared with me how they see the world and themselves. I met a total of 45 of them, each with their unique stories and shining lights, enough to fill the pages of volumes. In order to begin telling my story in a way which makes sense of the rich material I gathered, I outline the narratives of eight of them. They were the ones who had experiences of direct confrontation with elements of Right-wing populism. Their narratives therefore spoke directly to the phenomenon being studied.

* * *

Farid was born and raised in Copenhagen where he currently resides. Although he is in search of employment, he once ran his own business. A series of conversations with a student in the meditation room at Malmo University led to being introduced to him. He is a Danish national with mixed Arabian and Iranian heritage. This gave him varying tastes of both Sunni and Shi'ite traditions as he grew up. Religion was however not a big part of his life growing up. Farid's stocky frame would give the onlooker an impression that he was someone who lifted weights. His full beard, trimmed moustache and ankle-length trousers inform that he is a practicing Muslim. We met at a cafe in a Copenhagen neighbourhood. By the age of fourteen, he became deeply involved in the Copenhagen gang scene. This gave him a purpose and he felt he belonged - things he found difficult to find growing up as an ethnic minority in Denmark. He worked his way up in the gang by proving himself time and again up until he became a leader at seventeen. Having seen the rise and fall of leaderships from the elder generation, Farid told himself that he was going to be a leader who would be a 'helper' to the youngsters. He was going to show 'love and appreciation'. Having proved a lot already, Farid took upon himself to reclaim the postcode of his area thereby stamping his authority and leaving a legacy. Rival gang members who stood in the way were dealt with street-style. Somewhere in between, Farid's life started to take a new course when he came into contact with a

group of ‘brothers who opened [his] eyes’ to certain realities. He started to practice Islam; and although maintaining a certain degree of respect, his leadership skills could not influence his crew to join his new calling. One by one, they avoided him as he distanced himself from gang culture. He is now married to a practicing Muslim woman and they are raising a family together. They live in an area which has brought them into direct contact with members of the Danish Defence League.

* * *

Salah responded to a Facebook post shared about my research project by messaging me. By this, he became the first participant to engage in what was a quite challenging city to study (Copenhagen). This could have been due to the political pressure on Muslims in the aftermath of the shootings⁷ which coincided with my fieldwork. Salah, in his early twenties, is of mixed Arabian and Eastern European ethnicity, although one could think he was white. His tall height is perhaps accentuated by his slim build. He was clean-shaven and casually dressed when we met at one of the kebab houses in the Danish capital. Salah was born and raised in Copenhagen where he is just beginning a career in IT. He grew up in a ‘multicultural’ area, and the school he attended had a high intake of minority ethnic students. So growing up, he was more likely to face challenges for ‘looking Danish’ than for being a Muslim immigrant. Salah was never attracted to gang culture. He found a sense of belonging in punk culture interestingly enough when he started hanging around a group of left-wing anti-fascists and anarchists. Together with his friends, Salah participates in counter demonstrations and street protests against Right-wing and neo-Nazi groups. He sees it as a fight which Muslims should be a part of, but are sadly not. Salah - in his own words - has an ‘anarchist’ view of citizenship: he belongs to the world, but will actively take part in the local society he lives, and by doing so, fight for equal human rights for all. With his friends, he would usually wear

⁷ The fatal shootings which occurred between the 14th and 15th February 2015. The perpetrator was Omar Abdel Hamid El-Husseini.

tight jeans, military boots and a spiked leather jacket. At the mosque, he prefers to tone this down to avoid being seen as a ‘Satanist’. He is currently single.

* * *

Michael is an English convert in his mid-thirties. He is of medium height and frame with a handful of lightly toned facial hair collecting themselves around the middle of his chin. I was introduced to Michael through a prominent London-based Islamic organisation. He was born and raised in the East-end of London in a very multicultural secondary school where he made Muslim friends. As he put it: ‘a war would break out in some part of the Muslim world, and within months, one would turn up at school telling [them] how it all fell apart.’ He converted to Islam about 15 years ago. He is single and currently works in the customer services department of a company based in central London. When he invited me to his house, he showed me a picture of himself and his siblings when they were small. I told him that his cheerful smile had a hint of mischief, to which he laughed. Family (especially his mum and siblings) was really important to Michael, and Islam - for him - reinforced its value. Being the only Muslim however presented its fair share of challenges to both Michael and his family, especially after the July 7 bombings, when one of his brothers befriended someone with far-right sympathies. While acknowledging the multicultural influences which have shaped his person, Michael identifies himself in unequivocally English terms. He says he sees himself as English, not British. His Pakistani- heritage friends can of course claim Britishness he told me. He explained to me how he saw this: whilst on a Sunday, they might be eating a curry, speaking Punjabi and watching Asian TV, he’d be having a Sunday roast with his family, watching ‘Only Fools and Horses’. But of course, this is not his essentialisation of Englishness. It was Islam, and his ‘travelling amongst the Arabs’ which asserted for him his Englishness, which although not quintessential -as he put it - nonetheless remained inherent.

* * *

Sahra shouted out to me: ‘I am the participant you are looking for’ the moment I caught a glimpse of her - well, she might as well have. There she was, clad in her flowing black Jilbab veil, infused with energy, colourfully shouting out anti-fascist slogans in-sync with her co-protestors at a counter-racism demonstration in Copenhagen. She stood out as much as I did - we were perhaps the only two black faces in the waves of white. Sahra is a Danish-Somali woman in her mid-twenties. She is a trainee social worker in Copenhagen. She was born in Somalia but came with her family to Denmark at kindergarten age. She had a lot of things going on - to her admission - as she grew up in her new home: she was ‘fat’, the only Black Muslim in a white-Danish school. She had an absent father figure and a mother whose struggle to raise a lot of children under one roof compromised her ability to explain Islam beyond ‘this is Halal and this is Haram.’ Sahra distanced herself from the religion in rebellion and lived her life - as she put it - like a ‘Danish girl’. In between partying and living it large, Sahra reached a point where she realised that attaining full Danishness was an illusion and that she was leaving something behind and therefore betraying herself. She went back to Islam and took up the religion full on and fast. Before she knew it, she found herself in a marriage which broke down in a matter of months. What has helped her pick up the pieces is her active involvement with a left-wing youth activist group, only that this time round, she has held on to Islam.

* * *

Hamza was born and raised in London where he works in the IT sector. We were introduced through a grassroots Muslim initiative working with Muslim youth and tackling Islamophobia. Hamza is British with Bangladeshi heritage and is in his late twenties. He is slim and of medium height. There was an air of confidence around him with his business casual wear as we met for coffee at the busy St. Pancras station. Hamza told me his success story: how a young man against all the odds - Muslim, Bengali in Tower Hamlets - made it through education to work for a prestigious company and buy his own home in Tower Hamlets despite the gentrification driving

prices up. At an important juncture in his life, when it was a choice between going with friends who did ‘stuff’ and those who had their heads screwed on, Hamza opted for the ‘orthodox’. The July 7 bombings, and prior to that, 9/11, played their fair share in his rediscovery of Islam. Hamza narrated to me how the trends of discrimination evolved with time in Tower Hamlets - going from race, to ethnicity, to nationality and then to Islam, where it currently stands. He remembers as a youngster, he’d wear his England football shirt, waving the St. George flag when the big tournaments were on. He said that he feels that has now been hijacked by Far-right groups such as the EDL whom he has had direct standoffs with during his involvement in one of the area’s local mosques. Hamza is obviously enjoying the fruits of his hard-earned success. He is newly married and lives with his wife at his own home. However, this success does not cloud his vision from noticing a ‘left behind’ generation of working class indigenous whites on the one hand, and an elitist Muslim class that categorically discriminates against Muslims who came from backgrounds like his on the other.

* * *

Emma is a Swedish convert to Islam. She is in her late twenties. I was introduced to her through the administration of a Malmo-based Islamic centre she attended along with Niklas, her younger brother - also a convert. At the time, Emma was married with two kids and worked as a childminder in Malmo. At one point in our conversation, she paused to breastfeed her youngest. Wearing Hijab⁸ at the time together with Niklas, Emma sent waves of motherly energy about the living room. Her eyes radiantly keeping tabs on the children as the tape recorded. Emma’s conversion was not wholeheartedly welcomed by her family, and notably her father’s side. They took it hard when she told them of her Islam. It put a strain on their relationship especially after the first year when she decided to start wearing the Hijab. Growing up in a small town in the Skane region, Emma found it more appealing to connect with her ‘immigrant’ side: her paternal

⁸ The head-covering/veil.

grandparents were migrants from a Catholic Balkan nation but the family on her mother's side are indigenous Swedes. She therefore formed close friendship circles with her classmates from migrant backgrounds. When she moved from her hometown to Malmo, Emma met some friends who were Muslim and had recently begun exploring their Islamic identities. Emma had a series of confrontations in her visits to her hometown in which she was labelled a 'traitor' for abandoning her Swedishness for Islam. The irony for her however lay in the fact that it was Islam which actually made her feel more Swedish than ever before. However she now had to deal with the fact that she was no longer seen as Swedish.

* * *

Fiona is a Scottish woman in her mid-forties. I met her through an Edinburgh-based Muslim institution. She is a single mother and works in the community service sector. There was certainly more than meets the eye with Fiona. She sat at the cafe table: a distinct figure, composed, in full black, her white face veiled, lifting it up every now and again, just enough to take a sip of her tea. In her words: 'before, I was seen, not heard; but now, I'm heard not seen'. Her monotone covering truly veiled a colourfully unique creativity which in her youth found an expression through the neo-hippie movement; and for some time, Fiona lived in a commune. Before long into our conversations, Fiona expressed herself in pictures, collages and poetry. These means of self-expression, she said, reminded her of the time in her life which saw her enter a mental health institution when a number of things, relationships and events took their toll on her. Fiona then embarked upon a university degree in a Humanities subject; and it was there she picked up an interest in Islam. The religion provided a means for overcoming the challenges of life: 'Islam has given me a fresh start. It has given me the tools. But I'm in charge now. I'm in charge of who gets to see what, and that's a real empowering thing for women'. Fiona's mother was Catholic and her father was Protestant. Even though she was raised in a family which saw beyond sectarianism, her decision to become Muslim did cause tension, and family occasions still require considerable negotiation. Fiona's involvement

in charity work, particularly with the BME community has brought her at close proximity to elements of anti-Islam, Far-Right activism, and notably when a demonstration was held outside one of the institutions she engages with. Her sister's boyfriend was also a sympathiser of the Scottish Defence League. At times, members of her wider family would post something on social media sharing such views and sentiments.

* * *

Momina is a British woman of Bangladeshi heritage. Petite in frame, with shoulder-length flowing hair, she has a lively character and a clearly dynamic lifestyle: she was due to travel to an Eastern European capital within hours of our meeting at a central London cafe. We first met at a research conference in Edinburgh, where she expressed an interest in my project. Momina was born and raised in Bedfordshire. She moved to London for her undergraduate degree in European languages and continues to reside in the capital. She pursues an interesting blend of careers ranging from media and communication to academia and grassroots activism. Following 7/7, Momina got involved in delivering workshops on Multiculturalism and Islam, culminating with her wearing the Hijab in the second year of her BA. Her degree included overseas internships in Germany and Argentina; and it was here she was faced with the dilemma of either keeping her Hijab or position. Her family - and father notably - endorsed her decision to keep the latter. Their Islam had always been infused by a syncretistic cultural mysticism with influences from Hinduism and folk religion. Momina's stay in Germany brought her into direct confrontation with Right-wing activism. Her travels through South America whilst igniting a keen interest in exploring Muslim communities also brought to the fore a consciousness she called 'shadism', when members of the same ethnic group discriminate between lighter and darker skin tones. Belonging to the latter category, Momina navigates around the politics of race, ethnicity, colour and religion within her own Muslim community and wider society through her relationships, experiences and work.

* * *

Overview of the Thesis

In addition to the preface and introductions made, the thesis comprises seven chapters. The first chapter details the study's central analytical categories along with its theoretical framework. The methods and operational matters pertaining to research design are articulated in chapter two. In the third chapter, I elaborate on the cities, nations and localities where the fieldwork was conducted. Following these three preparatory chapters, the empirical material features in the next four chapters as I analyse the data and present the findings thematically. In these four empirical chapters, the participants' perceptions of and responses to Right-wing populism have been analysed with the particular themes identified for the chapter in focus. Chapter four focuses on the growing up narratives of the participants, looking at how it is like being Muslim. Family and culture aside, the other way of being Muslim is through conversion. The theme of the fifth chapter is to look at the conversion narratives and experiences. Gender is the thematic focus of the sixth chapter which looks at the discourses, role plays and contestations around it. Chapter seven focuses on citizenship: the negotiations of identity, the tensions around being Muslim yet fully belonging to one's respective national context and the resources drawn upon in claiming full citizen status. The thesis concludes with a separate section discussing the findings, evaluating them against the current field of research and the contributions made to the public understanding.

It should be highlighted that although this thesis is framed around Muslim responses to Right-wing populism, not all the study's participants shared experiences of directly encountering such groups and entities. I found that a significant number shaped their narratives using perceptions of such entities from media and/or based on experiences relayed to them by family members, friends and acquaintances. In this regard, there was a clearly observed engagement with the xenophobic, racist and anti-Muslim rhetoric espoused by such groups and movements. While this could be perceived as a divergence

between my analytical framework and the participants' understandings of Right-wing populism, I argue that this is precisely one of the major factors I was interested in studying and understanding. Right-wing populism is a specific analytical category which can be defined by the parameters of historical placement and foundational ideology. What cannot be disputed is that such movements and groups create and feed on anti-Muslim rhetoric and Islamophobia – whether it be empirically attributed to them or not. Studying Muslim responses to such groups therefore need not be exclusive of analyses looking at how perceptions of xenophobia, racism, Islamophobia and discrimination feature in the narratives addressing the question of the rise of Right-wing populism.

Chapter 1

Analytical Categories & Theoretical Frameworks

The research question deals with Right-wing populist influences on Muslim identity and being Muslim. Indeed there are many ways of being Muslim especially when I want to avoid reifying Islam by making Muslims to be all about it. And hence Muslim identity comes into the picture in so many ways: whether it be how Muslims see themselves, how they negotiate their sense of belonging and how they re-appropriate certain aspects of themselves in order to navigate everyday lived realities. Before I can begin answering the research questions asked in the introduction, I need to outline the exact analytical categories and situate the study within the current academic literature. This is the chief purpose of this opening chapter. If I claim to study how Muslims are affected by and responding to Right-wing populism, there is a need to unpack certain items so that it is clear what exactly is meant by the study. As such, the items: Muslim(s), identity and Right-wing populism require this unpacking. I start with Right-wing populism.

Right-wing Populism

Contemporary Right-wing politics is a fascinating blend of shifting politics, a bricolage of socio-political and cultural stand points thrown into a pot of cooking ethnocentric nationalist ideations. I have seen established political parties such as the British National Party (BNP), the French National Front⁹ (FN), the Swedish Democrats (SD) and Danish Folkeparti (DF) embrace elements of ‘Leftism’ in their welfare chauvinist policies (Rippon 2012). These parties have had to reshape (refine) some of their foundational

⁹ On the 1st June 2018, Marine Le Pen’s proposal to rename the party was approved by an 80% majority of its members. The new party name is *Rassemblement national* (National Rally).

ideologies in order to appeal¹⁰ to a broader electorate (Eatwell 2003). I have also seen mainstream political parties across Europe play the populist card by toughening their stances on immigration, asylum and terrorism (Art 2011: 240; Widfeldt 2003: 150).

Defining Right-wing activism is therefore challenging, due to the immense diversity, ranging from motives and political formations to the levels of success and popularity that such groups have achieved. The literature indicated two parameters in helping define the Right-wing: historical placement and foundational ideology (Betz & Meret 2009, 2017; Davies 1999; Hainsworth 2000; Ignazi 2003). With regard to the first, the terminology 'usually implies post-war, in the sense that far-right political movements of the pre-1945 era are usually labelled simply as fascist' (Davies & Jackson 2008: 20). As for the second, Far-right ideology tends to adopt idealist conceptions of a nation defined in terms of race, ethnicity and culture - features that acquire it an image of radicalism and xenophobic populism (ibid, see also Betz 2003).

In this thesis, I have deliberately avoided the terms: Far-Right, Radical-Right, Extreme-Right etc. opting instead to use Right-wing populism. I found the alternatives problematic insofar as they appeared to indicate some shared commonalities within the groups, albeit with subtle differences in *modus operandi*, rhetoric and even, foundational ideology (Hafez 2014). The objective has been to cast as broad a net as possible in studying how Muslim identity is influenced – or not - by this particular factor. I therefore recognised the need to employ terminology which would be more encompassing of the diversity in contemporary Right-wing politics.

This standpoint of casting as broad a net as possible has been authenticated by some of the literature (Hainsworth 2000: 29-30; Ignazi 2003: 6-12). Mudde (2014) used the term Far-Right as an umbrella concept encompassing both the Extreme and Radical right,

¹⁰ e.g. Griffin's modernization of the BNP by toning down its position on the repatriation of non-white Britons to 'appearing to accept the ethnic minorities who were legally already in the country' (Eatwell 2003:77).

outlining that ‘the vast majority of these parties are best described as populist radical right, combining an ideological core of nativism, authoritarianism and populism’ (Mudde 2014: 99). Hafez (2014: 480), distinguished between Right-wing extremist and Right-wing populist. Here, the former term referred to parties which have clearly recognized links with National Socialism whereas the latter was connotative of newly emergent groups having no such genealogy. Prior to Hafez (2014) and Mudde (2014), Roger Griffin (2008) identified populism as a key concept:

‘right-wing populism’ or ‘neo-populism’ are terms used by political scientists to refer to electoral parties which appeal to popular xenophobic and anti-government sentiments but without the fascist agenda to create a new order in a post-liberal society’ (Griffin 2008: 238).

When I reflected on these shifting politics in tandem with ideology, rhetoric and modus operandi, I identified ‘populism’ as the linchpin - so to speak (Griffin 2008; Hafez 2014; Mudde 2014). It is a common denominator as well as a catalyst stimulating the outlined evolutions within the European socio-political landscape. By populism, the literature outlines that such groups appeal to the ‘common person’ and use this as the basis for socio-political mobilization (Ignazi 2003; Griffin 2008; Hafez 2014). By qualifying the term ‘Right-wing’ with ‘populism’, I have that leverage on capturing as diverse a set of groups, movements, parties and entities as possible.

In sum, by Right-wing populism, this study takes a general and broad outlook on the groups, parties, movements, organisations and entities whose ideology, rhetoric and modus operandi falls within the initial parameters of being post-war and idealist in their conception of the nation state. No distinction is made between politically and officially established parties from non-official street-protest movements because this would otherwise limit what could be said about the social micro-level.

In what follows in this section, I will engage with the scholarship on Right-wing populism to highlight the contexts and factors which this study has to address and engage with if it is to fulfil its objective and contribute to the literature. I aim to do this

by firstly discussing the scholarship in order to situate the gap(s) relating to my research problem. Having done that, I focus on the literature addressing the influence dynamics between Islam/Muslims and Right-wing populism. By influence dynamics, I mean the definitions and redefinitions of collective membership, social grouping, social identity and intergroup relations.

Contexts, Emergence & Influence Dynamics

The literature on Right-wing populism began in the 1990s following the realisation from scholars in contemporary political movements in Western Europe that certain groups, parties and movements were forming along quite disparate lines from the already-established ideologies of Fascism and National Socialism (Nazism). Such terms became problematic when it came to categorising these elements because, while some blatantly distanced themselves from these ideologies, others reinvented them (Pupcenoks & McCabe 2013). To begin with, it should be outlined that the impact of Right-wing populist parties on the Western European political contexts does vary across the nation states (Art 2015; Messina 2015; Dunn 2015).

The rising Right-wing populist groups were and continue to be distinguished by their anti-establishment stance in challenging the political systems within their contexts of emergence (Widfeldt 2003: 151, cf. Schedler 1996 and Taggart 2000). As a result, they depart from libertarianism, despite claims to defend liberal democratic values (Hafez 2014). The groups are ethnocentric, ‘nationalist, xenophobic, racist and anti-democratic’ (Hainsworth 2000: 9) even if some proclaim a more cultural-centric stance.

Furthermore, they adopt an anti-immigrant stance, and specifically, an anti-Islam rhetoric (Art 2011: 146; Hainsworth 2000: 10-11). The outlined features are observable in their welfare chauvinist agenda: state-provided goods (benefits) are perceived as being the sole right of the indigenous in-group ‘on the basis of a distinctly restrictive citizenship, rather than to the population at large on the basis of equity’ (Hainsworth 2000: 10-11).

The contemporary and evolutionary nature of Right-wing populism has perhaps contributed to the literature's preoccupation with definitional issues at the structural level of analysis. Here, the political parties, their leading figures and the electoral processes within the national and regional contexts are the primary focus. Hence, influence dynamics tend to be analysed along structural terms focusing on democratic (Eatwell 2003; Dèzè 2004) and political responses (Widfeldt 2003) at the national level. Before engaging with the literature directly pertaining to the influence dynamics between Islam/Muslims and Right-wing populism, I outline the research conducted in particular contexts of interest. Since the scholarship has focused on the structural level of analysis, it has provided a good overall perspective of the varying levels of Right-wing populism across Western Europe.

Ignazi (2003) conducted a multi-dimensional analysis of 'extreme right parties' in eleven Western European countries focusing on how their historical legacies, ideologies and politics correlated with attitudinal shifts within the parties. Beginning his analysis with *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI) in Italy, he showed how attitudes towards claims like 'immigrants endanger national identity' considerably shifted from an 80% affirmation from voters in 1990 to 59% in 1995; it coincided with the nuanced approach to immigration from the MSI leadership (Ignazi 2003:47-48). It is expected that these attitudinal changes correspond with shifts in the relations and influence dynamics with other groups, especially Muslims. This factor however received very limited analytical attention within the work.

In the French context, DeClair (1999) analysed FN's electoral successes, party leadership and voter constituencies. This approach was also adopted by Art (2011) whose socio-historical analysis held that focusing on the parties' internal dynamics was crucial to understanding their rise and fall. By comparison, Art (2011: 148) detailed relatively more about the influence dynamics that interest this study. He highlighted the anti-Islam rhetoric of the Danish People's Party *Danske Folkeparti* (DF), outlining the political transformations within Scandinavia. Since his focus was on internal party

dynamics, a partial picture is given of the intergroup relations with Islam/Muslims. A starting point and significant gap which this study seeks to address is this lack of engagement with the effects of intergroup relations at the microsocial level. The topic's contemporaneous nature need not entail neglecting more nuanced perspectives and approaches. Rather, this complements the subject's complexity because it potentially offers new insights which the structural-level analyses cannot adequately capture.

The literature has highlighted a handful of contexts within Western Europe of particular interest to this thesis as far as Right-wing populism is concerned. UK and Scandinavia emerged as empirical contexts of interest as far as political system, socio-cultural history and immigration patterns correlate with levels of success and strength of Right-wing populism. Detailed treatment of these factors will feature in chapter three where I elaborate on the cities, nations and localities where the fieldwork was conducted. In this section, the aim is to briefly touch upon some of these factors as they relate to my research question.

In the UK context, Goodwin (2011) provided substantial insight into BNP voter attitudes and the party's 'mobilization of intolerance' through fuelling anti-immigrant feelings. His analysis touched upon anti-Muslim sentiment when he highlighted how the perception of Islam and Muslims led the party to adopt a 'cultural distinctiveness' (Goodwin 2011: 112). This was a watering down of its 'biological ethnocentrism'. It however identified Islam as being 'incompatible with British values' (ibid). There was a tendency to allow generalities cloud potentially nuanced stances from party members and voters¹¹ - something which analysis at the social micro level could have unearthed.

¹¹ For example: regards British citizenship, he gave an impression of a homogenous stance from the party leadership, members and voters (see Goodwin 2011: 7, 112-113, 128 and 142), and, with regard to Islam and Muslims (see pp150-152). Eatwell (2003) showed BNP's position on such issues is nuanced, citing the leadership's attempts to collaborate with British Sikhs and other ethnic minorities in 'the struggle against Islam' and the 'party's watering down the diet of compulsory repatriation of all non-whites' (Eatwell 2003: 63).

The literature has quite clearly shown that the UK context has - up to now - remained relatively immune to the Right-wing populist drive across Western Europe (Eatwell 2003, 2017; Griffin 2008, 2017; Goodwin 2011; Ignazi 2003; Taggart 2017). Right-wing populist parties have struggled to gain legitimate political recognition from the mainstream parties (Ignazi 2003, cf. Eatwell 2000); ‘they have remained pariahs, never perceived as ‘normal’ political actors’ (Ignazi 2003: 186). Although the Brexit vote¹² in June 2016 could be seen as indicating the departure of this ‘British exceptionalism’ (Eatwell 2000; Ignazi 2003; Griffin 2008), scholarship analysing the ‘Leave’ vote has however not established this (Becker *et al.* 2017; Goodwin & Heath 2016; Kaufmann 2016). And hence, this remains relevant especially when viewed in a comparative context-bound framework with respect to Western Europe.

Scotland is an interesting area of study within the UK. Like Wales and Northern Ireland, it has been eclipsed by England which has taken the lion’s share of the literature on Right-wing populism. I came across no scholarship directly addressing the Scottish scene in this regard despite reports of Right-wing populist activity (Bonino 2017).¹³ The unique social, historical and political climate he described for Scotland is relevant for this study. Anglophobia, Catholic-Protestant sectarianism, a progressive politics and civic nationalism along with other factors seem to have buffered anti-Muslim/Islam rhetoric. Regards experiences of Right-wing populism featuring in his chapters on integration and discrimination, focus on the broader socio-political ‘interplay shaping the understandings of Muslimness’ (Bonino 2017: 45) corresponded with a lack of analysing the perceptions of and responses to this phenomenon.

The Scandinavian context is markedly different from the UK/British one. Although the literature has indicated that the Right-wing populist parties in Denmark, and more

¹² Inglehart & Norris (2016: 3) highlighted UKIP as ‘catalyzing the British exit from the EU’. UKIP’s influence on the Brexit vote has however been strongly contested by specialists in Right-wing populism such as Matthew Goodwin in (Goodwin & Heath 2016).

¹³ See Bonino (2017: 6, 146-8, 158-9, 161, 195).

recently in Sweden are comparatively ‘milder’ than their European counterparts, (Widfeldt 2003: 151; see also Hainsworth 2000: 6-7), they are nonetheless extreme when situated ‘within their own party systems and political cultures’ (Hainsworth 2000: 7; see also Andersen & Bjørklund 2000). Historically speaking, the Right-wing populist rhetoric has been much sharper in the Danish context (Widfeldt 2003: 150; Art 2011: 149; Ignazi 2003: 140-147), and this has certainly been fuelled by major events such as the Danish cartoon crisis and the Copenhagen shootings.

In Sweden, the unprecedented rise of the Swedish Democrats (SD) does usher in a new dawn for Right-wing populism in the country. The literature on SD has expanded over the years (Hellström *et al.* 2012; Rydgren & Ruth 2013; Towns *et al.* 2014), keeping up with the party’s rise from ‘nothing’ (Davies 2008: 21) to claiming almost 13% of the votes in the recent (2018) national elections. This made it the third largest political actor within the space of a decade. Sweden, like Denmark differs from the UK context insofar as the conflation between ethnicity, race and national identity produces ‘foundations and boundaries of whiteness’ (Hübinette & Lundström 2011 cf. Rydgren 2007). SD is ‘mourning’ the loss of a ‘homogenous and white society’ (Hübinette & Lundström 2011: 46). Mulinari and Neergaard (2014) outlined: although SD is not an ‘aberration’ polluting a non-racist, liberal and democratic Sweden, it is an extreme expression of what was a pre-existing racialised society in which cultural racism very much continues to exist. The fieldwork phase in Sweden also coincided with a series of arson attacks against mosques across the country as a new wave of violent neo-Nazi militancy appeared on the horizon again.

Unlike the UK/British scene where there has been some resistance to Right-wing populism, the Scandinavian context seems to be going through what may well be a watershed moment for the influence of Right-wing populism on the socio-political arena. Noteworthy examples are the Danish People Party’s victory - by a wide margin of 27% - in the European parliament elections in 2014, followed by their 21% haul at the Danish national elections. This made them the second largest party. Their promises on

tougher immigration laws, tighter border controls and EU renegotiations seemed to have paid dividends as the party doubled their votes in the previous election in 2011 enabling the centre-right coalition to oust the incumbent centre-left government. ‘What’s key for us is that we get the most influence’ – words from the DF leader Kristian Thulesen Dahl¹⁴ spoke volumes about the decisive nature of this moment in Danish, Scandinavian and Nordic politics.

I have now fully defined the analytical unit ‘Right-wing populism’ and engaged with the scholarship which provided a broad overview of the Western European political landscape and highlighted for us certain contexts of interest. We have seen how a structural focus on definitions, typologies, ideology, the parties and leaders of the Right-wing populist movements took centre stage at the expense of the voices at the micro-social level. Muslims in Europe are part and parcel of this. It is now time to define what this study means by ‘Muslim responses’ to Right-wing populism.

Muslims: Responses & Identities

In this section, besides outlining what I mean by ‘Muslim responses’, I will succinctly engage with the literature on Muslims in Europe. This is a recognition of its importance in understanding how Muslim identity emerges through ‘ongoing power struggles’, ‘collective negotiations’ and ‘contestations’ (Elshayyal 2018; Meer 2016; Modood 1997; Modood *et al.* 2006). These intricately entwined processes are redefining and reshaping the popular discourses, public spheres and civil societies of ‘the New Europe’ (Modood 1997; see also Modood *et al.* 2006). In what follows, I focus on the aspects of the literature which help me frame my study and speak most directly to the analytical themes my participants engaged with in their narratives.

¹⁴<http://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2015/jun/18/denmark-general-election-2015-results-live>

‘Islam and Muslims in Europe’ have become a social, political and cultural fact that European society is still trying to understand and come to terms with (Modood 1997: 5). The diaspora experience has de-territorialized Islam, producing a transnational entity at the social macro level, but also several creatively crafted localities implicitly operating at the micro level (Allievi & Nielsen 2003; Elshayyal 2018; Jeldtoft 2012; and Mandaville 2006, 2009; Modood *et al.* 2006).

In response to ‘Islam and Muslims in Europe’, the recent years have seen an escalation of Right-wing anti-Islam sentiment. These two entities – Islam/Muslims and Right-wing populism - have tended to be conceptualised through certain power structural perspectives which designate labels such as minority/majority (Jeldtoft 2012: 67 cf. Allievi & Nielsen 2003; Meer & Modood 2009) or indeed ‘role cast’ them as exotic (hypervisible) objects of study (Jeldtoft 2012: 33 cf. Hemmingsen 2011; Kuhle 2011; Silvestri 2012). These perspectives have a tendency to overlook ‘minority agency’ (Jeldtoft 2012; 76-77) and the intricate socialisation processes occurring at the micro social level. As a result of this, both Islam/Muslims and Right-wing populism have been categorically viewed as minorities in ways which underestimate their potential in not only influencing one another, but also the wider public spaces and civil societies of Europe. This is where my thesis makes a contribution through a change of perspective and focus.

In very broad terms, European nation states have responded to the Islamic presence with a range of responses on the macrosocial level such as assimilationism, multinationalism, ‘aspirational pluralism’ and multiculturalism (Meer 2014a, 2015, 2016; Meer & Modood 2009; Modood 1997). In reaction to these structural responses, ‘European-Islam(s)’ and Muslims have responded back with a number of reconfigurations, manifestations of identity politics and sensibilities (Allievi & Nielsen 2003; Eade 1996; Elshayyal 2018; Hemmingsen 2011; Jeldtoft 2012; Mandaville 2009; Mandel 1996; Meer & Modood 2009; Peace 2015; Schmidt 2011).

Eade (1996) showed how contested public space with ‘native British’ residents initiated a number of identity negotiations amongst Muslims. On one end was the desire for compromise; and on the other was assertion of the Islamic culture. Mandel (1996) showed how newly found religious symbols ‘thrust upon’ Kreuzberg’s Turkish youth as they confronted German neo-fascists provided them with new meanings for self-understanding and the realisation of fundamental centre-periphery shifts.

In identifying these reconfigurations and sensibilities, scholarship has tended to adopt certain analytical frames focusing on: particular grouping(s) of ‘Muslims’ (Jeldtoft 2012), organisations/institutions (Mandaville 2009), radicalisation (Hemmingsen 2011) and political participation (Peace 2015). A significant section of the literature outlines the various factors shaping Muslim civic engagement (Meer & Modood 2009; Meer *et al.* 2015) and Muslim identity making (Elshayyal 2018; Schmidt 2011). The analytical frameworks of these cited works are primarily focused on the macrosocial level of analysis (Allievi & Nielsen 2003, Mandaville 2009; Meer *et al.* 2015). I therefore questioned the extent to which the outlined reconfigurations are representative of the broader individualist identity negotiations and also of the diverse constituencies within the European Muslim communities.

Elshayyal (2018: 17) set the scene historically and theoretically to outline how the birth of ‘modern British Muslim identity politics’ was premised on the preservation of identity between the 1960s and 1980s. By the early 2000s, these identity processes became ‘formalised’ through Muslim ‘responses to hate speech, discrimination and the equality gap (ibid). The ground-breaking events of 9/11, 7/7 and the Madrid bombings brought to the fore ‘securitisation’ as cries of the ‘crisis and failure’ of multiculturalism became louder (Elshayyal 2018; Modood *et al.* 2006).

‘European citizenship’ (Modood *et al.* 2006) has become increasingly ‘disoriented’ by the aforementioned atrocities and has proceeded to link ‘a religion (Islam) with violence and anti-western values’ (Modood *et al.* 2006:1 see also Elshayyal 2018; Meer 2016). And it is along these lines of ‘incrimination’ that Islamophobia and anti-Islamic rhetoric

feature in the literature and directly speak to the research question being addressed in this thesis. Meer (2016: 1) argued for situating the contemporary study of Islamophobia ‘squarely within the fields of race and racism’ (see also Hafez 2014; Meer 2013, 2014b; Meer & Modood 2010, 2012). This literature has fundamentally argued for the recognition of Islamophobia as a distinct ‘discriminatory category’ on par with racism and anti-Semitism (Hafez 2014; Meer 2013; Meer & Modood 2012). It has outlined crucial definitional matters (Meer 2013) alongside clarifying the obstacles in the way of its ‘recognition’ (Meer & Modood 2010; Meer & Modood 2012). The bulk of the research here has therefore focused on definitional matters.

A few works presented highly illuminating insights regarding how Muslims are being affected – potentially and materially (Bleich 2011; Garner & Selod 2015; Kaplan 2006; Meer 2014b; Zine 2006). Some, like Garner & Selod (2015: 10) were characterised by a ‘relatively weak presence of fieldwork-based studies’ (see also Bleich 2011). Other studies focused on specific aspects such as the gendered element of Islamophobia focusing on veiling in a specific context (Zine 2006). As for the other works, the empirical and analytical focus either fell on statistics (Kaplan 2006; Sheridan 2006) or institutions and organisations (Meer 2014b). Meer (2014b: 514) highlighted how Islamophobia is becoming a ‘conduit through which Muslim consciousness is achieved’, giving examples of the Muslim Council of Britain, Conseil Français du Culte Musulman and Zentralat der Muslime in Deutschland. With my interest in studying individual-level responses and identity negotiations at the social micro level, I saw the gap and hence, the potential of contributing to this field of study on Muslims in Europe.

* * *

I am studying Muslim responses to Right-wing populism which contests, challenges and at times, outwardly rejects their claims of belonging to Europe and finds problematic their integration prospects. And while this is my study’s primary analytical framework, I outline that I also engage with Muslim responses to everyday racism, discrimination and Islamophobia because my participants’ narratives engage with these themes. I am

primarily studying a definite analytical unit whose influence on Muslim identity can be empirically demarcated.

But what do I mean by ‘Muslim’ responses? Which type of Islam/Muslim? The moment I talk about Islam or Muslims in Europe, I should avoid imagining a homogenous analytical category - an ‘artificially unified religious community’ (Mandaville 2009: 492). Muslim identity is a hugely complex labyrinth of diverse expressions of religiosity crisscrossed by multiple factors like culture, ethnicity and nationality. It is therefore highly conceivable that these diverse identities correspond with diverse responses from both the wider European society and Right-wing populism.

If anything, this cautions us when making claims about Muslims and/or Islam in Europe. One of the ways in which this study has tried to address this challenge has been to contextualise the participants’ responses to Right-wing populism with primary reference to the city context whilst also drawing from the wider national and regional contexts. More about this will feature in the next chapter. For now, the question is: which type of Muslim/Islam do I mean? This is particularly challenging, especially given the tendency to reify Islam in the academic study of Muslims, not even mentioning the wider public and media discourses. Islam becomes reified when we use what Muslims say and do as a direct inference to their religion. In Jeldtoft’s words (2012:252): we make ‘Muslims all about Islam.’ On the other hand, Muslims themselves – individually and collectively - have their own conceptions of what is and what is not from their religion. In addressing the Islamic identity of the research participants, this study recognises that there are many ways of being Muslim. The objective has been to try and understand these diverse ways. This meant being critical with the use of the categories: orthodox/unorthodox, liberal/conservative, organized/unorganized, visible/invisible.

The organized/unorganized Islam dialectic especially relates to the spatial dimension of the analytical category ‘Muslim’ because scholarship has tended to link organized Islam with visibility on public space contestation, and the opposite for unorganized Islam

(Bektovic 2012; Jeldtoft 2012; Nielsen 2004; Otterbeck 2012). How should researchers deal with these categories? Bektovic (2012) pointed out that the key isn't to identify which is most representative of Islam; rather, it is to adopt a critical stance towards those who claim to represent such an Islam. Since there are many ways of being Muslim, my approach has been to study these different ways in relation to Right-wing populism. This entailed diversifying the field of 'Muslims', giving no selection preference to sectarian affiliations and levels of organization or practice. I therefore adopted a holistic outlook on European-Muslims: organized/unorganized, visible/invisible, practising/non-practising, convert Muslims across a range of contexts (mosques, homes, non-religious institutions, individuals and groups).

I outline here that this thesis doesn't claim to be a representative study of Muslims in Europe in relation to Right-wing populism. The project is an explorative study which aims to highlight particular areas of analytical interest which could be the subject of follow-up studies. The aim has been to explore the terrain alongside developing theory. The priority has been to access enough sites and engage with enough participants to enable comparisons and a fine-grained qualitative analysis. The study's operational frameworks will follow in Chapter two. It is important at this initial stage to get a handle on the core analytical concept which threads its way through the thesis - identity.

Identity

Identity is a prominent theme in the literature on Muslims in Europe and the West. Research in the 1990s outlined that South Asian young people in Britain chiefly self-identified through the religion of Islam (Modood 1997). Then, there was the emergence of 'public Muslim identities' as a product of new-found connections (Abbas 2005; Meer 2010) and the reconciliatory engagements with culture and society (Hopkins 2007). The gradual shift from ethnic to religious identity became a highlighted feature (Archer 2001; Marranci 2008), with Bonino (2017) pointing out the mutations of the 'British discourse' on minorities: from colour in the 1950s and 1960s to race in the 1960s-1980s, ethnicity in the 1990s and religion in the present period (Bonino 2017: 41 cf. Peach

2005). Recently, an interest has emerged studying how Muslim political engagement (Peace 2015) has resulted in an emerging identity politics - defined as 'any political participation that is based around the self-interest, or the specific perspective, of a particular group within society' (Elshayyal 2018: 40).

So, what is this thing called 'identity'? It remains important to be able to operationalise it in a study which attempts to look at social interactions and its influence within individual and group levels. I however face some major hurdles in this undertaking, and for this reason, I need to allocate the space to give it the treatment it requires. Identity is said to be as 'indispensable as it is unclear' and that no one discipline in the social sciences is likely to be able to resolve/define (Moscovici & Paicheler 1978 cited in Cairns 2010: 283). What should social science do about identity and identification - given that it matters so much and yet it is impossible to map and predict? To begin with, identity does matter because it is a 'baseline' sorting, fundamental to the organisation of the human world. It is the 'cognitive mechanism that humans use to sort out themselves and their fellows, individually and collectively' (Jenkins 2008: 13).

Theories have emerged to provide tools addressing how people see themselves and understand who they are. These cover a range of levels and contexts where identities are constructed, negotiated, configured, performed and appropriated (Goffman 1952, 1963; Hall 2000; Jenkins 2008, Lemert & Branaman, 1997; Punch *et. al.* 2013). Personal identity (Punch *et al.* 2013; Baumeister 1986; Clark *et al.* 2008), social identity (Brubaker & Cooper 2000; Jenkins 2008; Lawler 2015), collective identity (Barth 1969; Jasper 2001; Tajfel 1981), multiple identities (Punch *et. al.* 2013; Foucault 1977) and hybrid identity (Punch *et. al.* 2013) are main theoretical frameworks exploring the relations across the different levels and contexts involved in the identity processes.

Two influential perspectives on identity are Barth's social anthropology (1969) and Tajfel's social psychology (1981). The two schools of thought agree on certain core aspects in their understandings of identification – notably, their emphases on 'process'. Identity is best seen as an 'ongoing process' as opposed to treating it as a 'sociological

filing system' (Lawler 2015: 9, cf. Barth 1969, Tajfel 1981). Where they significantly differ is on the connection between identity/identification, motivation and behaviour. Barth (1969) posited that 'identification and collectivity are generated as emergent by-products of the transactions and negotiations of individuals pursuing their interests' (Jenkins 2008: 7). Tajfel (1981) on the other found even in the arbitrary assignment to groups under laboratory conditions, 'membership' in of itself was insufficient to create an identification which 'channelled' behaviour towards in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination (Jenkins 2008: 7).

Some scholars have distinguished between different aspects of identity - notably Goffman (1968) who differentiated between: personal identity, social identity and ego/felt identity (Lawler 2015: 8). Some, like Tajfel (1978 cf. Cairns 2010: 283) sidestepped definitional problems by not focusing on the (what is), but by looking at what was relevant to their study's theoretical and empirical context. Bonino (2017) and Jeldtoft (2012: 91) focused on the perspectives, approaches and theories around identity which spoke most directly to their respective research interests on the development of a Muslim community in post-9/11 Scotland and Muslim minority identifications in everyday life. As much as these works suggested to me to follow a similar trajectory: i.e. highlighting the central research issues/questions and selecting the theories and approaches which best correspond with them, questions around (the how and what) of identity needed answering. And – most importantly – I needed a clear operational framework.

As Jenkins noted, 'who we are and who we are seen to be, can matter enormously' (Jenkins 2008: 3). Writing Jenkins' words, I cannot help but momentarily retreat in reflection, suspended between the language of social science and lived human experience for indeed it is a question whose answer can consume entire lifetimes. To add to this is the prospect that what is at stake goes beyond the 'encounters and thresholds of individual lives' (Jenkins 2008: 3). In identification, history, collectivity, ritual and socio-political mobilisation are all potentially at stake (Jenkins 2008: 3).

Identities are products of social processes and subject to exercises of power which - among other things - can create systems of inequality (Lawler 2015: 13; cf. Scott 1992), discrimination (Tajfel 1981; Hung Ng 1982; 2010) and intergroup conflict (Cairns 2010). In which case, the role of the analyst is to 'look at the political, historical and social conditions by which categories are formed rather than solely consider the effects of such categories' (Lawler 2015: 14).

There commonly appears to be a close association between the word identity and certain 'public manifestations' (roles) of the categories of gender, race, nation, class, sexuality etc. (Lawler 2015: 7). Identity 'as it is lived' is however a labyrinth of multi-dimensional classifications and relational processes whose complexity cannot be accounted for by these categories alone (Jenkins 2008: 13; Lawler 2015: 7). Why? Firstly, identities 'cross categories (no one belongs to only one category), and different forms of categorical identity must be managed' (Lawler 2015: 7). Secondly, there isn't always a congruence between how people make sense of themselves and their actual lived experiences of being who they are - the map is not always accurately depicting the terrain (Gagnier 2000: 238). Discussions of identity therefore risk veering off the charted terrain since 'any discussion of identity always means we are in the presence of not one but many persons - or perceptions of a person' (Lawler 2015: 8).

Jenkins (2008) flagged the problematic phenomenon of 'lumping things onto identity' in a 'good deal of recent writing about identity' – something which does a violence to identity's 'unruly and multifarious forms' (Jenkins 2008: 14; see also Brubaker & Cooper 2000: 34; Brubaker 2004: 28-63). Simply speaking, the term is overused to the point of becoming meaningless because it 'cannot adequately deal with the human world's rich variety of identification processes' (Jenkins 2008: 14). Malesevic (2002) like Brubaker & Cooper (2000) pronounced a 'death sentence' on identity, going further to outline how it has become reified as a phenomenon whose existence and importance can be taken for granted. As an analytical concept therefore, identity is 'confused and

confusing, means too many things and encompasses too many different processes to be of any social analytical value' (Jenkins 2008: 14).

Is avoidance of the term 'identity' a potential solution then? Well, with the world and everyone in it seemingly using the word – from public discourses to politics, and from marketing to self-help - the genie is indeed out of the bottle! 'If we want to talk to the world outside academia, denying ourselves one of its words of power is not a good communications policy' (Jenkins 2008: 14). One approach has been to replace the word 'identity' with 'identification' insofar as the latter explicitly signifies a process (Brubaker 2004; Jenkins 2008). In substance, this isn't much of an improvement: 'stylistically' and linguistically as both terms are nouns and therefore prone to reification. A compromise between complete rejection of 'identity' and 'an uncritical acceptance of its ontological status and axiomatic significance [...] calls for more care about what we say, and more modesty in how we say it' (Jenkins 2008: 14).

The 'slipperiness' of the term along with the difficulties of defining and theorising about it led Lawler (2015: 7) to outline that what identity means depends on how it is 'thought about', identity means specific things in the context of particular modes of analysis. This insight brought me a step closer to reaching my operational objective. A concept which I found to complement this study in terms of its central research question, the empirical data and particular mode of analysis (context) was the concept of narrative identity. This concept refers to how identity is 'made' through narratives (Lawler 2015: 23-24; Stanley 1992: 61; Ricoeur 1980: 174). Permit me to return to my own personal narrative about coping with racism (threat) through research in the preface of this thesis. Just as Lawler (2015: 23) shared a part of a story and asked this following question, I – in the spirit of reflexive writing – pose the same question to myself and my reader: what is the connection between this brief story of (part of) Yahya's life and Yahya's identity? One answer could be that the account I shared reflects an aspect of negotiating and developing an identity which occurs independently of the narrative. An alternative viewpoint would be to see me:

as engaged in processes of producing an identity through assembling various memories, experiences, episodes, etc., within narrative. It is this latter way of understanding identity that I will explore ... That is, I am concerned here to consider identities as ‘made up’ through making a story out of a life. In describing identities as ‘made up’ in this way, let me stress that I am not suggesting they are fabricated in the normal sense of the word (as in ‘falsified’). I want, rather, to suggest that identities can be seen as being creatively produced through various raw materials available - notably, memories, understandings, experiences and interpretations [...] what narratives like [mine], here, convey is the story of the production of an identity. As Carolyn Steedman has observed, it is ‘always the same story in the end, that is the individual’s account of how [he] got to be the way [he] is’ (Steedman, 1986: 132, cited in Lawler 2015: 24).

As humans, we live storied lives whose episodes – although playing forwards in real time – are however understood backwards (Kierkegaard cited in Geertz 1995: 19; cf. Ricoeur 1980, 2010). And therefore, in order to make sense of the episodes, we engage in the constant process of narrative weaving. We interpret and reinterpret the past to tell ourselves and others about who we are/were, how and why we have become who we are today; we ‘produce’ our identities through the narratives. The stories we tell – autobiographies¹⁵ - aren’t ‘simple acts of description but are complicated procedures for making sense of the world, of the details of our days and, ultimately, of our lives. They are interpretive devices through which people make sense of, understand and live their lives’ (Lawler 2015: 26). Narrative becomes a ‘go to’ strategy for placing ourselves in a historically, politically and socio-culturally constituted world. This is because it makes the world intelligible, and by that, ‘it also makes ourselves intelligible’ (Moore 1994: 119 cited in Lawler 2015: 26).

¹⁵ Autobiography: the telling of a life (Stanley 1992). A key point worth highlighting is that while narrative is embedded within a hermeneutic tradition, it is more concerned with interpretation and meaning than it is with ‘positivist facts’ (Lawler 2015: 40, cf. Kearney 2002).

Whilst a detailed treatment of narrative and its analysis features in the methodology section of this thesis, the main issues I wanted to outline here are what this thesis means by identity, i.e. how it understands and therefore how it approaches it. I have awareness of the problematic nature of the term, but like Jenkins (2008), I use it unapologetically because to not do so is akin to pretending that the genie remains inside the bottle. Rather, where the literature gives me a leading/cutting edge is that I am able to operationalise what I mean by identity in terms of context – i.e. it's in the narratives – and I am able to align that with method (narrative analysis). Just as the role of the analyst is to look at how the political, historical and social play out in the episodes, my focus will be on how the participants shape, interpret and tell their narratives – and hence – produce identities as a result. As I outlined, whilst some scholars focused on certain aspects of identity, I saw that it would be more conducive to synergise context and empirical data with theory and method. By this, narrative becomes context whose analysis is intrinsically tied to the method of research. This further enables consideration of the historical, cultural, social and political elements as potential factors and 'raw materials' for the production of identities.

With the study's analytical categories (Right wing populism, Islam/Muslim responses and Identity) clearly grounded and defined, it is time to outline the theoretical frameworks which I have relied on to help me make sense of what I had gathered and therefore be able to make my own personal understanding of it contribute to that of the public.¹⁶

¹⁶ This, perhaps, simple language was inspired by the definition of knowledge as: 'a creation of minds at work and, I suggest, is best described as 'understanding' ...To put it another way, understanding comes from making sense of information which involves connecting the information with existing understandings, either by assimilating the new understandings to the old ones (in which case the old understandings are enriched) or by accommodating the old understandings to the new information (in which case the old understandings are changed)' (Knight 2002: 20).

Theoretical Frameworks

From the literature reviewed thus far, a number of insights guide us with regard to the theoretical framework(s) needed to help explain key factors relevant to Muslim responses to Right-wing populism. Firstly, the influence dynamics of interest to us require a schema to help map how the intergroup relations potentially function. And if I want to understand how individual Muslims respond to populist rhetoric, I need theoretical frameworks which enable me to consider their agencies. I will discuss the theories and perspectives which the study has relied on to answer its central research questions.

Intergroup Relations & Social Identity Theory

As I close in on the study's theoretical frameworks, the themes I have so far outlined provide me with useful bearings to focus my final approach. In studying the intricate processes involved when terms like citizenship, integration and Islamophobia are evoked, I recognise that I am ultimately dealing with cognitive definitions and redefinitions of social groups and social identity (Turner 2010; Tajfel 2010). The theories that have emanated from this field of study and from cross-cultural research (Wetherell 2010) are therefore significant to this thesis. I will highlight some of this research and briefly discuss how it illuminates my study.

Social grouping occurs when individuals perceive themselves as belonging to the same social category (Andersson 2006; Risse 2001); they share 'a collective perception of their own social unity' (Turner 2010: 15). This 'minimal categorization' is powerful enough to induce effects such as intergroup discrimination and competition (Jahoda 1978; Whiting 1968; Vaughan 1978 cited in Wetherell 2010). Substantial empirical studies have also been conducted within the field of social psychology to show the complex nature of social group relations and interactions (Gaffié 1992; Kelman 1958; Sampson 1991; Bagozzi & Lee 2002; Fein *et al.* 2007). Although his thesis isn't located

within social psychology, some of the insights do however benefit us in terms of theory development and data analysis.

The dynamics of intergroup behaviour (Brown and Ross 2010) comprise a range of interesting processes and interactions which may well apply in studying Muslim responses to Right-wing populism. And from this, is the perspective that power relations and contestations between groups create relationships of domination and subordination (Deschamps 2010: 88-91). These produce perceptions of superiority and inferiority (Brown and Ross 2010) where certain battles for acceptance are fought. And within these battles, certain tactics are deployed by group members, what Brown & Ross (2010: 170) termed 'social creativity as a response to threat'. Here, group members respond to perceptions of threat or superiority by altering the 'attachment' they place on certain values and qualities.¹⁷ It would be interesting to see if, how and when my study's participants engage in these 'social creative responses' - both as individuals and group members self-identifying with the Muslim community (potentially). In operational terms, I would need to approach my data analysis using perspectives which facilitate recognising these subversions of power and creative tactics.

One of the conceptual perspectives which I have seen do this to a good extent is de Certeau's (1984) 'tactics-strategies' model. Here, tactics refer to socially subordinate agents navigating around the strategies (overarching structures placed by the social elite). The creative reconfigurations of these structures on the tactical level produce distinct identities and localities in terms of space and place. Power is context-bound, situational and relational just as discourse and social identities are (de Certeau 1984; Brubaker & Cooper 2000; Goffman 1952, 1963; Jeldtoft 2012). I therefore needed theoretical frameworks which enable me to contextualise the research participants

¹⁷ A given example is - 'to upgrade the importance of 'other aspects' of intelligence.' (Brown & Ross 2010: 170).

within their relative localities to see how they shape their discourses and use their own power.

Although de Certeau's model can be critiqued for its polarised conception of agency and power, its framework can be modified with the awareness of 'crossovers': i.e. agents at the tactical level can also engage the strategic level through the subversion of power roles as I discovered the EDL were doing (Barry 2013). A number of studies have effectively used the model by focusing on the interplay between structure and agency (Jeldtoft 2012; Riis & Woodhead 2010; Heelas & Woodhead 2000). By using such a framework in space/place-making, I can situate participants in their respective localities and consider the potential that they already have the power to shape their own discourses. My role would be to see: how, and in relation to who, when, where and why they do this.

'Power' appears to be a key factor emerging from the contexts where intergroup relations have been studied and analysed. In this regard, discrimination occurs as a salient feature. In line with my research question, this is a significant factor worth considering because of the potentially beneficial theoretical insights. The literature on racial discrimination (Bonnet 2016; Dwyer & Bressey 2008; Nayak 2008; Hung Ng 2010) presents theories which hinge upon two main questions: what causes intergroup discrimination and what makes it possible. Power plays a key role facilitating both elements (Sik Hung Ng, 2010).

This usable power is derived from the power relation between the groups such that one or both groups are placed in a position to discriminate, if they so wish, without fear of reprisal; while the group or groups which are being discriminated against would not engage in disruptive rebellion (Sik Hung Ng: 2010: 180).

Muslim responses to Right-wing populism are expected to include perceptions of discrimination - whether that be on racial/ethnic grounds, or on the basis of religion and culture. Theoretically, the literature on discrimination and race relations (Myrdal 1944;

Cox 1948; Blalock 1967 and Wilson 1973, cited in Hung Nk 2010) has highlighted that power relations and exercises of power remain crucial factors to consider in understanding the causes as well as the responses to perceived discrimination. It would therefore be crucial to be able to give analytical attention to these power relations, but also to the tactics-strategies which the study's participants engage in.

Cases of Intergroup Conflict

While the literature on Muslim responses to Right-wing populism is non-existent, there are certain parallels with other groups regards how they experience being targeted and respond to populist rhetoric. Throughout our history, there has been a relentless preoccupation with group demarcation through othering. My discovery of this came about having freshly graduated from the Muslim World League Institute in July 2011, only to find myself learning Biblical Hebrew a few months later at the University of Copenhagen.¹⁸ Old and New Testament scholars in both camps - Theology and Study of Religion - acknowledge the 'us' and 'them' categories as the most basic binary for identity featuring in the various redactions of these religious texts (Olyan 2000: 170; see also Barth 1998; Johnson 2002; Lieu 2002; Thiessen 2011). These categories reflected certain social processes such as the 'demarcation' (Snoek 1995) of religious, social and cultural boundaries at the time these texts were produced¹⁹ – a time human societies were 'group-oriented' (Bechtel 1994; Johnson 2002; Thiessen 2011; van Wolde *et al.* 2003).

To this day, despite modernity creating individualist-oriented societies (Eisenstadt 2000: 3-4; see also Wilson 2005; Wood 2005) we remain strongly influenced by social grouping and collective belonging (Anderson 2006; Jenkins 2008; Turner 2010). Our

¹⁸ I am indebted to the Danish government for sponsoring my scholarship and to the Faculty of Theology at the University of Copenhagen for kindly hosting me. My programme of study was a Master of Arts degree in the Religious Roots of Europe (RRE).

¹⁹ I refer to these biblical texts because they are among the earliest artefacts (sources) of human history that we have: Murphy's (2002) approximate dating of the period covered in Genesis -for example - is ca. 1800-1600 BCE. This early dating is however contested.

earliest documentations of intergroup relations show groups and societies respond to stigma through polemics/apologetics (Brown 1999: 537; Thiessen & Merz 1998: 74-75) and indeed by use of force (Bechtel 1994: 21-23; van Wolde 2003: 528). In contemporary terms, we are seeing elements of this history repeating itself. Although I am not in a position to offer a socio-historical analysis of intergroup relations and conflict, I will very briefly mention some cases in order to present an overview of the themes and range of scholarship. Having done that, I then focus on a particular case which I recognise to be of more direct relevance to my research question.

A number of parallels have been outlined in the reviewed literature with Jews (anti-Semitism) in terms of rhetoric, stigmatisation, discrimination and modes of exclusion (Ford & Goodwin 2010; Hafez 2014; Jackson & Feldman 2011; Savage 2004). Literature on responses to anti-Semitism covered a range of areas such as: Anglo-Jewish responses to Nazi Germany (Gewirtz 1991); Black and Jewish responses to Japanese Internment (Greenberg (1995); and ‘living with anti-Semitism’ (Reinharz 1987). Beside the Jewish cases, Utsey *et. al.* (2000) showed how ‘avoidance’ became a coping mechanism within members of the ‘African American’ community. And regarding second- class citizenship, cases of Roma in Eastern Europe (Vasecka & Vasecka 2003); Dalits in India (Kumar 2009); and Rohingya in Myanmar (Farzana 2017) provide interesting insights into how minorities respond to being targets of discrimination.

As for the UK, a number of interesting responses have been attributed to other minority groups, notably, the Irish community in parts of England (Bradley 2006; Ullah 1985) and Scotland (Bonino 2017; Flint 2008; Gallagher 1985; Rosie 2001, 2014). Ullah (1985) highlighted the phenomenon of Irish youth downplaying their (white) Irishness, while Bradley (2006) reflected on Irish-descendent individuals looking to Celtic Football Club as a means of ‘expressing and sustaining their Irishness in perceived contested circumstances’ (Bradley 2006: 1191). Walter *et. al.* (2002) postulated that when colonised populations emigrate to the former ruler nation, the first generation tends to suppress certain ‘dissident’ identities as a way to accelerate integration and

avoid contestation. By the third and fourth generations, group members affiliated to such migrant ethnicities exhibit a contrasting response: they find ‘a new sense of respect for their origins and roots, one that their parents or grandparents had ‘lost’ or changed in response to their own experience of this socialisation process’ (Bradley 2006: 1193). But what about cases where individuals may not necessarily self-identify as immigrant; either that it wasn’t important for them or that they were indigenous and only took on a new identity through conversion (religion)?

It is at this juncture that I turn my focus to the Northern Irish context. There are individuals, or perhaps even, communities that very much see themselves as Muslim and European – not immigrants, guests or foreigners. In this case, the factor which may perhaps demarcate them as a group is that of religious affiliation. It is here I found parallels with Northern Ireland. I outline these features succinctly here before returning to theory.

Religious affiliation, manifest in ‘a sectarian consciousness’ is one of the major constitutive elements of social categorisation in Northern Ireland (Cairns 2010; McVeigh & Rolston 2007; Mitchell 2017). This is a first parallel insofar as my research question looks at how affiliation to a religious community could impact identity when claims of collective belonging are contested, even politicised. Burton (1978 cited in Cairns 2010: 279) outlined that the preoccupation with ‘telling’ what is he ‘constitutes the syndrome of signs by which Catholics and Protestants arrive at religious ascription in their everyday interactions’. In Northern Ireland, religious identity and affiliation is assigned at birth and continues till death; it is seen as far more important than the usual social categorisations of gender, sex and class (Birrell 1972; Rose 1971; Harris 1972; Easthope 1976 cited in Cairns 2010: 281). Children are socialised with the visual and perceptual cues to recognise how to ‘tell’ (Cairns 2010: 280-1). Another parallel is found here insofar as being Muslim is associated with certain cues which others in society learn to ‘tell’. Finally, the sanctity of this sectarian categorisation featured when certain borders are crossed, the so-called ‘mixed marriages’ (Cairns 2010: 282)

represent the most profound of such border penetrations. It is as though religious affiliation is a form of race and ethnicity – to this day in Northern Ireland (Mitchell 2017).

Tajfel (1974, 1978, 1981) and Cairns' (2010) contributions to the theory of intergroup relations in studying Northern Ireland is highly useful for this study. According to their framework, as humans, we tend to want to simplify our existence by structuring our social environments into 'groupings of persons, or social categories' based on our worldviews, experiences, and perhaps, most importantly, society (Cairns 2010: 278). These groupings are potent because they influence our social identity and significantly mould our 'self-concept' (Cairns 2010: 278; Tajfel 1981: 255). Where Tajfel and Cairns' intergroup theory however offers an alternative insight is their supposal that these categorisations are not static. They dynamically change as members continually seek to enhance their group's standing and move from less-desirable to more superior groups and memberships. In failing to do so, they may attempt to change how values of desirability are defined and therefore important 'so as to achieve a more positive social identity' (Cairns 2010: 278).

Other theories have been posited to explain dimensions of the Northern Irish conflict: readiness theory²⁰ (Pruitt 2007), consociational theory²¹ (Lijphart 1975; McGarry and O'Leary 2004) and social/cultural loyalty theory²² (Hirschman 1970 cf. Laver 1976). Having evaluated the relevance of these theories alongside considering the different dimensions of the Northern Irish context they address, I found the intergroup conflict

²⁰ This theory is focused on the group (party) level, referring to the extent to which a party is prepared to be conciliatory in its motivation to end conflict. It is an adaptation of Zartman's (1989, 2000) ripeness theory.

²¹ Refers to fragmentation. The theory focuses on political systems, associating cultural homogeneity with democratic stability and cultural heterogeneity with political instability (see Lijphart 1975: 99).

²² This was a contested theory explaining the Northern Irish political context using economic modelling. Hirschman (1970) posited that social/cultural loyalty was analogous to the situation where consumers either 'Exit or Stay (taking their custom elsewhere, or not) and Voice or Silence (complaining to the management in the hope of reversing the decline, or not). Both are straight-forward economic responses' (Laver 1976: 469).

theory advanced by Cairns (2010) from Tajfel (1978, 1981) more suited to my study. Besides approaching social, political, cultural and religious factors from the individual and group-level perspective (Cairns 2010: 278), the theory also considers the dynamic component of intergroup relations. And for these reasons, Cairns (2010) was able to provide a more nuanced explanation of the social changes than the reductionist answers given by observers such as Barritt and Carter (1972 cf. Cairns 2010: 278) reporting Northern Ireland as ‘having a deeply divided, but stable, social structure’. His adaptation of Tajfel’s (1981) framework gave a leading edge over the symptom theories which conceptualised the Northern Irish conflict in economic terms of ‘cost-benefit calculations’ (Cairns 2010: 277-8 cf. Hirschman 1970) or as a ‘rational struggle for power’ (Whyte 1978: 278).

Very closely linked to the social interrelations and identity theories above outlined is intergroup contact theory. In studying Muslim responses to Right-wing populism, the effect of contact on identity needs to be given due consideration.

Intergroup Contact Theory

This particular theory originated from Allport’s (1954) ‘contact hypothesis’ wherein four conditions were stipulated as crucial for the reduction of intergroup prejudice: (1) the equal status of the groups in situ, (2) intergroup cooperation, (3) common goals and (4) authority support (Allport, cited in Pettigrew 2007: 188). These four conditions - as subsequent research showed - constituted a package facilitating the effect. They were not a prerequisite for eliminating or even reducing prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp 2006; Pettigrew 2007: 188). The hypothesis expanded and developed into a theory which has led to burgeoning fields of study showing that the effects have a wide applicability to other²³ ‘stigmatised’ groups such as Muslims (Pettigrew 2007; Christ *et. al.* 2007),

²³ The theory was originally developed for ethnic, racial and cultural groups (Pettigrew 2007: 188).

homosexuals (Herek & Capitano 1996), the homeless (Lee *et. al.* 2004) and the mentally and physically disabled (Pettigrew & Tropp 2006).

The general phenomenon being described and studied is: intergroup contact improving intergroup attitudes: i.e. exposure, leading to liking (Pettigrew 2007: 188). Underlying the complex dynamics and processes already discussed, the mere exposure effect (Zajonc 1968 cited in Pettigrew 2007) has been outlined by substantial research as being a key factor accounting for why greater exposure to targets, in and of itself, can enhance liking for those targets (Bornstein 1993; Harmon-Jones & Allen 2001; Zajonc 1968; see also Homans 1950 cited in Pettigrew 2007). With regard to my study's research question and what the reviewed literature has presented, the factors explained by the contact theory framework are directly relevant and offer potentially useful analytical tools. Muslim communities have been shown to participate - to varying levels - in the production of social, cultural and political life in Europe (Bonino 2017; Elshayyal 2018; Jeldtoft 2012). These participations are expected to encompass aspects of social contact. And even more influential are the cross-group friendships which normatively occur in these interactions.

Cross-group friendships have been highlighted as especially powerful forms of intergroup contact and a potent factor influencing intergroup contact dynamics and mechanisms (Davies *et al.* 2011; Wright *et al.* 1997). Firstly, such friendships are likely to encompass the four conditions facilitating prejudice reduction (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 2007). Furthermore, they 'provide extensive contact in multiple social contexts' (Pettigrew 2007: 188) which has been shown to substantially reduce prejudice (Hamberger & Hewstone 1997; Hewstone *et. al.* 2006; Pettigrew & Tropp 2006).

Intergroup contact theory has not always been positively received in terms of reliability and its application in public policy (especially in contexts of conflict). As for the first, the research conducted has been critiqued for selection bias for the contact-prejudice link: 'prejudiced people avoid contact with the objects of their prejudice, and the unprejudiced may seek such contact' (Pettigrew 2007: 188). As for the scepticism

around applying intergroup contact to social policy, some political scientists have voiced ‘sometimes, good fences make good neighbours’ (McGarry & O’Leary 1995: 210) - asserting that given the volatile condition of Catholic-Protestant relations in their native Ulster (Northern Ireland), contact is more likely to validate and enhance prejudice than it is to allay it. The first criticism has been addressed to a reasonable extent by the convergence of diverse methods such as longitudinal studies all showing that although both sequences²⁴ operate, the more determining and important effect is that optimal intergroup contact over time typically reduces prejudice (Pettigrew 2007: 195-6; see also Eller & Abrams 2003, 2004; Levin et. al. 2003).

The criticism from some political scientists regarding the ‘universal’ application of intergroup contact to social policy has also been well addressed (McGarry & O’Leary 1995: 210). First, contact theory ‘amply allows’ for the negative effects encountered in the Ulster case (Pettigrew 2007: 196) just as the studies cited above have shown the two sequences for the contact-prejudice dynamic. However, to assert that ‘sometimes, good fences make good neighbours’ is problematic when considering the ‘repeated failures of ‘good fences’ from the Great Wall of China and Hadrian’s Wall ... to the modern examples of the Berlin Wall, the Green Line of Cyprus and Israel’s new West Bank Wall’ (Pettigrew 2007: 195). Furthermore, extensive and recent research conducted by social psychologists in Northern Ireland repeatedly found ‘Catholic-Protestant contact typically lessens prejudice at much the same level as intergroup contact in other parts of the globe (Hewstone *et al.* 2004; McClenahan *et al.* 1996; Niens *et al.* 2002; Paolini *et al.* 2004 cited in Pettigrew 2007: 196).

Having considered these points, I am convinced that intergroup contact theory offers a potentially illuminating framework for the study. Proponents of the theory have rejected claims to the effect that contact constituted a panacea for macro-level conflict and

²⁴ i.e. contact leading to prejudice (this is one sequence or ‘path’), and the other is the path from prejudice to contact.

outlined that their findings to date have consistently shown that ‘intergroup contact is a necessary but insufficient condition by itself to resolve intergroup conflict’ (Pettigrew 2007: 196). The challenge however remains insofar as social science (psychology) has - as yet - not placed enough emphasis on bridging the gap between theory and practice in terms of transforming contact theory into ‘easily applied’ remedies (solutions) within specific settings (ibid).

Conclusion

The *spectre* of an Islamised Europe has profoundly stimulated shifts in the social, economic and cultural cleavages within the political systems of Western European nation states. Right-wing populism has emerged from the cauldron of shifting politics, galvanising anti-Muslim sentiment through distinct nationalist ideations and cultural/ethnocentric viewpoints. The literature has been primarily concerned with structural level analysis. Research conducted into the impact of Right-wing populism on the microsocial level (Arzheimer 2017; Hafez 2014; Pupcenoks & McCabe 2013) has completely missed out one of the chief targets of their populist discourse – the Muslim community.

The dearth of scholarly engagement with Muslim responses to Right-wing populism prompted a study of other minority groups regarding how they experience being targeted and their responses to populist rhetoric. From this, a number of theories emerged, providing meaningful frameworks to help analyse, understand and explain the responses from my participants. Intergroup relations through: contact, conflict and identification surfaced as a key dimension to the issues I was about to engage with in analysing my data. The Northern Irish context interestingly surfaced as one encompassing this complex array of intergroup relations against which to make real-life references to in my analysis.

My focus on the microsocial level and my interest in intergroup relations and everyday experiences were bound to influence the methodology employed to answer my central research questions. This leads us to the next chapter where I elaborate on these decisions.

Chapter 2

Research Methodology

Chapter one has outlined for us the central research questions along with clarifying the study's analytical categories and theoretical frameworks. Thus far, I am clear that this thesis focuses on the impact of Right-wing populism on Muslim identities. It asks: has the rise of the Right-wing initiated certain identity negotiations within Muslim communities? And if so: why and how has this occurred? These central research questions held up against the reviewed literature already initiated a manoeuvre away from macro-level inquiry²⁵ towards a more individual-oriented analysis taking into account the intricate processes and interactions occurring at the social micro-level. The theoretical frameworks I have outlined enable me to consider individual agency in the context of these social (intergroup) relations.

This chapter deals with the operational matters of research design and methodology. In what follows, I will clarify for the reader why decisions with regard to how the project data was collected and analysed were taken. To begin with, there are ontological and epistemological matters which need articulation because they have an impact on the methodology and methods.

Ontology & Epistemology

I found myself having to acquire a 'sociological imagination'- a term coined by Mills (1970 cited in Punch *et. al.* 2013) referring to the conscious, systematic consideration of the social, historical and biographical elements of a subject in seeking to understand it. The approach is distinguished by its capacity to produce sharp insights which help

²⁵ The level of national (or supra-national) political and economic institutions and structures.

explain complex social phenomena because it situates them within their particular social and historical context, considering both macro and micro issues' (Punch *et. al.* 2013: 7). This is so crucial that some scholars regard a study that failed to consider the intersections between history, context and biography in understanding society as having an incomplete journey (Punch *et. al.* 2013, cf. Seale 2013; Silverman 2013). This realisation motivated me to situate the study in terms of the sociological canon. I outline the main points here as they related to the ontological and epistemological positions I adopted.

In their meritorious efforts to establish sociology as an academic discipline, Comte and Durkheim adopted a positivist approach where 'social facts' could be established through experimentation and testing (Giddens 1971; Hawkins 1979; Jones 2013; Punch *et. al.* 2013). Weber's epistemological stance contended that it was uncondusive to study human society in the same manner one would study the physical world because people are 'thinking, reasoning beings who attach meanings to what they do' (Punch *et. al.* 2013: 67; see also McIntosh 1997). The concept of *verstehen* distinguished his approach with an interpretative nature: the social world was understood through the interpretation of people's conduct.

Earlier, I had outlined the gaps in the literature calling for more micro-level analysis focusing on individuals within the intergroup relations framework. I found Weber's epistemological stance to be more suitable for what my study was aiming to do. Weber differed from the founding thinkers in terms of his focus on the individual vis-à-vis Durkheim's focus on collectivity and Marx's interest on social class groupings (Giddens 1971; Hughes *et. al.* 2003; Morrison 2006). 'Sociology had to aim to understand human action, and to do this it had to acknowledge the particular and unique rather than always expect to be able to generalize' (Punch *et. al.* 2013: 60). Weberian interpretative sociology opens the possibility of understanding the issues affecting individuals at the everyday micro-social level, exploring the meanings they attach to the things happening in their lives and the behaviour of people around them. These are things which the

functionalist and social conflict macro-theories do not focus on in their points of departure. By this, my study manoeuvres away from the methodologies associated with the positivist/neo-positivist tradition towards a distinctly qualitative approach.

I have outlined my inclination towards interpretative sociology in studying the meanings that people attach to the things happening around them and the way others behave towards them at the micro-level. In adopting this position, I have avoided two ‘extreme’ answers to questions of what exists (ontology) and how we know (epistemology): realism and anti-realism (Knight 2002: 25-26). A ‘mid-range’ position exists saying that what is important is to consider the subject of study. This is pragmatism or critical realism (Bhaskar 2013; Knight 2002; Morgan 2007). Matters of the physical world exist independent of the observer whereas human thoughts, actions and feelings are not, they are subjective (Kivinen & Piironen 2004). Critical realism contends that while reality exists, ‘our understanding of it is a social construct that is continually tested against the real’ (Bhaskar 1986, cited in Knight 2002: 27).

I found critical realism/pragmatism to be a useful stance to adopt in studying Muslim responses to Right-wing populism because of the openness and flexibility it provides in terms of being able to approach the subject as both a social fact existing independent of the observer as well as a social construct subjectively dependent on the observer. Although research methods are not necessarily bonded to ontological and epistemological standpoints, researchers sharing similar standpoints ‘congregate’ upon certain methods (Punch 2013; Seale 2013; Silverman 2013). As such, those ‘interested in explanations, understanding meanings or exploring feelings will use far less structured methods which are variously referred to as qualitative, interpretive, *verstehen*’ (Knight 2002: 27).

Methodology

Before getting into the core of methods straight away, it would be helpful to discuss overarching perspectives of methodology and research design which have shaped this

thesis by discussing the choices that had been available, why they were bypassed and options that were advanced and why. Ethnographic methods were among these options. A focus on the everyday lived ‘contingencies’ of groups and persons: their practices, rituals, routines and how they make sense, give meaning and work for them in the present time (Geertz 2008; Goffman 1968; McLeod & Thomson 2009; Turner & Schechner 1988) seems to align with our interest in individual agency and intergroup relations at the social-micro level. There was however something of a mismatch between the ethnographic approach and the particularities of my research question, the gaps I sought to address in the literature and the theoretical frameworks.

An effective research design needs to correspond with the studied phenomenon so that it can adequately track it and provide the analytical possibilities of reporting on its character (Punch 2013; Seale 2012; Silverman 2013). The rise of Right-wing populism within the European socio-political fabric is a relatively new phenomenon embedded within the context of social change. My research design therefore had to correspond with this ‘social change dynamism’ (McLeod & Thomson 2009). And it was here I had some reservation about ethnography. Its focus on the present has been critiqued, leading some scholars to describe the methodology as ‘intrinsically incomplete’ and ‘essentially contestable’ (Geertz 1995; 2008; Rosen 1991; Turner & Schechner 1988). This criticism has been countered by McLeod & Thomson (2009) who outlined that ethnography recognises the ‘present’ as an accumulative socio-cultural product of the past and that its ability to unravel disruptions and fluctuations in individual practices enables it to deal with social change dynamics.

Having considered both sides of the argument around ethnography’s capacity to correspond with social change dynamics, one determining reason for not employing a full ethnographic study lay in the nature of my project. This thesis addresses the specific issue of Muslim responses to Right -wing populism. The substantial gap in the literature led me to focus my research question on the influence dynamics between these two analytical categories. My approach was more explorative than it was a distinctly

theoretically-driven research. And as ethnography requires a focus on specific localities for extended periods of time (Geertz 2008; Goffman 1968; McLeod & Thomson 2009; Turner & Schechner 1988), it was unsuitable for a study of this nature.

Thus far, I have adopted an interpretative sociological approach to studying Muslim responses to Right-wing populism. And in terms of ontology and epistemology, I have inclined towards the pragmatist/critical-realist standpoint. This has influenced the methodological composition of the study. As I am interested in individual experiences, the meanings they attach to people, things and events, the methods which researchers adopting the critical realist epistemology use are:

methods more sensitive to the individual and personal - meanings, beliefs, feelings etc. Small samples, even n=1 [are] often acceptable. [They] tend to go for looser, higher-inference versions of positivist methods [such as] ... semi-structured or lightly structured questionnaires, interviews and observations. Positivist data sources [are] widely copied but with less concern that data and interpretation are clear-cut and 'objective'. Other data sources include life stories and other narratives, role play and simulations, focus groups, action interviews and analysis of critical incidents, diaries, journals and portfolios, photos, pictures, and video documents in general, including novels and journalism, analysis of secondary data, memory work, unobstructive measures, 'post-empirical' approaches. (Knight 2002: 31)

From these methods, I have decided to rely on 'lightly structured' interviews - described as: 'the mainstay of social research, used a lot in the early stages of inquiries and also when: feelings, meanings and thinking are to be investigated.' (Knight 2002: 117; see also Punch 2013; Seale 2013; Silverman 2013). Interviews have been used as a key research method for generating empirical data on Muslim social relations in general (Bonino 2017; Elshayyal 2018; Jeldtoft 2012; Silvestri 2012) and 'elusive phenomena' such as non-organized Islam and extremism (Hemmingsen 2011; Kühle 2011). Researchers in the Islamic studies field have used interviews to gain insight into Muslims' self-understandings and 'everyday lived Islam' (Jensen 2012; Otterbeck 2012; Jeldtoft 2012).

Interviews do have their limitations. A number of pitfalls are attributed to them: data capture and analysis are often lengthy and expensive. And what the interviewer and informant create together is not acceptable to those concerned with the classic concept of reliability (Knight 2002: 117). Other critiques pertain to the validity of the data generated by interviews: the generalisability of findings (external validity), high chances of multiple factors being confounded (internal validity) and/or conflation between facts and values (ecological validity) (Brewer & Crano 2000; Bryman 2004). Researchers have also noted certain difficulties associated with interviewing: building trust and rapport (Liamputtong 2007; Schmidt 2011; Otterbeck 2012), language and social barriers (Hurley 2007: 185) and excessive media and political attention on Muslim minorities leading respondents to giving ‘detached [and] distant answers’ - an ‘understandable fatigue’ from the constant attention from reporters and researchers. (Schmidt 2011: 114).

The first pitfall can be mitigated by selecting a reasonable number of cases to produce enough data which can be analysed in sufficient detail - i.e. a small-scale study (Emmel 2013; Knight 2002; Seale 2013; Silverman 2013; Small 2009). With regard to validity concerns, some scholars contend that validity and reliability are ‘inherently positivist’ (Punch *et. al.* 2013: 113) and therefore not applicable to qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln 1994). And while some advocate alternative criteria to evaluate the ‘trustworthiness’ of research (*ibid*), others appropriate ‘validity’ in qualitative research as the answer to the question ‘are we accurately reflecting the phenomena under study as perceived by the study population?’ (Lewis & Ritchie 2003: 274, cf. Punch *et. al.* 2013: 113). One way which scholars using qualitative methods strive towards validity is through detailed, high-quality analyses (Chamberlayne *et. al.* 2000: 21) and ‘thick descriptions’ (Brink 1993: 238)

like any qualitative account, this one [should] convince or otherwise by virtue of its authenticity, plausibility and criticality: that is, by whether the report of what respondents say and how they say it seem realistic to readers; by the face validity of the commentary and conclusions offered, and by whether they challenge the

reader to think critically and anew about what might otherwise be a taken-for-granted. (Freeman 2008: 6).

As for the point that interviewing is fraught with difficulties, researchers have responded to them in quite creative, flexible and effective ways which informed and inspired my own approach. Otterbeck (2012) used Socratic interviews to open up discussion and initiate debate through semi-casual conversation staged in informal contexts to help him to go beyond the ‘normative’ responses given by his respondents. Kühle (2011) showed that focus group interviews can be an effective research method for studying radicalized cultic milieus. And Schmidt (2011) deployed dialogical performance²⁶ to conduct fieldwork in a heavily politicised Danish (Copenhagen) context.

* * *

Awareness that in using interview methods, something is being created between the researcher and participant led me to consider approaches to data analysis which would complement the interpretative, critical-realist standpoint I adopted. The literature led to narrative analysis - the intricate study of narrative weaving: how individuals connect certain events, people and things to create a story or account. It is used by researchers interested in meaning (Silverman 2013; Smith 2000; Webster & Mertova 2007). ‘Narrative is a basic human way of making sense of the world’ (Seale 2013:443). We live storied lives by stringing the beads of lifetime events to craft ornaments we can show and share. There is inevitably a social aspect to narrative creation (Bruner 1991; Polkinghorne 1995): e.g. the ‘falling in love’ narrative and the ‘coming out’ stories from members of the LGBT community (Seale 2013: 444). These narrative frames are socioculturally shaped templates originating from the society (Bruner 1991). They are

²⁶ ‘Dialogical performance can be defined as bringing ‘self and other together so that they may question, debate, and challenge one another’ (Schmidt 2011: 114).

the result of social interactions which give social groups and individuals a *repertoire* of ‘what can be told’ in making their interpretations of reality ‘stick’ (Seale 2012: 444).

Going back to the sociological imagination which I had earlier introduced, narrative analysis would enable a dialogue between the micro and macro perspectives because the overlap between the individual and sociocultural templates leads to a focus on the social contexts (De Fina 2008; Holstein & Gubrium 2000). ‘Narratives do not give us access to what ‘really’ happened or to underlying psychological motives, rather they can be used to show us how experiences are reconstructed and interpreted once they have occurred’ (Seale 2013: 443). The narrative analytical method sees meaning as something that is actively co-constructed between social actors (including the researcher) in certain spheres of interaction and often in circumstances of unequal power (Seale 2013: 442, 447). This aspect of interpretation and co-construction also complements the interpretative approach I have adopted.

The narrative analytical approach has been implemented in a number of ways by researchers. Structure is a key focus. This can be attributed to the literary criticism/linguistic origins of narrative analysis where postmodern and poststructuralist thinking became interested in the role of language in shaping social constructs, interactions and structures of power (Bourdieu 1991: 105; Knight 2002: 24; Searle & Willis 1995; Seale 2013: 442). Seale (2013) outlined two broad approaches to narrative analysis: focus on the textual elements of the narrative and focus on the interactional context. Davis (2008: 160 cf. Seale 2013: 446) building on Labov (1972) identified ‘primary narrative structures’²⁷ based on six dimensions: characters, setting, events, themes, audience and causal relations. Rogan & de Kock (2005 cited in Faulkner 2006: 160) categorised narrative methodologies into three strands: structural analysis, performative and literary analysis

²⁷ “Labov’s six elements of a fully formed narrative ... [are] outlined ... as an abstract, an orientation, a complicating action, a resolution, a coda and an evaluation.” (Seale 2013: 454).

Structural analysis methods focus on the use of language, which words were chosen, how the narrative is put together and in what sequence. Performance narrative analyses look at what is being achieved in the narrative, the presentation of self-identity as a performance and positioning of others. Literary analysis is more about identifying figurative language, metaphors and visual images.²⁸

In my first chapter, I introduced the concept of narrative identity and mentioned that it linked theory with my method. Ricoeur's (1980) tripartite framework of: characters (human and/or non-human), action (movement through time, including transformation) and plot (Lawler 2015: 24-25) can be incorporated as part of my narrative analytical approach. Ricoeur's model provides two key components for this undertaking. The first is emplotment: the fundamental element that links all the characters, episodes, memories and events together in one meaningful picture which can then be screened – like a motion picture (film). The second component is the element of participation and co-production. A narrative cannot stand alone; it would be meaningless otherwise. The narrator and audience therefore have to participate in the process of production 'through a shared cultural understanding that these events have a place in this narrative' (Lawler 2015: 24). Adding these components to my kit of analytic tools sharpened my insights as I approached my data because I was given a set of pointers to look out for: characters, plot, and action!

In retrospect, narrative analysis has been a hugely helpful tool to use in this thesis. It has proven to be very effective in getting a lively, theoretically informed grip on the empirical data, having a feel for the issues which were being shared by the participants and beginning to understand their responses. As will be seen in the empirical chapters, I have used the analytical method to open up initial entry points to help make sense of the data. By viewing the participants' responses as weaves of narratives, I found that: I could group those which shared similar features together. I could then compare the way

²⁸ Faulkner (2006), p160.

they were shaped (structure). And if there were performative elements, I would try and identify which roles were being played and who the protagonists were.

Viewing the data through the lens of narrative analysis therefore facilitated the chaptering along with the content creation and designation. In sum, it has helped to create an analytical backbone for the data. This has helped in seeing the wood for the trees and allowing those voices to sing their stories in response to my research questions. I discovered that once structure was found, I could engage the scholarly literature touching upon the issues which emerged from the narratives and evaluate the findings against the theoretical frameworks.

Choices: Who, Where, How?

Getting on with the project entailed making certain choices which would ensure that the aims of this thesis were reliably obtained within the time and resource constraints. These choices were best outlined through the simple questions (who, where and how), which when answered articulated the precise operational measures of the project. The theoretical insights alongside the research literature into migration, religion, ethnic relations and citizenship have guided me regarding these choices in terms of the cities studied, the sampling frame and the type of questions to ask in the semi-structured interviews. I will now elaborate on these choices, along with outlining why they are justified with reference to the literature as well as the ontological and epistemological stance I have taken in the thesis.

The research question, reviewed literature and the outlined theoretical perspectives converge upon a common factor of space: 'Islam in Europe', the micro and macro social levels, contestations of public space, navigations around everyday lived spaces and the intergroup relations taking place within these spaces. Space perception, utilisation and contextualisation are central themes in this study and therefore deserve attention in answering the questions (who, where and how). The first question (who) pertains to the

participants of the study. And although the analytical category (Muslim) has been defined and qualified, certain aspects of operationalisation required addressing.

Who? The Participants

As there are many ways of being Muslim, one important goal is to try and understand these diverse ways. This means being critical in our use of categorisations such as: orthodox and unorthodox, liberal and conservative, organized and unorganized, visible and invisible (Bektovic 2012). The ‘organized/unorganized’ Islam dialectic strongly relates to the issue of ‘space’ because scholarship has tended to link organized Islam with visibility on public space contestation, and the opposite for unorganized Islam (Bektovic 2012, Jeldtoft 2012, Nielsen 2004; Otterbeck 2012). This un/organized dialectic is useful insofar as it signifies a standard that the project should satisfy, i.e. Muslims at both ends of the spectrum are eligible for the study. I hold that the inclusion of both can produce interesting results since individual agency is not mutually exclusive with organization. Furthermore, the focus on one end of the spectrum can result in erroneous assumptions such as: it is the unorganized, invisible Muslims who are the least practising. Religious identities can be misrepresented by assuming that worldviews are fixed and can be neatly categorised (see Jensen 2012).

I have already outlined what the study means in studying the analytical unit ‘Muslim responses’ to Right-wing populism. Adopting a pluralistic outlook on Muslims may well have been a helpful recruitment strategy. However, I encountered significant challenges in making choices about which of the Muslims’ narratives to focus on in the analytical phase of the study. To enable detailed interpretative analysis, it was crucial to ensure that the small scaled nature of the study tally with a small number of contrasts so that what participants share is given due analytical consideration. I used purposive sampling ‘where participants are selected on the basis of having a significant relation to the research topic’ reflectively without necessarily being representative of the population of interest (Seale 2013: 237).

Significant research on Muslims in Europe and the West has focused on ‘young people’ (Bevelander and Otterbeck 2012; Finlay *et al.* 2017; Frisina 2010; Harris and Roose 2014; Hopkins 2018; Kühle and Lindekilde 2010; Mustafa 2015; Otterbeck 2012; Schmidt 2004; Weedon and Riddell 2017). In light of this, I initially considered restricting my sample to young people. I however came to the realisation that a focus on the age category alone risked being somewhat arbitrary. And given the explorative nature of my approach, a scope for comparison (within fair limits) was advantageous. I hence decided to nuance the age factor by focusing more specifically on second-generation respondents. A theoretical justification for this selection exists.

Muslims born and/or raised in Europe are likely to have more of a stake and sense of belonging than their parents, who may have arguably experienced greater racism during the 1970s and 1980s. The first generation have a lesser stake in their host countries as there is always the myth of return (Dahya 1973; Anwar 1979, al-Rasheed 1994). And because of this greater stake of the second generation, their responses to Right-wing populism are likely to be more pronounced. Interestingly, from the mid-1970s, research engagement with Pakistani families in Bristol highlighted this generational difference. While some of the Pakistani migrants expressed support for the Labour Party, ‘it was not because of particular policies of the party; informants did not feel that the major parties differed markedly in terms of policy, but at least the Labour Party does not have Enoch Powell, they said’ (Jeffery 1976: 114). This first generation’s lack of invested political participation correlated with their myth of return (Jeffery 1976 cf. Dahya 1973; Anwar 1979). As for their children, the case was very different - they ‘knew’ Britain as home (Jeffery 1976: 114).

Children are the point at which the ethnic boundary is the most vulnerable: the adult migrants are well-socialized Pakistanis who have strong loyalties to their homeland, but the children are likely to develop other loyalties and be unwilling to return to a county they hardly know. (Jeffery 1976: 146)

Maliepaard *et al.* (2010) looked at the differences between first and second-generation Dutch Turks and Moroccans in terms of their ethno-cultural practices, self-

identifications as Muslim and social interrelations. Several contingent factors were explored through the cohort studies by looking at a number of dependent variables such as: education, language proficiency, marriage/family, employment, income etc. The results showed that despite the majority of second-generation immigrants of Turkish and Moroccan background readily self-identifying as Muslim, they identify less strongly with their ethnic and religious group and engage less in ethno-cultural and religious practices (Maliepaard *et. al.* 2010: 231). The researchers were able to conclude that: growing up in a ‘secular receiving context’ affects both ethnic and religious attachment negatively. ‘Becoming Dutch therefore entails a loss of strong religious identity, more so than it would in other receiving contexts (Maliepaard *et. al.* 2010: 231).

Another interesting point was the degree of intertwining between ethno-culturalism and religion with the second generation: being Turkish/Moroccan was essentially being Muslim. For me, this seems to suggest that discovering one’s culture was a way to the religious trajectory for the second generation. Based on this, the authors forecasted the possibility of an emerging ‘Dutch Islam’ exclusive of ethno-cultural foundations as highly unlikely. In the public perception, ethno-cultural influences which lead to a religious trajectory for the second generation are seen as suspect. They would identify with their native backgrounds and therefore make their social participations and allegiances along those lines to the alienation of majority society leading to the creation of ethno-religious enclaves that don’t really want to be a part of the society despite their prolonged presence. Another interesting finding was the difference in correlation between education level and religious practice/identity between the first and second generation. Data from the first generation concurred with the theory that increased education is a determining ‘catalyst’ for assimilation and secularisation (Need & de Graaf 1996; Hagendoorn, Veenman & Vollebergh 2003; Phalet & ter Wal 2004 cited in Maliepaard *et. al.* 2012: 233). For the second generation however, there was a clearly perceivable link between increased education and levels of practice and religious identity.

Bevelander and Otterbeck (2012) studied young people's attitudes towards Muslims in the Swedish context. Their research problem focused on how multiple factors affect the attitudes of 'native' European populations towards Muslims. At the individual level, they highlighted that young people who have a negative perception of society tended to also hold negative views of Muslims. These views were related to socialisation processes such as upbringing and parental influence: e.g. parents from low income and low education backgrounds tended to hold more negative opinions of Muslims, and this was passed on to their children. Boys and girls born outside Sweden were likely to hold relatively more positive attitudes towards Muslims than those born inside the country. And - as the authors outlined - in accordance with contact theory, those with Muslim friends or who had considerable contact with Muslims were more likely to have positive perceptions of them compared with those who did not have this contact (Bevelander and Otterbeck 2012).

Besides the second generation born and raised in Europe, another group of Muslims shares this present/conscious stakeholder status. This cohort are the converts to Islam, who, like the second generation, are born in Europe and are therefore likely to have a vested interest in exercising their full rights as citizens and are able to negotiate between being Muslim and European. Similar to the second generation, but to varying degrees, converts go through contradictory experiences of 'acceptance and rejection, inclusion and exclusion, integration and isolation' (Bonino 2017: 152; see also Baker 2009; Burdsey 2011; Moosavi 2015b; Suleiman 2013).

Substantial research has unearthed the nuances of racial/ethnic relations when it comes to converts - both in terms of their relations to non-Muslims as well as fellow Muslims. With regard to the former, a conflation between religious and racial identity has led to the identification of indigenous white converts as non-white (Garner 2006; 2017; Garner and Selod 2015), even, 'South-Asian' (Fortier 2008; Geaves 1996; Gilliat-Ray 2010, 84-111; Meer 2010, 91 cf. Moosavi 2015a: 6) or 'Pakistanised' (Kose 1996: 235; see also Moosavi 2015a: 6) treated as a 'non-white' (Allievi 2006, 133-134; Badran 2006,

198–199; Franks 2000: 922; Nieuwkerk 2006, 106; Moosavi 2015a:7). ‘foreignized’ (Badran (2006, 198– 199 cf. Moosavi: 6) or ‘crossing the borders of whiteness’ (Franks 2000) and even ‘race traitors’ (Franks 2000, 923–924; McDonald 2005, 142; Nieuwkerk 2006, 1: cf. Moosavi 2015a: 6). Within this rubric of ‘race traitors’, women, in particular have been highlighted by research as being more vulnerable to targeting with this label ‘due to the added pressure on them to ensure that the boundaries of the white race remain intact.’ (Moosavi 2015a: 7; Garner 2006, 9–10, 175; López 2005, 18).

As for the latter, the finding that white reverts have tended to receive a privileged status vis-a-vis their black/non-white counterparts has been well documented ‘(al-Qwidi 2002: 228–229; Haddad 2006: 40; Zebiri 2008: 65, 98–99; 2014 cf. Reddie 2009; Simmons 2006).’ Privileges and opportunities aside, literature has emerged outlining the susceptibility of converts to Islamophobia because apart from being re-racialized as not being white enough, their relatively frequent contact with non-Muslims made them privy to ‘frank remarks’ about their Islam and Muslims (Moosavi 2015b). Whilst a ‘privilege’ on the one hand, ‘whiteness’ could also be ‘confiscated’ (Moosavi 2015a).

In sum, the study focuses on the responses of second generation and convert Muslims to Right-wing populism. It can be argued that they have more of a stake in *resisting* racism and anti-Muslim populism, unlike the first-generation migrants who were not planning to stay in Europe and were therefore perhaps less existentially threatened by the racism which they encountered. This focus is more conducive to the interpretative sociological approach I have adopted for this thesis because it allows for more in-depth analysis of what the participants are sharing. In addition to these points, there are also the analytical benefits of comparing second generation Muslims and converts. The influence of race/ethnicity on the participants’ responses is one of the main analytical benefits. And by limiting the number of contrasts, greater space is provided to carefully consider which factors become relevant, how and why they are significant.

Where? The cities

Having made clear choices regarding who to include in the study, the next step was to decide where to locate the fieldwork. It had already been outlined that space, in terms of its utilisation and contextualisation, was a central factor in answering the questions: who, where and how. With regard to contextualizing space, scholarship has tended to adopt the nation state and relations to national majorities as standard contexts in studies of Islam in the West (Jeldtoft 2012 cf. Jensen 2012; also Nielsen and Otterbeck 2015). I saw it important that my study avoid taking any context for granted. A chief concern was to treat all contexts relatively. The aim was not to de-contextualize. Rather, it was to adopt a balance wherein the significance of national context in Muslim identity making is not assumed *a priori*; yet on the other hand, its relevance isn't ignored. The scalar approach (Schiller and Çağlar 2009, cf. Jeldtoft 2012; Bevelander & Otterbeck 2012) offered a potential solution in this regard.

The scalar approach involves exploring the different domains of space at the private, communal and national levels, seeing how they relate to one another in the frame of social relations (Jeldtoft 2012). This was complementary with the project's avoidance of primarily focusing on the macrosocial level thereby neglecting the individual agencies at the micro-level. In adapting this scalar approach, I decided early on that the European nation-states would not be the primary contextualisation for the study. I already know a lot about Muslim relations in the various national perspectives. But what I know much less about is the magnitude of these relations on Muslim identity construction at the local community and individual levels. I consequently selected the urban (city) setting as the alternative context.

Focusing on a specific set of urban localities can enable me to historically, socially and politically contextualise the Muslim presence. And in doing so, I avoid religionising the social dynamics enabling us to see when Islam becomes a factor, and why, when, where and how Right-wing populism featured - if it ever did. As mentioned in my literature review, there are well documented reports of existing tensions and contestations of

public space between the natives and Muslims in certain areas within certain European cities. The following stood out: Kreuzberg - the 'little Istanbul' of Berlin (Mandel 1996); Nørrebro (Schmidt 2011) - the 'shabby, now chic' Copenhagen district 'where you'd have more hope of scoring a joint than a cup of java'²⁹; The 'Londonistan' of Britain - Brick Lane (Eade 1996) and Rosengård - Sweden's Chicago' (Nordin 2005). As this was an exploratory study looking at a phenomenon spreading across Europe, there was rationale for a multi-sited (Hemmingsen 2011, Jensen 2012) comparative outlook. 'The methodological basis for comparison is the elementary principle that a greater number of cases for comparison leads to greater confidence in one's findings' (Hunter 2011: 74).

It however remained crucial to limit the number of contrasts and variables studied in order to facilitate the comparative element and enable an effective analysis of the data. I found the 'most similar systems design - MSSD' (Anckar 2008; see also de Lange & Mügge 2015: 66) and 'strategic selection of cases'³⁰ (Faulkner 2006) helpful in making the pragmatic and analytical choices regarding the study's empirical contexts. MSSD entails careful selection of cases sharing the most 'specified' variables 'except with regard to the phenomenon, the effects of which I am interested in assessing' (Anckar 2008: 389). A 'strict' application of the system aims at keeping constant the extraneous variables and hence leaving only one aspect (the independent variable under study) (e.g. Bartolini 1993: 134; Sartori 1991: 250; Skocpol 1984: 379 cited in Anckar 2008). It is theoretically robust but suffers from two serious 'practical' pitfalls - (1) many variables and (2) a small number of cases (Lijphart, 1971: 685, cited in Anckar 2008). One of the ways this has been addressed by researchers using the model has been to adopt a *looser* application of MSSD where the aim is to select cases which exhibit 'as many' shared

²⁹ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/denmark/copenhagen/articles/Copenhagens-trendy-Norrebro-district-a-tour/> - accessed 16/08/2018.

³⁰ 'Strategic Case' (Faulkner 2006: Young People's Participation in Public Decision making): 'the strategic selection of cases should be towards situations where it is possible to 'learn the most' ... and that which can provide most evidence for use in explanation (Hakim 1987; Stake 1998 cited in Faulkner 2006: 67).'

characteristics but where the researcher never systematically matches the cases on all the relevant control variables (Berg-Schlusser & De Meur, 1994; Collier & Collier 1991; De Meur & Berg-Schlusser 1994, 1996 and, less explicitly, Linz & Stepan 1996 – cited in Anckar 2008: 390).

From the cases which I highlighted above, London and Berlin ultimately emerged to be outliers in terms of their population, size, economy, hyper/super diversity and - quite simply - the fact that they are mega global cities best compared with other metropolises in their league. Copenhagen and Malmo can certainly fit into a ‘most similar case’ bracket in terms of size, economy, ethnic diversity and - especially - the Muslim demographic presence. Both cities are found at very close proximity to one another, and with the literature already indicating to me an active and relatively strong current for Right-wing populism in Scandinavia, I recognised the advantage of comparing the Scandinavian context with another context where Right-wing populism is more temperate. This is where Edinburgh stood out as a strong candidate insofar as scholarship highlighted its ‘benign’ and ‘tolerant’ reception of Muslims (Bonino 2017).

A whole chapter is dedicated to the study of these three contexts in order to gather the social, historical, political and biographical pieces of the puzzle together in completing my sociological journey. At this early stage however, it is important to outline that a principal difference between these three otherwise similar cities is precisely the factor I am most interested in - namely the relative strength of Right-wing populism. The spectrum ranges from: strong (Copenhagen) to quite strong (Malmo) to, not particularly strong in the case of Edinburgh. This complements the comparative outlook of the thesis in seeing how Muslim responses to Right-wing populism in parts of Scandinavia compare with those in a specific UK context. And with regard to the research question on Right-wing populism, the three contexts - as per the literature - exhibited certain nuances about: (a) the levels of political success enjoyed by the Right-wing, (b) the politicisation of Muslim immigration in public discourse and (c) the polarisations occurring as a result of Muslim segregation.

How? Bringing it Together

It was time to bring it all together having gone through the hoops of ontology, epistemology and methodology. The simple question for that was (how). From the start, I was wary of the distinction between finding data and manufacturing it - a warning from some scholars who recognised its prevalence in qualitative research (Silverman 2010: 37). This was a contradiction to the claim of doing the opposite of quantitative research by humanising the subjects. Their manufacturing of data actually resulted in the same thing. And while some may object saying ‘isn’t all data manufactured?’ - i.e. reality doesn’t speak for itself ‘but has to be apprehended by means of particular concerns and perspectives and by the simple logistics of research’ (Silverman 2010: 38), the emphasis should be on using these logistics to try and understand what is occurring rather than impose them, thereby premeditatively shape the analytical outcomes (Douglas 1975 cited in Silverman 2010: 38). With this important caveat in mind, the next stage was to access the field. In what follows I give a descriptive account of the steps I went through in making the operational elements of the project come together.

Accessing the Field

I began the pilot phase of my fieldwork in Edinburgh in January 2014. Wolff (2004: 195) outlined it was important to see the field not so much as a concretely defined entity with clearly demarcated borders which the researcher must enter - so to speak - in order to be able to see the interiors. Rather, ‘accessing the field’ was a more appropriate term because it connotes a process ‘into the field [...] a task that is never completed and which must be handled cooperatively, that is jointly with the intended ‘objects’ of the research’ (Wolff 2004: 196). With this conception in mind, I then had to address two fundamental questions:

1. How can the researcher succeed in making contact with the chosen research field and in stimulating the informants to cooperate?...
2. How can the researcher position himself or herself in respect to the field so as to secure the factual, temporal and social conditions to carry

out appropriately the planned research, or at least not significantly inhibit relevant freedom of action? (Wolff 2004: 195-6)

In answering the first question, I found the ‘pistol approach’ (Jensen 2012: 48) a useful way to make initial contact with potential participants. In addition to being fully reassured that such an approach certainly involved no shooting activity, I was convinced that it offered advantages which the snowball method - alone - did not. ‘The intent of the methodological approach was to avoid limiting the analysis to certain Muslim settings and rather to explore the diversity of [Islam] in these Muslim settings by gathering access to informants from the various Muslim groups’ (Jensen 2012: 47-8). This premise of accessing as many field sites as possible against a diverse range of contexts corresponded with my multi-sited fieldwork approach. I therefore chose to adopt a holistic focus on European Muslims: organised and unorganised, visible and invisible, practising and non-practising as well as convert and non-convert Muslims. In my selection of participants, I made provisions for both genders to be represented, from varying educational and occupational backgrounds, and I kept in mind factors such as ethnicity and country of origin. I ensured to access the field via a wide range of contexts; not just within the conventional research settings of (mosques, homes and institutions). Representativeness was not a determining factor in recruiting participants; rather diversity and exploration were key.

A diverse field of study called for a diverse approach in recruiting participants for the project. In this regard, access to organised Muslims is much easier (Jeldtoft 2012; Bektovic 2012). I followed the standard protocol to this effect (Jensen 2012): contacting mosques, organisations and religious institutions explaining the project and asking for cooperation. Institutions such as local community centres were also highlighted as useful contexts for recruitment and fieldwork for two reasons: (1) their outward non-religious character can house a diverse range of Muslims, and (2) they enable us to offset the religionisation of social interactions, seeing when religion becomes a factor instead of assuming it (Schmidt 2011). Accessing unorganised, invisible and non-practicing Muslims required more initiative, awareness and creativity. Some of the

methods I employed included personal/social networking (Otterbeck 2012, Jeldtoft 2012), snowballing (Jeldtoft 2012), using ‘gatekeepers’ such as community leaders to access respondents (Kuhle 2011) and making advertisements in public and semi-public domains (ibid).

My recruitment strategy comprised a mixture of personal (direct) contact and social networking through email lists, social media groups and attending specific events such as Islamic lectures, interfaith meetings and anti-fascist demonstrations.³¹ I have resided and studied in all three cities. This provided useful acquaintance with the localities, institutions and the language skills which proved to be advantageous in Copenhagen and Malmo. Although the extent of my networks³² considerably varied across the cities, it was conducive to recruiting and accessing as diverse an array of sites and participants as possible. A significant quota of the participation was initiated by me simply noticing something interesting about an individual in a particular setting, sometimes spontaneously, and subsequently introducing myself and the project. For the most part, recruitment was facilitated through social networking: from emailing requests for particular types of participants³³ to personal contacts and Muslim community organisations. In some cases, I used social media platforms – Facebook notably – to post requests for participation on particular Group pages.

I was aware that field research is viewed as a series of ‘social events’ (Wolff 2004: 195) wherein the involved parties engage in a range of relevant activities. It was absolutely

³¹ I attended such anti-fascist marches in all the three cities: in August 2014, I attended an anti-SDL protest outside the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. In January 2015, one of my participants in Copenhagen informed me about a counter demonstration against PEGIDA; I graced the event. And in February 2015, I attended the anti- PEGIDA demonstration in Malmo. Besides making observations (e.g. the very pronounced non-attendance from the Muslim and BME communities in these marches), I would try to speak to people, and in one occasion, I managed to recruit a Muslim participant (one of two I saw as visibly Muslim).

³² I will reflect on how my role potentially affected this process later on in this chapter.

³³ For example I would email asking to be introduced to Shi’a Muslims, or people who might consider themselves as ‘lapsed’ Muslims. The goal was to try and access as many expressions of Muslimness as possible following the exploratory trajectory I had adopted.

essential to safeguard the relations. A careful exposition of this will feature in the ethics section of this chapter. For now, one aspect of these relations which can be outlined here is how I ‘stimulat[ed] the informants to participate’ (Wolff 2004: 195). I had to embrace the sad fact that in reality the researcher has very little or nothing at all to offer the field. S/he may use the notion that their research will be useful in public policy decisions for example as a bargaining tool, but caution is advised with respect to this type of approach.

[I]t may well be understandable if researchers seek to buy their way in with problematic announcements or even promises concerning the expected uses of the project for the field that is under investigation. This sort of bargaining model, however, not only implies an unacceptable simplification of the relationship between science and the field. It also represents, in view of the triviality of what the researcher is actually able to offer, a form of *bragging*. (Wolff 2004: 202)

To address this, I made sure to be very clear with the participants that this was an exploratory project looking at an area of study which has not received the attention it deserved. I furthermore provided them with an abstract for the project which outlined the research questions I had along with informing them that they had the full autonomy to decide the extent of their participation which included the option of complete withdrawal without need to explain why. I found that by framing my project in such terms, I was able to garner interest without the pressure on anyone - myself or the participants - to perform any expected role. This provided a relaxed, casual and safe feeling which has allowed my participants to be themselves and has given me the privilege of being able to learn about their worldviews during our interviews (conversations).³⁴

With regard to the interviews, I decided to use the semi/loosely-structured technique (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). Because the research was not theoretically-driven, a structured protocol would have been inappropriate and less conducive to an exploratory

³⁴ At times, the interviews I conducted felt more like conversations, hence the outlining here.

approach. A particular methodological stance with regard to the researcher-researched relationship influenced the way I framed my questions in the interviews. I have reserved a detailed discussion of this in the ethics section of the chapter where I feel it can better answer the question regarding how I positioned myself. For now, I give the overview of what I had in mind as regards the outline of the interviewing method used. The interviews were designed to bring to the surface, narratives behind the intricate and complex processes of identity negotiation/construction and how sense is made through meaning and experience. The Right-wing factor was of course there, although I did not want to assume its presence by default - more about this to follow shortly.

Analytical themes pertaining to Muslim identity construction and its potential evolution in response to Right-wing populism were items of particular interest shaping the ways in which the interviews flowed as well as in the analysis of the empirical data. From the outset, I looked at how researchers in the Islamic Studies field in Europe used analytical themes to shape their interview guides. Otterbeck's (2012) guide was constructed around four themes: dogma, ritual, community and faith. Jeldtoft (2012) adopted the analytical theme of belonging and being in analysing her respondents' narratives. Since the project focuses on how Right-wing populism might impact Muslim identity, I expected themes such as: everyday living as Muslim, self-understanding and self-expression as Muslim in the face of escalating anti-Islam sentiment as being worthy of attention. I used these themes as a kind of reserve bank of questions I would have at the back of my mind if I saw that the interview or conversation could do with stimulating (broaching) the certain topic in question. I of course made a note of when this was the case as this related to the extent to which the participants may or may not see Right-wing populism in any particularly relevant terms for them.

The fieldwork phase took a period of thirteen months. It commenced in March 2014 after being approved by an ethics review board at the University of Edinburgh. By April 2015, the fieldwork was completed although I continued to stay in contact with my participants and even conducted follow-up interviews right up until April 2018.

Although I had no specifically designated sampling frame I made the conscious effort to be selective regarding the characteristics of: practice, organisation, conversion and visibility as well as the attributes of: age, gender, race/ethnicity, education and occupation amongst the second-generation individuals³⁵ and converts whom I met. For each city, I aimed for an even gender distribution and then selected participants on the basis of obtaining as diverse a mix as possible regarding the mentioned classifications and attributes.

Language barriers were not a huge problem as all the participants spoke fluent English - more or less - and those parts where they resorted to use Danish or Swedish words, I was able to understand them having undergone language training in Sweden during the course of the study.

I did not face the sort of ‘deficits in social relations’ (Hurley 2007: 185 cited in Hunter 2011: 83) which other researchers have experienced while studying Muslim populations, and there was no substantial ‘veritable chasm of differences [in] age, socio-economic class, and disparities in educational and employment histories’ (ibid). The role I later on assumed as Imam of Edinburgh Central Mosque did not have a significant bearing on my relations with the participants since I started the job in December 2015 by which time all my fieldwork had been well concluded. The Edinburgh participants perhaps may have been aware of the active volunteer role I had at the mosque. However, as will be seen in the data, my relationship with the participants was one of openness and being non-judgemental. As far as I was aware, these aspects did not impact the quality of the data I collected nor did it influence in any significant way its reliability and validity.

³⁵ From this moment on, I clarify for the reader that by ‘second-generation participant(s)’ henceforth, I refer to the cohort of Muslims born and/or raised in Europe from the smaller subset of twenty seven respondents whose data inform these analytical chapters.

Reflexivity & Research Ethics

In considering the ethical and aesthetic components of research design, I have been guided to question a certain aspect of what occurs when academics engage with communities as they carry out their research. There is an ethical and pragmatic need to consider the power roles involved. Producing knowledge is a powerful enterprise because it has the capacity to shape and shift power relations through the way it is created, shared and implemented. As researchers, the onus is on us to recognise this power and use it responsibly and ethically. One of the leading approaches which I have seen addressing these power relations is (PAR) Participatory Action Research (Kindon *et al.* 2007; Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2017). I shall outline the aspects of this particular approach which have positively inspired this project without necessarily being bound to its methodology.

PAR is seen as a ‘democratic commitment to break the monopoly on who owns knowledge and for whom research should be undertaken’ (Kindon *et al.* 2007: 11). It emphasises a reflexive form of participation wherein both the researcher and researched actively create knowledge for specific objectives related to social change. Through the influence of certain turns³⁶ and theories,³⁷ it has sought to open up spaces for the voices of previously marginalised groups to emerge (Kindon *et al.* 2007; Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2017). Its conceptualisation of research aims at enhancing the quality of information gathered. One way it does this is by encouraging cooperative relationships with the communities being researched. Research participants already have valuable knowledge; research should therefore be synergised through interactive participatory methods such as dialogue and art to complement participants’ diverse ways of self-expression (Tolia-Kelly 2007).

³⁶ The so-called: cultural turn, materialist turn and emotional turn, (Kindon *et al.* 2007: 28).

³⁷ Feminism, Critical theory, complexity theory, humanist and transpersonal psychology are some of the sub-theories situated within the three broader theoretical strands of: poststructuralism, postcolonialism and postmodernism (Kindon *et al.* 2007: 13; Alvesson & Skoldberg 2017: 148-9).

Although presenting a potentially interesting approach to research, PAR does have its own pitfalls as the literature indicated. First, is its tendency to perpetuate a power struggle instead of brokering a democratic resolution. The model can create polarisations of power in its conceptualisation of the roles played by researchers and participants (Kindon *et al.* 2007). It may possibly have the opposite effect of further marginalising certain minority groups whom it claims to give voice to. Its emphasis on change-oriented activity within locally situated contexts can miss out the bigger picture of a complex globalized world. Furthermore, as I came to discover first-hand, individuals vary in their level of commitment and engagement with the issues around their lives. Most seem not extremely willing to invest the time and energy.

Just like all other social science research methods, there are advantages and disadvantages, and researchers can choose aspects they find useful in meeting the objectives of their study. I recognise that collecting data from a multiplicity of expressive sources is a strength which does not conflict with the semi-structured methods I have adopted. What I do find resonating with me is the regard for ethical knowledge production. As there is always room for enhancing this aspect of research, I outline the aspects which have contributed to shaping this thesis in this regard. PAR's commitment to participatory engagement emphasises the ethical brokering of power roles at all stages of the research process. This involves informing the participants about the project in an accessible language to ensure that participant autonomy remains uninfluenced by technical jargon, coercion or obscurity of loaded terms, exaggerating a study's worth or concealing its objectives (Kindon *et al.* 2007; Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2017).

I have endeavoured to outline this project in such accessible terms to foster the relationships I was building with the participants. This entailed that both parties be fully aware of the project's scope, objectives and methods. I had to address a serious issue regarding transparency. My initial conception of the influence of Right-wing populism on Muslim identity was based on theoretical perspectives which view identity as

situational, relational and a process (Brubaker & Cooper 2000: 34; Brubaker 2004; Jenkins 2008). And being aware that I shouldn't make *a priori* assumptions about the factors which shape it, the idea was to allow the study's participants to articulate their identities in their own terms and then see how that related to the study's analytical categories. Along these lines, I came to recognise that I should not impose my own assumption that Right-wing populism is a relevant or even confrontational element influencing my participants' identity formation just like I did not want to take at face value that Islam was a central aspect of their identity. I faced a dilemma regarding how to strike a balance between not presenting Right-wing populism as an imminent factor of relevance and still fulfil the obligation of transparency by explicitly informing the participants about my actual research interests.

The outlined ethical dilemma made me reconsider my own position about Right-wing populism. In one way or other, we are all moved by various motivations when we engage in research. This not only has implications on how we obtain our data and what we are able to analytically state, but also on how our work can be received. For me, studying Islam's influence on the Far-Right (Barry 2013) was my way of coming to terms with the fact that the religion which I ascribe to, and moreover, one in which I am trained to represent as an Imam is perceived in such threatening terms. This was my way of overcoming my insecurities. This awareness made me restructure my conception of the research problem. This was my worldview and these were my insecurities, I should not impose it on the participants. I could share it with them in the spirit of participatory knowledge. However, if I wanted to open the space for them to share what was relevant to them, I had to change the approach.

I reconciled between the ethical guidelines gleaned from PAR and my research interests on Right-wing populism by articulating my study in terms of looking at change and its causes among Muslims in Edinburgh, Copenhagen and Malmo. By making change the primary analytical theme, I figured I could focus on my own research interests on Right-wing populism by looking at how the participants refer to it - if indeed they do. I

remained transparent by informing them that I was interested in studying the influence of Right-wing populism; however, the main topic of engagement was change. This shift in focus helped distance the relationships I was building with the participants from my own personal projections. I conceived that this would have opened the space for them to internally reflect and express the changes within their own senses of identity in ways I hoped would be equally rewarding for them.

It may sound idealistic that by articulating my project in such terms, I envisaged that the fruits of my research would become mutually beneficial to the participants. And that together, we would produce new knowledge and contribute to the current literature on Muslims in Europe especially when I made the commitment to share the results of the project with them. In retrospect, some of this has been achieved and some participants even highlighted that they found the method of engagement therapeutic. Some utilised the data for developing their own projects, and for some, participation became an outlet for venting their frustrations and concerns whether it related to the Muslim community or to Islamophobia and Right-wing populism. In general, the level of participation in the topic was engaging as we will see in the data and has resulted in a rich collection of empirical material touching upon a diverse range of themes and issues. It may have been slightly utopian to envisage a community of participants ardently creating knowledge together. This simply wasn't the case. All had their lives to get on with, and at the end of the day, it would be just my name on the PhD. In terms of data collection and ethical considerations however, PAR has offered useful ideas which have significantly helped shape this thesis.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

Confidentiality and anonymity are central ethical concerns when it comes to doing research (Punch *et al.* 2013; Seale 2013; Silverman 2013). In conducting research, we need to ensure that we protect the integrity, welfare and dignity of our research participants. Consent is the first step to begin with in ensuring that these rights are upheld. For the study, I ensured that I obtained informed consent from all my

participants both verbally and in writing and the process was repeated throughout the research engagement process. Prior to meeting any of the participants, I ensured that they were sent the project information sheet attached with a consent form. In preparing this information sheet, I ensured that I explained the project in as much detail as I saw necessary to clarify its objectives, scope and potential implications with regard to its findings, publication and dissemination. In doing this, I used as clear a language as I could and limited the technical jargon, clarifying what was difficult to omit.

All the research data gathered from recordings, transcripts, drawings, photographs and other material were stored in folders stored in my office filing cabinet once I had completed the fieldwork phase. During the fieldwork, it was challenging to access the same level of facilities. In this case, I ensured that all the data were carefully stored. Once the fieldwork phase was concluded, I uploaded all the data into files in my computer which is password protected. I then uploaded them into Nvivo, assigning pseudonyms to each of the participants so that the coding, resulting tabulations and *memos* would not bear the real names.

Outline of the Project Data

The original empirical data for this thesis comprises of individual response portfolios collected from forty five participants. These portfolios comprised interview transcripts, notes, correspondences and any additional material supplied by the participants. Twenty five of the participants were in their 20s; seven were in their 30s and nine were in their 40s. In terms of ethnicity, eleven came from a South Asian background, ten had Arabian/Middle Eastern, North African heritage, seven were white indigenous; seven were Black African and five were of mixed ethnicity. As for occupation, fourteen worked in the areas of community and social services, twelve worked in the business and finance sector, eight worked in the IT and technology industries and five were unemployed. With regard to education, nineteen were university educated and fourteen had attended full time education up till college level. The analytical chapters of the

thesis however draw on data derived from a smaller subset of twenty eight participants: nineteen second-generation and nine converts.

As the data gradually amassed toward the conclusion of the fieldwork in my first studied city (Edinburgh), I came to realise the need for an effective data storage and analysis system. Similar studies in the field of Muslim studies which adopted qualitative approaches to compare different cities and contexts (Hunter 2011; Jeldtoft 2012) used a software program called NVivo. This acquainted me to the software; following that, I received basic level training in its application at Edinburgh. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software which provides an interface for performing a number of mechanical research-related tasks such as: storing multimedia data, memoing and annotating. Where NVivo however provides a cutting edge is that it provides a wide range of tools to facilitate the more conceptual tasks of analysis, theorising and modelling. It does this through its capacity to store, retrieve and report colossal amounts of data enabling the user to request very specific data or to query points of intersection between the data which would simply be impossible for the human to execute. I used NVivo to host my data by uploading all the contents of the response portfolios into the software and subsequently organising them into different files according to the city of study and the type of media the data was recorded in.

To facilitate data analysis, I took advantage of NVivo's nodes - open digital containers which the user can freely and flexibly use to code³⁸ information from the source material. This feature of NVivo makes it a powerful tool facilitating data analysis because the user can request the program to retrieve all the data coded for a particular theme. S/he can then utilise the program's visualisation tools to inspect data where specific nodes intersected. Although this produced a rich and engaging analytical

³⁸ Refers to the activity of sorting the data into specific themes which can then be stored in the nodes. An example of some of the actual themes I used to code my data are: identity, migration, relationships, religion and Right-wing populism.

approach, it also created a problem in how to deal with the huge data in answering my research question on Muslim responses to Right-wing populism.

Rich data collection together with an extensive coding system can potentially produce high quality analysis and insightful conclusions. On the other hand, it can also cause problems in focusing on what exactly can be analytically stated with regard to the research question. I faced this challenge throughout my work. How was I going to tell my PhD story? The whole power issue emerges again when it comes to the issue of telling the 'story'. Cropping and editing a picture powerfully frames its story in a way which can significantly disadvantage the viewer (Coles 1998:106). In addressing the ethical dilemma regarding the power we exert in telling our stories, I refer to the point I made about having a nuanced understanding of power being situational and relational. I as a writer have the power to shape my story, but the reader also has the power to verify and scrutinise what I say, just as the participant has the power to shape h/er own agenda. So in this regard, we have to acknowledge that we are all exercising some form of power. I believe that as long as we are transparent about our understandings and categorisations as well as our agenda, and we inform our participants and readers of this so that they are aware of it, we go beyond shifting the power problem to actually starting to address and manage it. Liebow's works (1967; 1993) struck a chord with me in this regard. I found his presentation of the empirical data in 'Tally's corner' (1967) particularly convincing, moving and evocative.

Since the data do not have 'sense' built into them - that is, they were not collected to test specific hypotheses nor with any firm presumptions of relevance - the present analysis is an attempt to make sense of them after the fact. I have taken as the framework for the presentation and analysis of the data the street corner men as breadwinner, father, husband, lover and friend. The simplicity of such a framework is one of its principal advantages. Another and perhaps more important advantage is that the materials fall quite easily, almost naturally, into such a framework. This "natural" fit grows out of the fact that in looking at the

men as fathers, husbands, lovers, breadwinners, and so forth, we look at them in much the same way they look at themselves.³⁹ (Liebow 1967: 12-13)

In adapting this simple, yet evocative way of presenting stories, I began to find that prominent themes emerging from my own empirical data very much could ‘fall’ naturally in a framework of presentation which allowed them to sing as men, women, citizens - and perhaps most direct to our interest - Muslims who, for all we know, may or may not be too fussed about the rise of the Right in Europe.

³⁹ In my case, I can also argue that this ‘naturalistic’ and simple framework helps to portray how the participants saw themselves, and in presenting their narratives in such a way, we are able to see how, when and where the Right-wing populist factor features and impacts their lives.

Conclusion

The gap in the literature studying the impact of Right-wing populism on the social micro-level has steered me towards a distinctly qualitative methodological approach. My interest in the individual subjectivities inherent in my participants' responses best corresponded with the analytical tools provided by interpretive sociology. A pragmatic ontological and epistemological standpoint afforded me the versatility to engage with the topic of anti-Muslim Right-wing populist discourse as both a social fact as well as a subjectively perceived or experienced phenomenon.

The explorative, and hence, less theory-driven approach of this study also stems from the gap in literature above described. It should however not be understood that the study isn't informed by theory – especially in the analysis of its empirical data. Rather, by theory-driven, I refer to the fact that in the relative absence of scholarship in my field of study, I have had to explore the research terrain in order to unearth potential areas of analytical significance. The multi-sited approach in accessing the field in tandem with the useful ethical insights provided by PAR have been instrumental in generating a bounteous dataset whose analysis features in the thematic chapters. Before immersion into the rich empirical material however, I recognised the need to ground the national and local contexts I gathered my data from because of the substantial influence they have on the participants' identities, perceptions and everyday experiences.

Chapter 3

The Nations, Cities & Localities

The participants' interactions with/in their national and local contexts had a relation to their negotiations and productions of identity. And specific to the research topic, these contexts and interactions had an influence on their perceptions of and responses to Right-wing populism. This chapter presents the nations, cities and localities I conducted my research in to contextualise the participants' engagement with the research project and to bring to light the shared characteristics as well as distinguishing traits of the contexts of study. This helps in understanding the issues which will come up in the narratives and how the Right-wing populist factor featured in the scheme of the outlined contexts and interactions.

The chapter presents the essential socio-historical facts, political, economic and demographic features shaping the studied cities - Edinburgh, Copenhagen and Malmö by first considering the nations they are situated in before focusing on the city and local community levels. In addition to the literature and relevant statistics, I provide the reader with descriptions (vignettes) of the localities I conducted the fieldwork in along with reflections on some of my own experiences and perceptions. I do this to complement the reflexive element and voice of the thesis. In each section, I start with the Swedish case before moving on to Denmark and then Scotland.

Muslim Demographics, Histories & Patterns of Migration

For Sweden, and to a similar extent, Denmark, a distinguishing feature as Sander (1997) outlined is that it was an ethnically monolithic country that had retained its homogenous population composition for over a millennium. With this being the case, 'ethnic migration' to the country since the 1960s has been a profound 'shock to the system' (Sander 1997: 181). The nation transformed from being an impoverished country

witnessing a mass emigration of 1.5 million of its citizens to the United States from the mid-1800s to 1930 to being a highly advanced economically booming nation. This transformation however correlated with a fairly high immigration rate from the mid-1960s thereby creating a complex and ‘interesting situation: economically, politically and culturally’ (Otterbeck 2010: 104).

The last official census which featured ‘religious affiliation’ was in 1930. Fifteen individuals were recorded as Muslim in Sweden at the time (Larsson 2009: 331). From the 1930s to the 1960s Muslim settlements began to take shape. They were sporadic and ethno-culturally rooted. In 1949, the Turk-islamföreningen became the first Muslim organisation to form in Sweden (Otterbeck 2010). In 1956, the Ahmadiyya mission had activity in Sweden (ibid). By the 1960s through to the 1970s significantly larger Muslim communities recorded their presence on Swedish soil (Larsson 2009: 331).

By the end of the 1980s, the resident Muslim population in Sweden had reached an estimated 100,000 (Otterbeck 2010). In 1996, this figure reached 200,000, and then to an estimated 350,000 in 2000 (Anwar *et. al* 2004; Otterbeck 2010). In 2007, the figure was quoted at approximately 400,000 (Larsson & Sander 2007) - 3.5% of the total Swedish population of 9,000,000 were Muslim (Larsson 2009; Otterbeck 2010). These figures regarding the Muslim population are problematic because they are all estimated. It is illegal in Sweden to collect personal data on religious affiliations. Furthermore, they are based on data with regard to countries of birth e.g. Bosnia and Iraq without consideration of practice, culture, apostasy and conversion to other religions. More recently published statistics on the Swedish Muslim population have emerged from external bodies such as the US Department of State’s report (2014) stating the figure at 6% (600,000) of a total 10 million Swedish population. A 2017 Pew Research report documented the figure at 8.1% (810,000) of the total 10 million population.

The dominant Muslim group composing the estimated 8.1% population are Iraqis. Significantly large groups are Iranians, Bosnians, Kosovo Albanians followed by Turkish and Lebanese migrants who had resided in Sweden for a relatively longer

period of time (Larsson 2009). Refugees from Somalia, and - most recently - Syrians are two rapidly growing groups to join the Swedish-Muslim presence. With such changing demographics, the question that needs answering is: how is Sweden integrating its new 'Muslim population(s)'. In this regard, socio-economic factors need consideration. I shall turn my attention to this after bringing the remaining two nations into the picture in terms of demographics and migration patterns.

* * *

The earliest records of Muslims in Denmark are traced back to the 1880 census wherein eight 'Mohammedans' were registered as being resident in the country (Jacobsen 2009). Subsequent census data grouped the Muslims in the 'other faiths' category. From the 1880s through to the 1960s, there is an unclear picture regarding Muslim numbers due to a lack of statistical data. Post-1970, the Folkeregisteret only collected 'religious affiliation' data with specific regard to official Lutheran membership. In this case, there are similarities with Sweden where authorities do not register individual religious beliefs (Jacobsen 2009: 98), and hence statistics regarding the Muslims are based on assumptions around correlations between nationality and ethnicity with religion.

The overall trend has been an exponential growth in the Danish Muslim population from the 1960s onwards. This demographic reality - although relatively small with reference to the wider population - has come to stand out, as it has in Sweden, but more so in Denmark because of the heavier politicisation of Muslim immigration. (Schmidt 2011).

By the end of the 1960s, an estimated 2,000 Muslims were resident in Denmark (Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015). In this period, the Ahmadi (Pakistani) community have been highlighted as a significant group. Their organisation and missionary activity led to the construction of the first purpose-built mosque in Denmark - the Nusrat Djahan Mosque in Copenhagen (Jacobsen 2009). During the labour migration boom, the Muslim population reached 20,000 in 1970: 8,000 Turks, 2,000 Pakistanis and 9,000 North Africans (Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015). The 1973 halt on labour migration would

correlate with the family reunifications of the 1970s bringing the estimated resident Muslim count to 29,284 - 0.6% of the total Danish population (Jacobsen 2009) - 16,000 Turks, 6,600 Pakistanis and 3,000 Moroccans.

In the early 1990s, 'one of the most radical changes in immigration patterns of any European country' would take place in Denmark (Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015: 84). The number of migrants from the (Iraq, Iran and Lebanon) cluster went from 500 in 1980 to 15,000 within a decade - 9,000 Iranians, 2,800 Iraqis and 3,200 Lebanese entered Denmark, with the Turkish community recording 30,000 members (Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015: 84-85). This was the start of the refugee migration wave which would bring the estimated Muslim population in Denmark to about 60,000 (Otterbeck & Nielsen 2015: 84).

The waves of refugees have had various causes: the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88), the civil war in Lebanon (1975-90), the civil war in the former Yugoslavia (1991-2001), the war in Afghanistan (2001-present) and the wars in Iraq (1991 and 2003-present) (Jacobsen 2009: 97-98). In 2001, the Muslim figure in Denmark came to an estimated 150,000 (Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015: 85). By 2009, Muslims in Denmark constituted approximately (221,800) 4.0% of the Danish population (Jacobsen 2009), and most recently, Nielsen & Otterbeck (2015) published the current Muslim population in Denmark at roughly 250,800 according to figures reported in 2014.

By comparison to the studied Scandinavian countries, the statistical data on Islam and Muslims in Scotland is more precise (see Bonino 2017; Elshayyal 2016). Up until two decades ago, the focus of the data had been on South Asians and therefore didn't take religious background into consideration. As far as recent statistics are concerned, Scotland stands out because the religion question introduced in the 2001 and 2011 Census gives us very clear statistics to discuss the Muslim presence and better understand its contemporary issues. In 2001, the Muslim population accounted for 0.8% (42,557) of the total Scottish population (5,062,011). By 2011, the Muslim presence had reached 1.4% (76,737) of the total (5,295,403) overall population (Elshayyal 2016;

Bonino 2017). In terms of ethnicity, almost 60% of the Muslims living in Scotland are of Pakistani origin; 10% are of Arab ethnicity; 6% are of African heritage and 3.3% (2,501) are white Scots. As for the geographical distribution of Muslims in Scotland, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen host the significant majority with 42%, 16% and 6% of the total Muslim population residing in them respectively. Given the precise figures for Scotland, I can discuss its Muslim history and patterns of migration in tandem with demographic references after briefly surveying the Scandinavian cases first.

* * *

Sweden and Denmark along with their western European counterparts (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK) became destination countries for labour migration due to the post-war economic boom in the 1950s and 1960s creating specific labour recruitment needs (Castles 1986; Freeman 2015; Guardia & Pichelmann 2006). Foreign workers were recruited from Southern European countries and/or former colonies as well as countries neighbouring these regions (Castles 1986; Guardia & Pichelmann 2006). Labour migration post-1960 is therefore a shared pattern as far as the three national contexts of my study are concerned. In what follows, I elaborate on this, highlighting the nuances and key differences, especially for the UK (Scotland) vis-à-vis the Scandinavian context.

The 1960s was the start of rapid immigration in both Sweden and Denmark. In this regard, two key patterns need outlining. The first was this wave was the beginning of mass Muslim-heritage migration; secondly, the migrations were labour-based (Jacobsen 2009; Larsson 2009; Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015; Otterbeck 2010; Sander 1997). Young men from predominantly Turkish and former Yugoslavian countries moved to work in the labour force within the booming manufacturing industries in large and mid-sized Swedish and Danish cities of: Aarhus, Copenhagen, Gothenburg, Malmo, Odense and Stockholm (Bevelander 2004; Jacobsen 2009; Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015; Otterbeck 2010). More labour migrants from North Africa and Pakistan arrived, cumulatively creating a distinct demography within the two countries (Jacobsen 2009; Sander 1997).

By 1968, perceptions of the migrants and migration led to ‘calls for better control and stricter legislation’ in both countries (Otterbeck 2010: 104). A major economic recession in the first half of the 1970s and the 1973 oil crisis put a halt to labour migration in both Scandinavian countries as well as the UK (Scottish) context (Guardia & Pichelmann 2006; Castles 1986).

With labour migration halted, immigration would take a new face – family reunification – in the early 1970s in all three national contexts. In Sweden, this period also saw the initial wave of refugees - Ugandans in the early 1970s, and Iranians in the late 1970s (Otterbeck 2010). The mid-1980s became the heyday of refugee immigration in Sweden (Bevelander 2004; Lundh & Ohlsson 1994; Otterbeck 2010). Between 1984 and 2001, an estimated 400,000 sought refuge in the country, an approximate 150,000 had a Muslim background (Bevelander 2004). The primary countries of origin were: Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Albania. In terms of ‘group identifications and categorisations’ significant refugee populations migrating to Sweden in this period were Palestinians, Kurds (from Iran, Turkey and Iraq), Shi’is (from Lebanon and Iraq) and Kosovo-Albanians (from different countries in the Balkans) (Otterbeck 2010: 105). In Denmark, the ‘Asylum Seekers phase’ came in the 1990s where the fall of the ‘iron curtain’ along with wars and ethnic conflict in former-Yugoslavia ‘pushed upwards the number of people [Muslims] seeking asylum’ (Guardia & Pichelmann 2006: 7). The profound ‘shock to the [Scandinavian] system’ (Sander 1997: 181) caused by these demographic shifts has now been comprehensively contextualised. This was not the case for Scotland. The experience of empire and then colonialism would significantly impact migration patterns there.

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The earliest recognised Muslim migrations to Scotland are chronicled around the mid-eighteenth century (Ansari 2004; Bonino 2017; Maan 1992, 2014). An unquantified flow of Indian seamen called lascars arrived to work on ships docked at Scottish shores (Ansari 2004: 36, Bonino 2017: 11-12). Although the lascars tended to not settle

permanently, they prepared the ground for subsequent Muslim arrivals in Scotland (Maan 2014). Key events which would take place around their trade would have a significant impact on certain re-structuring of socio-economic activity. This would eventually pave the way for the Muslim community's relatively more successful integration (Bonino 2017). More about this will feature in the next section.

The next significant milestone for Muslim migration in Scotland would be in the 1880s through Indian students from middle and upper-middle class families attending Scottish universities for their higher education (Ansari 2004: 32). The 'disproportionally large numbers' of Scots serving in the East India company as well as the teaching profession has been highlighted as an influencing factor for this migratory pattern (Ansari 2004: 32; see also Bonino 2017: 12; Meer 2015: 1487). The relationship between Scotland and India had been substantial enough to warrant the third Earl of Rosebery to symbolically name it a 'Scotticised India and Orientalised Scotland' (Devine 2003: 126, cited in Meer 2015: 1487). By the early 1900s, the Edinburgh Indian Association, originally set up by six students reached 200 members (Ansari 2004: 32).

A steady flow of South Asian migration to Scotland continued after the mid-twentieth century. Post-war affluence ascribed to the Marshall and Beveridge Plans, nationalisation of key industries (the railway, coal, electricity, iron and steel), creation of the NHS and availability of council housing increased the standard of living in Scotland (Bonino 2017: 19; Devine 2012: 553-557; Mooney & Williams 2006: 610-612; see also McEwen 2006; Smith 1986). Better times and the economic boom of the 1950s - as already highlighted in the Scandinavian context - created gaps in unskilled labour. The UK looked to its colonies – South Asia in particular - to fill these gaps (Castles 1986; Guardia & Pichelmann 2006). The data however is focused on South-Asians.

What has been termed 'a chain migration' from the Indian subcontinent occurred after the passing of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1962 (Wardak 2000: 22; see also Bonino 2017: 20 and Maan 1992: 17). The sort of family reunifications which occurred in Sweden and Denmark in the 1970s following the 1973 economic (oil) crisis took

place about a decade earlier for the South-Asian community in Scotland (Bonino 2017: 20; see also Ansari 2004; Devine 2012; Wardak 2000).

The 1970s and 1980s saw the ‘internal migration of a few hundred South Asian (Muslim) families’ from England to Scotland (Bonino 2017: 21-22). The impetus for this went beyond family ties. Interestingly, perceptions of a relatively more tolerant Scottish society, the ‘affluence’ of the resident Muslim community and recognition of potential business opportunities all served as pulling factors (Bonino 2017: 21). As far as estimates on the Muslim population at that time go, Maan (1992: 17) places it at approximately 25,000. The figure went up to 35,000 in the early 1990s (Bonino 2017: 23).

The pattern of refugee migration which we saw change the Muslim demographic presence in Sweden and Denmark has not occurred in Scotland. The Scottish authorities have accepted 610 Syrian-refugee arrivals, including 68 in Renfrewshire, 58 in Argyll and Bute and 53 in Edinburgh (Addley & Pidd 2016). And while this constitutes a third of the total number of refugees accepted by the UK under its Vulnerable Persons Resettlement (VPR) scheme, in statistical terms, it is incomparable to the numbers that arrived in Sweden and Denmark from the mid-1980s to the early-2000s. In Sweden alone, between 1984 and 2001, an estimated 400,000 sought refuge in the country; 150,000 from this figure came from Muslim-majority nations (Bevelander 2004). In 2015, at the height of the refugee crisis, Sweden and Denmark reinstated border controls as a security measure addressing the colossal numbers of asylum-seeking migrants (Park 2015; see also Greenhill 2016). Besides security concerns, the socio-economic challenge of integrating immigrants from Muslim-majority countries is a significant factor for all three nations. This especially applied to Sweden and Denmark. I therefore expound on the Scandinavian context to highlight the distinct features before featuring the Scottish case in brief.

Belonging: Socio-economic Integration & Public Perceptions

Migration research has put socio-economics on par with the local and national political structures of Sweden and Denmark (Bevelander 1999; Mouritsen 2006; Otterbeck 2010). In this regard, two key factors were highlighted as crucial to the effective integration of immigrants: labour and housing (Otterbeck 2010: 109). Focusing on labour, research has highlighted how migrant integration is dependent upon their abilities to get a foothold on the employment (economic) sector in their host societies (Bevelander 1999). This in turn was dependent on the strength of the national economy as well as the structure of the labour market (Otterbeck 2010: 107-108). Changes to the economic structures during the 1970s and 80s were to make getting a foothold in the Swedish and Danish labour markets even more difficult (Bevelander 1999; Bevelander & Lundh 2007; Mouritsen 2006; Otterbeck 2010). Low-skilled jobs and unskilled labour began to disappear. The labour market systematically replaced these with

‘jobs which demanded labour with higher communicative and social abilities and which were organised on a teamwork basis’ (Bevelander 1999: 461). In short, employers wanted employees with ‘culture-specific social competence and language skills ... If anything, this is even truer today’ (Otterbeck 2010: 108).

To make matters worse, three recessions afflicted the Swedish and Danish economies: the first hit in the first half of the 1970s, the second struck in the early 1990s followed by the 2007-2009 global recession. These in combination with the substantial Muslim refugee intake since the late 1980s created a ‘permanent employment problem’ for Sweden more so than Denmark (Otterbeck 2010: 108; cf. Mouritsen 2006: 74). When labour-migration from Muslim-majority countries ceased in the 1970s, family reunification and asylum became the chief entry trajectories. The incoming Muslim population for the most part was unprepared and ill-equipped to socio-economically integrate via the labour market. They lacked essential language and social skills; any higher education they may have received in their home countries lost its value in Sweden due to non-recognition of the qualifications for the most part (Bevelander 2004).

Inexperience showed up as a significant factor. With no prior experience of dealing with large, cumulative migrant arrivals, Sweden - while learning a lot - was always at risk of making serious mistakes. Experiments of trial and error mounted: refugee camps, home-stays with relatives, asylum-seeker verification processes, creating an element of ‘chaos’ (Otterbeck 2010: 108). Large numbers of the country’s Muslim population migrated during this chaos period. Soon enough, the challenge of housing became prominent. And again, comparatively, Sweden was to fare worse than Denmark.

As a nation with a tradition of social-democratic governance, Sweden’s welfare system was bound to factor in the equation as far as Muslim integration was concerned. The nation has a very generous and inclusive welfare system which confers to ‘non-citizen newcomers’ housing, food, clothing and other necessities through state welfare benefits (Otterbeck 2010: 109). This has created an ongoing ideological debate between ‘liberals and leftists’ over whether this provides tools or creates a dependency syndrome (ibid).

* * *

Literature on Muslims in Sweden has pinpointed the ‘Million Programme’ (1960s - 1970s) as creating a unique socio-economic reality. The million apartments built with the working-class in mind became the affordable accommodation option for migrants. It however created a situation where segregated enclaves sprung up in the suburbs of the major Swedish cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. (Bevelander 2004; Larsson 2009; Otterbeck 2010). Migrant-children are born and socialised segregated from their indigenous Swedish counterparts as well as other Scandinavian migrants (Carlsson 2003; Larsson 2009; Otterbeck 2010). This has had certain ramifications on their integration and huge potential consequences for the future (Bevelander 2004). In comparison to the Danish case, although ‘most Muslims’ in Denmark find themselves in ‘geographically segregated’ areas, it is not to the same degree of concentration as the Swedish case (Mouritsen 2006: 74 cf. Larsson 2009; Otterbeck 2010). The socio-economic prospects of Muslims in Sweden have therefore been substantially impacted by this.

One of the most direct impacts of segregation is it significantly limits labour connections present in certain networks of friendships with the majority population (Bevelander 2004). Migrants therefore miss out on the social contacts which can lead to job offers and work opportunities: ‘children are robbed of the possibility of growing up with native Swedes for peers who later on in life could become vital contacts’ (Otterbeck 2010: 110). Further to this obstacle, association to segregated areas through one’s domicile (address) stigmatises job candidates in the eyes of prospective employers and within wider Swedish society (see Ristilammi 1994).

And with verbal communication skills becoming increasingly important in the labour market, migrants and their children’s Swedish competencies become affected. In segregated areas, most of the immediate circles of interaction will tend to comprise non-native Swedish speakers. This has even created a series of ‘sociolects’ - *Rinkebysvenska* and *Rosengårdssvenska* which isn’t held in high regard by employers despite the interest of linguists (Otterbeck 2010: 110). Schools in segregated areas furthermore struggle to maintain good standards and families tend to succumb to dependency on the welfare system (Carlbohm 2003; Larsson 2009). Although this may not reflect the everyday lived experiences of every single person falling within the described schema, the statistics however do show that ‘the majority of people with a Muslim family history seem to be in an unusually disadvantageous position’ (Otterbeck 2010: 110). Was this the case for Muslims in the Scottish context?

As for Scotland, from the early to mid-1920s, increasing numbers of South Asians took the self-employment route by working as pedlars ‘selling mostly ladies’, childrens’ and gents’ clothing’ (Maan 1992: 20-24). Apart from providing an alternative source of income for the migrant community, itinerant peddling dispersed the South Asian community across the Scottish cities and even to remote villages during the economic depression of the early-1930s (Ansari 2004: 48). This independent employment niche was conducive to further rooting the fledgling Scottish Muslim community through the economic boom of the 1950s and then through the early-1960s and family reunifications

of the 1970s following the passing of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act (Bonino 2017: 21).

During this period, family-run businesses, especially grocery shops replaced peddling, enabling the Pakistani and Indian families to gradually climb up the Scottish socio-economic ladder (Bonino 2017; Maan 1992). Although prejudice surfaced from the Scottish population in response to these developments, racial tensions never reached the levels they were south of the border. The small dispersed community came to be accepted for their corner-shops as the Italians were for their ice-cream parlours decades before (Devine 2012: 564; see also Bonino 2017: 20). In the period of the 1970s and 1980s, what has been termed an ‘affluent’ resident Muslim community (Bonino 2017: 20) would attract an ‘internal migration’ of Muslim families from England to Scotland. By this time, the Muslim community had managed to establish a sustained dispersed presence across Scotland (Maan 1992: 21). With the exception of some parts of Glasgow (Bonino 2017: 145), this dispersal has mitigated the segregation effect seen in the Swedish and Danish cases. In socio-economic terms of integration:

The community started diversifying, dispersing, expanding its businesses and entering new sectors (motor repair, service industry, property, do-it-yourself shops, catering, computer technology and so on). At the same time, young, educated Scottish-born Muslims accessed a range of professions that allowed a certain degree of social mobility. In the early 1990s, about 35,000 Muslims were living all over Scotland and formed a visible presence in the main urban areas as shop, restaurant and takeaway owners, as well as through a growing global and local participation in political affairs (Bonino 2017: 23).

By comparison to Scandinavia therefore, the settlement and integration of Muslims in Scotland has been a far less ‘chaotic’ (Otterbeck 2010: 108) and ‘disruptive’ (Sander 1997: 181) of the nation’s socio-economic system. As we have seen in presenting the research, the factor of Muslim integration essentially involves the reception and perceptions of the wider host societies. The Muslim migration patterns in Sweden, Denmark and Scotland correlated with certain perceptions and attitudes which influence belonging (see Bonino 2017; Larsson 2009; Mouritsen 2006; Otterbeck 2010). In the

next section, I will discuss what the literature has presented regarding these perceptions and how that directly pertained to my research interest on Muslim responses to Right-wing populism.

Public Perceptions

Public perceptions of Muslim migration in Europe, and specifically in the three national contexts (Sweden, Denmark and Scotland) strongly pertained to Right-wing populism because the issue became politicised. And from the research presented, it is deducible that the Swedish and Danish cases would substantially differ from the Scottish context as far as the factor of politicisation of Muslim migration is concerned. This certainly was the case. Referring back to the contexts of emergence for Right-wing populism in the first chapter, it was already highlighted that the Scandinavian context was markedly different from the UK (Scotland) in this regard. Comparatively, Right-wing populist rhetoric has been much sharper in the Danish context (Widfeldt 2003: 150; Art 2011: 149; Ignazi 2003: 140-147). In Sweden, the unprecedented rise of the Swedish Democrats (Hellström *et al.* 2012; Rydgren & Ruth 2013; Towns *et al.* 2014) ‘mourning’ the loss of a ‘homogenous and white society’ (Hübinette & Lundström 2011: 46) has been identified as an extreme expression of what was already a pre-existing racialised society in which cultural racism very much continues to exist (Mulinari and Neergaard 2014). I will start my analysis of the public perceptions with the Danish context.

The 1990s refugee migration phase inspired one of the ‘harshest immigration policies’ in Western Europe (Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015: 84), and with it, a heavily politicised national discourse fixated on the Muslim presence in Denmark (Jacobsen 2009: 97-98). The harsh immigration and refugee policies would however only slow, not fully stop immigration especially in the face of a new wave of refugees from ex-Yugoslavia. During the following ten years, Muslims became the object of public and political debates with regards to two issues: immigration and immigrants; and security and threat

(Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015: 84). The terrorist attacks in Europe and the US, the threats in connection with the so-called cartoon crises, Danish military engagement in Afghanistan, and the successful intervention by the Danish Security Police (PET) in Islamically motivated terror plans in Denmark, taken together, created a tense atmosphere (Jacobsen 2009: 97-98; Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015: 84).

The politically charged Danish atmosphere saw a new ‘right-of-centre’ government with a strong anti-immigration agenda come to power in November 2001 and tighten the already tight border controls with immediate effect (Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015: 85). Although the public debate on immigration momentarily eased when a centre-left government came to power in 2011 and alleviated some of the restrictive migration regulations, DPP’s⁴⁰ 2014 victory in the European parliament election in Denmark and their securing 21% of the votes in the 2015 Danish general elections indicated a resurgence of the public debate on the Muslim issue in Denmark.

In Sweden, research has highlighted that perceptions about refugees and migrants have risen in the public debate, thereby creating significant obstacles to Muslim integration (Carlbohm 2003; Larsson 2009; Otterbeck 2010). Prevalent stereotypes about migrant men and women being ‘uncivilized and suppressed’ impede their ‘ability to penetrate Swedish society’ (Otterbeck 2010: 108; see also Agerström & Rooth 2009; Bevelander 2004). In a labour market characterised by high-level communication skills and cultural sensibilities, members of the Muslim community in Sweden have continued to find themselves in the margins and often subject to discrimination - ‘all the odds are stacked against them’ (Otterbeck 2010: 108).

As a nation with a tradition of social-democratic governance, Sweden’s welfare system factored in the equation as far as Muslim integration was concerned. The nation has a very generous and inclusive welfare system which confers to non-citizen newcomers

⁴⁰ The Danish People’s Party (*Dansk FolkeParti*) – a Right-wing populist party.

housing, food, clothing and other necessities through state welfare benefits (Otterbeck 2010: 109). This compares with Denmark where the generous ‘three-year integration programme’ established by the government was a response to the migrant refugees struggling to get a foothold on the job market (Mouritsen 2006: 74 cf. Otterbeck 2010; Bevelander 1999; Bevelander & Lundh 2007). Like the inclusive Swedish welfare system, it has been criticised of being paternalist, responsible for creating a dependency syndrome and perpetuating labour market marginalisation.

Moreover, the conspicuous inability of so many Muslim immigrants, particularly women and early school leavers, to fulfil the work obligation underlying the universal welfare state may be conducive to a more homogenising and assimilationist public policy and to lower popular tolerance of cultural diversity (Necef, 2001). The question is constantly asked in what ways immigrants, particularly Muslims, must change in order to be able to function in and contribute to Danish society (Hedetoft, 2003), hence lowering the ‘price of solidarity’ for others to pay (Nannestad, 1999) (Mouritsen 2006: 74).

Needless to say, this has fed into wider public perceptions and produced negative stereotypes which have all contributed to a very politically charged and tense social atmosphere. Although the different metrics used to chart public opinion have shown a mixed picture about ‘Danish intolerance and ethnocentrism’, it is noteworthy that the country hit

an EU low, with Greece and Belgium, on measures of personal feelings of ‘disturbance in daily life’ by the presence of other nationalities, other races and particularly other religions. Also, Danes, compared to EU countries and the United States, are rather less supportive of multicultural policies (EUMC/SORA, 2001; Togeby, 1998b: 195). Finally, an increase is visible from the early or mid-1990s in affirmations of national pride and cultural superiority, fear of national culture being threatened by immigration, and support of assimilation (citizenship conditional on ‘learning to behave like Danes’) (Mouritsen 2006: 74).

While data regarding public perceptions of Muslim migration in Sweden and Denmark is fairly recent, the Scottish data contains more detail about host society perceptions of the earlier Muslim settlements. This is helpful in creating a timeline of public perception to contextualise contemporary relations and track the changes that have occurred. Towards the end of the 19th century, lascar employment soared in the Scottish port

cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee due to the expansion of the British mercantile sea trade routes to and from the East (Ansari 2004: 36; Maan 1992: 17-18). 'Structural and technological changes' within the British shipping industry created new job roles 'undesirable' to the white European workers (Bonino 2017: 12). The lascars came in and took these roles resulting in 'colonies' of Indian seamen settling within the mentioned port cities (Devine 2012: 486; see also Bonino 2017: 12).

To look further into the relationship between the Muslim migrations, host society's perceptions and socio-economic factors, it's key to highlight that the lascar arrivals in the 19th century and subsequent settlement of Muslims thereafter in the 20th century were contemporaneous with one of Scotland's 'most concentrated phase[s] of immigration' (Devine 2012: 486). This period saw Irish Catholics, Irish Protestants, Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe, Poles, Italians, Lithuanians as well as 'Asian and English people' arrive in the country (Devine 2012: 486). Establishment of the South-Asian Muslim community in this context of multi-ethnic/religious migration would elicit certain responses from the host Scottish society. These responses were influenced by two key factors: (a) the migrants' placement within the labour market, and (b) the extent of their abilities to integrate into Scottish society (Bonino 2017: 13).

In the late 1920s through to the early 1930s, 'the colour problem' emerged after riots in many of the Scottish seaports following the global collapse of the shipping industry at the end of the First World War (Ansari 2004: 96-99). The cheap colonial seaman workforce was quickly outlined as a threat in the face of fast disappearing jobs and dropping wages. In this regard, the South-Asian Muslim community had more in common with the Irish Catholics, Lithuanians and Polish workers vis-à-vis the Irish Protestants, Jews and Italians. Besides being more higher-skilled, the Irish Protestants had a sectarian commonality with their Presbyterian Scottish counterparts (Devine 2012: 485-487). As for the Jews and Italians, their entrepreneurial self-sufficiency enabled them to avoid competing with the locals in the job market (ibid). A potentially negative situation was averted through diverting the South Asian economic activity away from

competing in the labour market therefore. An era of itinerant peddling ensued from the mid-1920s through the economic depression of the early-1930s (Maan 1992: 20-24; 2014: 20). And we saw in the previous section, how the gradually settling Muslim community came to diversify and disperse their economic activities in ways which not only created enterprise for both Muslims and non-Muslims, but most importantly, avoided competing in the low-skilled job sector (Bonino 2017: 13-14, 190). This socio-economic element has been highlighted as a top factor accounting for the relatively positive public perceptions and good relations between Scotland and its Muslim population (Bonino 2017: 189).

Having looked at the three nations in terms of Muslim demographics, histories, patterns of migration, socio-economic integration and public perceptions, it remains for me to engage with the issue of citizenship.

Citizenship

I start with Scotland, which - up to now - remains a part of the Union. In the UK, 'late-medieval territorial subjection', an imperial history and the 'race relations tradition' produced a sense of civic membership, which although thin, was open and pluralistic (Mouritsen 2012: 93-94 see also Bellamy 2008: 13; Joppke 2008: 536-7; Meer and Modood 2009: 483-4). In reaction to this civic deficit, UK governments since 2001 have sought to reinvest citizenship with significance - e.g. through a focus on core values, citizenship ceremonies and tests (ibid). This infusion of 'identity' into citizenship remains thin and retains its pluralism due to two factors: (1) the 'compatibility of citizenship with maintenance and indeed celebration of diversity' (Mouritsen 2013: 96), and (2) citizenship being conceived as an ongoing process where members contribute to its evolution (Modood 1997: 24).

Within this UK context lies the matter of Scottish citizenship – a fact that asserted itself so clearly in the 2014 independence referendum (Bonino 2017: 60-63). The finding that an ascription to Scottish nationalism on a political and social basis need not correspond

with support for secession (Mycock 2012: 64) makes this identity category interestingly malleable. Along these lines, the idea of Scottishness as less ethnically fixed than Englishness is more inclusionary as it allows ethnic minorities and faith groups to integrate under ‘a national banner of civic unity, belief in social justice and a sense of tolerance’ (Bonino 2017: 59; see also Kyriakides et al. 2009: 297). A progressive politics, an inclusive civic nationalism labelled as ‘aspirational pluralism’ provide a fertile breeding ground of hybrid identities to stake claims of belonging to Scotland (Bonino 2017: 195; see also McCrone 2002; Meer 2015).

Denmark is ‘highly civic, egalitarian and ethno-cultural’ (Mouritsen 2013: 97). Historically, the (1848-64) German occupation created an ‘introvert cultural nationalism’ marked by a territorial, linguistic and religious homogeneity (ibid). This would lead to collective Danish identity being connected to a tight-knit, language-based ethnic group which sees Lutheranism as a shared cultural Christianity (Gudrun Jensen 2008: 390; Hansen 2002; Kærgård 2006). It would take a century (1870-1970) for the introvert nationalism to evolve into an egalitarian ‘society-penetrating welfare state’ (Mouritsen 2012: 97; see also Kærgård 2006: 1). Homogeneity and consensus are celebrated as national values, thereby placing ‘a strong onus on immigrants to behave like the native population’ (Mouritsen 2013: 101).

With the arrival of the Liberal-Conservative government in 2001, integration policies aimed at the Muslim community resulted in a two-tiered conception of citizenship: *medborgerskab* (civic membership i.e. ‘being one of us’) and *statsborgerskab* (legal nationality). The latter has been increasingly tightened through restrictive measures on: periods of qualifying residence, continued refusal of dual citizenship, tighter language and knowledge tests and prohibitive family reunification policies. *Medborgerskab* on the other hand, took the centre of official public discourse (Mouritsen 2013: 97). The articulation of Danish citizenship duties in civic democratic terms ‘directed inwards towards family, outwards towards the welfare state community, and upwards towards

national democracy' has been framed in discourses which 'clearly presuppose stereotypes of (Muslim) traditionalism' (Mouritsen 2013: 97).

From the 1960s and 1970s, Swedish citizenship was based on a liberal-universalist conception of the nation where an inclusive multiculturalism accompanied an equitable welfare system (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 47; Gustafson 2002: 467-8; Soininen 1999: 686). This inclusiveness was enhanced by the government distancing itself from the implicit assimilationist policies pre-1960 (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 48; cf. Gustafson 2005: 9). The Swedish model was hailed as 'one of the most balanced political attempts to merge a liberal-universalist framework of citizenship with particular identity claims' (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 48). In theory, newcomers were supposed to 'exercise substantial citizenship' through active participation in civil society - which in turn was expected to respect and draw on 'the cultural and social resources of migrants' (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 48; see also Gustafson 2002: 471-2; Soininen 1999: 686).

In reality, discriminatory housing policies and an exclusivist labour market was carving an ethnically divided society. Social unrest came in the mid-1980s when the arrival of African and Asian refugees sparked 'proto-Nazi' violence. (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 48; Soininen 1999: 687). The state attempted to rectify the status-quo by merging economic growth with social inclusion through the buzzwords: 'lifelong learning', 'employability' and 'ethnic entrepreneurship', however, these initiatives correlated with the erosion of the state's framework of social citizenship (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 49; Bevelander & Pendakur 2012: 220). The situation is now comparable to the US and UK where 'structurally based forms of social polarisation, poverty and racialised exclusion' limit ethnic minority citizenship (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 50). And the emergence of the immigrant or Muslim problem feeding into the national political arena moves the public discourse closer to that of Denmark.

With these broad overviews providing a good historical, socio-economic and political context to citizenship in addition to the data on Muslim integration, migration histories

and demographics of the three nations, it is time to focus on the cities. As I have outlined, the city/urban has been the primary contextualisation for my study. It is therefore important to give each city due focus in terms of socio-historical context, demographics and economic factors. I start with Malmo before moving on to Copenhagen and then Edinburgh.

The Cities & Localities

Malmo

A ‘city with two faces’ (Anderson 2014: 10) seems to be a fairly sharp way to define Malmo. In a number of ways, I can recognise why this is, based on the statistics and research academia has produced, but also, more directly, based on my direct experiences of living in Malmo just over five years. On the one hand, the city has reinvented itself through a number of facelifts becoming a hub of culture and creativity, whilst on the other hand, about half its population - foreign born- continue to struggle with unemployment and socio-economic segregation (Bevelander 2004: 21-22). It has attracted praise as a ‘green city’ of sustainability, ecological development and urban planning on the one hand whilst on the other it has been portrayed as one of the hotbeds of Eurabia and Sweden's Little Chicago (Anderson 2014; Nordin 2005).

Malmo, situated in the southern-most part of the Skåne province was a Viking village (Anderson 2014). From the 1270s it was a part of Denmark and became its second largest city with an established sea-export economy (ibid). Its population grew to about 5000 by the dawn of the fifteenth century (ibid). The Treaty of Roskilde in 1658 saw it come under Swedish possession, and by 1800, its population had soared to 38,048 (Anderson 2014). The Kockum shipyard founded in 1840 and opening of the Southern Main railway transformed Malmo into a world-leading ship building centre with a bustling textile and mechanical industry (Anderson 2014; Carlbom 2003). This boosted its population to 60,000 by 1900 and then to 100,000 and 200,000 in 1915 and 1952 respectively. It then peaked to 265,505 in 1970 (Anderson 2014).

The 1973-1975 recession and the Swedish financial crisis in the early 1990s hit Malmö badly. The city's industries and ship manufacturing sectors suffered heavy losses. Some companies like Kockums actually closed, thereby leading the city into economic stagnation (Anderson 2014). The population declined by 35,000 in 1985 to 229,000 (Statistics Sweden, 2013). A declining industrial city was faced with a bleak future up until a new municipal leadership headed by Ilmar Reepalu (Estonian origin) proposed a new vision for Malmö to steer it from its post-industrial depression to become a sustainable global city of culture with a knowledge-based economy (Anderson 2014).

A number of key urban regeneration projects helped usher in a new dawn for Malmö: the Oresund Bridge linking Sweden to Denmark (1995-2000) Malmö University (1998) and a new landmark, the highest skyscraper in Scandinavia (the Turning Torso) in 2005 (Anderson 2014; Carlbom 2003). Malmö has heavily invested in sustainable urban developments such as the Western Harbour (Västra Hamnen) from 2001 as a locus of its vision of synergising 'innovation, creativity, resident participation and sustainability' with its ambition of being a Green City, climate neutral by 2020 and 100% run on renewable energy by 2030 (Anderson 2014: 15).

The facelift above described has however been a partial one, perhaps applied to just one half of the city's 'face' (Anderson 2014). A significant demographic detail needs careful consideration especially in its relation to this thesis. The official population of Malmö in 31 December 2017 was 333,633 (Malmö stad 2017)⁴¹. From that, a third (135,000) are of a 'foreign' background, a 100,000 of whom were born overseas (Malmö stad 2017). How did the population which dipped in 1985 following the rapid deindustrialisation and unemployment swell to what it currently is? Waves of family reunification and refugee migration (Anderson 2014; Bevelander 2001, Otterbeck 2001) were the

⁴¹ <https://malmo.se/Kommun--politik/Fakta-och-statistik/Befolkning/Befolkningsprognos.html> (Accessed 09/05/2018).

principal reasons for this population swell, and with it, a unique demographic situation with associated socio-economic challenges has been created (Otterbeck 2010).

Incoming refugees have shown an affinity to Malmö, and especially certain segregated districts like Rosengård (Anderson 2014; Bevelander 2004; Carlbom 2003). The municipality's mayor at one point wrote an open letter to the Swedish government in 2004 complaining that the freedom of choice exercised by refugees in choosing their settlement was creating an unequal distribution stretching the city's resources (Anderson 2014: 15). From a socio-political angle, the status-quo has created something of a polarised city: ethnically segregated enclaves on one end and a 'white commuter belt' supportive of the Right-wing populist Swedish Democrats party on the other (Anderson 2014: 15).

Rosengård as Locality

Research has outlined Rosengård as a local context of contestation and relevant interest to the theme of this thesis (Anderson 2014; Carlbom 2003; Otterbeck 2010). Rosengård (literally: Rose Manor) is a district within Malmö municipality built between 1967 and 1973 as part of the nationwide 'Million Homes Programme'. It is 332 hectares in size with a population of 23,563 (2012). In January 2007, 60% of its residents were foreign-born. This figure went up to 86% in 2008 (Anderson 2014). Education and unemployment are among the major socio-economic issues: only 60% complete elementary school compared to a citywide 100% average, and with regard to work only 38% of the residents are employed vis-a-vis the 80% citywide average.⁴²

Whilst Malmö has recorded remarkable progress post-industry, its investment in areas such as the Western Harbour (Västra Hamnen) has caused a gentrification (Andersen 2014: 15) which is making the existing segregation even more accentuated. Tensions

⁴² Herrgården - värst utsatta området i Rosengård". Dagens Nyheter. (20 December 2008). <https://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/herrgarden-varst-utsatta-området-i-rosengard/> (Accessed 10/05/2018).

have been stirred by this unique social, political, economic and migration *cocktail* (Anderson 2014; Otterbeck 2010). A public discourse around the Malmo integration problem has become national along with the regular reports of low civic participation, violence and hate crime - such as the reported 60 incidents of anti-Semitism in 2009 (Anderson 2014: 13).

Copenhagen

Copenhagen (literally: merchants' harbour) - the Danish capital has a population of 775,033 (Statistics Denmark,⁴³ January 2018). It was a small Viking fishing village in the tenth century (Woodward 1998: 7-8). The area's natural harbour and good herring stocks enabled it to become a thriving town during the reign of Kings Valdimar I and II of Denmark (Slumstrup 2017). By the early fourteenth century, it emerged as capital of the United Kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden and Norway: the Kalmar Union 1397–1523 (Ingebritsen 2006: 7). By 1711, Copenhagen's population reached about 65,000. The plague which struck the city that year, followed by two major fires in 1728 and 1795 topped with the British Bombardment of the city in 1807 reduced the population by an estimated 25,000 (Woodward 1998: 10).

With the cumulative destructions of the city's infrastructure, the renovation work which took place in the 1880s was long overdue (ibid). The defunct defence walls (ramparts) on the west were removed to allow for new housing in tandem with the planned ensuing industrialisation. This created new districts such as Nørrebro and Vesterbro to house labourers migrating from the provincial areas. These key processes caused the population to swell to 120,000 and then to about 400,000 in 1840 and 1901 respectively (Ejlensen: 2017).

By the start of the twentieth century, Copenhagen established itself as an industrialised city with a healthy economy which benefited from the nation's neutrality in World War

⁴³ <https://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/emner/befolkning-og-valg> (Accessed 10/05/2018).

I (Baltzersen, 2005; Woodward 1998: 18-19). Denmark couldn't however avoid some collateral damage during the Second World War when it was occupied by Germany who initially envisioned the nation as a potential 'model protectorate' (Poulsen 1995: 10). A major project to shape post-war Copenhagen would be the 1947 Five Finger project - a ground-breaking urban development project which saw housing, commerce/business and recreational spaces interlace with greenery in a five-fingered stretch from the city centre (Cervero 1998: 146; Woodward 1998: 19-20). The boom in industry and construction drew in migrant labour from the 1950s and 1960s. In the early-1970s and through to the 1980s, a set of 'eroding processes' afflicted the city in the aftermath of the economic crisis that affected Western Europe (Andersen & Winther 2010). Housing, amenities and transport aside, the process of continuous de-industrialization had the most significant socio-economic impact. It led to slower economic and population growth as a loss of jobs and relocation of high earning middle-class families and businesses set in.

The central city was thus characterized by job losses, loss of high-income families, high unemployment rates, an ageing population, a rise in the number of students and low-income singles, high welfare costs and dated housing, as well as increasing segregation, polarization and poverty as a result of a long-term crisis (Andersen & Winther 2010: 695).

Like Malmo, Copenhagen had to go through certain restructuring processes to keep with the 'rising inter-urban competition' (Fertner 2013: 325; Swyngedouw *et al.* 2002). To revitalise its economy, the city embarked on a number of high investment projects such as the Oresund bridge expansion of Copenhagen Airport, an enhanced road network and state-of-the-art metro system (Fertner 2013). The city's universities and cultural institutions were also expanded complementary with the 'very costly neighbourhood programme aimed at modernizing the dwellings of the inner cities' (Kristensen 2001, cited in Andersen & Winther 2010: 695).

However, as Scott (2008) recently pointed out, a strong divide remains between the 'surface glitter' of the new economy and its amenities and the 'underlying squalor' that is being produced concurrently. This 'underlying squalor' manifests

itself in new patterns of crime and gangs, a variety of riots, violence, strengthened ghettos, social conflicts, Mac-jobs, informal-economy jobs and social imposture. This development is in stark contrast to the polished face of urban-renewal and regeneration processes and the strong place-marketing efforts of local and regional authorities. This squalor is not new. It is rooted in underlying patterns of segregation and polarization that came into existence in the 1970s and 1980s. Such patterns were in many cases strengthened in the past 10 years: the making of a resurgent city also divide the city according to income, education and occupation (Andersen & Winther 2010: 695-6).

These new regeneration initiatives certainly revitalised the city's economy as it shifted from its industrial past to a distinctly more knowledge-based service economy driven by professionalism, talent and creativity - not unskilled manual labour. The new Copenhagen socio-economic model created 'uneven city-region geographies based on human capital rather than industries' (Andersen & Winther 2010: 695; see also Hansen & Winther 2007, 2010). In so many ways which mirror the Swedish case, socio-economic dynamics have created unique manifestations of uneven human geographies and segregation.

Norrebro as Muslim Locality

Just as research pinpointed Rosengard as a locality of Muslim segregation, research on Muslims in Denmark has highlighted the Copenhagen district of Norrebro as an area boasting the capital city's largest immigrant and Muslim population. In 2008, an estimated 14.6% of the Norrebro residents were classified as 'ethnic minority' (Hussain 2014). By 2009, 28.3% (20,360) of Norrebro's residents were either migrants of born to migrant parents (ibid). 'More than half of this group come from countries such as Turkey, Somalia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan and Syria (Municipality of Copenhagen 2009b cited in Schmidt 2011: 110). In January 2010, Schmidt (2016) made reference to this statistic

13,931 people were registered as immigrants, 6361 as the descendants of immigrants (Statistics Bank, Municipality of Copenhagen 2012). Although national statistics no longer includes data on people's religion, there is no doubt that Nørrebro has a large segment of Muslim inhabitants, as underlined by the many Muslim institutions (mosques and schools), processions and references to

the Muslim religion (e.g. signboards on restaurants telling customers that the food sold is 'halal', or people dressing according to Islamic dress codes) found in the area (Schmidt 2016: 59).

Conflicting statistics have been given for this particular issue perhaps due to the fact that the Danish statistics, like the Swedish case do not feature religion as a recorded category, and hence estimates are based on assumptions around country of origin. Møller & Larsen (2015: 8) citing Københavns Kommune (2014) stated that 19.2% of the Norrebro 'inhabitants were from non -Western countries'. It has been identified amongst the six most disadvantaged Copenhagen areas (Eurocities 2012: European Commission). What the statistics show is: although Norrebro certainly does have more than an averagely sized Muslim population, it is not on par with Rosengård where the statistics for immigrants exceed 60%. The segregation is therefore more pronounced there. Garbi Schmidt (2016) highlights this by comparing Norrebro - not with Rosengård - but with Møllevång, a more 'hip' Malmö district.

But Nørrebro is also, and just as importantly, the neighbourhood where for decades left-wing activists have thrown cobblestones at the police and set fire to the streets, and where young students, intellectuals and musicians drink their coffee lattes and micro-brewery beers in front of fancy cafes (not unlike Møllevången in Malmö, as described by Frykman, this volume). Nørrebro easily fulfils a stereotypical expectation of diversity, and even of a bricolage of diversities (Schmidt 2016: 51).

The picture therefore becomes clearer with regard to Norrebro. It is an area of very interesting contestations of space where a mixture of diversity in terms of ethnicity, levels of income, political ideology and social activism vibrantly co-exist. It is an area highlighted in its historical role of being a receiving hub for migrants⁴⁴ with a long-ingrained identity of being ethnically diverse, anti-establishment and politically active

⁴⁴ 'Norrebro has always been a product of immigrant settlements: a hundred years ago immigrants came from the Danish countryside and neighbouring countries such as Sweden, Norway and Germany (Willerslev 1981). From the 1960s onwards, people have come from more remote corners of the world, transforming the neighbourhood into an urban example of ethnic 'hyperdiversity' (Vertovec 2007)' (Schmidt 2011: 111).

(Schmidt 2011). Norrebro has its own distinct identity, which over the course of its history has shifted and changed with regard to the national debates it has aroused. Today, it ‘currently plays a role in national debates over multiculturalism and Islam’ (Schmidt 2011: 110) which political parties and figures such as the Danish People Party’s founder Pia Kjaersgaard would use as a ‘trope’ in their rhetoric such as her article ‘*Giv os Norrebro tilbage*’ (Give us back Norrebro).⁴⁵

Edinburgh

The city’s civilization goes back considerably further when compared to the Nordic cities. The earliest archaeological findings date the traces of human settlement to ca. 8500 BCE (Denison 2001). Not much is known about these early settlements and this includes the first century accounts indicating the arrival of the Romans, their engagements with the native Celtic Brittonic tribes and the struggles over rulership with the Northumbrian kingdoms (Ritchie & Ritchie 1972: 51). A royal charter by King David I (1124-1127) would be the first documentary evidence reaching us mentioning the medieval burgh as *Edenesburg* (Daiches 1978: 15). The Union of the Crowns by King James VI of Scotland in 1603 followed by the Acts of Union in 1707 merged the parliaments of England and Scotland in Westminster (Patterson 2000). By the middle of the eighteenth century, Edinburgh was an established centre for banking and boasted a prosperous but highly populated city. The earliest census data collected by the Edinburgh presbytery marked the city’s population at 8,003 in 1592 (Lynch 2011: 219).

Migrations from the rural areas at the beginning of the nineteenth century would contribute to an exponential population growth to 136,000 in 1831 from its total of 49,000 in 1751 (Edwards & Jenkins 2005: 9). This swell would see the dilapidated Old Town reach an unprecedented population density spurring the affluent business and professional classes to move to the better living conditions offered by the New Town

⁴⁵ The article was published in her weekly newsletter in November 2003 (Schmidt 2012: 110).

constructed from 1767 onwards - something that would change the city's social character (Youngson 1988: 256). It is noteworthy to highlight the relatively less-industrialised character of Edinburgh. Despite the continued growth of the traditional contemporary distilling, printing and brewing industries in the nineteenth century up until their demise in the 1980s, Edinburgh fell behind the other industrial cities like Glasgow (Pryde 1962: 141).⁴⁶ Newer industries such as engineering and banking in particular started to emerge as the key shapers of the city's economy which went in tandem with significant population growth from 82,560 in 1801 to 394,898 in 1901 (ibid). The economic stagnation during the 1970s crisis affected the city as its population decreased by 10.3% from 466,761 in 1951 to 418,748 in 1991 (GB Historical 2018). A number of regeneration projects such as the establishment of a new financial district over the former industrial area, the Edinburgh Park business and technology hub, university building developments enabled the city to restructure its economy to one based on financial services, knowledge, scientific research, higher education and tourism (Edinburgh Council 2017). The most recent official statistics for the city's population (2016) was 507,170.

* * *

The Edinburgh Muslim population is distinguished by a number of characteristics pointed out by Bonino (2017) in his pioneering study 'Muslims in Scotland' making him highlight the city as one which represents one side of the two sided Muslim experience of the nation:

It is important to bear in mind that the experiences of Scottish Muslims is twofold. They include high levels of integration, social participation and tolerance, which are unique to Scotland and are epitomised by Edinburgh. But they also register more complex living conditions, which are typical of large British conurbations hosting large Muslim populations and which are exemplified by Glasgow (Bonino 2017: 35).

⁴⁶ Population figures for 1801 – Glasgow 77,385; Edinburgh 82,560; for 1821 – Glasgow 147,043; Edinburgh 138,325 (Pryde 1962: 141).

Bonino (2017) used Glasgow as a case for comparison and highlighting these distinguishing traits given that it hosts the largest Muslim community in Scotland. The first is low levels of economic deprivation among the Edinburgh Muslim population (9.5%) vis-a-vis Glasgow (19%). The SIMD index showed the capital city's Muslim population fared better in all seven domains: (1) employment; (2) income; (3) health; (4) education, skills and training; (5) geographical access to services; (6) crime and (7) housing. The second major distinguishing trait is the ethnic composition of the two communities. The Pakistani communities of Glasgow and Edinburgh constitute 65% and 43% respectively. The Scottish capital boasts more heterogeneity due to its 'international appeal' (Bonino 2017). A third crucial factor is that whilst Glaswegian Muslims were more likely to find themselves living in segregated neighbourhoods (60% of Glaswegian Muslims are concentrated in Glasgow South), the Edinburgh Muslim community 'is widespread and scattered across the city [...] this could favour closer contact and better integration within wider society' (Bonino 2017: 34). In this respect, Edinburgh differs from the Scandinavian cities of Malmö and Copenhagen because unlike them, scholarship hasn't outlined any specific locality as a context of segregation or contestation.

I have been fortunate enough to have had direct lived experiences of all three cities. This has been a great advantage as I have already outlined in the methodology chapter. To reflexively wrap the data presented thus far into the historical, social, cultural, economic and political contexts of the three cities, I now present my vignettes of life in Malmö, Copenhagen and Denmark. This, I felt, would also serve as a nice way to bridge the grey preparatory and contextual data with the empirical material I collected during the course of my fieldwork.

Vignettes of Malmö, Copenhagen & Edinburgh

I thought it would complement the sociological and reflexive approach I have adopted in this thesis and especially the voice I have tried to write in to describe the field sites and highlight my own direct experiences of them. I have also been inspired to take this route

by works I have read in sociology (Hunter 2018; Liebow 1967, 1993) and even in the anthropological studies of Muslims in Malmo (Carlbom 2003). Swedish anthropologist Aje Carlbom (2003) along with his wife - fellow anthropologist - Sara Johnsdotter (2003) lived in Rosengard for two years in order to conduct their study. Having myself lived in Rosengard for the first year of my residency in Sweden (mid 2012-2013) before moving on to Hermodsdal⁴⁷ for another two years (2013-2015), I could easily identify with their descriptions of the field. In recognising the benefit of providing such insights for the reader and for contextualising the study I will briefly describe the area using my perceptions and experiences.

I remember being told: you can go out dressed like a Muslim in Rosengard and you would be 'normal'. That was certainly the case - I did this a good number of times, going out dressed in my *Thawb*.⁴⁸ Although not sticking out for my Muslimness, my ethnicity certainly did stick out. There weren't a lot of Africans around - the few Somali and Ethiopian families seemed to fade away - quite literally. Rosengard is dominated by Arabs⁴⁹ - I met residents from many different Arab countries: Iraq, Palestine and Tunisia mostly, and few Egyptians, Yemenis and Jordanians. The local *Musalla*⁵⁰ called *al-Rabita* was clearly ran with an Arab Muslim Brotherhood influence - as pointed out by Otterbeck (2010) and Larsson (2009). Besides the Arabs, another main Muslim ethnicity were the Kurds, from Iraq mainly. There was this lingering feeling of tension and unease between the Arabs and Kurds although some got along really well, established friendships and even had business partnerships.

⁴⁷ This is another segregated area in Malmo.

⁴⁸ Full-flowing male robe.

⁴⁹ Statistics in 2010 outlined the largest national/ethnic groups as: Iraq (2,957), Former Yugoslavia (2,172) Lebanon (1,370), Bosnia & Herzegovina (1,211), Somalia (550), Denmark (541), Poland (475), Afghanistan (406), Turkey (357) and Pakistan (230).

⁵⁰ Prayer space, the difference between it and a mosque is the *Jumu'ah* (Friday congregational prayer) would not tend to take place in a *Musalla* due to its small size.

In terms of physical descriptions of Rosengard, the area is a mini constellation of identical high rise eight-storey buildings constructed during the 1970s under the 'Million Programme'. Clusters of three to five buildings would be interlinked with green spaced playgrounds for families each having a unique set of accessories (swings, slides, climbing frames, enclosed 5-a-side Astroturf pitches, outdoor barbecue slabs - not bad eh). The accessories together with the buildings were well looked after by the MKB⁵¹ company who seemed to recruit some staff from the Rosengard community. Whenever we had a problem with the plumbing, cooker or even noisy neighbours, they would quickly and efficiently address it. There was a shared communal launderette where you would book three hour slots in a neat and orderly way - very Swedish. All in all, as Carlbom (2003) described it, a complete contrast to the enclaves of 'Little Istanbul' (Kreuzberg, Berlin) or the segregated neighbourhoods in London and the US. One of my friends visiting from Leyton (East London) hit the nail on the head when he said to me 'bruv, if this is the worst part of Sweden, I would like to see what the best part looks like!'

So what's wrong with Rosengard? Well, from a Muslim eye, nothing really. It's a comfortable place, where you have everything you need: *Khubz Arabi*, *Baklava*, *Burek*,⁵² a library, Swedbank branch, Post Office, a shopping centre, the SFI school,⁵³ a sports centre (which would be rented out for the Friday congregational prayer) and *Social*.⁵⁴ You didn't really have to go out of Rosengard unless you worked - if you found a job - or studied or had some errand outside the area. I found this to be perhaps a source of potential stagnation. It wasn't unusual for Rosengard residents to live in

⁵¹ *Malmö Kommunala Bostads AB* is Malmo's biggest housing company owning 21,300 apartments (29% of the market). They built the Rosengard residential area.

⁵² *Khubz*: bread. *Burek* is a filled baked pastry popular in Balkan, Levantine and Mediterranean cuisine.

⁵³ *Svenska för indvandrare* - Swedish for immigrants.

⁵⁴ *Social*: state welfare benefit. One Yemeni brother told me one day "look [pointing at the buildings early morning] they're all sleeping because they're on *social* [welfare]".

Sweden for over a decade and not be able to speak Swedish - so I was told by the shopkeepers and some brothers who spoke about their own parents. From my point of view, what I found problematic was that kind of segregation and enclavisation produced a type of mentality which was somewhat restricted and restricting. I would stop short of saying: ghetto mentality. When I first showed up regularly worshipping at the *Rabita*, I would become very uncomfortable by the number of times I would be asked what I was doing in Sweden and if I had *Iqamah*.⁵⁵ They wanted to know your business.

I came to learn during my SFI classes that my classmates were actually stigmatised by being ‘refugees’. I would overhear in Arabic when they would talk about a person, they would ask: *hal huwa laaji*⁵⁶ as a main point of reference. And as for the youth, I would find myself saying to them ‘you have a Swedish passport, the world’s your oyster, why do you have to be stuck here if you genuinely believe that your talents are being wasted?’ In many ways, I came to recognise a paradox: on the one hand, the Swedish state seemed to open the doors to these people to come in. But when they arrived, it appeared that the society wasn’t quite prepared to integrate them. My experiences showed me that the Muslim community in Rosengård came to actually internalise and embody this Swedish experience, and it shaped their own relations. They would outwardly open the doors of their *Musalla* and *Föreningar*,⁵⁷ but it could take considerable period before newcomers were actually integrated and incorporated, especially if they came from a different background.

* * *

Copenhagen would be my first landing spot after a ten-year absence from Europe. I arrived at the city in August 2011 to study the MA Religious Roots of Europe

⁵⁵ Arabic: residence permit.

⁵⁶ Arabic: is he an asylum seeker/refugee?

⁵⁷ Swedish: associations. The Swedish government generously funds community based projects. I noticed a good number of such *förenings* in both Rosengård and Hermodsdal. Otterbeck (2010: 106) noted: ‘SST gives each community some financial support that is calculated based on the size of the community. Often this support is used to cover rental costs, costs for an imam or the employment of administrators...’.

programme generously funded by the Faculty of Theology, the University of Copenhagen - to whom I am most grateful. The city has an amazing feel of order and structure to it - the organised compactness, the transport system etc. Perhaps this feeling was accentuated given that for the past decade, I lived in the Middle East and West Africa, and prior to that I was in Leyton (East London). For the first few months, I was resident in Frederiksberg, known as the green village of Copenhagen, an area with beautiful gardens and an overall tranquil neighbourhood with a well-known posh vibe. How did I find myself living there? Well, I'm Gambian, and our long-distant family ties somehow always find us an uncle or aunt somewhere in whatever part of the world we managed to venture to. I was kindly lodged by my uncle who settled in Denmark in the 1980s and his native Danish wife for the first few months until I found my feet and moved to Malmo.

The 'Muslim scene' in Frederiksberg was unsurprisingly not that vibrant. In fact, the nearest prayer space/mosque was located in the Norrebro area - a twenty minute walk away, and the contrasts were there even though the two neighbourhoods were adjacent. Whilst Frederiksberg is a 'gourmet's paradise'⁵⁸ and its residents tend to be on the slightly older end of the age scale and 'more established', Norrebro is colourfully littered with shawarma houses, bazaar-style Arabian jewellery stores, shisha bars, indie shops and hip cafes where 'left-wing activists [...] students, intellectuals and musicians drink their lattes and micro-brewery beers' (Schmidt 2016: 51). A group of friends came to visit me in Malmo whilst I was doing fieldwork there and I took them on a road trip crossing the Oresund Bridge to the Danish capital. I showed them around Norrebro. One of them commented saying how they could 'feel' the difference between the 'twin cities'⁵⁹ - Malmo and Copenhagen. They could feel the vibrancy of the Danish capital and the distinct multicultural vibe of Norrebro especially.

⁵⁸ Description by: <https://www.visitcopenhagen.com/copenhagen/culture/posh-frederiksberg> (accessed 05 May 2018).

⁵⁹ This was his expression.

The Muslim community in Norrebro - from what I could glean from my visits to the area, eating there, shopping and worshipping at the mosque - was far less insular than Rosengard. People didn't have the time to ask you what you were doing in Denmark and nose about - there was a vibrancy in the air. After the prayers people would disperse to their businesses and workplaces after brief chats. Muslim employment was certainly in greater abundance and much easier to secure in Copenhagen than it was in Malmo.⁶⁰ I knew a good number of the Swedish brothers who found work in the Danish capital as bus drivers, postmen, cleaners. Some worked at the airport and they would make the daily commute over the Oresund Bridge. The youth were also far more active in the Muslim organisations and mosques than what I had seen in Malmo where the gerontocratic face of the Muslim community leaderships seemed to push the youth aside. Back in Copenhagen, the youth were much more engaged in socio-political issues. Hizb-ut-Tahrir had a felt impact on the Muslim youth scene, although the dominant ideology was that of the Muslim Brotherhood - similar to Malmo.

* * *

One of the initial questions I asked in the beginning of my stay in the Scottish capital in September 2013 was: could you please tell me where the Muslim area is? The answer to my surprise was, a puzzling look, then an awkward pause and then: 'no *akhi*. The Muslims live all over the city'. That was an amazing revelation to me. Apart from the obvious Madinah and Makkah, the only city I've been to that doesn't have what resembles a Muslim or immigrant area is Edinburgh. With time spent in the city as a resident, I've come to see the significance this has on both the Muslim and wider non-Muslim Scottish society. The little pockets of dispersed Muslims in all corners of the

⁶⁰ This has been attributed to the difference in the labour market structure. The trade unions in Sweden are extremely strong meaning a 'job is almost for life', employers tend to exercise more caution in who they employ therefore. The Danish flexicurity system on the other hand makes hiring and firing easier for employers and hence they are prepared to take more risks in who they employ.

city of Edinburgh has indeed - as Bonino (2017) observed and theorised- facilitated the integration of Muslims.

When I first came in 2013, I lived further out of the city centre in Portobello. The Edinburgh city centre is indeed a thriving hub for a plethora of activities, this included Muslim-related affairs. The city centre boasts several mosques, and the further out one goes the more sporadic the mosque locations and establishments. In Portobello, there was one mosque affiliated to the Barelvi Pakistani community. And this is a distinguishing feature of Edinburgh compared to the Scandinavian cities. Sufism and especially the Deobandi and Barelvi traditions were the dominant Islamic ideological and methodological strains over against the more political Muslim Brotherhood and Hizb-ut-Tahrir movements. This is explained by the demographics. Whilst some 43% of the Edinburgh Muslim community are Pakistani, in Copenhagen and Malmo, the Pakistanis are a tiny minority compared to the dominant Arab community.

In Edinburgh mosque attendance is a mixed choice between local proximity and ideological affinity. It isn't uncommon for Muslims to drive significant distances to attend a mosque they felt more ideologically, culturally and ethnically inclined to. This is well demonstrated in the interesting case of Annandale Street which has two mosques roughly adjacent to one another. One is Pakistani and the other is Bengali. Recently a Turkish mosque has opened in Gorgie.

The dispersal of the Muslim community has brought about particular advantages but it has also caused certain challenges such as community building and cohesion. Not living in a Muslim area means more risk of hyper-visibility particularly for the *Hijab* wearers. Muslim parents also lament the difficulty of raising children with a distinct Muslim identity. A distinguishing feature is the strength of support and outreach to Muslims, assisting their integration both within civil society as well as the Scottish government. Interfaith work in particular stands out as well as the city's annual cultural festival.

Conclusion

In this presentation of the three cities - Edinburgh, Copenhagen and Malmo, we have seen how the levels of nation and locality interplay to shape the unique characters of the cities. These unique features, when held up against Muslim migration in these different contexts shaped the national discourses, public perceptions and hence the everyday lived experiences of being Muslim. With regard to the research question on Right-wing populism, the three contexts have exhibited certain nuances about: (a) the politicisation of Muslim immigration in the public discourse (b) polarisations occurring as a result of segregation and (c) the perception of Muslims being a socio-economic burden on the state.

Scotland (Edinburgh) stands out with regard to its low scoring on each of the above outlined factors. Historically speaking, Right-wing parties have never managed to get a strong foothold in UK national level politics as highlighted in the first chapter. The well dispersed nature of the Muslim community and their non-competition in the low-skilled labour market has given them a benign lived experience of Scotland (Bonino 2017). In the case of Sweden and Denmark, the inexperience of migration, the homogenous population which had remained constant for a millennium and a shifting labour structure based on specific competencies has created a uniquely challenging social, political and economic situation (Bevelander 2004; Nielsen & Otterbeck 2016; Otterbeck 2010; Sander 1997).

We should note that even though the two Scandinavian cities appear to outwardly have many factors in common, there are essential differences between them. Although segregation isn't as pronounced in the Danish context (Copenhagen), the Muslim presence remains a highly politicised issue and hot topic. It seems as though the whole Danish society is really concerned. As for Sweden (Malmo), the puzzle remains as to how to reconcile the city's two faces. On the surface, the government ticks all the boxes and beyond; yet we do not see that translate into integration on real ground. What is clear from the chapter is the link between socio-economics, migration patterns and

attitudes/perceptions of the host society. And in this framework, we have seen how the Right-wing populist rhetoric finds ambient breeding grounds in problematised socio-economic relations with Muslim migration patterns. In this lies much context for understanding, exploring and analysing Muslim responses to Right-wing populism. With the groundwork set, I am now in a position to present my empirical chapters on this question of being Muslim and the effect of anti-Islam sentiment espoused by Right-wing populism upon identity production.

Chapter 4

Growing Up 'Being Muslim'

There are indeed many ways of being Muslim. I wanted to study these different ways, seeing how they related to the participants' responses to Right-wing populism. The narrative analytical approach helped me to identify structures and features within the participants' accounts. These provided entry points to begin making sense of the data. Following these entry points led me to narratives which I found recurring one story after the next. One of these narratives is the growing up story of being Muslim – prominent in the accounts of the second-generation participants. This chapter is dedicated to these narratives, seeing how they were emplotted by the participants as they narrated their identities. I then inspect the extent to which Right-wing populism featured in these episodes and influenced these narrative identities – or not. I start by giving an overview of the narratives so that the reader appreciates the bigger picture from which I have had to zoom in on to tell my participants' stories cogently.⁶¹ This style/approach recurs in the analytical chapters henceforth.

I initially identified three main sub-narratives (themes) which spoke to this analytical unit of being Muslim. The first set of themes pertained to journeys in self-discovery, when Islam wasn't always there, the challenges of growing up Muslim, and for some, conversion to Islam. The second set of themes were negotiations in ways of being Muslim. This included narratives of practice/non-practice, culture, race, ethnicity and nationality. Alongside these were questions of what it means to be Muslim and how one goes about representing Islam. The third set of themes within this rubric related to contexts of space, place and relations. Under this grouping, I found discourses on everyday lived Islam, community - Muslim and non -Muslim, the major events of 9/11,

⁶¹ Indeed, while they were making motion pictures from characters, action and plot(s), so was I here.

7/7, Charlie Hebdo, the Copenhagen shootings, politics, education, employment and careers.

To tell my story well, I had to make certain choices about which themes to focus on in this chapter and how to group them in a way which I saw best reflected the stories I had been entrusted with.⁶² To help me begin to do this, I looked at the scholarship on being Muslim (Allievi 2006; Bonino 2017; Jeldtoft 2012; Schmidt 2004; Marranci 2008; Meer 2010, 2015; Meer & Modood 2009) alongside scholarship on social identity (Brubaker & Cooper 2000; Goffman 1952, 1963, 1968; Hall 2000; Jenkins 2008). The latter set of works converged on the point that social identity is contingently constructed upon situationality and relationality (context). The first set on the other hand highlighted the pitfalls of conflating Islam and Muslim along with religionising and ethnicising identity. When I combined these two key insights, it resulted in focusing on (a) the participants' narratives of being Muslim and (b) the contexts these narratives were told. By this, I found that I could focus on situationality and relationality (context) and avoid the pitfalls of conflating identities. I could therefore distinguish when Islam featured in the participants' narratives and became meaningful - especially with regard to their responses to Right-wing populism - from when it didn't feature. I now unravel this distinction for the reader to see as I tell the stories of the participants I met in my journey.

The participants' narratives on being Muslim encompassed a variety of contexts. Three main narratives emerged from this analytical focus. I found narratives about: (a) growing up Muslim, (b) conversion and (c) practice/non-practice. This chapter focuses on the growing up narratives of the second-generation participants and the next chapter

⁶² Some of my participants indeed entrusted me with certain episodes of their lives and I took this very seriously. I had a duty to tell their stories because they trusted me with them, and as Maya Angelou famously said 'there's no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you' (cited in Lancaster 2015: 127).

treats the conversion narratives.⁶³ Under the rubric of growing up, three factors emerged to influence the participants' responses to Right-wing populism: (1) segregated upbringings (2) role models and (3) reconciling Islam with everyday life. To introduce the data, I start by presenting a commonly shared theme in their narratives: the journeys of self-discovery. Being Muslim - to begin with - was to have a journey.

Journeys of Self-Discovery

When asked to share reflections on how they had changed over time, a good number of the participants expressed these changes in terms of a journey of self-discovery – and, sometimes - faith. Each journey was unique even though they may have shared certain features such as: migration and relocation, moments of realisation, conflict and crisis, relationships, and Islam becoming something that is discovered. These narrated journeys tended to start at a point when Islam wasn't there, marking the important milestones along the way. For nine of the participants, conversion to Islam was a defining moment in the journey of finding oneself and one's faith.

The journeys all seemed to have a key moment or moments where something happened to cause a realisation and effect some sort of change. I asked all the participants to share what they could about change instead of directly asking them about Right-wing populism. I wanted to see how, when and where any discourse about Right-wing populism would feature in their narratives on change - whether it be change within themselves, their families, their localities or countries of residence. This, then allowed me to analyse the narratives of their responses to Right-wing populism.

In Rabia's case, the passing away of her brother made her realise how 'fragile' life was. Her journey of self-discovery started as far back as when she moved with her family

⁶³ A chapter isn't dedicated to *narratives of practice/non-practice* because it wasn't a distinct analytical category that stood on its own; rather, the growing up and conversion experiences of the participants were infused with narratives of practice/non-practice.

from Yorkshire to Edinburgh aged eleven. For the first time in her life, Rabia became aware and conscious of her race. She heard ‘Paki’ jokes in school which made her crawl into her shell. By the time she was in college however, she gained a newfound confidence which made it easier for her to be herself especially when she joined the workforce. Marriage shortly followed and then children. When talking about how she had changed, she mentioned how the birth of her third child followed her brother’s death. It made her move away from a ‘raw thinking’ to contemplate on the ‘sickness around the world’ after the 9/11 and July 7 events. She now realised that she had to equip these children with tools which would enable them to live in such a world. This series of realisations motivated within Rabia a quest for a ‘spiritual Islam’ beyond the ‘decorative Islam’ she had followed up to that point in her life. For Rabia, this itself, is an ongoing journey.

For a number of the participants, like Rabia, moving from one place to another during childhood brought about profound experiences and exposures. These often led to those key moments of realisation. This was the case for Sahra whose story began with her migration from Somalia to Denmark at the age of three. Her journey involved certain struggles with issues of race, religion, nationality and family as she tried to find herself. At kindergarten, Sahra did not have to deal with the race issue. She lived in a small community where everyone knew each other, and the fact she was accompanied on her first day by her aunt’s white Danish husband gave her the seal of being known. A change in neighbourhood during high school in the later years caused a sort of crisis because she was no longer known as Danish. She was this black girl who had ‘many things going on’ such as being overweight and insecure about her image. At this crucial juncture, Sahra didn’t have the adequate parental support which Rabia - whose story we have just read - now sees as being crucial to provide for her own children.

I know I’m the mum, but I need to have another relationship with the child as well, a friendly one. That they can come and talk to me, and that’s so important to have that relationship built on love and respect. And a lot of parents unfortunately don’t have that. They just say to their kids: you’re doing this, full stop [...] That’s unfortunately how a lot of kids rebel, and I’ve seen that.

(Rabia, late-40s, Community Worker, Edinburgh, Pakistani background)

Somali families - according to Sahra - tended to have many children. And with the parents having their 'own problems', the only Islam they could offer was one which seldom went beyond a 'this is *haram* because it's *haram*'⁶⁴ framework. She started to rebel against this Islam. The *Hijab* came off and she followed the 'party lifestyle' of her Danish friends. Somewhere along this road came the realisation: 'I can never be like them' and Sahra started to feel that she was perhaps betraying herself. At this point in her life, she said she took on Islam 'very fast'. Her Danish friends abandoned her, and in a relatively short space of time she got married and found herself divorced a few months after. In retrospect, Sahra admitted she perhaps wasn't ready to marry at that stage. However as time went by, she was able to mature in her faith in Islam, and it led her to connect with a group of 'left-wing' Danish activists. The connecting factor for her was 'knowledge'. When she is with her friends, she learns more about herself and the world, and her Islam enables her to actively engage with her society.

It's a group that says that we all equal, and we stand for human rights [...] I'm not limited to be as I want, to see the world as I want. Every day you learn something about the people that you meet ... in a demonstration like. I don't see knowledge is like you sitting in school ... That's knowledge; but when you're out there talking to different people and getting close to people, you'll learn more about yourself because you're going to learn how to react and how to listen.

(Sahra, mid-20s, Social Worker, Copenhagen, Somali background)

Sahra was able to reconfigure the guidelines set by Islam to make sense for her everyday life. Some - she contended - would say that her marching in solidarity with anti-fascist groups was haram because it involved free-mixing with the opposite gender. She countered this saying: if this was the case, then so would what she was doing right at the moment of my interviewing her. For Sahra however, her participation in such activities

⁶⁴ *Haram*: an Islamic legal term for something this is unlawful, illegal or impure.

was not for the intent of free-mixing for its sake; rather, for learning, experiencing and actively taking part in her society.⁶⁵ These things were compatible with her Islam: ‘we’re mixing things, so, if I want to do something good, and I’m not talking to these guys about love and all that sexual thing, it’s not going to stop me’.

Sahra’s reconfiguration of Islam contrasted with Dwayne’s.⁶⁶ He, like Sahra also went through life changing experiences in moving from one context to another during childhood. He also experienced conflict with his parents around Islam. Dwayne was however a convert and the transitions in his life were many. Born and raised in Hackney, he had to move to the Caribbean when he was two to live with his grandparents whilst his mother finished her university degree. Growing up in an extended family with limited socio-economic resources enabled Dwayne to appreciate family values and ‘built’ his character. Moving back to the UK to live with his mother at the age of 12 brought its fair share of change, and later on, conflict, as he went into his teens. Although encountering racism was a part of his growing up experiences, Dwayne shared (performed) a narrative of positivity and strong-mindedness which enabled him to pull through - whether that be during school or later on when he reached 17 and found himself in the ‘hostel system’. He had moved out of his mum’s house by this time and it coincided with his conversion to Orthodox Islam having being raised by his mother as an adherent to the Nation of Islam.

Islam had shown Dwayne the importance of dutifulness to one’s mother, but by the time he could make amends, their relationship had reached the point where he had to move out. The difficulty of evading past acquaintances and Dwayne’s impressionability made it challenging for his Islam to grow. Despite experiencing ‘spiritual highs’, Dwayne’s Islam regressed and bad habits started to resurface. He met a Swedish girl and they lived

⁶⁵ It’s almost as though she *re-appropriated* (Jeldtoft 2012) a central tenet in Islam - *Niyyah* (intention) - found in the *hadith* “Actions are according to intentions, and everyone will get what they intended” (Transmission: Bukhari #54, Muslim #1907).

⁶⁶ (late-20s, personal assistant, Malmo, Afro-Caribbean background).

together for a while in London. When the two of them visited Sweden (Malmö) for the first time, Dwayne spotted a golden chance which he instantaneously grabbed. 'It was a fresh start in a place where nobody knew who you were.' He fathered a child with his Swedish partner, but after some time, Dwayne started to 'return back to Islam' and their relationship broke down. He went on to marry a Muslim woman and adopted Salafi Islam. Dwayne puts 'every change' to his 'way of thinking'. Whilst recognising the potential threat posed by Right-wing populism, Dwayne does not dwell too much on it because, for him, the main priority remains 'safeguarding' his religion. This, for him, could only be achieved by Hijrah - the migration from non-Muslim lands to the Islamic world.

Somewhere in between the many crossroads of these journeys, Islam tended to show up as something unearthed, discovered and - in some cases, embraced to 'resist the stigma' (Bonino 2017) of being Muslim. Stigmatisation (Bonino 2017), discrimination in employment (Lindley 2002) and marginalisation (Hopkins 2007) were prominent themes in some of the participants' journeys of self-discovery and faith. Sometimes, the themes (relocation/migration, relationships, conflict and crisis) would conglomerate in a story to precipitate the moment when Islam would be embraced to resist the stigma of being Muslim. This was the case with Safiyyah.

There was a sense of consciousness, but there was a desire to not be different [...] You want to fit in, you want to get along, you don't want to see that there's a difference between you and them. We're all just kids at the end of the day, the difference just came from things like racism and discrimination. So obviously I didn't want to see that there was a difference, but until I reached about the third year was when I decided, when I realised it: the difference is there, but that it was a good thing as well, that I didn't want to be associated with that kind of mentality or with an ... an un-Islamic, if you like mentality.

(Safiyyah, early-20s, Student, Edinburgh, Tunisian-Moroccan background)

Growing up in the challenging Edinburgh neighbourhoods of Saughton and Stenhouse brought about direct experiences of racism into Safiyyah's childhood. She had to live with the stigma of being made to feel different, labelled 'Paki' despite being born in

Edinburgh and of North African heritage. Such experiences however did not stop the continuous effort to be like ‘the rest’ deep inside Safiyyah up until high school. Here, was the moment of realisation of that difference between her and the rest of her indigenous Scottish classmates. Saffiyah embraced this. For her, it became a matter of ‘coming out’ and ‘pride’ as she donned on the Hijab, flocked to sisters’ circles and attended Islamic events. This response to stigmatisation chimed with Bonino’s (2017) description of positive reaction formations from Muslims served the purpose of ‘resisting the stigma and surviving the post-9/11 social crisis that Muslims are experiencing’ (Bonino 2017: 50-51). With regard to the theoretical frameworks of the study, this tallied with Brown & Ross’s (2010: 170) identification of ‘social creativity as a response to threat’ and Cairn’s (2010) observation in the Northern Irish context that groups attempt to reconfigure how values of desirability are defined and therefore important ‘so as to achieve a more positive social identity’ (Cairns 2010: 278). The challenge of growing up Muslim was a prominent theme in a significant number of the journeys. For this reason, I saw it befitting that the next section of this chapter be dedicated to studying this subset of narratives. To do this, I found it helpful to focus on a main character (participant) whose story encapsulated the core studied theme(s), then subject their narratives to in-depth analysis before comparing their stories to other participants. I repeat this technique throughout the remaining empirical chapters.

The Challenges of Growing Up Muslim

Growing up Muslim is quite different from growing up non-Muslim - in a western European context at least (Hopkins 2007, 2018; Jeldtoft 2012; Meer 2010, 2015; Modood 2005; Meer & Modood 2009; Otterbeck 2012; Schmidt 2004). This may well state the obvious. Sometimes, the obvious is a good place to start unpacking the complex. The growing up narratives of the participants raised in Muslim families were distinguished from those born in non-Muslim, mostly indigenous European households. I will look at the distinguishing traits of this latter group in the chapter on conversion. Like Saffiyah - who I introduced earlier, narratives of the former group were laced with

experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination, stigmatisation and - in Sahra's case - conflict with parents over Islam. This resonated with research on young Muslims which highlighted their susceptibility to everyday lived experiences of discrimination and prejudice (Finlay *et al.* 2017; Hopkins 2007, 2018; Bonino 2017), their 'highly individualised and eclectic approaches to Islam' (Jeldtoft & Nielsen 2014: 53, see also Jeldtoft 2012; Otterbeck 2010, 2012) and the multiple hyphenations⁶⁷ of their being (Jacobsen 2009; Jeldtoft 2012; Schmidt 2004). In sum, growing up Muslim, unfortunately, entailed growing up with conflict as part and parcel of life.

Conflict, in its multitude of forms, was one of the overarching themes of the participants' narratives of growing up. The sources, provocateurs (characters) and reasons behind the conflicts (action) ranged: from disagreements with parents and family to run-ins with authority figures at school; and from crises in self-identity to contesting definitions about what it meant to be Muslim (plot). The conflicts exposed the participants to new milieux and brought about profound crises which had to be resolved. One of the major challenges encountered by the young participants was the conflict some had with significant others - parents and family members particularly. For some, this conflict continues. Being a teenager brought about its fair share of adversities. These problems and issues weren't necessarily connected to their sense of Muslimness and being Muslim. Beyond 'just being a teenager' however, Islam featured in these conflicts, albeit in different ways. For Mustafa – whose narrative I will dwell on for some time - it almost seemed as though Islam was momentarily suspended. He knew that the religion exhorted kindness to parents, but hey, he was a teenager!

I remember ... the Muslims in the mosque always taught me that you must be good to your mother, you must ... never say anything bad to her, even Uff⁶⁸ [...] It stuck in my head you know. So at puberty, it changed in my body. I became

⁶⁷ Hyphenations in terms of ethnic and religious identity, e.g. Pakistani-Muslim as well as national and cultural affiliation, e.g. Danish-Ugandan-Muslim.

⁶⁸ The word 'uff' is a reference to the Quranic verse (17:23) 'Your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. When one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], 'uff', and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word'.

more angry, more easily. I had mood swings, I had problems, I didn't even know who it was. So, in my family [...] I started to feel more, you know, strange.

(Mustafa, unemployed, early-20s, Malmo, Turkish background)

This excerpt resonates with scholarship on Muslim identity and youth: Islam is not necessarily the default mode to which Muslim conduct is set (Bonino 2017; Hopkins 2007; Jeldtoft 2012; Meer 2010; Otterbeck 2012; Schmidt 2004). Muslims, like others, choose when to switch religion (Islam) on and off. If this is the case, their responses to rhetoric which targets their religion - Right-wing populism, as such - could be contingent upon this factor. Mustafa's participation provided some interesting insights along these lines. He grew up in Rosengard, a renowned tough area, with a segregated⁶⁹ migrant-background population. Mustafa commenced his schooling in the area, but when he started getting into trouble, his mother made the decision to pull him out and send him to a city-centre school. Here, Mustafa stood out, in terms of his ethnicity at first, and then his conduct. He had to a role to act out - 'the tough kid from Rosengard'. Despite Islam's appeal to him as a youngster, it was neither the religion in of itself nor its adherents who Mustafa would turn to for help in resolving his school crisis.

Mustafa: I had a very great teacher [...] He had been in the military, he was a bodybuilder, and he was very cool, and he was very motivational as a person.

Yahya: Right! And he was a Swedish native?

Mustafa: Yea, he was Swedish native. He helped me and he was helping another guy I was with too, he was also from another background, so we really didn't fit in the class [...]

Yahya: OK, was that after the tough guy was broken down?

Mustafa: Yea [...] we really clicked with him because we're also into training and martial arts... he started to help us weightlifting, gave us tips on what to eat. He became like a role model [...]

⁶⁹ The initial term I used was *ghettoised*. My supervisor Dr. Hunter advised that this was a loaded term. After consulting literature, I found scholars who studied Muslims in the same contexts used the term *segregation* (Carlbom 2003: 166, 209-10). Bonino (2017) also used and qualified it: ethnic segregation (p33), urban segregation (p163) and self-segregation (p164).

Yahya: You were going through these changes in puberty. So when would you say you started to become more stable?

Mustafa: I think it was ... when I got this teacher at the end in the seventh, eighth grade, that's where I felt like it was very stable [...] I thought, all these years, he helped me now to get a more stronger identity you know, so we started believing in ourselves.

Mustafa's narrative bears the hallmarks of resisting the stigma of being 'the dumb kid from Rosengard' who couldn't fit in. He had to prove his critics wrong. Erving Goffman made a piercing analysis of segregated environments as graveyards where the marginalised live until they die their social deaths. An individual unable to 'sustain' one of their social roles is effectively 'losing one of his social lives and is about to die one of the deaths that are possible for him' (Goffman 1952: 451-63). Mustafa's narrative was one of a young man who was resisting this social death, and I for one could certainly relate to him! What happened to Islam however? When it did feature in his narrative, it seemed to be in the periphery, and at times, it was a result of my probing.

Mustafa: There is actually one change that I noticed when I was a kid like 8 or 9 years old. I went to the mosque, some of my friends went there and [...] we had people that were like role models. They were raising us [...] I felt there was something that was good, I had something that appealed to me [...] It continued towards 10, 11, 12. But then I started to [see] ... it interfered much with my school.

Yahya: It interfered?

Mustafa: Yea. I had these ideas about how a Muslim should be. But when I went to school, you know, my friends were also Muslim. But I saw [...] they were talking with girls [...] go[ing] out and party[ing] [...] They wanted to do like what the society tells them to do [...] I can say I felt a little bit confused [...]

Yahya: Was there any point in the lectures in [the mosque] that would be, let's say, advice to someone like you on how to live Islam in a realistic way in school? So that it might clear up some of the conflict you had?

Mustafa's mosque mentors 'didn't go to school [anymore], they had jobs and started families'. Despite some being born and raised in Sweden, and therefore expected to be able to relate to Mustafa's predicament, guidance didn't come from them in this matter.

To his advantage, he had recourse to another role model - his school teacher. When I remarked to him 'it seems as though you almost Islamised his influence', Mustafa laughed, saying 'yes' twice. At this point, I bring into focus some of the theoretical frameworks which inform my study. Intergroup contact theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 2007; Zajonc 1968) is certainly helpful here in explaining how Mustafa came to Islamise his native Swedish teacher's influence to the point he became a source of guidance over against his Rosengard Muslim elders. Simply put: increased contact enhances liking and relatability. Had Mustafa remained schooled in Rosengard, such a process would, most probably, not have taken place.

I saw up to this guy because even when he was our age, he was always taking care of his body [...] and always training [...] So I felt from another side of view that OK, you can also be cool and you don't have to drink, you don't have to party because he didn't do it. He always said like: when I was a kid, I didn't go out and do that, and I didn't go party 'cos I had tournaments [...] [He] couldn't drink and then next day, he wouldn't sober up. He gave us like that focus [...] saying: you should stick with the right people around you that can help you to focus on your goals.

To his admission, Mustafa has always been motivated by a drive to 'prove people wrong'. He excelled in school to show his classmates that the 'dumb kid from Rosengard can fit in'. The help he received from his mentor(s) at school was crucial to his fitting in, and this has led him to securely self-identify as Swedish more so than Turkish. By comparison to his Rosengard peers, Mustafa demonstrated a secure sense of belonging to Sweden. The effect of his education outside 'the ghetto' had been profound.

There are people born in Sweden, but they couldn't even speak like good Swedish [...] Maybe they even use like sign language [...] I was hanging with kids in Rosengard, and they were a little bit embarrassed to call themselves Swedish people. They always said: I'm Arabic, I'm Turkish, I'm Albanian [...] proud! If you said you were from Sweden, you would like get, like, 'geek' or something. Now when you ask me, I say I feel more Swedish because I have more Swedish values. I don't know if it's correct to say but, I maybe have more Swedish values than Turkish.

With such a secure sense of belonging and identity stemming from positive relationships with contact (support) from role models, all coupled with achievement, Mustafa articulated highly secure responses to Right-wing populism. He distinguished between ‘racism’ and ‘xenophobia’, and between the agenda-driven leaders of such parties from the ‘manipulated’ voters. For him, most of the people in Sweden have good values which are complementary with Islam - only if the Muslims ‘truly’ represented them. The ‘minority’ who voted for the Right-wing populist Swedish Democrats party did so as a result of the ‘scare tactics’ deployed in their rhetoric. He was however hopeful that such peoples’ eyes will be open to the manipulations. When asked (stimulated)⁷⁰, Mustafa responded saying he did not feel threatened by the growing prevalence of Right-wing politics. He made the analogy to crime: just as a society can never be purged of criminality, likewise, racism and xenophobia will always exist, although improvements are made over time.

Yahya: How do you feel about these racist anti-Muslim parties like Swedish Democrats for example, do you see them racist even?

Mustafa: I don't see them racist because I see racism and xenophobia as two different things.

Yahya: Aha, ok, could you please explain?

Mustafa: I came to the conclusion that, racism, it builds on something [...] it's more like an ideology, like during Hitler's time [...] They think and they believe in stuff like that. Xenophobia is more like [...] you're afraid of someone else's culture, or you feel threatened by it, that's why you hate it.

Mustafa arrived at this conclusion – unsurprisingly – at school when he did a project on racism. A supportive learning environment, positive intergroup contact and inspiring role models proved to be a significant factor in building a secure sense of belonging. The narrative identity he portrayed for me was a product of these factors and the story of

⁷⁰ Mustafa was one of the participants I had to *stimulate* responses from regarding Right-wing populism as his narrative on how he had changed did not touch upon the topic. As I clarified in my methods chapter, since I didn't want to assume *a priori* that my participants felt threatened about Right-wing populism the way I felt, I framed the topic of research engagement in a way which would not *lead* the discussion.

boy-becomes-man against the odds was a plot linking the episodes of growing up being Muslim in Rosengard. Regarding my central research question, a number of significant elements contribute to Mustafa's highly secure responses to Right-wing populism: (a) education outside a segregated area, (b) positive role models and (c) reconciliation of Islam with everyday life. I could see the role each of these three components played when I compared his narratives to others'. Using Mustafa's story as a basis of comparison, I will now highlight how each of these three elements were significant. The first is the segregation factor.

Segregated Upbringings

I was born in Malmo [...] raised in Rosengard my whole life, and since I was a child, we haven't really moved much, but the start of my childhood [...] I changed my school from Rosengard to a more, to into the city [...] That I think, changed me as much as a person [...] It was my mum's choice, we [had] many fights and I didn't learn much from the school [...] so she had to do something so I don't get like other people [...] because I got many childhood friends that are doing very bad and illegal stuff [...] So I thought that was a big point of change in my view.

(Mustafa)

Muslim communities in Western European cities have a tendency to concentrate within specific neighbourhoods characterised by socio-economic deprivation and high crime levels (al-Qwidi, 2002: 105; Amin 2002: 960; Bonino 2017: 164; Kose, 1996: 3). This, sometimes correlated with tensions and contestations of public space between the indigenous population and Muslims. Here are some contexts highlighted by scholarship: Kreuzberg, Berlin (Mandel 1996); Brick Lane, London (Eade 1996); Nørrebro, Copenhagen; (Schmidt 2011) Rosengård, Malmö (Nordin 2005); East Pollokshields, Glasgow; (Hopkins 2007) Leith, Edinburgh (Wardak 2000). This tendency to cluster in such areas resulted in multi-layered segregation(s) - ethnic, urban and self-segregation - where Muslims find themselves excluded from social life, and as a result, find

themselves marginalised and segregated to the geographic, economic and cultural fringes of their cities.⁷¹

Muslims who find themselves growing up in such contexts face a multitude of challenges which potentially determine so many outcomes in their lives: from educational achievements to career success and from their susceptibility to participation in juvenile crime to escaping the tribulations of addiction (Bevelander 2004; Carlbom 2003; Larsson 2009; Otterbeck 2010). We saw in the previous chapter that the Scottish (Edinburgh) context fared relatively better than the Scandinavian cities. This particular factor also related to the participants' sense of security in their citizenships and national identities. The narratives I collected showed a relation between growing up in such segregated contexts and the participants' sense of belonging to their localities and to a collective identity. These discourses offered useful insights to answering the questions on how Muslims are being affected by and responding to Right-wing populist rhetoric.

Mustafa describes growing up and living in Rosengard in terms identical to those of the above outlined segregation. His move away from this context to attend school at the city-centre exposed him to a new milieu where he had to negotiate his fitting in. In terms of his domicile, his experiences were similar to those participants who grew up in segregated areas. His schooling was however different from theirs, and this makes comparing his narrative to theirs worthwhile. Rabia was born in a predominantly Asian community in Bradford. Moving to Edinburgh in the mid-80s was a significant change for her.

When I came to Scotland at about 12 [...] it was very much a racist issue [...] When I was in England, I lived in a community with a lot of Muslims, you know, coloured people, mostly Asians, so I didn't really feel that way at all to be honest. And when I came to Edinburgh, I was aware of something that I hadn't

⁷¹ 'It is well known that racial violence and exclusion from 'those important spheres of social life that constitute the basic elements of citizenship in a democratic welfare state' - namely, 'the spheres of employment, housing, sports and social cultural entertainment, and political institutional life of the wider society' (Wardak 2000: 242) - can alienate and push minorities to the social and geographical boundaries of a city'. (Bonino 2017: 164).

been aware of before [...] and I thought to myself why am I being treated differently because I'm a Pakistani? [...] It took a while to sort of settle down. It meant that I was in my shell an awful lot. I wasn't a very confident person at that time.

(Rabia)

Safiyyah and Tariq are siblings⁷² who grew up together and attended school in Saughton and Stenhouse - socio-economically deprived areas in Edinburgh.⁷³ The segregated experience narrated by the siblings contrasted Mustafa's. The stimulus for him to confront his otherness came when he went to school outside segregation, whereas Tariq and Safiyyah were reminded of this fact locally, as a part of their everyday-growing-up lives. Bonino (2017: 165) asserted that 'Edinburgh puts contact theory to the test': although small and dispersed, the city's Muslim community endure elements of stigmatisation - they are 'discriminated against yet integrated'.

We were in a very bad area right, in a very rough area. It's called Saughton. It's like a junkie area [...] We were also told that everyone [...] [was] racist and they were going to hate us [...] We grew up looking over our shoulders [...] It was an ignorant area, right so, I go school and I see a gang ... they were able to accept Pakis ... I couldn't understand, I been told that 'we're not going to accept you, you're different'. The junkies were racist, and we're Muslims.

(Tariq, mid-20s, Security officer, Edinburgh, Moroccan-Tunisian background)

I was raised in Saughton, and then we went to Stenhouse. So this was an age where there was a lot of racism, and, a lot of ignorance as well. In fact the biggest ignorance I've ever heard [...] So I've heard a lot of racism, things [...] 'Paki' was a very common word, a lot of fighting. I had [...] big brothers, so I was pretty much protected. But even so nobody would fight with me, I still had a lot of racism, even things like playing outside, and adults coming to you saying

⁷² They participated separately.

⁷³ I highlight: although *Muslim segregation* is a relatively less pronounced phenomenon in Edinburgh vis-a-vis Copenhagen and Malmo, *segregation* as a phenomenon encompassed other factors such as socio-economic deprivation and crime beyond just the clustering of Muslims. An example is: 'some Scottish Pakistanis living in the Leith area of Edinburgh responded to mainstream exclusion by insulating themselves within social, cultural, economic and political micro-worlds. These were predominantly first-generation migrants who needed to find cultural and linguistic support via a community of similarity. Today, younger generations are dispersing more and more across the Scottish capital'. (Bonino 2017: 164)

'Paki children' and stuff like that, so racism has definitely been a part of growing up in Britain.

(Safiyyah, early-20s, Student, Edinburgh, Moroccan-Tunisian background)

These narratives together with Mustafa's tell a story that a segregated upbringing exposed some of the participants to experiences of discrimination and prejudice. What ensued from this in terms of negotiations (productions) of identity and sense of belonging - was crucial. Why? Because, as we saw in Mustafa's case that resolution of his crisis to fit in facilitated his narrative of self-identifying with Sweden. This in turn led to his ability to distinguish xenophobia from racism based on his Swedish values. This narrative of self-identity reconciliation didn't feature in Tariq and Saffiyah's case.

Yahya: Have there been any crucial moments in your life where you have experienced a sense of change in how you see yourself? And how you self-identify? [...]

Safiyyah: Eerm, I think probably in high school, I had a moment of realizing [...] the difference between myself and the people around me, like the native [...] white people, the non-Muslims [...] It was a moment of realization that ... we're not the same and accepting that [...] I suppose I was trying to conform to society [...] to fit in with them a lot. It was a moment when I thought to myself: this isn't me, this isn't who I want to be! [...] I stopped trying to be part of that [...] I didn't need to be like them to be who I want, and that's when I think I started to become more confident.

(Safiyyah)

Yahya: It's natural that when you're a kid you hang around with other kids [...] you go to the park, you go to school [...] You didn't associate with those kids?

Tariq: I wasn't allowed to [...] My mum was scared I was going to start smoking and drinking [...]

Yahya: So you were a loner? In school

Tariq: No, not in school [...] I was a popular boy [...] because I was beating everybody up. No lie, wallah⁷⁴, I saw them as different, I saw them as white boys.

(Tariq)

Whilst Saffiyah has embraced the Islamic part of her identity as a means of celebrating her ‘difference’, Tariq’s Islam continued to fluctuate with the ups and downs of his personal life. Neither of the siblings attributed these narrative identities as a response to Right-wing populism. Rather, their productions of identity chimed with recent scholarship on Muslims in Scotland (Finlay et al. 2017; Hopkins 2018; Weedon and Riddell 2017) especially the positive reaction formations (Cohen 1955; Lemert 1951, 1974 cited in Bonino 2017: 50-51) described as a means of ‘resisting the stigma and social crisis’ of being Muslim. For Safiyyah, such a positive reaction was expressed in terms of love and family – where an attack on her identity was akin to an attack on her little brother. As for Right-wing populism, then this was on another scale, which, although threatening for her, did not stimulate a distinct identity production like what the personal attacks on her *Hijab* had done.

Safiyyah: I think the *Hijab*, when the racism came, it was no longer an attack on the fact that I was wearing the Hijab [...] It was more a personal attack, like somebody attacking your little brother [...] Instantly, you love that thing more [...] When people are racist towards the *Hijab*, it’s never made me feel I should take it off. It always made me stronger [...] My head was always a bit higher [...] [But I] think there’s a difference between [...] ‘you’re a Paki’ and 2000 people going to a demonstration saying: we don’t want Pakistanis and Muslims in the country [...] I think things like SDL, UKIP etcetera, it’s not just one person being racist [...] They’re saying things, hatred, and that’s when it doesn’t just affect one person. It starts to affect the whole Muslim community. And that affects me because it affects our kids.

Yahya: How does it make you feel?

⁷⁴ An oath, in Arabic, meaning “by Allah” - used for emphasis.

Safiyyah: Scared, scared, absolutely scared, scared for the community, the Muslim community, because I know there's a lot of negative pressure on people...

As for Tariq, the perceived rise of anti-Islam populist rhetoric isn't to his consternation. He has bigger fish to fry in his aim to build a music career and become a celebrity.⁷⁵ Tariq intimated to me his dream of positively influencing Muslim youth and the image of Islam through his status once stardom is achieved. Brown and Ross' (2010: 170) concept of social creativity as response to threat along with Cairns' (2010) intergroup conflict analysis in the Northern Irish context can be drawn upon here. Tariq's agency can be interpreted as an endeavour to enhance himself and his group's standing by navigating between 'less-desirable to more superior group membership' (Cairns 2010: 278). This production of a narrative identity was not stimulated by a perception of threat from Right-wing populism. Rather, its appearance in Tariq's emplotment came after the presentation of the episodes of his growing experiences in Saughton and Stenhouse. It appeared that the conglomeration of factors in those episodes were more stimulating for his identity. Tariq however faces a dilemma in how to promote his image (identity) – 'a Scottish rapper or an Arab rap-star?' This provided some insight into the extent of his reconciliation between the Scottish and other elements of his identity. The exposure to discrimination brought about by an upbringing in some of Edinburgh's segregated areas resulted in unresolved - or, partially resolved - senses of belonging to Scotland. When confronted⁷⁶ with Right-wing populist rhetoric, Safiyyah's responses reflected the insecurities felt deep inside her, as we just saw. Let us now look at Tariq's responses as he described a situation when a Muslim man said to a non-Muslim female:

Tariq: 'go put some clothes on [...]' This guy said 'how comes you're living in our country?' [...] They've got a point! We're living in their country [...] We're getting their benefits, you know what I mean? No matter what you say: 'I'm British'. All these fucking [unclear], all these Pakis right, 'oh: I'm British, I'm

⁷⁵ He remains actively involved in music (rap) production four years later to this date. And a part of his music – as far as I could make out – draws on themes of resisting racism and *anti-blackness*.

⁷⁶ i.e. when I broached the subject with her.

British.' You're a fucking Paki mate, you're not British... A dog born in a barn is still a dog [...]

Yahya: How do you see yourself then?

Tariq: I'll be honest with you. That's very interesting right [...] When I'm in Morocco, I see myself as Scottish. When I'm in Scotland, I see myself as not Scottish [...] I was brought up here but my culture's not here. I know people look at me and think he looks different. Different, different, different and people are scared of what is different [...]

Yahya: But the Scottish are more friendly than the English they say, right?

Tariq: I tell you what my friend right. You think of somebody who's grown up in Scotland in a junkie area, you tell me who's more friendly [laughs]. The English are more friendly, right because the English have had blacks and Jamaicans and Pakistanis and Indians and Chinese for years, Scotland's not. Scotland's more backward than England.

This excerpt from my conversation with Tariq is filled with themes, discourses and issues which could take up a lot of space. Relevant to this section is the very last part of the excerpt where Tariq references his claim of an English-friendliness to his lived growing up experience. This impacted his narrative identity of Scottishness. Compared with Mustafa, Tariq did not narrate positive contacts with native Scottish role models who would help him reconcile between the various dimensions of his identity. Absence of this factor appears to have impacted his ability to claim belonging to the nation. This inability was not attributed to Right-wing populism in terms of cause and effect.

Role Models

We saw in Mustafa's case, when Islam wasn't available, or, when it was partially available, role models played an important role in the process of identity production. This factor appeared in the other participants' growing up experiences, albeit in different ways, causing quite different outcomes. The literature places role model⁷⁷ as a concept

⁷⁷ Kemper (1968: 33) defined a role model as someone who 'possesses skills and displays techniques which the actor lacks ... and from whom, by observation and comparison with his own performance, the actor can learn' (cited in Brown 2012: 306).

within social learning theory (Kemper 1968 cited in Brown 2012). Scholarship has highlighted role models as important to minority communities or disadvantaged groups because they provide a template of behaviours for achievement because they are perceived as embodying success (Basit 1996; Brown 2012; Dagkas *et al.* 2011; Jouili 2013; Lockwood 2006). The body element is certainly key; and while some research has documented a positive correlation (e.g. Lockwood (2006) finding gender as a determining factor for the positive impact of role models for female students), it has been contested. Brown's (2012) study of African-American male teachers provided compelling insights challenging what he outlined as:

a discursively sealed construct, one theorized solely as the father figure, mentor, and role model for the at-risk and in-crisis Black male student. What is striking about this discourse is that Black men were presumed—by default—to possess the pedagogies needed to fulfil these roles. The roles, capacities, pedagogies, and expectations of Black male teachers were, therefore, set in place before they ever entered the classroom (Brown 2012: 307).

The association between 'black male bodies' and pedagogy fed into cultural narratives which fetishise the black male body by reducing (essentialising) its performance 'through explicit and subtle discourses of deviance and difference' (Brown 2012: 308). The frenzied advocacy of the US Department of Education, political organisations, activists, researchers, and even Oprah Winfrey to increase African-American male teachers from the 1990s to 2010 missed one key detail: 'the practice of teaching the Black boy is pedagogical, and not just an outcome of their race and gender' (Brown 2012: 312). While there exists literature shedding light on the importance of Muslim role models for: state-civil society relations (Jouili 2013: 71), upward social mobility (Basit 1996: 234) and inclusive education (Dagkas *et al.* 2011: 236), I was not too convinced by their uncritical application of the term Muslim role model. Was Islam being reified into Muslim bodies? I found it interesting to see if the question of body compellingly articulated by Brown (2010) tallied with some of my findings; especially the question of body. African American males were constructed – by the sociological literature – as embodying 'special cultural knowledge and understanding that would

make them ideal role models for African American male students' (Brown 2012: 306). How about Muslim young men and women, did they need Muslim male and female bodies?

In the absence of Muslim role models, Mustafa Islamised his non-Muslim Swedish teacher's influence to the point he became a Muslim role model. I highlight that this occurred in the context of schooling in a non-segregated area. Had the same teacher worked in the Rosengard School, could he have played a similar role? Probably. But we must recognise that Mustafa's move to the city-centre school exposed him to a milieu where he was challenged to confront his otherness - something his Rosengard friends didn't have to do. They found it less problematic to 'proudly' self-identify as 'Arab, Albanian or Turkish' and difficult to see themselves Swedish. Mustafa benefitted from a supportive relationship in this crucial transition period of his life. He was able to survive the crisis and even subvert the stigma by showing he could fit in and achieve his goals. Opposite to this experience of supportive teacher-role models was Riem's case.

When I was in third or fourth grade, we had a parent-teacher meeting about me [...] after gym class to [not] shower with the rest of the kids, because - you know - Muslim rules and stuff [laughs]. I remember the teacher [...] at the end [...] [saying] [...] 'ok, fine.' The next time we had gym [...] she said [mimicking derogatory tone] 'oh! Riem [...] it's not going to be possible. You have to shower with the [others].' I still remember [emotive tone] ... what I was wearing, where I was, everything, because [...] I felt like someone slapped me twice [...] Authorities were like [...] [gestures with hand up]: you can't say nothing.

(Riem, mid-20s, Teacher, Copenhagen, Syrian background)

This negative experience had a profound impact on Riem's trust in authority figures, both within the school/academic context and out-with. She lamented the 'injustices' she has encountered as a teacher working within the Danish education system and narrated

the negative experiences of some Muslim colleagues.⁷⁸ Her voice echoed with the two other Muslim teachers I met - Salim (Malmo) and Momina (London) in expressing serious concern for the wellbeing of Muslim students/youth educated in such institutions.

I'm really scared for the next generation and their future in this country because right now, they have this anti-radicalisation programme and it's really targeted towards children in elementary schools. So you have teachers who are told to focus: [...] do you see anything radicalised about this kid [mimics serious tone in sarcasm]? You have stories about a kid [...] playing with a banana as a gun [...] they were afraid he was going to be radicalised [...] If they say anything about Israel or Palestine, they're going to be radicalised! You're not allowed to be a kid anymore, and that's really scary.

(Riem)

When I compared Riem's responses to Right-wing populism with Mustafa's, I could see a difference in the focal points of their narratives. Mustafa's immediate focus is on the grassroots. He talked about how 'normal people' could become afraid of peoples and cultures they had not encountered. This led to him differentiating between racism and xenophobia as we saw. And for this reason, he was able to come to the conclusion that, like crime in society, xenophobia will always be around. It isn't something of major concern to him.⁷⁹ His role model teachers yet again significantly contributed to his reaching this conclusion.

Yahya: Can I ask, are you basing this on the fact that you've mixed with Swedish people and [...] not everyone is acting along this ideology?

Mustafa: It was something that stuck in my head from my teacher in school [...] she said that during her grandmother's years in Sweden [...] xenophobia was

⁷⁸“I have friends who experience that [...] They work in a school with a high Muslim population [...] One of them went to pray in the same place as the students prayed and she got told: ‘oh! You cannot pray with them because people will think you’re pressing them to pray [irritated tone] [...] It [became] a case’ (Riem).

⁷⁹“I haven’t really cared about the[m], as I said I didn’t really see them as a threat, but I know there will always be stupid people who attack people you will always see that. I don’t think you can eliminate it completely, it’s like saying we want a country that has no crime whatsoever. We will always have crime, you can decrease it, but you can never eliminate it.” (Mustafa)

bigger because there wasn't that much people from other backgrounds. But when they started to mix up, it became more and more accepted. And, she said that it's mostly because of fear of the unknown.

Riem's response on the other hand focused on the political (macrosocial) level. The distinction she made essentially categorised Danish society along 'two spheres' - the general population as one, and the politicians and media as the second. Her focus on the power wielded by the latter group and its impact on people's - especially Muslim youths' - everyday lived experiences became a major concern for her.

I see it like [...] two different spheres [gestures with hands]. You have all the people in Denmark who go to school, work [...] we all live in harmony. Then you have the politicians and media! They live in their own little world [...] where all the Muslims are out to get them, and everything is bad [...] I see a really, really scary development in Danish politics [...] Before, we only had Pia Kjaersgaard.⁸⁰ It was [only] the Danish FolkeParti who had these really outrageous thoughts [...] about Muslims. Now, it's every other party as well [...] The only politician we know who stands for what they feel is Pia Kjaersgaard! Everyone else [...] one day they believe this and the [next] day, they believe something else because they're only out for the votes [...] You voted for them [...] then when they got elected, they totally turned on you [laughs].
(Riem)

Had Riem benefitted from supportive role model teachers in school would her responses have been different? Would she have expressed similar views to Mustafa? What her narrative does show is her clash with 'authority' vis-à-vis Mustafa's trusting relationships with his role model teachers stimulated relatively more insecure responses to Right-wing populism. Furthermore, her position as a teacher/mentor to Muslim youths has given her clear insights into the substantial nature of the challenges that face them from a number of institutional levels: academic, political, social and the media. She shared this position with the other teachers. They all voiced the serious concerns they have for the welfare of Muslim youth in the circumstances.

⁸⁰ The founder and ex-leader of the Right-wing populist Danish People's Party.

When I look at the stories of the participants, with role models in mind, I couldn't help but see its huge importance. I saw this necessary to convey, even if the space doesn't allow for in-depth analysis of each narrative. Farid - an ex-gangster - narrated how Muslim youth who couldn't find role models growing up in Copenhagen went away from 'education', resorting to relatively lesser constructive resources like hip-hop and rap culture or, even, to more destructive resources such as gang-culture and street violence. It resonated some aspects of what Brown (2012) described when African American youth living in matrifocal homes would 'seek validation of their manhood through distorted constructions of masculinity from peers and other African American men outside the home' (Brown 2012: 303).

MTV [...] the different channels, these gangster movies [...] when they showed that to us, that was what we could relate to because we had always problem with the cops, and there was a racial problem.

(Farid, mid-20s, Edinburgh, Iraqi-Iranian background)

Both Sahra and Tariq, like Mustafa faced a crisis in reconciling aspects of Islam with everyday life at school and in Danish and Scottish society respectively. Unlike Mustafa though, they didn't narrate the presence of a role model who could help them with this. When the clash with their parents came, they both took on the Danish/Scottish youth party lifestyle as a resource for producing identity. This also served a means of rebellion against their parents (Muslim background). Safiyyah went through a similar initial struggle in reconciling her identity in the absence of role models although she, unlike Sahra and Tariq did not rebel. She resolved her identity crisis through embracing her Muslimness. When compared to Mustafa, Safiyyah's perceptions of and responses to Right-wing populism were markedly insecure. The ability to reconcile aspects of Islam with everyday life featured as an important factor in the participants' narratives.

Reconciling Islam with Everyday Life

Within the growing-up narratives of the participants, there was an observation that at certain points, they encountered scenarios and moments where Islam - in their

perception - either limited them or was limited in what it could offer in terms of resources. They were conflicted between Islam and their daily lived realities. We saw Mustafa's ability to reconcile between the elements of his Muslim identity with everyday life gave him a sense of 'stability' in the midst of conflict. This translated into secure identification which led to fitting in. This in turn enabled him to relate with 'Swedish values' as he responded to Right-wing populism. Some of the participants, like Sahra on the other hand, faced considerable difficulty in reconciling Islam with the lived reality of youth. This section compares their narratives to shed further light on this issue.

I noticed when I was in school, I was this kind of person, and when I came home to the society I was living in, I was another kind of person... OK, should I be more Danish, or should I be more Muslim Somali? [It] was like an identity crisis for me At this point, I'm like 16 I had Hijab on ... I was like OK, I don't want to have this on ... I just want to be myself because I felt being yourself would be more Danish, like be more the people around you... I started to not go with my Hijab... and I was a bit rebellion with my mother ... went partying all that ... I thought that was the life for me.

(Sahra)

Considerable research has shown that when young Muslims are able to coherently 'live' their 'Islams' in their everyday lives, they become more secure about themselves, their relationships and their citizenships; and this security manifests when their claims of belonging are questioned (Bonino 2017; Elshayyal 2018; Finlay *et al.* 2017; Hopkins 2018; Jeldtoft 2012; Otterbeck 2010; Schmidt 2011). We saw this with Mustafa during his schooling. Sahra was initially unable to attain this. She lacked relatable role models at school and parental support at home. She rebelled against her Islamic upbringing in a bid to be 'more Danish'. This, according to her only accentuated her non-Danishness.

Sahra: When I was 20, I start to think about the creation around me, and I start to think: the more I was trying to be this, the more I feel like I was betraying myself with sins. So I was like, I can never be like them [...]

Yahya: The Danish?

Sahra: Yea, the Danish people. I could never be like them because I was believing in the creation and how, I was like, how can these people not have a

religion in any kind of way like? It's all about your desires, desires, desires. So I was thinking a lot, and I stopped partying I noticed like many of my Danish friends at that time cut me off.

A gradual return to Islam took place for Sahra. What deserves highlighting is: it would take a reconciliation between her new-found practice of Islam with her everyday life for Sahra to become secure about herself, her relationships, her citizenship and her belonging to Danish society. And this security manifested itself in her responses to Right-wing populism. Having seen her in a counter-demonstration against PEGIDA,⁸¹ I directly asked:

Yahya: So how do you see these far-right groups [...] like this PEGIDA-Denmark, how do you see them, do you feel affected by them? Do you feel threatened by them?

Sahra: I don't feel threatened. Yea, I don't feel that, and I just feel more sorry for a person. I feel [that] because I've been there [...] I don't have all knowledge like now, but [...] I've been to a place where I was living in my own zone [...] it's all about me, and my desires and how I see things before I became more like: ok, let me learn things, other cultures, let me learn about how these people are seeing me [...] I just feel sorry about that: the people don't go and seek knowledge, why [do] you stand for this kind of propaganda, about Muslims [...] I can feel sorry for you that you're following this kind of way. You can like develop yourself for your own sake, and for your children's sake, because you're just creating a hate, and hate [...] hurts more than anything else.

This ability to reconcile Islam with one's everyday lived reality appears to be a crucial factor in the participants' staking claims to belonging. I was able to make this observation when comparing Mustafa and Sahra's narratives to Dwayne and Tariq's. I found in their case that some participants' responses to Right-wing populism were framed within discourses of absent stakeholderhood - i.e. in terms of inactive citizenship and belonging (i.e. we're not too bothered by Right-wing populism, but we're also not too interested in taking active part in society). Dwayne and Tariq, like Mustafa and

⁸¹ An anti-Islam populist street protest movement that originated in Germany and gained considerable traction across western Europe. The Danish branch staged demonstrations in Copenhagen during my fieldwork phase there.

Sahra, faced the dilemma of being Muslim, yet growing up in Europe. Unlike them however, they were yet to reconcile between their versions of Islam and their daily lived realities.

Dwayne found it hard to find balance and stability in his life after converting⁸² to Islam at 16. As I pointed out in introducing his journey of self-discovery, his impressionability together with the bad company he was around growing up in Hackney stifled his faith. He needed a complete ‘fresh start’, and this is what Malmo offered. This time round, he was determined to ‘hold fast’ to his religion; the priority lay in ‘safeguarding’ it. His narrative was a performance of redemption, and the identity he produced in his participation emphasised a distinct conservatism outlined by Geoffroy (2004) as one of the ‘religious positions’ in response to modernity. Dwayne’s prioritisation precluded the ‘reconciliation’ between his practice of Islam and his lived everyday reality in Malmo. For him, it was the same whether Right-wing politics took hold of Sweden or not because it didn’t matter much. He was on a mission to make his ‘Hijrah’. This constituted a different kind of response to Right-wing populism - one rooted in an unwillingness or inability to reconcile Islam with everyday life in Europe.

Yahya: Is there any direction that these changes are going towards? [...] You’ve seen changes in yourself, in your thinking as an adult, what about in terms of [...] politics or economics or how society in Sweden is changing? Do you pick up on any of these?

Dwayne: Yea, it’s come lately now that Romania has joined the EU, obviously now we see a lot of Romanians on the street that are begging or busking [...] But for me realistically that doesn’t really [...] affect me even in the politics [...] I don’t really care about those stuff to tell you the truth cos I know what I need to do for myself personally and where I’m going and where I want to go, so what, I mean [...] It’s not permissible for a Muslim to live in a non-Islamic country whether it be having children, because verily even in the way I was thinking about it, obviously, safety is an important issue, even to the whole of mankind. I don’t think there’s no one individual that would say: I’m not worried about

⁸² Dwayne’s early-ish conversion to ‘orthodox Islam’ plus his being raised by his mother under the “Nation of Islam” from the age of 12 onwards makes his inclusion in the ‘Growing up Muslim’ cohort justifiable.

safety, everyone's worried about safety, and in the aspect of safety, at the head of safety is safeguarding my religion.

Tariq shared with Dwayne this absent-stakeholder narrative in terms of his sense of belonging and social participation. Like Mustafa, Sahra and Dwayne, Tariq's Islam was also conflicted in his growing up, and he continues to struggle with reconciling it with his everyday life. We saw in the section on 'segregated upbringings' how his exposure to discrimination as a part and parcel of growing up in Saughton and Stenhouse resulted in an unreconciled sense of identity, especially in the absence of role models. We saw something of an 'us versus them' narrative when he spoke about his early childhood experiences such as in him not being allowed to play with the other children, and how he saw them as 'white boys'. In Tariq's narrative, his conflicted Islam stemmed from the upbringing he received at home with his family. Just as I allocated space in screening the episodes of Mustafa's narrative, Tariq has a slot in chapter six when I explore the gender theme in the participants' production of narrative identities. For now, I suffice with summarising the relevant parts of his narratives as they pertained to the topic of reconciling Islam with everyday life.

Tariq along with his family 'were saved' and the 'junkies' - his neighbours, school friends, and pretty much, the surrounding members of his community weren't. To make matters worse, he was told that 'no one likes you; you're Muslim'. Beyond this religionisation of social boundaries Tariq and his siblings - in his view - weren't given the parental support that would enable them to make informed decisions as they grew up in life. What was the most damaging in Tariq's view however was the insidious inculcation of an 'Innocent Islam' which pulled the wool over his eyes. He 'was Islamic and proper' and yet he saw his mother flaunt those values when she started to form relationships outside the norms she had defined for him: girls should not speak to boys. This 'hypocrisy' became a catalyst for his rebellion and severe conflict with his mother. I continue to have contact with Tariq, even at this point of writing up my work, and he has informed me that he continues to face difficulties reconciling Islam with his

everyday life. He goes through lapses in his practice of the religion, and has recently started to syncretise his Islamic faith with Yoga and Mindfulness. We have seen how he was yet to resolve his sense of belonging to Scotland. This tallies with my tentative finding that the inability to reconcile Islam with everyday practice impacts Muslim claims of citizenship and sense of belonging to their national contexts. This becomes manifest when they are confronted by rhetoric which outwardly contests their claims of belonging.

Conclusion

This chapter looked at the growing-up-Muslim narratives of the second generation cohort. It has provided empirical examples showing a range of factors (migration, socio-economic and individual) conglomerate, producing distinct perspectives and experiences which the participants used in narrating their identities. Three major factors were found as challenging to the participants in their growing up experiences: (1) segregation, (2) lack of role models and (3) the inability to reconcile Islam with everyday life. And while each of these factors could be variably linked to the participants' perceptions of and responses to Right-wing populism, being Muslim in and of itself does not appear to determine the nature of these responses.

The participants' narratives have shown that they exercise individual agency in choosing when to switch Islam on and off. Their perceptions of anti-Islam discourses are therefore likely to correlate with this: i.e. neither Islam nor Right-wing populism determined the production of narrative identities in a totalistic sense. We saw in Mustafa's case how contact with a non-Muslim role model became a defining episode in his identification. The combined factors of: a secure sense of belonging and identity stemming from positive relations (contact) with indigenous Swedish people produced highly secure responses to Right-wing populism. Tariq and Safiyyah showed us: although a segregated upbringing exposed them to experiences of discrimination and prejudice, neither produced their narrative identities as a response to Right-wing populism. Rather, they appeared to be resisting the stigma of being Muslim (Bonino 2017).

Referring to the theoretical frameworks, the explanatory model best suited to explaining and accounting for the above outlined empirical manifestations is intergroup relations and social identity theory. Sahra attached value to 'knowledge' and it became a means for her reconciling her Islam with her left-wing activism; Safiyyah embraced the 'difference'; Mustafa recognised the Islamic values inherent in Swedishness. These could be viewed from the theoretical perspectives of: 'social creativity as a response to

threat' (Brown & Ross 2010: 170), or tactics-strategies (de Certeau 1984) in response to perceptions of threat/superiority by altering attachment placed on certain values and qualities (Cairns 2010). Intergroup contact theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 2007) has also provided a useful framework to explain the 'in/exposure leading to non/liking' (Pettigrew 2007: 188) narratives shared by Mustafa, Sahra, Tariq and Safiyyah.

When comparing the participants' responses to the literature on intergroup conflict and other minority (stigmatised) groups, I saw a number of similar coping measures manifest in the narratives. The suppressed 'dissident identities' of the first generation (Walter *et. al.* 2002) resurfacing in the second generation as a 'rediscovery of cultural roots' (Bradley 2006: 1193) was something which Safiyyah's narrative expressed. The 'downplaying' of Irish identity (Ullah 1985) and 'avoidance' as a coping strategy for members of the African American community (Utsey *et. al.* 2000) are two responses which avert confronting the source of prejudice/discrimination. This could be seen in Dwayne and Tariq's responses. For both, the apparent difficulty of reconciling Islam with everyday life appeared to inhibit their claims of collective belonging. Their responses to Right-wing populism were framed in terms of an absent stakeholdership: i.e. not being too bothered, while disengaging from civic participation.

Growing up Muslim, unfortunately, entailed growing up with conflict, often involving family, friends and identities. Regarding how this theme related to Muslim responses to Right-wing populism, it was observed that when such conflict is resolved through the reconciliation between Islam and other aspects of identity such as ethnicity, nationality and gender, it tended to produce secure responses. It may have been expected that Islam would be an inhibiting factor stimulating more defensive responses. The participants however reconfigured Islam in ways which complemented active civic participation in their local and national contexts. Rather than become inhibiting, Islam provided a basis for exploring, considering and - where necessary - countering narratives and discourses of exclusion. We saw this particularly in the cases of Sahra and Mustafa

I was interested in studying the participants' narratives around their images of self and constructions of identity when - at some point in their lives - Islam wasn't necessarily an active agent or resource. We saw that the participants used other resources available to them in order to construct their identities and configure images of who they were. Like them, the other cohort also went through episodes of their lives without Islam being there. For them, the religion factor came about as an active choice to convert. How would their experiences shape their perceptions of and responses to Right-wing populism?

Chapter 5

Conversion to Being Muslim

For some of the participants, Islam came along following an active choice to convert - revert⁸³ - as some of them put it. The journeys they took in discovering themselves, the paths that led them to Islam and their narratives around being Muslim and practicing the religion differed from those participants born and raised in Muslim families. This warranted a separate chapter studying the theme of conversion to Islam, analysing the issues connected to it and how that related to the participants' responses to Right-wing populism.

I discovered the emergent narratives clustered into two main themes: (a) being Muslim and (b) the challenges of being a convert. These form the backbone of this chapter. The first cluster, being Muslim, comprised narratives of the fresh start(s) Islam offered its converts and the tools it provided for them- belonging, purpose and character. The second part of the chapter looks at the challenges of being Muslim through conversion by looking at narratives of surviving the crises associated with embracing the religion and resisting the stigma of being a 'traitor' to one's people. Within the scope of these challenges were negotiations around identity (racial/ethnic, national, religious), perspective or perception (insider/outsider) and individuality.

Like conversion to other religions, conversion to Islam is a process (Rambo 1993) involving a number of stages where the convert - at some point - faces the challenge of

⁸³ Some Muslim converts prefer to use the term 'revert' because Islam's theology sees all humans as born within the *fitrah* - a natural state of purity in submission to Allah. People choose to either follow or depart from this universal Islam; and hence, embracing it through conversion is seen as a return to the religion. References are: 'So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the *fitrah* of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know.' (Quran 30:30). And in a *Hadith*: 'every infant is born upon the *Fitrah*; then his/her parents make him a Jew or Christian ...' (Bukhari #1319, Muslim #2658).

resolving conflicts in their new found dual, sometimes, multiple identities (Baker 2009: 23; Reddie 2009; Moosavi 2012, 2015a; Simmons 2006; Zebiri 2008, 2014). Converts go through contradictory experiences of ‘acceptance and rejection, inclusion and exclusion, integration and isolation’ (Suleiman 2013: 9; Bonino 2017: 152; Moosavi 2012).

Baker (2009); Roald (2004), Kose (1996) outlined four stages of conversion. The first is the founding phase where converts ‘embrace new ideological, cultural and religious practices once considered alien to them’ (Baker 2009: 22). The foundational phase is the second: here, converts start to develop their new-found Islamic identities. It is fraught with liminalities and in some cases, it leads to overzealousness, self-righteousness and a ‘desire to address/tackle perceived ills of societies head on’ (Roald (2004: 160). The formative phase is the ‘actualisation of religion’ - a stage beyond the abstract practice of religion where converts are able to experience Islam as ‘a way of life’ having understood and internalised its teachings (Baker 2009: 23). Here, more long-term Muslim converts have had the opportunity to practice the religion in Muslim contexts so that they are able to see first-hand how it is practiced - beyond learning from ‘books, cassettes and videos from predominantly non-Muslim environments’ (ibid). In the mature (reflective) phase, defining moments - both pre and post-conversion - become the subject in reflections over one’s journey and how much they have developed in their understanding, practice and character as Muslims (ibid).

I have outlined the above typology in the stages of the conversion process to help set the stage as I now present the converts’ journeys into Islam. Similar to the second-generation Muslims, the converts lived a life where Islam was not a present factor; they came to discover it. They were in different stages of their journeys. Some were recent converts, and hence, still in their foundational phases. Others had been Muslim for over a decade and had in-depth experiences of actualising their faiths in Muslim contexts – some actually lived in parts of the Muslim world for extended periods of time. I now provide a presentation of their stories on the fresh starts Islam offered as an entry into

analysing their narrative identities and inspecting how their production related to their responses to Right-wing populism.

Fresh Starts in Being Muslim

Embracing Islam represented a fresh start for many of the convert participants. This fresh start brought about many and significant changes to life for them. These ranged from having to give up certain relationships to adopting a specific diet; from learning worship rituals to observing certain social codes of conduct; and from making sense of oneself to explaining oneself to others. Designating Islam as a 'fresh start' tended to come about after the many twists and turns in one's life. In some cases, after significantly difficult and harrowing circumstances. The fresh start became a sort of reset button for the episodes/narrative(s). Fiona showed this both as an illustration and as a figure of speech.

Fiona: I started by drawing the tree with the root. And I thought: right, I'd put Allah here. And I was like aah - I can't put Him on the bottom! I have to turn it upside. So Allah is on the top. So now my tree. My tree of life is turned upside down. But not upside down. Maybe it's right way up [crying]

Yahya: So it's like an inverted tree?

Fiona: [hums affirming] You think [...] this is how life is gonna be, this is it. And then somebody turns it and goes: actually look at the picture that way. And you go: [excitedly] Oh my God! How did I never see that? Islam has given me a fresh start. It has given me the tools. But I'm in charge now. I'm in charge of who gets to see what, and that's a real empowering thing for women.

(Fiona, mid-40s, Admin, Edinburgh, Scottish)

Fiona's tree of life - overleaf - branched out the many twists and turns of her life: motherhood, abusive relationships with men, alcoholism, depression and mental illness leading to her hospitalisation. Islam certainly represented a 'fresh start' in her narrative. Now in her mid-forties and having been Muslim over a decade, Fiona's participation was reflective of a mature phase. And while in her production of narrative identity,

Islam featured as a central component in the plot, this was not the case across the cohort. For some converts, besides the life changing moments brought on by Islam, other factors contributed to change perhaps on an even more profound extent. Dwayne is an example of this. Despite ‘starting [in Islam] as a fresh new baby’, it appeared that his move from London to Malmo was what really brought about that change in his life leading him to where he is today. I asked: why Sweden?

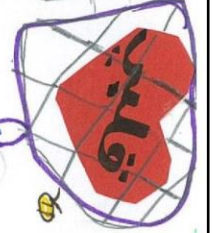
[laughing] I get asked [that] a thousand times [...] I met my son’s mother in the UK [...] She was Swedish, and *Alhamdulillah* that was at a time when I was quite weak in my religion [...] I started backtracking, because of my environment and the people I was rolling with [...] Deep inside, I felt quite sad about it and depressed [...] So when I met her, and then [...] I visited Sweden, I could see it as like a new door opening because I never had no baggage to think about [...] I took it straight away without even thinking twice just to run away from the environment I was in. Too many friends were going to prison, I was in a bad situation [...] I don't wanna be cliché, but what I went through made me who I am today [...] I wouldn't choose it another way.

(Dwayne)

What
who
where
Am I
Bus stop
School

Where are you out there
Journey of life.

Which station are you
at.



عزيت
children

Relationship

Men
Woman

marriage

When you
fall from the
tree, do not
fear,
your return is
to Allah!

My voice
covered my fall

fly high
my little
one
I have
your
back
and
your roots
are strong



When you make a mistake,
you have a choice,
1. Leave it and complain
about the mess
2. Transform it
to a butterfly

Education
Arabic - Language Teaching
Thibbiyyah



grass share
Allah plants
you, but remember
The Bees

The fool

buy a sheng bag
put your own bagged
and walk
Forward

Thewalka

Allah
accepts
it
Turns

Turn War 112 - ...sidu ...damin - Nawho thone is al-ther ...

Conversion to Islam wasn't always perceived of or experienced as a fresh start. In Isla's case, her Islam at the age of 16 coincided with the transitions of being a teenager. There was no major life altering. She experienced it more as a fluidity than a distinct rupture signifying a fresh start. Isla's formative period in Islam took place within the insular context of her hometown where she was one of two Muslims. This experience of Islam without Muslims and her initial practice of the religion caused no serious conflict within herself. The first major crisis Isla would encounter post-conversion would be two years later when she moved from rural Scotland to Edinburgh for her university degree. Here, for the first time, she encountered a Muslim community. She encountered a crisis in this formative stage of her conversion where she was expecting/expected to actualise her faith through its practice in Muslim space.

Earlier literature on Muslim converts tended to highlight their relatively positive experiences and perceptions. Ansari (2004) highlighted how white British converts weren't faced with the issues and conflicts with self-identity compared with their culturally raised Muslim counterparts. Roald (2004) highlighted the advantages enjoyed by native Scandinavian converts: their 'transcultural identities' enabled them to move freely within their Muslim and indigenous socio-cultural worlds. This enabled them to engage other minority subcultural communities as well. Moosavi (2015b) went further to highlight the 'white privilege' enjoyed by converts: their whiteness gave them a sense of respectability amidst their Muslim circles. Interestingly, white converts tended to receive a privileged status vis-à-vis their black/non-white counterparts (al-Qwidi 2002: 228–229; Haddad 2006: 40; Zebiri 2008: 65, 98–99). This literature prepares the ground for Isla's story.

Isla: I don't see myself as a convert, it seems like a fluid transition for me that Islam entered my life and I just started practising in my teenage years. [...] I was just 16 at the time [...] There wasn't this [...] having to give up dating or any of that kind of thing [...] Sometimes I feel that I haven't transitioned at all [...] It's kind of just been a fluid kind of thing, a continuation from teenage years..

Yahya: [...] This fluidity, has it also continued? [...]

Isla: No [...] there has been ruptures [...] I accepted Islam, and for two years, I wasn't part of the Muslim community [...] I just practiced Islam on my own, I didn't know other Muslims [...] It was difficult, but more so because of my family [...] And then when I entered the Muslim community, [...] that's when I had a slight identity crisis [...] I was a white, Scottish Muslim walking into a mosque which was predominantly South Asian and Arab.

(Isla, early-20s, Secretary, Edinburgh, Scottish)

Isla's identity crisis came in her initial encounter with the Edinburgh Muslim community. She found herself carefully navigating the fine lines of religion, race, ethnicity and culture. This made it difficult for her to initially fit in, making her feel like she was a 'minority within a minority'. But to Isla's recognition, she also belongs to the social majority group by virtue of her ethnicity. The concept of double-minority is interesting insofar as it echoes research conducted in Northern Ireland – a context where intergroup conflict theory has provided useful explanatory insights. Here, Jackson (1971, cited in Cairns 2010: 286) 'suggested what he calls 'the double minority model': Protestants see themselves as a minority within the whole island of Ireland while Catholics see themselves as a minority within Northern Ireland'.

These perceptions of minority-majority create notions of superiority-inferiority which in turn initiate certain responses from individuals within the groups. These responses can be: (a) an 'attempt to redefine the attributes which contribute to the existing negative social [status] – for example 'black is beautiful' (b) 'an attempt to create, through social action, new group characteristics' positively valued by the superior group, and (c) seek to become more like the superior group 'through action and reinterpretation of group characteristics' (Cairns 2010: 286). This provides signage for themes to look out for in analysing the converts' narratives. I shall make recourse to this especially in the section on challenges and negotiations. For now, I return to Isla's narrative to conclude this section with the point that seeing and experiencing Islam as a fresh start was not shared by all.

Isla's Islam story was quite different from the others insofar as she didn't share a fresh start narrative. Her Islam wasn't experienced in these terms; she had her own unique

trajectory which brought distinct scenarios to her life. These made her have to confront her identity and negotiate her own sense of belonging. We have seen in the previous chapter how certain contexts which the second-generation participants were exposed to growing up made them negotiate and reconfigure their identities. This related to their responses to Right-wing populism insofar as the discourse touched upon the themes of race, ethnicity, culture, citizenship and national identity. Isla's narrative made me question if this could also be the case for the converts. To explore this, I use Isla's portfolio as a case - like I had done with Mustafa - to compare her narrative with the others in the convert cohort. The first sub-narrative I analyse is the tools of life which Islam had acquired the converts. What were these tools? And how were they used in narrative identity production.

Tools of Life

Conversion accorded the participants new things: perspectives, insights, attitudes, and worldviews - what Fiona summed up as 'tools'. This was a prominent post-conversion narrative shared by all the converts. In a lot of the stories, these tools were instrumental in producing a distinct identity as the converts pieced together the episodes of their lives to narrate who they are. Some expressed this in terms of change. Isla experienced it as a 'fluid continuation' of teenagehood. These produced identities were mostly framed in positive narratives: (more respect for family members, calmness, awareness of others, an expanded worldview, a new sense of responsibility and so on). Isla's narrative is insightful because it shows how a life-changing and world-opening tool for someone could also be another's source of fear and anxiety. It resonated with the statement 'Edinburgh puts contact theory to the test' (Bonino 2017: 165).

To return momentarily to Northern Ireland, some political scientists have expressed scepticism around the application of intergroup contact to social policy. They cited cases in Ulster where Catholic-Protestant contact 'enhanced prejudice' rather than allay it (McGarry & O'Leary 2004: 210). The difficulty or near-impossibility of crossing from one (sectarian) group to another is a fact of life in Northern Ireland (Cairns 2010: 281,

see also Donnan 1990; McLaughlin et al. 2007). Religious conversion and intermarriage⁸⁴ are indeed possibilities. But as Barritt and Carter (1972) observed, ‘it is relatively rare and is opposed equally by both sides’ (cited in Cairns 2010: 281, see also McLaughlin *et al.* 2007: 96; Donnan 1990). With this perspective in mind, I return to Isla’s case to see how her crossing of group boundaries, the tools she acquired upon doing so and the various contacts she has with family and communities (Muslim and non-Muslim) have been narrated.

We’re a very small insular family, very close knit and have stayed in the same area, we’ve never really travelled much [...] typical working class. I’m the first to go to university [...] I’ve been the breakaway from that [laughs] I decided: oh yes mother! I’m going across the world to China, I’m going to study in Qatar for a year. So it’s kind of actively breaking the usual way of doing things because I just decided to do things a little bit different [laughs] and I think it’s worked out well for me, but I’m not sure they’d agree [...] I can understand my parents’ fear in avoid[ing] talking about Islam because I think part of them feels: six years down the line, we don’t like that you’re a Muslim, but [...] you’ve turned into this really admirable person. You’ve achieved so much [...] You can tell they’re partly attributing that to Islam. I think part of their remaining in ignorance is fear of finding out that it’s true [...] So I have to remain empathetic to that [...] understand[ing] how scary it is to [...] take all that on board and go through that fear and accept it. Your life has to change in the way you view the world, and that’s a difficult transition to go through.

(Isla)

Isla outlined that the insular nature of her family and their working-class background factored in their perception of ‘Islam starting to take over’ and hence the imminent threat to their way of life. This issue of class has been outlined in Northern Ireland as well, where the working-class take on a pronounced stance in outwardly maintaining the sectarian divide. An example of this is the Orange Order marches where among ‘the Protestant middle classes in particular, there seems to be a view that as long as there are some people willing to keep the traditional symbols of Protestant identity ticking over’

⁸⁴ ‘Approximately only 2 % of marriages in Northern Ireland are between Catholic and Protestant (Lee, 1983: 18; Rose, 1971: 508)’ (Donnan 1990: 209).

there is no need to become involved themselves (Donnan 1990: 211; see also Cairns 2010: 290; McLaughlin *et al.* 2007). In intergroup identity terms, class itself is a social category beside sectarian/religious grouping. Hence, members belonging to different class groupings engage in the process of maintaining a positive and secure social identity. How is this?

In the Northern Irish context, the 'self-ascribed middle class' would see themselves as more tolerant to religious differences and therefore superior to the bigotry of 'their social inferiors' (Donnan 1990: 211). The working class on the other hand regard themselves in patriotic and loyalist terms, seeing 'those they see as their social superiors [as] expressing only rather wishy-washy views on the sectarian divide; they help to maintain the idea of the middle class as politically inactive, more liberal, and more inclined to be ecumenical' (ibid). In Isla's narrative, this awareness of social class is tied with a discourse around the preservation of Scottish tradition and culture. Her explaining the increasing convert presence in the mosque led to a discussion around the perception of threat from a growing Muslim population; and it was here the Right-wing populist factor surfaced.

Isla: I'm thinking specifically about my family but if I apply that to the [...] general Scottish population, I could see them potentially having the same view [...] I think part of it is wanting to hold onto the Scottish tradition, not have it taken away [...] by increasing diversity.

Yahya: [...] Does that mean Islam doesn't have a future here?

Isla: No [...] I think it does. I think it's certain groups of people, who're more likely to join these protests because they see Islam as a threat to their way of life [...] Like my family ... [They] could probably sympathise with the SDL [...] 'they've recruited our daughter' [laughs]

Yahya: They could recruit anyone! [laughs]

Isla: Yea [...] It's difficult for my family [...] because the reason I came to Islam was my friend had converted [...] They did everything in their power to stop us talking [...] So, I can understand why they would sympathise with something like the SDL [...]

Yahya: How does that make you feel as a Muslim?

Isla: [...] It does make you feel a bit unsafe because [...] I can potentially be a target [...] It's not a nice feeling [...]

Yahya: Does that in anyway influence your sense of belonging to this city or country?

Isla: No [...] I was raised here, I don't know anywhere else as home [...] it just makes me feel slightly unsafe. It doesn't make me feel that I have to leave Edinburgh [...] I'm born here.

Isla's ability to understand where her family were 'coming from' enabled her to relate to Right-wing populist rhetoric. She wasn't intimidated by it; rather she could empathise and understand its sympathisers. She could engage in dialogue with their views along with considering opposing perspectives. Although the rise of the Right-wing may cause her some element of insecurity, she is defiant in her being at home. Isla's response is framed by two main factors: (a) her direct contact with 'anti-Islam' rhetoric (see Moosavi 2015a: 43) (b) her ability to look at issues from more than one insider perspective. Being Muslim gave her the additional tool of having more than one perspective. Isla's narrative portrays (performs) a resilient character using these tools, contexts and insights to negotiate her position within and outwith Muslim circles. And by doing this, she produces her own identity of Scottish Islam where she can feel authentic to herself by taking from both 'traditions'. This, I noted, was not a reactionary narrative identity in response to Right-wing populism. Rather, it was a product of several factors (friendship, conversion, relocation, doing things differently) against multiple contexts (family, rural, urban, international) experienced as a continuity from teenagehood.

Isla: I view myself as a minority within a minority [laugh] [...] It has its negative [and] beneficial points. I think I have a unique perspective to bring to the community because [...] I can see things outside the usual box [...] I often struggle between siding with my non-Muslim white people [...] and siding with Muslims

Yahya: [...] How you are now, are you more secure in your identity as a Scottish Muslim?

Isla: Yea![emphatic] definitely[...] I'm happy being Scottish and [...] having my Scottish heritage. I'm proud of it, you know [...] haggis, neeps and tatties [...] I'm starting to appreciate [...] retaining that kind of Scottishness, which I think we're slowly losing as a nation unfortunately.

Yahya: Aha! wow that's interesting, would that be a national change? [...] What about demographics, immigration, have they contributed at all to this fading Scottish culture?

Isla: Yea! well [thinking-pause] I know [...] people within my family who are completely against immigration [...] On the flipside, I know people who embrace that as an ability to make Scotland a melting pot of diversity [...] That would cause us to lose [...] some of that tradition and heritage. Well, I don't think we'd lose it, but maybe the Scottish one wouldn't be as prominent because you'd have such a mix.

So far, we have gained significant insight into Isla's narrative, seeing the factors which framed and shaped her responses to Right-wing populism: (a) exposure to Right-wing populist rhetoric through family socialisation and (b) having more than one perspective (tool/s). When I compared her narrative to the others', I saw the effect these tools along with the individual factors and contexts have on the convert participants' responses to Right-wing populism. Emma is one such candidate whose narrative can be compared with Isla's. Emma's conversion narrative wasn't as detailed. Her responses were brief and succinct to begin with as she warmed to the conversation.

Emma: My name is [Emma] [...] I'm 29 years old. I live in Malmo, and I'm a mum of two [...] I'm on parental leave but otherwise I work as a childminder.

Yahya: Right. So, how has your identity changed as a person? [...]

Emma: I don't know what to say [...] Well obviously I have changed as a person [...] I became a Muslim, and I became a mum. Maybe those are the two main changes in my life.

Emma's conversion narrative didn't convey the same fluid sense of continuity with teenagehood Isla experienced. There was however, something of a continuity – 'I believed in God ... and I prayed every day, or every night' - but Islam's entry into her life wasn't internalised as part and parcel of her growing up as Isla had done. Like Isla, Emma shared a narrative of having to overcome family reactions to her conversion.

Emma's family background was however very different from Isla's. This would create a variance in terms of what issues would be evoked and the resulting negotiations of identity. Emma has mixed-European heritage: her mother's side of the family are indigenous Swedes whereas her father's side have Croatian roots. Her family certainly wasn't the 'insular' type Isla described of her's. In terms of social status, Emma's family have successfully established themselves business-wise and in terms of careers. The rhetoric she was exposed to following her Islam - or even in growing up - didn't feature race, ethnicity and migration; rather, it centred on the family feeling hurt and somewhat 'betrayed' especially when she decided to start wearing the Hijab.

My family knew I was [...] studying Islam but they didn't think it was a big thing [...] My Dad thought it was just a phase, but when I decided to wear Hijab [...] it was so hard for him [...] It made our relationship very, very bad [...] It was hard to tell my grandparents because I knew they would be very offended [...]

Yahya: Why would they get offended?

Emma: [sighs] Because they didn't understand how I could [...] choose to leave [...] to not be Christian [...] My Grandpa said that he couldn't sleep for three nights [...]] Maybe they felt betrayed.

One of the findings that emerge when comparing Emma and Isla's stories is the importance of family socialisation in (a) exposure to specific discourses of inclusion/exclusion and (b) the ability to negotiate and deal with these discourses through individual choices. Isla's family are insular and close-knit; they have a specific way of doing things and seeing the world in terms of inclusion/exclusion. Isla was socialised in this context, but her individual choice was to be the 'breakaway'. Emma's family on the other hand are very cosmopolitan.⁸⁵ She was socialised in this context of relative pluralism in terms of inclusion and openness. When she made the decision to

⁸⁵ She has extended relatives from Croatia, the US, Netherlands, Germany and Luxembourg through marriage and migration. Although there is extensive literature on cosmopolitanism as distinct from ethnic/national diversity (Derrida 2003; Miller 2007; Kleingeld & Brown 2014; Pogge 1992; Vertovec and Cohen 2003). Here, it is used with regard to *socio-economic elites* who are highly mobile internationally and in terms of social mobility. And this is the case with Emma's family.

convert, she wasn't confronted with the same brazen rhetoric/discourse of exclusion which Isla faced. And therefore, when she was finally encountered it post-conversion, she struggled to find the resources (tools) to cope and deal with the challenge. In saying this however, we should also appreciate that Emma appears to have been subject to more direct anti-Islam hate than Isla was. I share her story as she recounted a series of horrific experiences which have influenced her perception of and responses to Right-wing populism.

I was with [sibling sister] at the time, and this man came up to us and he asked me: 'do you know speak Swedish?' I'm like: yea! [...] 'Are you Swedish?' ... I [thought]: ok ... some people want to ask you things out of curiosity, and it's ok. I was being open, and then he just [...] put his fist in my face and like: [clenches raising her fist making an aggressive face] förrädare! betrayer, or traitor, Förrädare!

(Emma)

Emma and Isla's experiences chimed with scholarship outlining the susceptibility of converts to 'Islamophobia' (Garner and Selod 2015; Moosavi 2015a; Zebiri 2014). I have already presented an overview of this literature in chapter two. As for the tropes of betrayal, converts are not only seen as abandoning their nation by joining the Islamic Other, they are also seen as race traitors (Franks, 2000: 923-4; McDonald, 2005: 142; Moosavi 2015a: 43; van Nieuwkerk, 2006: 1). A chapter is designated for narratives of citizenship and hence the material touching on the issue of national belonging – for converts and the second-generation - will be given fuller attention there. In the meantime, to maintain a thematic symmetry with the previous empirical chapter, I focus on the contexts of the anti-Islam discourses which the converts were exposed to. This is more likely to reveal the tools which were used to respond to such discourse, and where relevant, how this then related to the converts' perceptions of and responses to Right-wing populist rhetoric.

When I looked at the converts' narratives, the family became a primary context for the sort of rhetoric and discourses outlined above. And although scholarship has touched

upon this issue of family-based anti-Muslim sentiment (Al-Qwidi 2002: 219–20; Haddad 2006: 31; Jensen 2008: 398; Johns and Saeed 2002: 209; Moosavi 2015a: 43; Kose 1996: 137; van Nieuwkerk 2006: 4; Zebiri, 2008: 71), it hasn't explored the issue in depth, seeing how different contexts (families) contribute to different responses from the converts as coping mechanisms or indeed productions of identity. This thesis can therefore contribute with insights in this regard by comparing the converts' family narratives, seeing how they became resources for the production of identities - especially in growing up.

My mother is indigenous English [...] and my father is from North India⁸⁶ [...] I have a very strong connection to Scotland [...] by ancestry [...] birth and schooling [...] I had a very, very comfortable and pleasant childhood. My parents had an academic background. My mother's a maths teacher and my father's a professor, so, a very intellectual, a very pleasant atmosphere. We had a nice family life and we went back to India for years and so I got the fun of both cultures.

(Adam, late-40s, Self-Employed, Edinburgh, English-Indian heritage)

I was brought up with a mentality of children should be seen and not heard. So weren't meant to interrupt. You weren't to come in and go: mum, mum, mum. It was always children are seen and not heard. So your voice is never heard, your opinion was never validated. You were always told to go out. I'm from a good family actually Alhamdulillah. But that was a statement from my youth that stuck and [...] now [...] boy! will you listen to me.

(Fiona)

Adam's upbringing exposed him to different cultures. In this regard, his childhood differed from Isla's. And although Emma's cosmopolitan family background may well have exposed her to cultural diversity, it certainly wasn't something that featured in her narrative. The glimpse Fiona gives us into her childhood tells an account of 'roles', tradition and discipline: as the eldest, she was given more chores to do. She came from a

⁸⁶ Adam clarified that his father is Hindu.

family that married across the Protestant-Catholic divide. It might have been expected for her to share reflections on this distinctly ecumenical growing up context especially given the history of tense sectarianism in Scotland (Bonino 2017; Bruce *et al.* 2004; Flint 2008; Walls and Williams 2005). Fiona however focused on childhood roles and validation. She weaved this into her narrative of being given a voice by Islam to contrast her growing up experience of ‘being seen and not heard’. A chapter is dedicated to narratives of gender. In this respect, the factors which she saw as important at that stage of her family life (age and gender roles) differed from the discourses of inclusion and exclusion encountered by Isla.

From the narratives so far, I have showcased how Emma, Fiona and Adam’s family backgrounds were relatively more ‘pluralistic’ than Isla’s. From a young age, Adam was brought up seeing that matters could be viewed from diametrically opposed positions and yet loved ones could still live harmoniously. A somewhat similar experience in Fiona’s case could be inferred from her ecumenical upbringing. In her case interestingly, this growing up experience was re-appropriated in her post-conversion narrative to counter what she perceived of as her mother’s attempt to demarcate (restrict) religious boundaries. This is something I have already elaborated on regarding the Northern Irish case (Cairns 2010: 281, see also McLaughlin *et al.* 2007: 96; Donnan 1990).

I remember somebody asking me ‘why do you need to marry a Muslim? [...] Just make sure you marry your own kind’ [...] I was a bit taken aback, and actually it was my mum that said it to be honest. And I felt [...] deep down rooted, there’s something of this ‘other’ ... There’s them and there’s us. I don’t know who the other ‘us’ is to her, but she identifies as white, protestant [...] My Dad was Catholic [...] ‘Just remember to marry your own kind.’ And I was a bit hurt, and said: well, [...] I’d marry a human and a Muslim because that’s my kind.

(Fiona)

My father would pick the Palestinian side [...] even if he belongs to neither religion [...] and my mother would [...] take the Israeli side [...] on the grounds that Israel was surrounded by Arab countries, couldn’t they just have one little country? [...] My father’s argument was the[y] [...] were using someone else’s

land [...] Both arguments have points if you go purely by reason [...] and this is the environment I was brought up in.

(Adam)

Such an intellectually stimulating environment certainly left its mark on Adam as he grew up and made those important life choices based on careful reasoning and consideration of the many perspectives. This critical way of looking at matters enabled him to share nuanced insights and to question the agenda or status-quo. This came up in his evaluation of the Right-wing populist agenda vis-à-vis the other competing factions in his perception (liberalism and the media).

Adam: Looking at the media reports, I'm saddened by collective attacks on Muslims by some of these Far-Right groups [...] But I feel that the media does rip people up [...] My feeling is that it's almost like one group is played off against the other [...] [and] the media feeds it on both sides [...]

Yahya: You think they're a result of the media?

Adam: [...] This is conjecture [...] in part, they are [also] a result of preservation of their identity and morality [...] The common ground as I see [it] is that the Far-right shouldn't attack Muslims, and Muslims shouldn't attack them [...] They are against Islam because they feel a loss of cultural identity.

Fiona's responses to Right-wing populism were in congruence with her post-conversion voice narrative. We have seen how she used certain childhood memories as resources to re-appropriate the issues of concern in her life. The tools Islam provided equipped her to assert her own mind in questioning how society functioned without need to have her opinion validated. Fiona's voice in this matter followed her re-appropriation of Scottishness in terms of 'flock' and family – the land, according to her, belonged to Allah regardless of who ascribed it to the Scots or English. 'They're trying to give people a false sense of what nationality is [...] It's about neighbourhood. It's about family, your flock ... and the people around you'. This meant acknowledging the other, meeting them halfway and speaking to them at their level - things she could do within her Islam. Fiona took the discourse on responding to Right-wing populism to actual practical (performance) terms when she told the story of her conversing with her sister's boyfriend.

Part of me [...] wants to go and challenge them. Not [...] in confrontation [...] but listen to what the real people on the street, those that are in the SDL: ‘what is your real issue here?’ [...] Is it with Muslims? ... Islam? ... Pakistanis? ... Blacks? [...] No Tommy Robinson, no what the media is making it out to be [...] And there are people I know that outwardly say I’m part of that [...] like my sister’s boyfriend [...] I’ve sat in his company [...] I didn’t wear my Niqab⁸⁷ [...] it would have been more of a barrier [...] We had such an open conversation [...] I put my point across to them [...] And my sister was like: ‘they were listening to you’ [...]] And the guy [...] was like: ‘your sister’s sound’ and [...] he went over trying to give me a hug [...] I think they very much identify with the SDL [...] In those groups, there’s a lot of testosterone, alcohol, violence [...] So you really have to choose your words wisely and you have to go to their level [...] But you have to make it safe. And you have to make it Halal⁸⁸ [...] You can’t say: ‘let’s go make Dawah⁸⁹ in the pubs’ [...] Part of me say[s]: [...] what gives me the right to say they’re not entitled to Dawah? But [...] my Islam comes first.

(Fiona)

Here is an ideal place to bring this section which looked at the post-conversion narratives of ‘fresh start[s]’ to a close. We began with Fiona and end with her, having focused on Isla and brought in the other converts’ narratives. The tools Islam provided them were context-bound, and the ways in which they utilised them were very much situational and relational. Similar to the participants who came from ethnic-Muslim backgrounds, the converts’ families and growing up experiences played an important role in their identity production. The episodes from these experiences, contexts, perceptions and reflections were assembled by the converts into the narratives which we have seen parts of. Family and growing up were key contexts where certain rhetoric and discourses stimulated specific negotiations of identity post-conversion. And like the second-generation participants, the converts faced significant challenges within and out with these primary contexts. I shall now turn my attention to these challenges, seeing

⁸⁷ Full face veil.

⁸⁸ Lawful, according to Islamic law.

⁸⁹ Propagate Islam.

how they were narrated, and – where relevant – how it related to their responses to Right-wing populism.

Challenges of Being a Convert

Converting to Islam and being Muslim is not an easy affair. It's a path strewn with many trials and tribulations: from taking on a religious identity which others see as an antithesis to the values of mainstream society, to learning the rituals of worship necessary to practice the religion; and from living the stigma of being affiliated to a religion that has been implicated in a plethora of atrocities to dealing with the stereotypes of Muslims and Islam (Baker 2009; Moosavi 2014; Reddie 2009; Roald 2004; Suleiman 2013; Zebiri 2008). When I looked at this theme, I recognised that Islam itself was a trial and tribulation - a *Fitnah* - to those who made the conscious decision to embrace it. This section of the chapter focuses on the features of this *Fitnah*, seeing how the converts traversed its rocky terrain. I then look at how this related to their responses to Right-wing populism. I commence with Isla talking about her parents.

I think they're afraid [...] Islam, this foreign thing [...] made its way into their family [...] I think [...] the fear [is] if they were to ever discuss it, they'd come to understand my rationale behind it, and they'd have to accept it themselves. So I think it's a fear finding out the truth [...] They want to remain in ignorance in the way they view the world because it's frightening to learn something new, and I kind of empathise with that now reflecting on my own journey because it was frightening for me [...] when I first started reading about Islam. I thought it was wrong because my friend in high school converted when we were fifteen [...] and I was there in shock. It ate away in my mind: has she become a terrorist? Does she hate me? Does she want to blow people up? Is she a threat to the school? [...] I was convinced she was making a terrible choice [...] so I started reading about Islam under the onus of: I have to prove her wrong [...] I suddenly realised: I'm agreeing with Islam, and that became frightening.

(Isla)

Perhaps the greatest *Fitnah* Islam introduced to the converts' lives was the challenge of visibility associated with practicing the religion (see Allen 2014; Guzik 2018; Moosavi

2015a). Apart from Dwayne, Erik and – perhaps - Adam, the convert participants are outwardly ethnic Swedes, Danes and Scots. The only factor which distinguished them as being Muslim was visibility (practice): first and foremost, *Hijab* and then the beard (see Jeldtoft 2012: 17-18). Subsidiary elements of this would include: non-physical contact with the opposite gender⁹⁰, gender segregation, not socialising with friends and family on certain occasions (e.g. birthdays, Christmas and funerals) or in certain contexts (e.g. having a drink at a pub). With practice came visibility, and with visibility came experiences of prejudice. This was the case when it came to the *Hijab* especially. The female converts who chose to actively practise veiling highlighted the prejudice, negativity and stigma associated with the *Hijab* to the extent that some like Alison (late-30s, Edinburgh) choose ‘to be careful with the *Hijab*’.

Yahya: To me it seems as though Islam is really a central element of your identity.

Alison: Yea

Yahya: So would it be right to assume: if, it is so, the fact that Islam is [...] something that you hold so dear to heart, the fact that it’s hated, or [...] portrayed in such negative light worries you

Alison: [interjects] I view it as another test [...] Most religions at some point have been vilified and subjected to fairly awful media portrayal [...] I try not to read any of it.

Yahya: So you feel quite secure, even though

Alison: It’s not that I feel secure [...] I’m very careful because where I live, I’m the only Muslim [laughs]. So I take my *Hijab* off when I go home [...] and I don’t travel with it, but that’s more because I’ve got enough to deal with the wheelchair than about my identity as a Muslim. So, I am very careful about it, and it doesn’t make me hugely happy.

Alison (late-30s, Housewife, Edinburgh, Scottish)

All the female converts and some of the males had narratives around the Hijab, and it became a symbol of otherness in the eyes of the wider society. Some re-appropriated

⁹⁰ Shaking hands, hugging and kissing non-*Mahrams* (i.e. those to whom no impediment exists to contracting a marriage with, either through lineage or breastfeeding in the Islamic legislation).

this symbolism drawing on the ‘tools’ Islam gave; and by doing this, they subverted some of the negativity of this otherness. Fiona’s narrative exemplified this. Her full face veil meant she was in control of who could see what and when. This allowed her to avail the opportunity to project what was far more important to her: her voice! Isla incorporated the *Hijab* as part and parcel of her growing up even before she became Muslim, something which would become a cause of concern to her family. With regard to the *Hijab*’s connection to the convert participants’ responses to Right-wing populism, it was noticeable that this element of visibility was connected to being a potential target for such groups. *Hijab* was a definitive part of this targeting (Allen 2001; Carland 2011; Sheridan 2006; Zine 2006)

I tend to not take notice of them personally, but, when you find out they’re having protests in Edinburgh, it make[s] you feel a bit unsafe because you [...] think: if I am in that area at the time, I can potentially be a target [...] When I hear these things, I just avoid going to whatever area it is [...] because it could be unsafe for me to be there [...] It’s not a nice feeling to have.

(Isla)

To nuance these powerful female voices with those from the male converts, I turn the spotlight to Dwayne momentarily. With regard to visibility, Dwayne touched upon both the *Hijab* and the beard. His narrative casts the episode of his ‘beginning’ as a Muslim convert in a highly spiritual light of ‘tasting the sweetness of Eemaan’⁹¹ which saw Dwayne take on a lot of visibly Muslim practices such as growing his beard. He was so imbued with a sense of ‘trust in Allah’ that he circumvented advice from ‘elder’ Muslims to trim/shave his beard to enhance his employment prospects. In his own words, he closed his ‘eyes and jumped into the ocean at its deepest end’. The ups and downs of life, and the highs and lows of tribulation tested Dwayne’s faith. One outcome of this has been his ability to reflect on life and compare experiences of practice in the formative phase of his conversion to his non-practice of the religion. Here, featured the

⁹¹ A reference to a famous hadith.

Hijab/Jilbaab – his current Muslim wife’s – as a symbol of otherness which exposed Dwayne to prejudice from neighbours he was on friendly terms with once upon a time.

There’s one particular woman, I think she’s a witch anyway. She really doesn't like me because I’m Muslim [...] I could tell that for fact [...] When I was not practicing, and I was living there with my ex-wife who was not Muslim, she used to be friendly and talk to us *and what not*. But then when she saw I became practicing with a beard and now I was married to an Arab wife with *Jilbaab*, then she wouldn't say nothing, she wouldn't even look.

(Dwayne)

Having now presented a few narratives, Emma’s story stood out from the others insofar as it portrayed the connection between Muslim visibility, vulnerability to anti-Islam sentiment and identity negotiation. Emma’s narrative identity intermingled with her perceptions and responses to Right-wing populism. It furthermore led to one of the significant findings of this thesis: the convert participants are stigmatised by a traitor label. This was something which their ethnified Muslim (Jeldtoft 2012) counterparts - the second-generation participants seemed to be exempted from - outwardly. Although this resonates with scholarship (Franks, 2000; Garner and Selod 2015; McDonald, 2005; Moosavi 2012, 2015a; van Nieuwkerk, 2006; Zebiri 2014), the factor of Right-wing populism in terms of influence on convert identity is a new area. This traitor label/betrayal trope was certainly a major *Fitnah* as far as the converts were concerned.

I regard this stigmatisation of convert Muslims as a very interesting and significant theme to study because it tells us something about how mainstream European society conceptualises Islam, national belonging and ethnicity. This strongly relates to Right-wing populism because it constitutes one of the salient features in their conceptions of nationhood. Focusing on the converts’ responses to being labelled traitors therefore also tells us a lot about how such discourses of exclusion potentially influence their identities or not. I begin with Emma’s story as she recounts the second time she would encounter her aggressor:

Emma: The worse thing was I saw him a second time [...] I was with two sisters, and this time, he was very threatening.

Yahya: Towards you in particular?

Emma: Yea! It was only to me, because I'm Swedish [...] He hates me because I'm a traitor. The other ones were wearing the same clothes [i.e. *Hijab*] as me, but they were Somalis [...] It was just me he was targeting [...] probably [for] leaving Swedishness and [...] becom[ing] Muslim.

(Emma)

Her near-internalisation of the traitor label, in her own words 'because I'm a traitor' is indeed powerful, evocative and moving – for me. Within the converts' narratives, Islam appears to have empowered, or enabled, a good number of them to embrace a sense of national belonging and recognition that being Muslim wasn't mutually exclusive with being Swedish, Danish or Scottish. This was however from their own perspectives. It is an unfortunate paradox: the converts' positive affiliations to nation were not always reciprocated by the members of the societies they staked claims of belonging to. Whilst they may well and securely see themselves as Scots, Danes or Swedes, mainstream society continues to see and treat them as others, and even worse, as traitors.

Isla: I think I would be seen as more of a threat than the native Muslims who were born into the religion because I've made that active choice to join the other.

Yahya: Are you seen as a traitor?

Isla: Yea! [emphatic] [...] And I know that statement's existed in my family among some people. [laughs] So I would completely agree with that. People do kind of view you as a traitor to the country, to Scotland, to your people: you know, you've gone and left us and joined the other side.

(Isla)

This whole selective approach [...] [of] marginalising and presenting Muslims as some sort of fifth column here in Europe, I would say that [...] a growing number of Danish people have developed some sort of phobia [...] We have seen for example after the incident with Charlie Hebdo, and the incident here in Copenhagen, many, Muslim sisters have been subjugated to violence and verbal assaults [...] You [...] have some sort of phobia that these right wing politicians are feeding on.

(Erik)

Isla and Erik shared discourses of being able to relate to individuals and groups who may gravitate towards Right-wing populism. We have seen Isla express her understanding of her family's fear and we will see more of Erik's story in this regard soon. Their narratives showed that their responses were rooted in a consolidated sense of belonging reconciled with Islam. Emma's narrative doesn't feature this particular element. Her claims of belonging to Sweden remain liminal and her insecurity is exacerbated by negative confrontational situations which further reinforced the traitor stigma. When I stepped back and looked at the various narratives playing out as though they were multiple screens in front of me, I recognised that the convert participants were in constant negotiation processes. In producing their narratives, they have had to negotiate their identities (ethnic, racial, cultural, national, and religious) in a multitude of events and against multiple contexts. And within these categories of identity, ethnicity emerged as a key factor of negotiation linking the converts' experiences of inclusion-exclusion and their responses to Right-wing populism whose ideology is driven by an ethnocentric conception of nationhood. For this reason, the converts' negotiation of ethnicity deserves a closer look. The next section focuses on these negotiation processes, looking at what made the converts have to negotiate their ethnic identities and exploring how that related to their responses to Right-wing populism.

Negotiations of Ethnicity

When you're partially Danish [...] you feel very caught out between both camps [...] I remember many times, some friends speaking about Danes in a derogatory term [...] and then, I would admonish them [...] They'd look at me very perplexed and say: 'oh yea, I forgot you were half Danish, I'm sorry' [...] I remember when I was 16, 17, Danish colleagues passing derogatory jokes casually [...] and they'd trivialise the whole thing [...] 'come on, you're only mulatto, not full black, you shouldn't be taking it so badly'[laughs]. From such an upbringing, you feel a [...] growing frustration, [...] [an] identity crisis. You don't know where to go, you don't know what to say [...]

We don't have the same history as England or the US [...] racist jokes become very controversial in such societies [...] Since Denmark hasn't participated on a large scale in slavery, racist jokes are just passed as something very simple [...] But I came directly from Africa where we studied history [...] slavery, and thus, coming from a former British colony [...] to Denmark, it was very shocking to see something that is so controversial in one culture [...] being so trivial in another society because of not having the same history.

(Erik)

The converts were gatekeepers to cultures and worlds (Baker 2009; Mandel et al. 2015; Özyürek 2014; Roald 2004). They were equipped with certain insights and perspectives by virtue of their abilities of being insiders within certain circles and outsiders to others. Being ethnic-Swedes, Danes and Scots opened certain doors not easily accessed by their ethnified-Muslim co-religionists (Mandel *et al.* 2015; Özyürek 2014). Islam brought additional perspectives which the converts were able to syncretise with their ways of being to create hybridised identities and ways of living. As Erik's narrative (above) shows, converts' abilities to outwardly access two or more communities by virtue of their ethnicities not only gave them more insights than the average Muslim, they also found opportunities to become catalysts of dialogue and mutual understanding between these different communities. This resonated with what Roald (2004) highlighted as convert Muslims' capacities to freely move within various trans-cultural identities and access diverse subcultural communities.

Isla demonstrated this very clearly when she spoke about the struggle 'between siding with my non-Muslim [...] white Scottish people, and siding with Muslims'. In this regard, conversion to Islam wasn't restrictive in terms of the converts' social relations. On the contrary, it appeared to expand the horizons and help build bridges, enabling the converts to feel secure belonging where they were and empowering them to seek meaningful relations with those around them - both with the immediate family and wider society. These qualities enabled some of the converts to propose potential resolutions for some of the existing tensions between the Muslim and wider non-Muslim communities. Isla showed this sensibility when she spoke about how the 'convert

support group' which convened in the mosque became a catalyst for inter-community relations – and even - services.

Isla: I think the increasing convert presence in the mosque [...] has drawn other native Scottish people to the mosque [...] We had one girl who came purely for the Arabic class [...] she was not interested in Islam [...] We became really good friends [...] Then Arabic classes stopped, so she said [...] 'I quite like being in your company, can I just come along, if you have any kind of social events, lectures, even if they're Islamic, I don't really mind' [...]

Yahya: Did she convert?

Isla: Yea, she's been Muslim now for a good three years [...] It just goes to show if you open the doors, people will come. Not necessarily because they're interested in Islam, or to convert [...] If we provide services for them [...] they'll come and get to know Islam and Muslims [...] It's something we need to be doing more of as a community [...] Just opening the doors to the wider community. You don't have to be Muslim, as long as you respect [...] the etiquettes of being in the mosque then you're more than welcome to come and join us.

(Isla)

Being a stakeholder to two or more communities or being a gatekeeper to them wasn't always challenge-free. Having access to the views and opinions of two or more groups sometimes left the converts feeling torn and conflicted as both Isla and Erik pointed out in the excerpts I quoted from them in this chapter. This feeling of being torn came from the immediate family in Isla's case whereas Erik outlined these confrontations taking place within work-relationships. With family being such a close and intimate thing, it is understandable for converts like Isla to feel and express the hurt, pain and dejection of being torn. Her responses to the confrontation of being torn were however characterised by a touch of passivity whereas Erik expressed that Islam empowered him to 'take a standpoint'. I start with Isla where after sharing how some of her family members view her as a traitor to Scotland for having joined the other side, I asked her:

Yahya: So [...] Islam is the other religion [...] it can never be European?

Isla: Yea, I can't see it [...] It is very much still viewed as: 'you've joined the other people, you're one of them now'. And when my mum and dad talk to me:

‘oh, is she one of your people?’ [...] I’m like [sigh] [...] ‘she’s a human being like you’. She’s like ‘she follows your religion’. I’m like ‘yea, if you want to differentiate in that way, yea, she’s one of mine’.

Yahya: It hurt a bit huh?

Isla: Yea, exactly [...] hearing that from her and my sister, they’ve kind of all drummed it in my head that they view me as the ‘other’ as well [...] It makes me wonder how much they view me as still ‘theirs’? It’s a difficult situation because my parents don’t want to talk about it at all to me.

Erik didn’t go into details about his immediate family’s reaction to his conversion to Islam. His family came into the picture when he spoke about his ‘partial’ background from Uganda and Denmark; that he and his siblings grew up in Mombasa where they attended an international school; his father always spoke Danish to them; the family relocated to Denmark when he was around 10 and that he lived with his mother although frequently visited his father upon their eventual separation. He gave not a single conflict narrative with his family and I didn’t probe.⁹² The narrative of ‘being torn’ was primarily framed within contexts of friendship and work-relationships. He would use Islam and his multicultural family base as resources to take his ‘standpoint’. When I asked Erik if he had resolved the crisis of being torn, he said:

I might say that [hums and thinks] it is still ongoing [...] There’s not much you can do about it as an individual. You can make awareness, try appeal to the public [...] on, you know, human values. But I would say: what I can do right now compared to what I didn’t do before is that I can take a very [...] well defined standpoint when it comes to such tendencies. I remember before I didn’t [...] admonish anybody about this because I just saw it as the norm [...] You just realise: ‘okay, if you can’t beat ‘em, then join ‘em.’ However, Islam has very well defined ideas about life [...] You know exactly which standpoints to take at different situations, even if the whole society were against you [...] Hopefully as a practicing Muslim, you would take the very sincere standpoint concerning this because Islam does also have its own things to say about you know such polarisations between two ethnic groups.

⁹² See the Reflexivity & Research Ethics section in chapter two.

Erik's diagnosis of polarised ethnic relations brings to analytical focus an important finding from the convert cohort: negotiating ethnicity within and out with Islam is a truly complex process for converts. Again, while this certainly isn't new to the current literature, the Right-wing populist dimension certainly is (Franks, 2000; Garner and Selod 2015; McDonald, 2005; Moosavi 2012, 2015a; van Nieuwkerk, 2006; Zebiri 2014). The embracing Islam stories and post-conversion narratives were interlaced with negotiations and reconfigurations of ethnic identity. On the one hand, this theme manifested itself in positive ways such as Adam outlining how Islam 'squashed' the un/natural tendency for people to group based on race/ethnicity⁹³ and Dwayne's recognition of orthodox Islam's 'openness' to racial/ethnic identity compared with the Nation of Islam which he was brought up under.

Dwayne: I had a lot of difficulties [...] in the sense of my mum was against Islam [...] She was a part of Nation of Islam [...] eating bean pie and going to their so-called classes [...] But when it came to 16, 17, I started learning about the true Islam, so I converted to orthodox Islam [...]

Yahya: So would you say that accepting orthodox Islam was a change in your character then?

Dwayne: Absolutely, absolutely [...] The knowledge I took from them was basically about how the white man's the devil [...] it was very erm [...] black-oriented in that sense. So when I actually came to learn about the true Islam and meet [...] people from different ethnic backgrounds, it made sense in all types of ways [...]

Yahya: The Nation of Islam thing, could it be because of racism that black people were suffering? [...] In your experience of growing up in London, where there any moments where you really felt discriminated as a black guy?

Dwayne: Absolutely.

Yahya: Did you find that the Nation of Islam was empowering for you?

⁹³ 'What I think is particularly powerful about Islam is that it's not only beyond racism, but it is beyond even the natural grouping, or unnatural grouping. It's the wrong grouping [...] It makes your identity [unclear] even other identities [...] they're squashed by the Islamic identity'. (Adam).

Dwayne: erm, not really because it's narrow minded thinking [...] Maybe, a particular race have done something negative [...] basically you put the whole of that race in one particular box [...] that's unjust.

On the other hand, discourses of ethnic identity caused significant tension and conflict especially when the crises emerged from within the faith and 'sister/brotherhood' of Islam. This finding surprised me. Converts like Isla identified significant divisions along ethnic lines within the Muslim community which she was part of. Her narrative was distinguished from the others in terms of the focus she gave to this particular issue; but more so, her connection to one of the Edinburgh mosques gave her detailed insights regards the dynamics of the Muslim community.

We saw in the beginning of Isla's post-conversion narrative that she only faced an identity crisis in the formative phase, when she came into contact with the Muslim community. She described the 'pressure' to adopt certain cultural practices like having to wear *Salwar Kameez*⁹⁴ and eating certain foods. Isla asserted: although she had become Muslim, she wanted to retain her Scottish identity. When conditions weren't quite ripe for her to balance between her nascent Islamic identity with her Scottishness, she resorted to the tactic of withdrawing herself from active community participation. As she grew in her faith and/or confidence, she began to re-engage with the Muslim community through a regular class she would attend. This however was to create further tension down the ethnic fault lines of a very small community. Isla was - this time round - equipped with tools to handle the tension.

Isla: We had a weekly class and people would come over and say: 'wait a minute, there's a whole group of white women' [...] That in itself is not always great because things were said negatively, but anyway

Yahya: About what? Some discrimination?

Isla: Yea!

Yahya: Against white people?

⁹⁴ Traditional South Asian dress.

Isla: [laughs] yea

Yahya: Could you give an example? [...]

Isla: There was some comments saying that we were the Gore⁹⁵ club [...] basically you had to be white to join us [...] We said ‘no, it’s a convert support group’ [...] but it was interesting how that was perceived by the rest of the community [...] But I think once we had a presence within the community, people realised actually, you know: they’re Scottish, they’re English, they’re Irish, she’s Russian, she’s Mexican, she’s from some part of Europe, Poland or something, an American, you know, it was actually: oh wait! hold on! [Excited tone] There’s quite a nice mix of diversity within this group, and it just broadened our horizons and opened people up to the idea of there’s more than just their little kind of niche.

From what I saw in the converts’ narratives featuring their negotiation of ethnicity, there appeared to be a correlation between responses to confrontational rhetoric around issues of ethnic identity and responses to Right-wing populism. This feature stands out when I compare Isla and Erik’s narratives to Emma’s. I have already shown how Isla’s responses are framed in secure terms of being home in Scotland and being able to relate to the communities who identify with Right-wing populist groups such as the SDL. As for Erik, he outlined his nuanced understanding of Danish society by highlighting the ‘economic aspects [...] the right-wing politicians are feeding on’. When I directly asked him how it made him feel that such rhetoric is on the rise, he promptly responded: ‘well when you’re in a country like Denmark, you in a way, eventually get very used to it. Deep down inside, you have confidence in the Danish public that they will see through such dangerous rhetoric. Muslims must also play a role in [this]’. We saw that whilst both Isla and Erik took clear standpoints regarding certain aspects of ethnic identity negotiation, Emma’s narrative on the other hand doesn’t touch upon this. She frames herself at the passive receiving end of anti-Islam sentiment and refers to ‘statistics’ in shaping her perceptions of Right-wing populism.

⁹⁵ White (Urdu).

Yahya: So we're talking about changes in [Malmo], but also in Sweden as a country, have you seen any, can you reflect on any things?

Emma: [...] You can see the statistics for example, that it's becoming more ok to be a racist. It's like, it's ok [...] [to] vot[e] for Sverige Democrats [...] Whereas, maybe 10 years ago, people will like, be smygg⁹⁶ racist [...] It wouldn't be ok [...] [to] say out 'it's something immigrants' [...] like to criticise [...] But now because the Sverige Demokraterna are so strong [...] in some parts of Sweden, they have won like a quarter or even more.

Being able to take a standpoint along with being able to adeptly negotiate issues of ethnicity seemed to correlate with the converts' responses to Right-wing populism. Isla and Erik were both able to show a reconciliation between their Islamic and ethnic-national identities. This coherent reconfiguration of identities manifested highly secure responses from them to Right-wing populism. This wasn't the case for Emma. Her narrated self-identification as Swedish didn't appear to be consolidated by Islam. It was a conundrum: being Muslim made her feel more Swedish because she actually started to socialise more with Swedish people (converts); on the other hand, some Swedish people made her feel less Swedish because they treated her differently.

Emma: I never used to feel really Swedish before [...] I would not hang out with the typical Swedish girls, so I would not do the typical Swedish things, as in to go out and party and to have, ok, yea, I would have a boyfriend [...] but it wouldn't be serious .

Yahya: Culturally, you weren't Swedish?

Emma: I didn't feel like the Swedish culture was really my culture.

Yahya: And now you've accepted Islam, you feel more that Islamic culture is

Emma: I can feel [...] in my Swedishness, I am more, because when I was young, I was hanging out with mostly immigrants [...] I would not say ashamed [humouring smile] for being Swedish [...] but it would be cooler to not be Swedish, you understand me? [...] So I would be very proud of my Croatian side [...] I'm more comfortable with being a Swedish [laugh] since I became

⁹⁶ Secretly.

Muslim actually because I didn't use to hang out with so many Swedish until I actually became Muslim.

Yahya: That's interesting.

Emma: It is actually. But if I would look at how the society sees me, as in like how I get treated, then I would feel less Swedish now than I do before [...]

Yahya: So it's from two perspectives?

Emma: Yea! I feel very un-Swedish actually. I feel like if people would point me out to a group, they would point me together with the Arabs and immigrants. They would not point me out as a Swedish, and that's a bit disturbing sometimes because everyone wants to be treated like they're normal [laughs in slight emotion and sadness].

In most of the converts' narratives, Islam brought with it a newfound sense of being able to comfortably identify with the national context through a resolved negotiation of ethnic identity. This enabled the converts to stake clear unequivocal claims to being Swedish, Danish or Scottish. We have seen this in Isla, Erik and - to a lesser extent - in Emma's case. For Adam, Islam enabled him to see 'the common ground', find the 'moral line' and distinguish the 'best of Britain' from the 'worst of Britain'. These negotiations and reconciliations between ethnic identity and national belonging related very strongly to the participants' responses to Right-wing populism. A more detailed analysis of this theme of 'national identification and belonging' will be treated in greater detail in the Citizens chapter. As we now approach the conclusion of the chapter on conversion and this section, negotiations around race and ethnicity were certainly tied with discourses of national identity and belonging. The converts' narratives around these issues offered contextual insights into their perceptions of and responses to Right-wing populism due to the ethno-centric character of its ideology. Although the 'Right-wing' factor appeared as an element challenging the converts' choices and claims of belonging, it remained one from an aggregate of many challenges facing the converts. Being a convert was certainly challenging.

Conclusion

Although not necessarily representing a ‘fresh start’ for everyone, Islam certainly accorded its converts new things - perspectives, insights, attitudes, worldviews (tools). What remains essential to outline is that these tools didn’t just appear out of the blue; their acquisition and utilisation were shaped within distinct contexts - family especially. In this sense, the converts had something to share with those who ‘grew up Muslim’ - the contexts which they were exposed to made them have to negotiate and configure their identities after their conversion to Islam. With regard to the topic of this thesis, family background emerged as a key socialisation ‘context’ which exposed the would-be converts to specific discourses of inclusion/exclusion around race, ethnicity, culture, belonging and finally, anti-Islam sentiment. Scaling the family vis-à-vis the national and city contexts, the socialisation processes occurring at this very grassroots level had a profound effect on the converts’ narrative identities. Different family backgrounds created correspondingly different negotiations and configurations of identity post-conversion.

The converts’ responses to Right-wing populism were influenced by three main factors: (1) their direct contact with anti-Islam rhetoric (2) their ability to negotiate identity around race/ethnicity and (3) being able to take a ‘standpoint’ after negotiation. Those who exhibited the securest responses demonstrated the ability to relate to Right-wing populist rhetoric directly or indirectly (e.g. family members who may sympathise). Such converts were able to empathise with the fear of such groups and individuals; they weren’t intimidated by them. At times, they even negotiated a peacekeeping role to allay fears and tensions from both sides of the fence by virtue of their gatekeeper status. This feature did not surface in the narratives of the second generation participants. It therefore chimes with the research highlighting this distinct gatekeeper status for converts (Baker 2009; Mandel *et al.* 2015; Özyürek 2014; Roald 2004).

At times, ‘peacekeeping’ became precarious. The converts could feel torn and conflicted especially when their claims to belonging are questioned, suspended even. One of the

crucial findings of the thesis is the susceptibility of converts to 'Islamophobia' - they are re-racialised as not white enough (Franks 2000; McDonald 2005; Moosavi 2014, 2015) Embracing Islam therefore necessitated certain negotiations and configurations for the converts in terms of: race/ethnic identity, citizenship and belonging. Islam didn't outwardly appear as a restricting element. On the contrary, it enabled the converts to build bridges and offer potential resolutions to existing inter-community tensions.

A conundrum existed: although Islam brought the converts closer to self-identifying with being Swedish, Danish and Scottish, people's differential treatment and attitudes of prejudice made them feel otherwise. Embracing Islam was embracing fitnah. The first stumbling block tended to be 'visibility' - being a practicing Muslim (especially through observance of Hijab) made the converts visibly Muslim. And being visible exposed them to being stigmatised and re-racialised. They became increasingly susceptible to anti-Islam sentiment. This related to their responses to Right-wing populism because they - the women especially - saw themselves as being potential targets in such demonstrations and would therefore avoid direct confrontation by keeping away from those areas and localities.

Perhaps the greater fitnah for the converts was the hurt of being seen as traitors by their fellow country folk and family members (Franks 2000; McDonald 2005; van Nieuwkerk 2006). This spoke volumes for how the people in their lives and those around them conceive of Islam. To become Muslim through conversion was seen to be a betrayal of one's race and country. The extent to which a convert is able to resist such a stigma determined the nature of their responses to exclusionary discourses of exclusion which seek to conflate religious, racial and cultural identity to create notions of nationhood where certain elements - such as Islam - are deemed foreign. Which theories can help explain these empirical manifestations?

The converts do indeed put contact theory to test. If prolonged contact leads to increased likeability - as per the theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 2007), the narratives showed that contact, for some of the converts, actually kindled prejudice from members of their

ethnic group. Insights gained from studying the Northern Irish context help to unravel this intriguing picture. The near-impermeability of the Catholic-Protestant divide in Northern Ireland (Barritt and Carter 1962) exists because 'sectarian consciousness' is one of the major constitutive elements of social categorisation in Northern Ireland (Cairns 2010; McVeigh and Rolston 2007; Mitchell 2017). Crossing the borders of this social categorisation through conversion essentially meant denouncing and invalidating this identity. The second generation participants did not endure such experiences of invalidation because they are not visibly recognised as members of the indigenous ethnic group. A gender dimension surfaced when narratives of women and Hijab - in particular - accentuated Muslim visibility in the public space. Gender is my next line of inquiry as I study how it related to experiences of, perceptions and responses to Right-wing populism for both converts and second generation Muslims.

Chapter 6

Men & Women

As much or as little as Islam was part and parcel of the participants' narrative identities, gender clearly surfaced as a significant component. Narratives of femininity and masculinity were intertwined with their negotiations and reconfigurations of identity, sense of belonging, practice/non-practice and their everyday lived realities. The gender factor also became relevant in the participants' perceptions and responses to Right-wing populism. This chapter gives an exposition of how this factor came about and how, why and when it became relevant.

Gender is an intrinsic part of human identity and a core component of the 'social marking of identity' (Woodward 2011: ix; see also Killen and Coplan 2011; Marchbank & Letherby 2014). Under its rubric, certain factors become highly relevant to the issues of analytical importance in this thesis: e.g. gender roles influence labour market participation, which, in western European nations have an impact on active citizenship and political participation (Kofman *et al.* 2005; Lewis 1992; Orloff 1993; Predelli 2004; Walby 1994). Family importantly featured beside work as crucial contexts (arenas) for the formation and negotiation of gender relations wherein specific gender roles are constructed, challenged and maintained (Predelli 2004: 474).

When I introduce the factor of religion (Islam) to the gender equation a number of perspectives arise requiring analytical consideration. Gender roles/relations become a matter of interpretation and practice within certain frameworks of Islam (Fadil 2011; Hashim 1999; Mernissi 1987, 1991, 2011; Wadud 2013). Here, the religion becomes a 'resource' that can be 'flexibly' re-appropriated to fit everyday lived socio-economic realities (Predelli 2004: 473; see also Bartkowski & Read 2003). And since religion remains an important element for identity construction in immigration as far as Muslims

are concerned, different social contexts influence their faith and practice of Islam (Fadil 2011; Predelli 2004; Tiilikainen 2003 cf. Vertovec 1997). The conditions that Muslim men and women find themselves living in Western Europe affect their gender roles and relationships in subjectively positive and negative ways in the areas of family, religion and society (Afshar 2012; Predelli 2004). Examples of the negative aspects are marginalisation and ‘loss of influence’ over the family; and relatively positive outcomes are: increased socio-economic mobility and acquired legal rights (Predelli 2004: 474). These perspectives from the scholarship on gender roles/relations within Muslim communities in Western Europe highlighted two key areas of analytical importance for me to focus on: (a) how Islam is being used by the participants to negotiate gender and produce identity, and (b) the effect of social context on these processes.

Approaching the gender theme with this analytical strategy is conducive to studying the extent to which the participants’ identity narratives are influenced by Right-wing populism for two reasons. The first is by looking at how Islam is being used in the participants’ narratives enabled me to see when the religion became important without assuming – a priori - that it was. Secondly, looking at the narrative contexts enabled me to see how discourses around active citizenship, labour-market participation, community stakeholdership and political engagement surfaced. Combining these two enabled a theoretically-informed and contextually-based approach to seeing precisely how the Right-wing populism factor became relevant, and the extent to which it was influential to the participants’ narrative identities. Before zooming into these two analytical points of focus - as I’ve done in the previous empirical chapters - I will start with an overview section to introduce the wider issues and provide a context for the findings of the in-depth thematic analyses. When I looked at the narratives around gender, the one thing that stood out was: doing, negotiating and reconfiguring gender was contestational.

Gendered Contestations

Compared with the other identity categories (ethnicity, religious affiliation and sense of national belonging), gender seemed to evoke narratives of difference more so than similarity. This begins to help explain why the gender narratives featured significant conflict, tension and resistance. Rather than provide space for commonality, the gender and/in Islam equation accentuated core differences between wider society and Muslims. Mernissi (2011: 7) evocatively captured this strongly contested factor when she highlighted: ‘the veil has become a fixation of our twenty-first-century, secular, Western man’. This provides good ground for beginning to explain why the gender discourse directly related to Right-wing populism in a way which the other themes and factors didn’t always do. Right-wing populist rhetoric has framed non-Europeans and Muslims - particularly - as a threat to women’s rights in society (Meret and Siim 2013; Mulinari and Neergaard 2014 cf. Mayer et al. 2014), focusing on ‘harmful cultural practices such as female genital mutilation, honour killings, the wearing of headscarves, forced marriages [and] polygamy’ (De Lange and Mügge 2015: 62). Increasingly, Right-wing populist parties have adopted gendered interpretations of immigration and Islam (de Lange and Mügge 2015; Mulinari and Neergaard 2014). Central tenets in the Right-wing populist gender ideology are: ‘the equating of women's politics with family politics and [...] the idea that, since women are the only sex that can give birth and offspring are vital to the survival of the nation, women should be ‘protected’’ (de Lange and Mügge 2015: 66). These themes, tropes and discourses featured in my participants’ narratives. I start with Chantelle:

Chantelle: Well, it’s only men who stare at you when you’re out, who voice how they feel about your Hijab. Most of the Islamophobic insults come from men [...]

Yahya: Why do you think it’s just the men?

Chantelle: Well, I just think they don’t like to see a white woman covered. They want to be able to see one of their own [...] I’m one of them, and they want to

see me, like, Scottish [...] If I was Pakistani-Muslim, I don't know if I would have had the same abuse [...] because 'that's [...] their culture, their religion sort of thing' [...] When they see a white person, it's 'oooh God, that's one of ours'. And I think they just hate it! [...] They don't see you've done that for any religion: it's like for a man, who's not white.

Yahya: So [...] they see that they're losing you [...]

Chantelle: To a brown man [...] That is the fear if I'm being honest with you. Or [...] not that there's not going to be any more white people, but their white culture is going to die [...] It's not nice for them to see one of their white women - not that I belong to anyone - covered up and having a foreign religion. It's a threat to them [...] It's literally only men that have this issue [...] Women know that women can wear what they want, but men just feel like they have this right over women [...]

Yahya: Seems like there's [...] more people having this opinion? How does that make you feel?

Chantelle: [thinking-pause] Well to be honest, it doesn't really bother me. Is that bad? [laughs] ... Why should I be bothered at what other people think or want? Just because I'm a white person?

(Chantelle, mid-20s, Cleaner, Edinburgh)

Chantelle's sharp insights delineate how multiple factors complexly and intricately interlace with gender to produce tense contestations of space, ethnicity, culture and sex. Bringing intergroup social theory (Tajfel 2010; Turner 2010) to the analysis, Chantelle's narrative depicts a Scotland demarcated by ethnic and religious boundaries. This theoretically compares with the Northern Irish context where a social code of symbols - which members learn to read - exist to keep the sectarian borders intact; crossing them precipitates a social crisis (Cairns 2010; Donnan 1990; McLaughlin *et al.* 2007). Social categorisation in Northern Ireland therefore 'assumes the proportions of ethnicity' (Cairns 2010: 282) and in Chantelle's narrative, this ethnic element is perceived as applying to her everyday Edinburgh reality. Border crossing through conversion and intermarriage - in Northern Ireland - reveal this 'affective power of ethnicity' because they represent 'a case where the parents were unsuccessful in transmitting their own attachment to the group' (Cairns 2010: 282). Chantelle interprets the insults she receives

from men on near-tribal, ethnic grounds: they perceive the departure of her sexual energy (Bechtel 1994: 21-23; van Wolde 2003: 528) from the group as a threat to the indigenous community's survival. And this strongly relates to what Mudde (2010: 92-94) highlighted as a consistent gender ideology where women – as bearers of offspring – were vital to the nation's longevity.

Women must therefore wield significant power and influence if they carry the nation's vitality in their wombs. In Chantelle's perception, a threatened masculinity is insecurely lashing out; but she isn't too bothered by it. She has the power to choose whether to maintain her sexual energy within the indigenous tribe or to carry it outside. Is Right-wing populism a manifestation of an aspect or aspects of this masculine fragility (Blazina et al. 2000)? Answering this question would be a substantial contribution to understanding the interesting socio-political phenomenon that is Right-wing populism. As far as this thesis is however concerned, my analytical attention is on the Muslims' perceptions of this, and specifically, their responses to it.

In going through the narratives, I saw that when the participants talked about Right-wing populism, they tended to frame the male-female gender positions in antagonistic terms. The masculine (Right-wing populist factions) clash with a masculinised Islam to contest a space where females have the power to ensure that the boundaries of the white race remain intact (Moosavi 2015b: 7). It was almost tribal. The tribal element outlined above was resonated and powerfully depicted in Momina's⁹⁷ response to Right-wing populism. An hour and a half into our conversation, I noticed her very secure configuration of identity in asserting an unequivocal Britishness. I inferred from this - perhaps to tease out the question - that she wouldn't feel particularly threatened by Right-wing populism. Momina gave an interestingly two-tiered reply to my question. To begin with, she outlined that she didn't 'personally feel threatened' due to her

⁹⁷ Momina was one of the London participants of my study. I add her response here because she corroborates the insights Chantelle gave earlier and I thought it would enrich my analysis.

knowledge of British history through academia and her ability to engage with different perspectives enabled her to confidently stake claims of belonging to Britain. She then went on to the second tier where she outlined her awareness of the gender factor.

Momina: I don't feel so threatened personally, but as a community, yes! [emphatic] My brothers always get stopped and searched [...] Black and Asian boys are more likely to be stopped than their white counterparts, so it does affect the community [...] I know this kind of racialisation and Far-right, it's [...] more of a male ego versus male ego because you don't see many females present [...] You see the male representatives of the Far-right movement as well as al-Muhajiroun⁹⁸ [...] You don't see their wives at the forefront or any women, so I feel it's very masculine space. This whole interaction between the Far-right as well as the Extremist Muslim [groups] [...] it's definitely gendered, this whole battle.

Yahya: It's a very interesting perspective, I didn't think about that.

Momina: It's male ego versus male ego, and, a battle of spaces really, who has the loudest voice, who has the [...] biggest roar [...] To me, it's so masculine, it's just two boys playing around on a playground, trying to get one over each other [...] The women are only involved in the background scenes, not at the forefront [...] It becomes like a battlefield... What concerns me is how it's affecting the community.

(Momina, late-20s, Community Activist/Academic/Media, London, Bengali-heritage)

So far, we have seen gender discourses and narratives from female perspectives clearly highlight the charged masculinity of Islam-Right wing influence dynamics. How about the male participants' perspectives? Gender featured in the male narratives along similar contestational lines; however it was interesting to see distinct constructions of Muslim masculinities juxtaposed with narratives of 'protection' and concern for Muslim women. I met Qasim in Copenhagen just after the fatal shooting incidents⁹⁹ and he shared how 'everybody's on their toes': some Muslim women were physically attacked and spat on

⁹⁸ A proscribed radical Islamist group that advocates *Shariah* law and establishment of an Islamic caliphate in Britain.

⁹⁹ Between February 14 to 15th, 2015, Omar el-Hussein carried out three separate shootings in Copenhagen, Denmark. Two victims and the perpetrator were killed. Five police officers were wounded.

in the aftermath of the shootings. Qasim informed me that he resorted to downloading an app called BeSafe so he could trace his wife's movement to ensure that he knows her exact location in case she ran into trouble and needed assistance. While serving as a pragmatic measure of protection, another interpretation of Qasim's actions could be that this was actual surveillance of his wife's movements; potentially for many different purposes.

The male policing and disciplining of female bodies has been highlighted as a response to 'moral panics' where certain social, economic and political developments result in the characterisation of women as socio-sexually dangerous (Carby 1992: 739; see also Flood 2008). And while these developments tend to be macrosocial: e.g. large-scale urbanisation (Carby 1992), the expansion of industrial capitalism (Odem 2000), the global HIV/AIDS crisis (Parker and Gagnon 2013), population growth and land scarcity (Ong 1990), - they result in women¹⁰⁰ being identified as a social and political problem that has to be 'rectified in order to restore a moral social order' (Carby 1992: 740).

The question that has to be asked at this point is: how does Qasim's actions fit into the perspectives outlined by the above literature? I would say that the current social, economic and political upheavals that Europe is going through definitely create a moral social panic where women's sexual energies are the centre of focus. Mernissi (2011) stimulatingly made links between the 'demographic fear of being invaded by Muslims' with the fixation on the veiled female body – 'the sacred community link' defying a 'narcissistic, pleasure-focused, sexual individualism' which 'forces people to swallow Viagra instead of thinking about reproducing themselves' (Mernissi 2011: 7-8).

Although this could insinuate that it is the institutional macrosocial forces policing these female bodies, the literature actually highlighted that ethnic minority males also have a

¹⁰⁰ Especially women belonging to minority ethnic or disadvantaged communities (Carby 1992; Spillers 1987; Odem 1995 cf. Ong 1990).

vested interest in policing their females' bodies (see Carby 1992; Spillers 1987; Odem 2000; Ong 1990).

In (Carby 1992: 741), the migrating black woman was perceived as a threat to the 'progress of the race' in the context of the migration of African-Americans from the 'Secessionist states' in the South to the North in the first half of the twentieth century. In twenty-first century Europe where Muslim women have been provided with opportunities for socio-economic mobility and political participation (Afshar 2012; Predelli 2004), male policing/surveillance of female bodies may well be on the increase.¹⁰¹ And although Qasim's narrative doesn't provide further detail regards his 'tracking' his wife's moves and I did not probe, it suffices that I indicate to the literature without further speculation about his intentions. I however asked him about the future for Muslims in Denmark since he felt compelled to take sure measures to keep his family safe. He mentioned that some of his close friends were planning Hijrah to various parts of the Muslim world. Was he going to follow them? His response was:

This is my home, but there comes a point I need to think about my son [...] the future of my family. My wife is veiled, how safe is she walking around? [...] I mean if this lady [points randomly] [...] was being attacked, it would be my duty as a human being, not because I'm Muslim or non-Muslim [...] to protect her, but I've heard of pregnant Muslim women being attacked and nobody bats an eye[lid] [...] I need to think about my family. I don't know where I'm going but I know I need to prepare myself to leave, but it's sad because this is my home. Wherever I go, Copenhagen is where I'm from, you know, I love this place, I swear to God bro, I love this place.

(Qasim, mid-20s, Charity Worker, Copenhagen, Tanzanian-heritage)

A similar narrative was shared by a number of the other male participants, notably Farid, Erik, Salah and Dwayne. As tempting it is for me to share some of their narratives, I will

¹⁰¹ I had the pleasure of attending the 'Muslim Women's Religious Leadership and Authority in Europe and North America' conference, hosted by the Edinburgh Alwaleed Centre (13th – 14th September 2018). The interdisciplinary workshop brought a range of scholars and practitioners to the discussion table. Problems around *masculine fragility* and the *policing* of female bodies were very loudly and clearly outlined during the proceedings.

resist, out of consideration for space, and also to give a fair balance of male and female voices. I say this to alert the reader that the next section will indeed focus on performed masculinities. To briefly present their views and thereby conclude this section on gendered contestations, I outline that the safety of Muslim women and the liberty to practice *Hijab* were a main source of concern. Being ‘visibly Muslim’ had its effect in exposing the women, converts notably to direct experiences of anti-Islam sentiment (Garner and Selod 2015; Moosavi 2012, 2015a; Shazhadi et al. 2018; Zebiri 2014). The gender contestations mapped out into gendered spaces - masculinised territories - where women are policed and backgrounded in terms of voice/presence, yet, foregrounded in the battle because they carry in their wombs, the safekeeping of the borders. With this overview in place, I have been able to identify some of the key factors of direct relevance to gender. I have also shown how these related to the participants’ responses to Right-wing populism. In order to ground these insights in line with the theoretical perspectives outlined in the literature and current scholarship, I now turn my attention to analyse how: (a) Islam was a resource for the negotiation of gender, and (b) the effect of social context on these processes of negotiation and reconfiguration. I begin my analysis with Tariq to see how gender was narrated, how Islam became a resource that could be re-appropriated in everyday life and his responses to Right-wing populist rhetoric.

Islam as Gender Resource

Tariq was raised in the deprived Saughton area in Edinburgh. One of the earliest memories he invokes in his narrative is being told that everyone around him was a ‘junkie’. It was a powerful briefing because it pretty much shaped his outlook and social relations in that crucial, formative stage of his life. Before religion would feature as a resource for identity construction, Tariq’s narrative told a story of racialised gender roles and social relations. He wasn’t allowed to play with the other ‘white boys’ even though he wanted to. And when those white boys looked at his sisters, he was given

instructions to beat them up.¹⁰² To reinforce these racialised social relations, Tariq was taught that the values being instilled in him were his ‘culture’. At this point, a perceivable syncretisation of Islam with cultural norms featured in Tariq’s narrative. This amalgam became a resource for identity production albeit in an Islamic dressing: negotiations around gender - masculinity in particular - occurred within an Islamified framework. Tariq was consequently raised with the values of ‘*izzah*, *sharaf* and *ghirah*’ (pride, respect and protective jealousy) epitomised as ‘Muslim’ values.

I was given the impression that my family were saved. Mum was proper. Dad was proper [...] uncles were proper. I had to be proper: ‘[Tariq], don’t talk to girls!’ [serious voice] Haram! OK I won’t talk to girls. And then at 17, I see my mum talking to a guy [...] so what the fuck is going on here? [...] I was sugar-coated, moulded, covered [...] and almost programmed [...] Don’t talk to girls! OK. Don’t fight your family. OK [...] Go beat up that boy who looked at your sister! OK. That’s what it was right. Up until I was 17.

To give an overview, Tariq’s life story comprised three main stages of significant relevance to gender in terms of his identity negotiation and reconfiguration: a passive phase, a crisis phase and an active phase. In the passive phase, gender became racialised and culturalised - here, Islamified resources were provided by his family at a period of time distinguished by an ‘innocence’. This resulted in what I term as a hyper-masculinisation of the male gender role. This reproduced unhealthy social relations in a resource-deprived growing up context of segregation, absent role models and inadequate socialisation. Then crisis entered Tariq’s life - a period marked with confusion, pain, hurt and anger. Inconsistency between taught values and actually practised (lived) realities in Muslim space caused a crisis. Tariq’s narrative takes a turn when the crisis leads him to adopt alternative resources to negotiate and reconfigure his identity. In the active phase, we come to see him re-appropriate, subvert and challenge certain gender roles and value systems as part of his construction of a new identity. Looking at Tariq’s story through the prism of performative narrative analysis helps show that it was a

¹⁰² Glimpses of his story preceded in chapter three under the ‘segregated upbringings’ section. The fuller context of his words here can be read there.

narrative of survival: a fight against the odds in finding oneself and thriving. Here was the story of a youth performing the role of a toughened, hardened man who has come a long way and has an even longer stretch to walk in fulfilling his dream of being a rap star.

Tariq: Growing up you know, our Islam was innocent [...] In the first song I released, I wrote: the first time in my life, I stepped outside, there was so much to see, all in front of my eyes [melody] [...] I said: life is fucked! [...] What's this bullshit I've been told that don't talk to girls? [...] It was a slap in the face. It was like somebody took away the sugar-coat [...] my sunglasses, and pushed me out into the street where there was no one and it was snowing and raining and fucking dark and cold [...] That's what it was like emotionally.

Yahya: It was very hard?

Tariq: I was just confused [...] and angry. I was like: what's going on man? This is not how we're meant to be. This is not how I believe that it could be [...] Muslims, who were taught their whole lives: pride, jealousy, respect and all that [...] and now you're fucking going and letting him text you. How can he respect me as a man as your son?¹⁰³ He's gonna laugh in my face...

At a critical period in Tariq's growing up, a series of crises loomed on the horizon, necessitating a reconfiguration of his Innocent Islam. It involved rebelling against a normative Islam, his parents (mother, especially) and a 'backward culture'. Tariq's crisis narrative was extensive, starting from his entry into high school at about twelve years. He fell out with his parents (mother). He then lost another uncle to alcohol and drug dependency at eighteen. He fell into a deep depression at twenty when he lost one of his best friends to a drug/gang-related shooting followed by another friend who died of a drug overdose. As the crises cascaded upon him, they led Tariq to adopt alternative resources for identity construction: body image, physical condition and self-dependence become increasingly important. Looking at this brief presentation of the critical chapters of his life, it was his Tunisian holiday at seventeen which appeared to have impacted

¹⁰³ A reference to his mother. Tariq perceived that his mother was having an affair with a man.

him most profoundly. His navigation around gender roles and relations in this part of the narrative led to new identity production(s).

I'd go home and my mum wasn't home yet [...] Mum where are you? 'I'll be there in a minute'. What do you mean you'll be home in a fucking minute? [...] Women just don't go to coffee shops in that country, and at 2 in the morning?! [...] 'You're not my dad. Don't question me' [...] It really pissed me off: mum coming home late, mum going out [...] dress[ed] not what she taught my sister how to dress [...] Stuff like that pissed me off as a man [...] And then one day she left her phone in the car [...] I read [...] I love you and I want to marry you. I was thinking, why's she letting that happen?

[5-minutes-on] It was then I really stopped respecting my mum. I started being disobedient [...] I said stuff I never dreamed of saying like: you fucking slut, fuck off [...] I was so hurt. I'm sorry for my language [...] I had a lot of hatred in me as well. Look at how you've thrown me out, and now you're going to come and rescue me? Instead of bringing me up to not be jealous or to accept that being Muslim and that [unclear] I wouldn't give a shit [...] It got out of hand [...] I came to my dad [...] said salamu alaikum, gave him a kiss. He said: how was the holiday? I said to him [...] Baba, if you were a man, you would divorce mum because I know you, and you won't accept what mum was doing ... And that's the hypocrisy that made me angry at her [and] made me be like: well, what I've been brought up with, it's all hypocrisy [...] bullshit. Astaghfirullahal Adheem¹⁰⁴. I stopped praying at that point. I stopped praying.

In Tunisia, within a Muslim context, Tariq expected the religious norms and gender roles he was brought up with to be most exemplified, and especially by the very people who inculcated them into him. Whilst Tariq expected them to honour its code, lo and behold, he saw first-hand all the values he had been raised with flaunted by the same people¹⁰⁵ who had instilled them in him. There were clear contradictions to the taught gender roles he grew up with. At this point in Tariq's life story, a narrative of hurt, anger and confusion emerged at first, then, hate and violence (towards his would-be step-father). He recounted 'pull[ing] a knife out' for him and causing damage to his mother's car and smashing one of the family home's windows. This phase in Tariq's journey sees

¹⁰⁴ 'I seek forgiveness from Allah, the Almighty'.

¹⁰⁵ The man who Tariq perceived his mother as having an affair with was a family member he 'used to look up to'.

him hit back at the source of his pain, hurt and confusion. This was framed in terms of gender. Tariq distinguished between his mother and father in terms of their effect on his life and the influence this had on him. Then there was an onslaught on the femininity he was raised to be jealously protective of. It was gender humiliation as he starts calling his mother a 'fucking slut'. This subversion of normative gender roles and positions, from respect to utter disdain, was intertwined with narratives of violence and hyper-masculinity.

A significant part of Tariq's active identity phase would be his conquests of the opposite gender: first, in Tunis when he made a girl he loved 'fall' for him, and then in Edinburgh where he declined the advances of a girl he once had a crush on saying 'naa bitch'. These along with Tariq's other conquests were meshed with narratives of body image, masculinity and violence. The metaphor he gave to his transformation was: 'I came back so much more confident like I had been in jail'. There was a distinct tone of rebellion to Tariq's hyper-masculine performance. If anything sums up this period, it would be - in his own words - 'it was a fight towards my mum'. This fight continued until the story of his uncle's death. The death moved him to return to Islam: he 'kept' all his prayers so that he can 'ask forgiveness' for his uncles. The narrative of reconciliation with his mother and Islam comprised two episodes of relevance to gender roles and relations. The first contained narratives of maturity (his relationship with his sisters), and family (cultivating good ties). Then came the second episode where he had to negotiate around the re-appropriation of Islam in conflicting circumstances – specifically - in a Muslim context. Following the fatal shooting of his friend, Tariq found himself having to draw upon both his masculinity and a personally reconfigured Islam which accommodated for his lifestyle and ambitions. Tariq becomes a 'proud Muslim' consequently. After he shared his proud Muslim narrative, I saw a suitable moment to ask:

Yahya: If Islam is so important to you, how do you feel about all these anti-Islam people [...] like the BNP, EDL, SDL? Does it have any effect on you as a person, as a Muslim?

Tariq: I'll tell you what I think of them, right. I think to a certain extent, they're right. Because we've given them something to hate. The Asian rape gangs, one of the members, said 'they're not Asian rape gangs, they're Muslim rape gangs'. They're identified as Muslim [...] Them cutting the guy's head off in London,¹⁰⁶ [...] he was doing it because he was a Muslim, not because he was black [...] It's stuff that we do in the name of Islam that makes them hate us [...] My take on them is that they're ignorant. If they were to know Islam, a lot of them would become Muslims because they would love it so much. But, it's the backwardness. It's not Islam. It's cultures of people [...] I empathise with them. I hate it, but I do.

Yahya: You hate it? Why's that?

Tariq: That I empathise with them. Because I'm a Muslim.

Yahya: They don't differentiate between good and bad Muslim?

Tariq: No they don't [...] 99.9% of those on the EDL and SDL are common working class society. That's what they are. You're angry about the way that Muslims come to this country, and treat it as a Muslim country.

Unbeknown to me at that point, Tariq's strongest point of relation to Right-wing populism would be nested within such gender-based negotiations and reconfigurations of identity. Was it by coincidence that the very first issue he would raise in pointing the finger back towards his very own Muslim community would be the sex grooming of vulnerable white girls by predominantly South-Asian (Muslim) males? Tariq exhibited a very secure ability to directly relate to Right-wing populist rhetoric in distinctly gendered terms with regard to the Asian (Muslim) grooming gangs, 'gender and culture' and contestations of space. I hold that a part of this secure response was his ability to be critical about an Islamified religion - he was able to break out from the mould. His rebelling and experimenting perhaps helped him look at things outside the box.

There also appears to be something about consistency and fairness in Tariq's narrative. For him, one rationale should be applied consistently, and hence he is able to relate to Right-wing populism from a gender point of view: just as he wouldn't like his women to

¹⁰⁶ The killing of Lee Rigby in Woolwich.

be groomed, likewise he could understand why they felt the way they did about grooming gangs. Tariq was a man getting his fellow men. Reconfiguring Islam facilitated Tariq's critical awareness in distinguishing what was cultural from religious, but also in his active choices of which aspects to practise. He was able to mould Islam according to his needs against the multiple contexts and scenarios he was exposed to: hypocrisy, death, love and hate, Muslim and non-Muslim. Applying a gender-based analysis his narrative was helpful in opening up such perspectives. Following the line of enquiry in looking at gender from a context-based perspective, I now proceed to compare Tariq's narrative with the other participants.

Contexts of Gendered Discourses

We have seen the theme of contested masculinities in the introductory section of this chapter. It's time to take a closer look at the contexts of these contestations to see what insights emerge. Tariq's portfolio gave us good insights into the ways Islam became a resource in the construction of gendered selves and the effect this had on perceptions and responses to Right-wing populism. I am now in a good position to compare his narrative with the others' focusing on contextual factors which potentially influence this dynamic between gender and responses to Right-wing populism. Context accounted for a lot regarding the participants' perceptions of life in general, the changes they experienced and their responses to confrontational (exclusionary) rhetoric. One of the contexts deserving closer analysis is where hyper-masculine performances were produced - the hard, deprived, and segregated, growing up contexts. Such contexts have been outlined by research as limiting a sense of national belonging for ethnic minority youth and also fostering interethnic intolerance and conflict (Amin 2002: 960; Connell 2005: 18-19; see also Alexander 2004; Bonino 2017: 164; Hopkins 2004, 2018).

Hyper-masculinity

Research has located certain constituencies of Right-wing populism as 'marginalized and disadvantaged white working-class communities [...] construct[ing] a specific form

and style of violent masculinity’ (Treadwell and Garland 2011: 621; see also Copsey 2010). Furthermore, the hate-crime literature has connected masculinity to violence targeting ethnic minorities. In certain contexts where men are denied the normative opportunities to craft their masculinities (authority, control, aggression, independence, competitiveness, individualism – in Western society), violence/crime becomes a ‘resource for doing gender’ (Messerschmidt 1993: 84; see also Perry 2002; Watts 2001). As for Extremist Islam, research hasn’t established such a gendered link between mode of violence and ‘ideals of masculinity and honour’ (Allan et al. 2015: 2; see also Davies 2008: 616). The emergence of such expressions of Islam have instead been identified as multi-factorial: ‘for individuals to join them, requires an alignment of situational, social/cultural, and individual factors’ (Allan et al. 2015: 2). Regards my line of inquiry, we have seen how Right-wing Populism and Extremist Islam have both been conceived of in masculine contestational ways by some of the female participants. And we have seen in Tariq’s narrative a performance of hypermasculinity, which although not extremist, still featured reconfigurations of Islam as a resource for doing gender.

We saw how Tariq’s hyper-masculinity enabled him to relate and even empathise with Right-wing populism - it takes a hard man to understand a hard man, perhaps. Was this the case for the other hard participants that I met? I will present Farid and Qasim’s¹⁰⁷ narratives as a collective alongside Tariq’s insofar as hyper-masculinity was a shared theme. I will then compare their narratives with Dwayne and Mustafa as a pair who withdrew from such hyper-masculine contexts. After this, I will look at Hani and Salah¹⁰⁸ as a pair who displayed some masculine performance at some point in their change narratives despite not having grown up in segregated areas. And finally, I will

¹⁰⁷ Both are in their mid-20s, born and raised in Copenhagen. Farid (unemployed, Iraqi-Iranian heritage). Qasim (charity worker, Tanzanian-heritage).

¹⁰⁸ Hani and Salah are also Copenhageners, both are in their early-20s. Hani (student, Syrian-heritage). Salah (IT-technician, Palestinian-Hungarian heritage).

include the participants who made no such references to masculine-related frameworks, neither in growing up nor in terms of change and performance, like Erik and Rashid.¹⁰⁹

I present an overview of what I found employing this comparative-contextual approach before furnishing the analytical details. I observed a continuity between the performed hyper-masculine roles and the participants'¹¹⁰ growing-up contexts: they reconfigured Islam and their masculinities in ways which allowed them to keep up the hard performances. These participants - interestingly- were more able to closely relate to Right-wing populism, even empathise with them. They provided the most concrete discourses in terms of everyday-lived experiences of direct contact as opposed to the more abstract responses. For Dwayne and Mustafa, a change in their contexts significantly inhibited their hyper-masculine performances; although both were able to share everyday-lived examples in relating to Right-wing populism, their responses were quite different. Dwayne's absent-stakeholdership restricted him from engaging in the issue as much as Mustafa was able to. As for the rest, there was a tendency to look at the issue from macrosocial perspectives and to use abstract discourse in engaging the topic of Right-wing populism. Furthermore, some appeared to engage from a particular standpoint of e.g. Da`wah, ideology, activism and rationale. I will now go into the details of their narratives with this comparative-contextual approach in mind.

With regard to the first group, I found that the shared hyper-masculine performances came from a context of growing up hard. This gave the young men certain 'skills'.

Thank God I can go anywhere, even those turf areas I had problems with because they know who I am now. They know I'm not going to fight their turf [...] but at the end of the day, they know me as a human being [...] Islam didn't make me handicapped. I still have my hands and feet. Of course, now I only

¹⁰⁹ Rashid (mid-20s, IT-sales consultant, Malmo, Thai-heritage).

¹¹⁰ Tariq, Farid and Qasim.

fight with my tongue¹¹¹ but when push comes to shove [...] I'm going to defend my honour. I'm going to defend myself, and they know that.

(Farid, mid-20s, Copenhagen)

They were hardmen, and the skills they acquired from the hard life, although not conventional by any means, didn't detract from their abilities to draw upon them to survive in life. These young men were equipped with: access to a different environment,¹¹² they have gone through particular experiences, all of which have given them insights and a sharp ability to be critical in relating to 'others'. These hardmen came to see certain issues from both insider and outsider perspectives, and with some piercing criticism. Their critical insights give them a powerfully constructive ability to be negotiators reconciling between polarised groups, although this ability seems to be ignored by mainstream society. They came to see that it was 'Muslims against Muslims', but they also recognised how media and mainstream society 'demonise' them - with or without Islam.

Qasim: The media! [emphatic] are doing a fantastic job [...] to demonise Muslims, to call all [...] practicing Muslims as radicalised [...] Before, it was gang related: 'ah! you're gang related' [...] Now everybody is radicalised.

Yahya: So there's a shift in the targeting?

Qasim: Of course! [...] Because most of the gang-bangers who used to shoot people [...] they've all dropped that. They like: you know what: I'm only killing my Muslim brother [...] for what? Drugs, territory, nonsense [...] Alhamdulillah, they settled it [...] So they started becoming more practicing in Islam and [...] bam! Radical! 'Ah! gang members are becoming radicals' [...] Our Masjid is in one of the gangs' territory [...] Should we stand at the door and say: 'no entry for gang members'? [...] If you look at the Jyllands Posten¹¹³ [...] right before the

¹¹¹ This expression has specific connotations within the Islamic legislative framework. The tongue is an instrument for *Amr bi-l Ma'ruf wa Nahi `an-il-Munkar* (enjoining the good and forbidding the evil) and likewise for *Jihad* and *Da`wah*.

¹¹² By this, I mean they know street life, they were street-smart. And I have heard first-hand how this access has tended to be manipulated within certain circles, notably the intelligence services. At least four of the participants raised this issue; one in particular disclosed to me in the strictest of confidence that an intelligence agency approached him multiple times in an attempt to recruit him in exchange for money and other perks.

¹¹³ A popular Danish newspaper.

Second World War, and look at what the media's writing right now, they just took Jews and inserted Muslim.

The issue of social marginalisation and stigma was very clear as far as these young men were concerned. They have been made to feel marginalised and discriminated against regardless of their potentials. They are effectively entrapped and left to resist dying the social deaths of stigma (Goffman 1952: 451-63, 2001: 18-19); cf. Bonino 2017; Finlay et al. 2017; Hopkins 2007). This could be linked to the continuity in their hyper-masculine performances. Tariq, went from beating up white boys to being the Muay Thai champ ready to revenge the usurping of his male status by his step-father. Farid went from being gang-related to engaging in the warfare of ideologies¹¹⁴ between Islam and its detractors. And Qasim went from being 'gang-related' to serving in the Danish army,¹¹⁵ to now engaging in charity work in Syria's most bombarded regions. Tariq, Farid and Qasim, like Dwayne and Mustafa grew up with elements of hyper-masculinity around them. However the latter two withdrew from active participation in such contexts, and we saw how that translated in changes in their reconfigurations of identity.¹¹⁶ Their narratives lacked the continuity in hyper-masculine performance which Tariq, Farid and Qasim exhibited.

Yahya: Is there an increase in the Far-right, because you said it isn't so apparent in Copenhagen?

Qasim: There isn't, not here where I live. But as soon as you leave the centre and go a little bit out, there are Far-rights. But they don't come out and attack [...] like Paris or [...] in England for example where they throw pig heads. In Norrebro, the people here have accepted Muslims. They know there's a difference between [...] psycho Muslims and normal Muslims [...] We are a part of this community, even though I'm being racially profiled by the police [...] The old ladies as soon as I walk in the bus, she grabs her bag [laughs] yes! It still

¹¹⁴ He uses this term himself. During my BA (Islamic Theology) in Madinah, the topic '*al-Ghazu al-Fikri*' literally translated as Ideological Warfare was part of a studied unit in *Da`wah*.

¹¹⁵ 'I joined the Danish army at the age of 21 after I finished high school [...] I was the only black guy in the whole battalion [...] They did everything to kick me out [...] *Alhamdulillah* I left before things went crazy [...] I stayed there for like 3, 4 months [...] I came back home, started my life all over again.' (Qasim)

¹¹⁶ Dwayne and Mustafa's narratives featured in chapters four and five.

happens in 2015, and I just take it with a smile. This is my home; where am I going to go? Back to Zanzibar, where they say: ‘this guy’s from Denmark’ [...] I have brothers [...] of Arab descent, they’re like: you guys are still exotic!

Yahya: Is that maybe because of their skin complexion, they can [...] integrate?

Qasim: No [...] I have more chances of feeling exotic than him because he feels more demonised.

Yahya: Ah! [...] you’re black.

Qasim: Yea! You have the hip-hop culture and all that, exactly! So when I walk around with a Thawb¹¹⁷ in the summer and my ‘Amamah¹¹⁸ [...] ‘this guy is a terrorist’ [...] When I wear my cargo pants, hoodie, bomber jacket ‘ah! this guy’s a thief, this guy’s a thug.’

Yahya: So there’s nowhere you can be normalised?

Qasim: [laughs] Nobody’s normal here! This is how I see my world in Copenhagen, Denmark [...] I love this place and I also hate it. I’ve tried leaving Copenhagen to find life elsewhere, but I couldn’t! [...] I love it here. Everything is just a grasp away, whatever I need I get it, but it’s just been difficult [...] some people don’t get a job because of their names: like come on man, it’s 2015!

The hardmen displayed a sense of immunity from being made to feel unwanted, suspect and - essentially - marginalised by their society. They grew up with these sentiments in the air, to the point it simply became water off a duck’s back: they could laugh, joke and ‘smile’ about it. This made me realise that among the reasons why these particular young men were able to relate to elements of Right- wing Populism is perhaps due to the fact that both groups (minorities) have been marginalised and stigmatised by mainstream society.¹¹⁹ Farid described an encounter with Freja Lindgren¹²⁰ and her counterparts. I briefly feature his description to illustrate this point:

¹¹⁷ Long-flowing male dress.

¹¹⁸ A shemagh worn on the head.

¹¹⁹ Although it is arguable that Right-wing Populism is becoming more mainstream, some undercurrents remain stigmatised minorities e.g. the grassroots street-protest movements. My study took a broad *sui-generis* approach to considering what constituted Right-wing populism as clarified in the first chapter.

¹²⁰ She is a Danish Defence League activist and spokesperson residing in Copenhagen although the official status with the EDL has been negated in the EDL website: <http://edlnews.co.uk/2012/03/29/the-english-defence-league-in-aarhus-31-march-2012/> (Accessed May 8, 2015).

It was the first time in my life I [had] seen them [even though] [...] we live in the area. We were there to get their perspective. They're afraid, that's why they're doing what they do. They think we want to come to this country and take it over [...] I don't know how many percent want to change Denmark [...] But [...] the majority: we are here to do our best [...] But we have Islamic values.

(Farid)

Being able to have direct contact (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 2007) with individuals and groups identifying with Right-wing populism was therefore a matter of context in Tariq, Farid and Qasim's stories. In contrast with their hyper-masculine narratives, some of the young men like Rashid and Erik grew up in completely different contexts. Erik grew up in Uganda and Kenya, and moved to Denmark aged ten. Rashid's family on the other hand had a practice of sending each child back to Thailand from the age of six till twelve so they could acquire essential cultural sensibilities before returning to Sweden for high school. By comparison to the first group of young men, I found that Erik¹²¹ and Rashid had no first hand experiences, confrontations or encounters with Right-wing populism. They related to Right-wing populism in limited, second hand terms. Furthermore, their perceptions and responses tended to be framed in macrosocial terms focusing on the socio-economic and the political systems.

Yahya: Have you yourself any experiences of racism or anti-Islam, here in Sweden?

Rashid: I've been grateful because it has not happened to me [...] But sometimes they would say something bad about Muslims. Maybe, they ask me: where are you from? And I would say [...] and then they would say 'Ah ok, I thought you were those Muslims who do stuff like that' [...] It sticks inside my heart forever [slight laugh] [...] It's powerful when people say something like, they're referring to other Muslims, but they're talking to me. When I hear a story about other people's experiences: [...] women in Hijab that get pulled of and get chased after [...] it irritates me a lot [...] It's more accepted sort of because now we have a political party [...] who basically are racist, and really against Islam.¹²²

¹²¹ Erik's discourse around Right-wing populism has featured in chapter five. I focus here on Rashid.

¹²² A reference to the Swedish Democrats Party.

Rashid, like Erik had positive perceptions of his society despite the changes in the Swedish political climate. When I noticed his secure sense of belonging to Sweden and his appreciation of what the country had given him and his family, I thought it could be interesting to ask him about integration. With the segregated areas like Rosengard in mind (Bevelander 2004; Carlbohm 2003; Otterbeck 2015; Sander 1997), I asked Rashid whether he heard about the concept of white flight. He answered no. I described the phenomenon, and it led him to outline some interesting perceptions of the segregated contexts where the hyper-masculinities we have so far seen emerge from.

Yahya: Some neighbourhoods like Rosengard, there's almost no Swedish people living there [...] Could you say anything about that through your own experiences, where do you live for example?

Rashid: That's also an issue: [...] Sweden taking in too many people, that it becomes [...] political [...] that they deliberately put many immigrants into those places [...] Rosengard isn't only the place like that. You have many other places similar like: Lindängen, Kroksbäck, Sofielund [...] They place these immigrants to those places and many of them maybe have relatives in those places. And yes, there may be criminals; they don't know what to do; they go to the wrong path. Just in Kroksbäck, you hear like a gunshot everyday. It's serious because it's Sweden, not Harlem.

Yahya: So you see that the immigrants are at fault for these negative views?

Rashid: No I think [...] everybody has to take their responsibility [...] Like I said, I think, politicians, and then yes, many immigrants who are shooting at people or whatever they do, which is bad, it's their action, they are to blame. But, to make a generalisation that everybody is doing that is wrong. When the Swedish people say 'our neighbours are immigrants, we have to go' - that is wrong. But if you don't feel safe in the neighbourhood because there's a gunshot everyday, you need to move, I don't blame them for doing that, because I would do the same.

It was interesting to note a sort of privilege enjoyed by such participants who were able to enjoy the best of cultures. They framed their perceptions of the hyper-masculine contexts in macrosocial terms focusing on issues like integration. Erik's narrative was

distinguished from Rashid's by a performance of social and community activism.¹²³ I noticed that some of the participants, especially those based in Denmark used the opportunity provided by this research project to get their views across as social and community activists. Erik shared this trait with the remaining group - who, although not performing hyper-masculine roles - certainly didn't grow up in the segregated areas. They, at some point in their narratives engaged in masculine role play or displays of masculinity as part of a change they perceived themselves as having gone through. This was the case with Hani and Salah.

Every summer, we visited Syria. And when I was ten, eleven [...] my mother couldn't handle me no more, so she said you go out with your Dad. My Dad used to all day go out and visit the family we didn't see normally in Syria. When I saw these people, they were very poor [...] I really felt bad about myself: how could I, with all the things that I have be such an arrogant [...] aggressive person? [...] I [was] the lucky one to come to Denmark and have a good education. So that changed me [...] I was trying to be a better person from that day [...] It's not because I was very religious at that time [...] But now I can see the religious things in it.

(Hani, Copenhagen)

It was around the entry of 2014, I kind of made that change. I knew about Right-wing politics, but [...] it wasn't something that I cared about [...] But at some point, you meet people, who make you think differently [...] [They're] actually fighting for your rights because you are Muslim [...] so why are you not fighting with them? [...] The first people I met [are] not people you would regard as God's best children. They're punks [...] drunks [laughs] people who may look crazy to you at first sight [...] A friend told me to come with him to a place where these people would gather [...] just for fun [...] I start[ed] talking with them, and I thought: that makes sense [...] I mean this is my fight too [...] I just haven't engaged in it [...] So slowly, I start[ed] participating in demonstrations against racism.

(Salah, Copenhagen)

¹²³ He is an active youth volunteer for the Copenhagen-based *Islamisk Trossamfund*.

Hani and Salah, like Erik were keen to get their views across as part of their community activist roles. Hani shared an extensive Islamic missionary Da`wah narrative;¹²⁴ Salah was a left-wing activist.¹²⁵ A difference came in the way that masculinity featured in their narratives. For Hani, an unconstructive masculinity which manifested itself in boisterous terms was changed through an experience which led him to reconfigure Islam alongside values he already laid out for himself.¹²⁶ In Salah's case, an indifferent attitude to what was happening in a sheltered upbringing changed and saw him take on a distinct punk leftist identity which was there to be noticed - bold, fearless, spikes and all.¹²⁷ One thing they both shared was their distinctly positive perceptions of Danish society - something which the narratives of the hardmen didn't have as a glowing feature.

The thing that happened after that, the *Islamic Trossamfund* [...] visited the Jews [...] and the father of the man who was killed, just because we're not here to make problems. We have to build this country together. Muslims, non-Muslims,

¹²⁴ Hani focused on the *Da`wah*, successes and positivity of the *Islamisk Trossamfund*. He referred to the Copenhagen-based institution as 'the most amazing mosque in Scandinavia'. He is an active and keen volunteer who spends his time engaged in outreach work throughout Denmark, especially in the areas of low-Muslim population.

¹²⁵ 'I'm Muslim even though some might beg to differ due to my interests in punk music and style. Besides that, I'm also an anti-fascist and have relations to groups, who[se] ... goal is simple: No Nazis in our streets. No right-wing politics. Not a lot of Muslims in Copenhagen today ... take part in [such] movements ... which I consider a problem, since it's our fight too'. (Salah)

¹²⁶ 'I also heard...when you become a teenager, you will change...But when I became 13, I thought three things that I will not go into: ...smoking because...I saw a lot of my friends began to smoke ... I didn't want to go near alcohol at all, and the third thing was - the only woman that I will love or be with would be my wife ... It was like principles I will hold onto for the rest of my life, and *Alhamdulillah*: I've not smoked, I don't drink alcohol and all the other things...It wasn't about religion at that time, but...I hold fast to those things right now. Now I can see the religious things in it, like the beautiful things in it'. (Hani)

¹²⁷ In talking about his spiked leather jacket: 'I want to show people who I am. I can't really show...who I am wearing a chequered shirt...going around with a big *peace* sign...People actually see left wing activism as ... trouble makers. So I like to ... go out on the streets, make people look at me and think, that's a left wing trouble maker there going Not because I want some trouble, but because I want to make people think that there's going to be something going down here soon ...I show people: I also roam these streets. I also take part in anti-racist demonstrations, I take part in fighting for solidarity, fighting for tolerance'.

Christians, Jews, Atheists. We live here together, we have to build it together, so it's pretty amazing that we got our main speaker to the society to go there Subhanallah and talk with them, and, he was there with them for that day Subhanallah. That's, we all, we all, when there comes problems, we try to fix it as much as we can ... and you will see people commenting positively that: do you know what? It's not Islam, it's human, and like some Danish people actually, felt sad for [...] the so-called terrorist because they thought that we have lost him as a society, [we] lost a man [...] It wasn't good for us to make him feel like that, so, it was interesting, the reactions we got from many of the Danish people.

(Hani, Copenhagen)

This positive perception of Danish society flowed into positive perceptions and responses to Right-wing populism. Hani expressed this in optimistic terms: 'building the country together' in his narrative in the aftermath of the Copenhagen shootings. Salah's perceptions and responses to Right-wing populism on the other hand were expressed his in terms of fighting for 'solidarity and tolerance' for all social groups in Denmark - Muslim and non-Muslim.

It's immigration [...] that is the big debate. In the beginning, it is immigration that started, not Islam specifically [...] and, with time, it has [...] had an impact on Danish society [...] I don't see it with the people that I live with; I'm like a Danish citizen. But immigrants may see it in another way [...] It's very complicated [...] You can understand that many of the Danish people don't want so many immigrants [...] because they don't have money. The city like can't hold this, you can understand somehow. But the problem is when you take that and put it on Islam, and look at it as the Islamic problem.

(Hani, Copenhagen)

I think it's something general about human character, not just Danish character. Everybody fears. We may fear spiders, we may fear whatever, they would picture in a horror movie. And with right wing political parties, their horror movies are pretty much Muslims taking over their countries. Some people might believe in it, but I'm glad I know a lot of people that don't actually believe in it. They know what's going on. They know what tactics they're using. They know to stay away, and some of them won't even turn on their television, some of them don't even have a television.

(Salah, Copenhagen)

Unlike the hardmen, Hani and Salah like Rashid and Erik had limited experiences of direct contact with groups affiliated to Right-wing populism. With no everyday lived experiences of the marginalisation and stigma inherently present in the hyper-masculinised contexts, these participants' relations to Right-wing populism tended to be abstract. And hence, the perceptions and responses to Right-wing populism tended to be framed in structural terms. They also didn't engage in the performance of hyper-masculine roles to assert their claims of belonging to their societies and to reconfigure their identities. The contexts they grew up in and continue to actively engage with weren't spaces of hyper-masculine contestations. And although this hindered their abilities to directly relate to other marginalised and stigmatised minority groups - like certain manifestations of Right-wing populism - this didn't lead to judgemental and stereotyped views. Rather, they simply engaged the debate from a different (macrosocial) perspective to substitute the lack of direct experience.

Conclusion

The chapter has outlined a masculinised conception of Right-wing populism as far as some of the female narratives were concerned. The influence dynamics between Islam/Muslims and Right-wing populism have been perceived as male ego versus male ego from the female perspectives. And from the male perspectives, perceptions of Right-wing populism were interlaced with narratives of protection and concern for Muslim women - *Hijab*-wearing females particularly. Parallels were made with contexts were moral panics potentially characterising women as socio-sexually dangerous cause the male policing and disciplining of female bodies (Carby 199; Flood 2008; Odem 1995; Ong 1990)

In this regard, the contested spaces and contexts were shaped by a gendered dynamic. For this reason, we saw that the ability to relate to Right-wing populism correlated with gendered themes of contestation such as Tariq's reference to the sex grooming cases in empathising with them. It could have been assumed that the male participants would

perhaps see the masculinity inherent in Right-wing populism as a threat to their own masculinities. This was however not the case. We saw the most 'empathy' for the Right-wing expressed within the most hyper-masculine performances such as Tariq's. Was it then, a type of Islam/Muslims or a strain of Right-wing activism which produces such threat perceptions and responses?

I can state that the form(s) of Islam reconfigured by the participants wasn't the type which felt threatened by the masculinity of Right-wing populism. If we removed Islam from the equation, what remained therefore was gender (masculinity) and context (marginalisation and stigma). And when this was the case, it was only logical to see narratives of understanding, empathising and seeing things from the other side. It took hardmen to get hardmen. This finding forced me to re-evaluate my initial conceptual framework for analysing the participants' responses to Right-wing populism within a secure-insecure binary. I found - simply - that this just didn't fit the narratives.

From this gendered analytical approach, I discovered that labelling the participants' responses to Right-wing populism in secure/insecure terms did no justice to the complexity of their narratives. How else could I analytically categorise the responses of young Muslim men who had become so immune to everyday lived experiences of discrimination, marginalisation and stigmatisation that they would take it with a smile and laugh? The fact that these young men were able to relate to a phenomenon (Right-wing populism) which targeted their ethnic, racial, cultural and religious identities with specific discourses of exclusion tells a story of similarity more than difference.

The young men like Tariq, Farid and Qasim were resisting their social deaths of stigma (Bonino 2017; Finlay *et al.* 2017; Goffman [1952] 2000; Hopkins 2017) through the continuity of hyper-masculine performance. They could relate to elements of the Right-wing because both potentially share similar marginalised contexts which produce hyper-masculine role plays as a means of resisting the stigma and surviving the crises (Copsey 2010; Kimmel 2000; Treadwell and Garland 2011). For the others who grew up in non-segregated areas like Hani and Salah or had spent significant periods of their childhood

abroad like Erik and Rashid, this ability to relate to Right-wing populism was limited. Their lack of first hand experiences and encounters led them to frame their perceptions and responses in primarily structural terms focusing on integration, socio-economics and the electoral system.

In the previous chapters covering growing up being Muslim and conversion, we saw that the contexts of exposure initiated certain negotiations and reconfigurations of identity for the participants. In this chapter, context surfaced again as a crucial factor. Although recognising how gender roles/relations were subject to interpretation and practice within certain frameworks of Islam, social context had a significant influence on the processes of identity negotiation and reconfiguration (Fadil 2011; Hashim 1999; Mernissi 1991, 2011; Wadud 2013). Social context shaped both the gendered discourses as well as the responses to Right-wing populism and Islam remained a malleable resource individually re-appropriated to fit everyday lived realities. A core element of this social contextual factor was about belonging to the nation and exercising citizenship - even in the face of rejection and outright marginalisation. This theme of being citizens is the topic of my next chapter.

Chapter 7

Citizens

It tells a lot when someone says to you ‘that’s been a long journey for me to identify myself¹²⁸ with the country they were born and raised in. Or when another one asks you: ‘you going to help the Scottish people having a black or a darkie Scottish to represent them?’¹²⁹ As I reach the end of this journey, I begin its final chapter asking: how come Muslims, born and raised in their local contexts found themselves having to go through epic journeys of identity negotiation before they could confidently say: I am Scottish, I am Swedish or I am a Dane? A prominent narrative shared by my participants was that of belonging to the nation, being seen as a rightful citizen deserving of the respect and acknowledgement that comes with being the same. And given Right-wing populism’s idealist conceptions of nationhood producing a xenophobic discourse of exclusion, the participants’ narratives around citizenship directly pertained to the subject of this thesis.

When I aligned these questions with my participants’ stories about being home in their respective localities, it helped me identify three sets of narratives. In their aspirations to be equal citizens, the participants encountered certain barriers placed in their way. The first thematic analysis in this chapter therefore looks at these obstacles. I will then study the various factors at play when the participants navigated around these obstacles and negotiated their identities as citizens. The third and final section looks at the resources which the participants utilised in staking their claims of being citizens.

Being able to confidently assert being Scottish, Danish or Swedish as far as the narratives were concerned was of course a matter of individual subjectivity. The narrative analytical approach I have adopted however recognised that these stories are

¹²⁸ Salim. Qasim said: ‘This is how I see my world in Copenhagen, Denmark [...] I love this place and I also hate it [...] I’ve tried leaving Copenhagen to find life elsewhere, but I couldn’t! [...] I love it here’.

¹²⁹ Tariq.

also framed in response to broader socio-cultural discourses. I therefore had to contextualise my participants' narratives by looking at the national contexts to see how conceptions of citizenship potentially influence the production of identity. I will succinctly present this literature to give an overview before approaching the empirical data.

* * *

In the absence of a consensus on what defines citizenship, different approaches by contemporary political philosophers have converged on the participation factor (Castles and Davidson 2000: 103; Marshall 1950, cited in Blaug 2016: 204-5; Parekh 2002: 301; Punch *et. al.* 2013: 283). Citizenship entails the capacity to participate in the political and socio-economic life of a community (state) as free individuals of equal moral worth deserving of equal concern and respect (Bellamy 2008: 14; Conover *et al.* 2004: 1036; Somers 2008: 7). Two factors emerge to challenge and test this concept. The first being the variance in individual participation levels, and the second pertains to how the participants view each other as belonging to the state in which they reside (Joppke 2008: 536; Mouritsen 2013: 87; Meer and Modood 2009: 483-4). To address this, 'functioning democracies' have a common civic culture in place to enable bonds of 'trust and solidarity' develop between the citizens (Bellamy 2008: 13). This requirement of a collective sense of belonging and identity has however become increasingly complex when societies change as a result of immigration and multiculturalism (Bellamy 2008: 13; Joppke 2008: 536-7; see also Meer and Modood 2009; Mouritsen 2013).

Chapter three presented broad overviews providing a useful historical, socio-economic and political context to citizenship in the three nations hosting the cities I studied. We have seen how the different nation-states have responded to the crises of citizenship - migration, multiculturalism and globalisation (Castles & Davidson 2000). All of these responses have restricting/prohibitive measures as well as facilitatory elements.

Obstacles were therefore bound to be a part and parcel of the wider cultural discourse on citizenship which the participants drew from in constructing their narratives.

Obstacles

Certain issues and factors presented significant challenges to the participants regards their claims of belonging and citizenship. These obstacles created a need to navigate around certain realities and constructs. Identities were being negotiated and produced in the context of these navigations. To give an overview, (discrimination, segregation and the traitor stigma) were the most prominent factors highlighted in participants' narratives as being obstacles in the way of attaining citizenship. I start my analysis with the most frequently narrated factor - discrimination.

Discrimination

Discrimination was the most commonly narrated theme in the participants' narratives. Being treated differently in a clearly perceivable way meant being made to feel *different* from others about belonging to one's society and nation. And with citizenship conceived of in participatory means in terms of equality and fairness (Castles & Davidson 2000: 103; Parekh 2002: 301), being discriminated against meant being denied a fundamental aspect of rightfully belonging to the nation.

I was the only black guy in the whole battalion. We had 2 battalions: and there was one black guy on each battalion [...] I'm talking about north Denmark. [...] You know when you're not welcome [laughs] you understand? They did everything to kick me out but *Alhamdulillah* I left before things went crazy. I could walk through the lunch hall with my food and every head was like this [staring-glance then laughs] [...] My senior sergeant once asked me 'if anything happened, which direction would you shoot?' I was like: wow! Because he asked me: do you drink? And I was like 'no I don't drink because I'm Muslim'

(Qasim)

For someone like Qasim, growing up in a hypermasculinised context of street gangs placed him at the very margins of meaningful civic participation, and he knew this.¹³⁰ As a social agent with the power to creatively navigate around the macrosocial structures, Qasim – against the odds – enlists, serving in the Danish Army. In his narrative performance, being in the army would have functioned as both a continuum in his development of masculine identity (Messerschmidt 1993: 84; see also Perry 2002; Watts 2001) as well as legitimise his claims of belonging to Denmark (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 55; cf. Mouritsen 2013: 97). As per his narrative, he was however assigned a second-class citizen status (Conover *et al.* 2004: 1037). Being black and Muslim presented two obstacles impeding access to an ethno-cultural civicness of being Danish (Mouritsen 2013: 97).

Having to endure the perceived racial discrimination during his short-lived service served as another rejection of Qasim's citizenship and therefore reinforced the marginalisation he already experienced in his gangster '*Jahiliyyah*'.¹³¹ His narrative showed that in a lot of public spheres and roles (gangster, Muslim, soldier, charity worker) that he plays he becomes discriminated against and stigmatised. And while this impacted the extent to which he could draw on resources to claim an active Danish citizenship, it did not translate into a specific type of response from him to Right-wing populism; on the contrary, he was able to relate to them – as we saw in chapter six. To further support my argument that obstruction from equal citizenship affected the participants' self-identification with the nation-state, I present his position regards Swedishness as a basis of comparison to illustrate his affinity for the homeland.

Let me put it this way: if the Danish football team and the Swedish football team are playing [...] I would support the Swedish national team. [...] I'll tell you why. Look at the Danish national team. Who represents me? [...] Since I was born, the Danish national team has been blue-eyed blonde people till today. They have never represented me, never. And you know why I'll support the Swedish

¹³⁰ We saw his narrative in the previous chapter on gender.

¹³¹ Means his pre-Islamic days: i.e. prior to his incorporation of Islamic practice as a part of his everyday life.

national team? You have Zlatan Ibrahimovic. Why? He represents me though he's not black. He represents me: he's from the same background as me. He's gone through [...] discrimination, the whole you know: you'll never amount to anything. He's been there, he's lived that.

Qasim's direct experiences of discrimination serve to reinforce perceived institutional racism¹³² - everyday lived experiences are projected onto the whole social, political and cultural fabric of the nation. He interestingly makes recourse to the broader socio-political discourses by comparing the inclusive multiculturalism of Sweden in its liberal-universalist model of nation building (Schierup and Ålund 2011; Gustafson 2002; Soininen 1999) vis-à-vis Denmark's ethno-cultural position (Hansen 2002; Kærgård 2006; Mouritsen 2013). With a lack of representation on the institutional level came a lack of trust and hence ambivalent claims of belonging to the nation. And this relates to the paradox of citizenship outlined by Bellamy (2008: 13), Joppke (2008:536) and Mouritsen (2013: 87) among others – that in depending on a collective solidarity between citizens to ensure its fruits of labour are fairly shared, certain constructions of citizenship are driving individuals away and thereby dividing society along the lines of first and second class citizens. Qasim, as a second-generation young man in Denmark is marginalised from equal socio-economic and political participation in the maintenance of an increasingly cultural 'chauvinist' (Mouritsen 2013: 101) welfare state. Being accorded second-class status was also a major obstacle for the convert Muslim participants whose narratives I now turn to

Traitors

A specific form of discrimination which really created a significant challenge for the convert Muslim participants was the traitor trope. For the most part, these converts belonged to the majority ethnic social group by virtue of their ethnicity. By making the choice to convert to Islam however, they were stripped of whiteness (Franks 2000;

¹³² Later on in his narrative, he would brand the Danish national coach Morten Olsen as a racist, and the Danish Football Association as a racist institution.

Garner and Selod 2015; McDonald, 2005; Moosavi 2015a, 2015b; van Nieuwkerk, 2006; Zebiri 2014), and, as I argue here, their citizenships as well – they were treated as second-class citizens, on somewhat similar terms to their second generation Muslim counterparts. I have already shown aspects of this traitor stigma when I presented the narratives of Isla and Emma in chapter five on conversion. From the analytical dimensions I focused on there, visibility in the public space and contact with family were contributing factors to being discriminated against on the grounds of religious affiliation. To convert was to betray one's nation and people, and therefore delegitimises entitlement to citizenship. As this chapter pertains to citizenship, I will focus on this aspect of analysis using Michael's narrative. Michael is a Londoner, a characteristic which initially placed him outside the target study group. I however noticed that his account contained very rich narratives which, if harvested through analysis potentially enrich our insights in understanding this very interesting phenomenon. And since, I was not building a new argument, his inclusion serves to corroborate and complement. I am going to allow the conversation to flow to allow the reader to absorb its contexts before I start my analysis.

Michael: I don't look at myself as British, English, definitely yea. [...] British is like [gestures to friend] [...] on Sunday, he wasn't having a roast dinner and watching Only Fools & Horses or Catchphrase. He was having a curry, watching something else [...] They'll be living a total separate life. [...]

Yahya: Do you see Britishness as a kind of artificial construct then?

Michael: Yea, [...] It's just a means to an end: to keep everyone unified, a form of keeping us all in order which is fair enough [...] It's a choice - that's the beauty - it's not forced upon us [...] I'm considered a British citizen in the eyes of the law, but I always consider myself English. [...]

Yahya: So what would be your perception of certain groups that are rallying to protect British or English values because they see that it's under threat?

Michael: See, this is the problem now, because I don't want to align too much with Englishness because I don't want it to be associated with like EDL [...] that would consider themselves English [...] as a political statement, to be against immigrants, foreigners that are claiming to be British in their eyes, but that's not what I would be claiming it.

Yahya: You mention the EDL [...] How do you see them? Are you able to [...] relate to why they've emerged and why they're becoming so popular?

Michael: [...] Well, to be honest, because I'm Muslim, I'm very biased against them because of their anti-Islam, and I've deliberately gone out of my way not to read their literature or research them up because of my hatred for them because of their hate for Islam. [...] How can I empathise with something that hates me? I will be the first, if they hate Muslims, an English Muslim is going to be right at the top of their tree of who they're going to hit [...] because I would be perceived as a traitor in their eyes.

Yahya: Have you had any personal confrontations yourself?

Michael: [thinking-pause] [...] I was going to the Masjid [...] someone cycling behind me, I hear him shout out 'traitor!' [...] But I was actually happy that he thought I was English, not Albanian or Eastern European or something like that. So I was kind of a little bit happy that he acknowledged that, yea, at least you're one of us kind of thing, but you're going in the mosque, and obviously that's why I'm a traitor.

Michael's narrative begins with him outlining his appreciation of the civic nature of British citizenship (Kyriakides et al. 2009; Meer and Modood 2008; Mouritsen 2013) – it has a beauty to it, and part of this beauty was for him to exercise his agency in choosing how he self-identified while fully participating in and adhering to its obligations. There is no conflict at this juncture between the Islamic, English and British categories of his identity; rather, there is a fertile ground for hybridity, and he is using it (Dietz 2004: 1095-6; cf. Bonino 2017; McCrone 2002; Meer 2015). His conversion to Islam – according to him¹³³ - was the catalyst for his self-identification as English (see Dietz 2004; Gudrun Jensen 2008: 395-7). This was because when he would encounter Muslims in his extensive travels,¹³⁴ and introduce himself, he would always be referred to as '*al-Ingleezee, Gora*' or *Shada Bhai*'.¹³⁵ For him, it was a pragmatic choice to embrace this. In his words: 'it's not a political protest: it's just a clarification of which

¹³³ This part of his narrative was omitted due to its length.

¹³⁴ He has visited Muslim communities in: the Middle East and North Africa, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, the US and the Caribbean.

¹³⁵ *Al-Ingleezee*: Arabic for Englishman, *Gora* and *Shada Bhai*: Urdu for white man/brother.

part of the island I'm from, it just happened to be from England, not Wales or Scotland'. And in his construction of Englishness, he makes reference to certain culturally shared narratives and symbols (Lawler 2015; Stanley 1992; Ricoeur 1980), which I found to be touching in their apparent simplicity, yet, warm in the meaning they carried. Being English, for Michael was about family and flock - to resonate with Fiona who I met in Edinburgh. Sharing a meal surrounded by one's loved ones and admiring the comic genius in the characters of Delboy and Rodney was emblematic enough for Michael to highlight as what distinguished his Englishness from the Britishness of his second-generation Muslim friend. Michael frames these different identities of: Muslimness, Englishness and Britishness in open, non-contestational terms. But his narrative takes a turn when I introduce the very topic of this thesis.

Michael's identification with Englishness is disassociated from entities which politicise it, and at the forefront of such entities is the Right-wing populist group EDL. This disassociation is made on the general basis that such rhetoric was anti-immigrant/foreigner. When I followed that up asking Michael if he could relate to them, his disassociation is made on the specific basis of his ascription to the Muslim community. And his narrative takes a distinctly sharp tone where words like hate are repeatedly used to describe both his feelings towards EDL as well as what he imagines to be what EDL-members would feel toward him. Michael also delineates that he is being biased towards them; and to his admission: 'I should really have done a bit of research, that's not normally the way I do things, but because their opinion is so deeply Islamophobic, I just thought, well, regardless'. If citizenship depends on bonds of 'trust and solidarity' (Bellamy 2008: 13), and this, in turn relies on fellow members seeing each other as deserving citizens, then the system is at risk (Joppke 2008: 536-7; see also Meer and Modood 2009; Mouritsen 2013). Michael's refusal to relate to his fellow citizens here is on the grounds that they regard him as a traitor for embracing Islam, despite the fact that it was through the religion and its community that he came to embrace his Englishness. It is a tragic paradox. Although his narrative did not show a distinct production of an identity in response to Right-wing populism, it attests to the

obstructive nature of the traitor trope to Muslim convert citizenship. For some like Emma – as we saw – this created a sense of liminality for her where she expressed the feeling of being almost stateless. Erik, Isla, Fiona and Adam were able to assert their citizenships through their negotiation of identity using Islam alongside their ethnicity and culture as resources. However, the converts voiced out the anguish of being regarded traitors. Being a citizen – to some extent - was to be made to feel like one; it needed validation and by significant others, family especially. Having contact with fellow citizens is a crucial part of this. And while the converts, in one regard belong to the majority ethnic group, and were primarily socialised in such majority contexts, for some of the second-generation participants, segregation was an obstacle to this contact.

Segregation

The chapter on growing-up Muslim featured narratives from Mustafa, Safiyyah, Farid and Tariq showing how growing up in segregated contexts produced certain constructions of boundaries of us and them alongside notions of being hated by the majority-ethnic population. Furthermore, the detailed analysis I conducted of Mustafa's narrative showed us the positive influence of contact with the majority-ethnic population in self-identifying with the nation. Mustafa might have been the lucky one to have a mother who would take matters into her hands and ensure that her son receive the best education outside a segregated enclave. His narrative showed the effect of this enclavisation insofar as it produced certain identities from youth resisting Swedishness by 'proudly' clinging on to their native home-country identities. These findings all resonate with research conducted in the three cities being studied: Copenhagen (Schmidt 2011), Edinburgh (Bonino 2017; Wardak 2000) and Malmö (Carlson 2003). They also resonate with the scholarship on citizenship with regard to ethnic minority inclusion (Joppke 2008; Meer and Modood 2009; Mouritsen 2013; Schierup and Ålund 2011). Segregation is therefore a primary obstacle to citizenship because it impacts the extent of economic and socio-political participation intrinsic to the functioning of citizenship itself.

As this thesis focuses on the Right-wing populist dimension, I wanted to see how the effect of segregation on citizenship related to the participants' responses to Right-wing populism. It is important to highlight however that none of the participants I met unequivocally expressed claims of not belonging to the nation as an extension of growing up or living in a segregated context. Rather, reservations to clear expressions of belonging to the nation were made with reference to third parties, i.e. their fellow citizens. Tariq's narrative encapsulated this, where he declined being 'sold' as a 'Scottish rapper' in terms of branding for fear that '90% of the Scots' might not accept him – in contrast with the relatively positive picture painted of the Scottish context (Bonino 2017: 195; see also McCrone 2002; Meer 2015) and of Scottish identity as being less ethnically fixed than Englishness (Bonino 2017: 59; see also Kyriakides *et al.* 2009: 297). One dimension of segregation which I saw important to highlight is that it limited contact between members of migrant backgrounds and native populations and reinforced stereotyped perceptions of the other. I feature Huda's¹³⁶ narrative in this regard because, besides touching upon stereotypes, it related to the topic on responses to Right-wing populism.

Huda: Many people [are] afraid to come in Rosengård, I mean why?! [...] But others are not afraid, they want to see us. They want to see how we have it, they want to...smell our food [...] taste it, yea. But others [are] afraid, and then I say to them, come with me and we go around Rosengård and see what happen. 'No I am afraid'. I am with you. I am living there, are you afraid from me? No. OK, come with me! [Excited tone]. I did that twice I think [...] Yea! Swedish people,¹³⁷ they come to see my house.

Yahya: You talked to them and you found that they were afraid of Rosengård, so you told them: come and see how we have it. So what did they say afterwards?

Huda: Oh, it's amazing, yea! I mean: 'why was you afraid?' 'Oh, I don't know, I hear it' but you don't see it. You hear it [...] 80% of that you hear is not true [...] so do you want to see more, or do you want to hear more? 'No I want to see it'.

¹³⁶ Swedish-Iraqi female, mid-twenties, retail assistant, Malmo.

¹³⁷ They were work colleagues.

Yahya: I think you're the kind of person [...] you don't really care too much the fact [...] people, or the media is showing that - you know - some people are getting more racist attitudes?

Huda: Yes

Yahya: For example that the Swedish Democrats they got like 13% of the votes in Parliament [...] double what they got [previously], what do you feel about that?

Huda: Yea, yea. [...] It's only people, who talk much, but not do anything, so I don't know, I don't care about the Democrats so much [...] I feel that [...] we like ungdomar,¹³⁸ we can do something, from that bad thing to the good thing, we can show them that Rosengård, yea, Rosengård or Lindängen or something else in this area, we can show them that we are not what you hear, we are what you see.

Huda's narrative confirms a lot of contact theory's premises (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 2007) besides chiming with scholarship highlighting its effect on intergroup relations (Achbari 2015; Bevelander & Otterbeck 2010; Bonino 2017; Cairns 2010). When I align this with the literature that highlights the challenge of inclusive citizenships for ethnic minorities, (Joppke 2008; Meer and Modood 2009; Mouritsen 2013; Schierup and Ålund 2011) I am faced with a difficult reality because not everyone is like Huda in this regard. Her willingness to reach out to her fellow citizens who – by virtue of their ethnicity – belong to the majority social group demonstrated her strong sense of belonging and community. What it shows as well, is the reality that theory cannot account for subjective individuality. It is a finding that I find extremely important to highlight and connect to my central research question.

Muslims have very eclectic and highly individualised ways of dealing with the contingencies of everyday life – of which Right-wing populism is a minor part. It certainly wasn't consuming their whole existence as I had expected in the outset of this project. Huda's indifference, Dwayne's absent stakeholdership, Qasim's love-hate of Denmark and so on were reflections of these individual responses. But that's not to say

¹³⁸ youth.

that the broader social, economic, political and historical factors did not matter. Of course they did, and the narratives show this. This is a strength of the micro-social approach I have adopted: besides revealing the broader structures and narrative frameworks, it has shown the influence of these on the individual without obscuring the individualism. And with this, I conclude this section which presented the three major obstacles to citizenship: discrimination, traitor-ism and segregation. These obstacles called for certain negotiations which involved certain navigations around the obstacles. I will for the next section, look at these negotiations by focusing on Salim's narrative at first before bringing in the other participants.

Negotiations

It's been a very long journey for me: to identify myself as a Swedish person [...] When I grew up, people were asking me: where do you come from? I used to say Turkey, but I'm born here [...] Now when people ask [...] I'm like: I'm from Sweden from Malmo! [emphatic]

(Salim, late-thirties, Teacher, Malmo, Turkish-heritage)

I began this chapter with a fragment from Salim's words above, regards his reconciliation with his Swedishness because it captured the essence of the chapter. Indeed, it is telling when someone expresses their identification with the land they were born onto as a 'long journey'. I asked Salim whether he could recollect any milestones along his identification journey, and in his response lay insights into how he negotiated his citizenship. He replied saying that there was no one defining moment when he - all of a sudden - felt Swedish, rather 'it was something gradual'. Salim outlined a number of resources he made recourse to in his journey of being Swedish. More of an analysis into the analytical theme of resources shall follow in the next section of the chapter.

So there's no pivotal moment, but it's something gradual, coming with knowledge and reflecting upon it you know. I've been to some workshops about identity at the university [...] and also Islam has helped me. Islamic theology, about, you know, mankind being one. There's no difference of ethnicity, or geography or where you come from [...] You can be a Muslim, you can come from whichever corner of the world you wish [...] It's not a problem for me to

be Swedish, because what happens is that, amongst some groups, when you don't feel like you're part of the society, then Swedishness and Swedish people, and Swedish culture becomes something that you dislike, you understand? Just as Swedish people can call foreigners *invandrare*; foreigners, they can have words against Swedish people, and, so, with Islam, I don't feel any problem with that, I can identify myself as a Swedish people, as a Swedish person, and being a Muslim is no problem.

Islamic theology, education and relationships to significant others (convert Swedes especially) were all significant resources which Salim drew from in identifying himself as a Swedish person. The role that his convert friends played resonates with scholarship (Baker 2009; Mandel *et al.* 2015; Özyürek 2014; Roald 2004) as well as the findings in the conversion chapter which showed their potentially important role in mediating between different social groups because of their gatekeeper status and their abilities to look at things from more than one insider perspective. It was therefore a stinging irony that this group be stigmatised by the traitor trope.

Also one important thing for me, it was my friends who are converts to Islam. Swedish people who have converted to Islam [...] were amongst the people that have influenced me to think about identity, and not seeing Swedish identity being against Islam because this is also a misunderstanding amongst some Muslims that Swedish culture and Swedish way of life and everything is going against Islamic guidelines, you know, you cannot be Muslim and then Swedish at the same time. I don't see that problem.

Besides convert friends and education, a defining feature in Salim's negotiation of citizenship was his ability to reconcile his Islamic identity/worldview with certain core aspects of 'Swedish' identity and values - *Jantelagen* (which he explains shortly) especially - alongside characteristics such as honesty, hard work and considering others. Salim's teaching role and his acquaintance with the Swedish education system has given him insights into the tensions and contestations which polarise positions between the various social and ethnic groups. These tensions and contestations shall come in detail in a separate section where I compare his responses to others. But for now, I shall briefly present what he says with regard to these tensions so we see how he navigates around

them and puts forward ideas where Swedish nationality and sense of belonging could be negotiated in more inclusive terms.

I mean of course some parts in Swedish culture or tradition which goes against Islam [...] some holidays where they drink alcohol for example. But most of it, I would say is according to Islamic teachings – you know: being honest, being polite, and working hard, thinking about other people. These core values which a lot of Swedish people share is also Islamic. Not to be arrogant, you know in Sweden they talk about *Jantelagen*. *Jantelagen* means that you should not put yourself higher than other people. You should not talk about yourself being better than other people. *Jantelagen* [...] when you talk about it in a negative sense, Swedish people talk about it, and it has got a negative sense that nobody is saying: ‘I did this! I’m really good at that!’ Everybody’s like [humble, low voice] ‘oh yea, maybe I’m ...’ and you could interpret that in both in a negative and a positive way, *Jantelagen*. I would interpret it in a good way because Swedish, I would interpret it like: Swedish people are humble, they don’t have a big head

Salim’s narrative echoes what scholarship on citizenship has identified as an increase on the emphasis of shared values as a mechanism for investing citizenship with meaning (Bellamy 2008: 13; Joppke 2008: 536-7; see also Meer and Modood 2009; Mouritsen 2013). A review of the scholarship reveals that such emphasis on shared values is a recognisable trait in liberal/pluralist-civic citizenships such as the Swedish and British (Scottish) versions vis-à-vis the Danish ethno-culturalist tradition which actually shares the *Jantelagen* culture with Sweden (Gudrun Jensen 2008: 390; Hansen 2002; Kærgård 2006). Salim’s account draws from this socio-cultural framework and uses it to produce an unequivocal Swedish narrative identity. There is however a perception of a contradiction: an inclusive citizenship in principle did not translate into actual reality in practice.

Salim views an element of rigidity and nestedness about Swedish identity, a sense of insecurity which was a distinct departure from the way things were back in the

eighties¹³⁹ when he was in school. He uses the memories from these episodes to construct a narrative of inclusion in a bygone era. Salim remembers the spirit of showing solidarity with other peoples such as making a thousand-origami cranes for Hiroshima¹⁴⁰ and his Peruvian classmate sharing stories at school assembly about the plight facing the indigenous people. Salim, in his teaching role perceives the change within Swedish society. The emergence of the immigrant/Muslim problem in the national political discourse is ‘step by step, moving closer to the type of politics practised in neighbouring Denmark’ (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 54-55; cf. Soininen 1999: 687). Salim protested against the unfairness and simple inaccuracy of giving labels to people with migrant backgrounds like himself and his children. He asked the rhetorical question: would his son be labelled a third generation immigrant? Salim sees that the way to bring social groups together in Sweden is to focus on the shared values and not the ‘glitter’. He bases this on his lived experience of going through the Swedish education system himself. Salim negotiates his citizenship and stakes a clear claim to belonging to Sweden on the grounds of his teaching and mentoring role. Not only is he a negotiator from the Muslim end by coaching youngsters to realise their Swedishness, he's also an educator to his native Swedish students, teaching and challenging them to ‘live outside their bubbles.’ In this way, Salim performs the role of an active Swedish citizen. His narrative then takes a turn as he flags a perceived threat: the Right-wing populist Swedish Democrats are in the corridors of power. This is of chief concern to him.

The rise of right wing parties affects my identity in my thinking about Muslims living in Sweden. I mean, you read the newspapers [...] From the beginning, they were not that strong in Sweden. They didn't have any influence, but during

¹³⁹ By the 80s, Sweden's liberal-universalist approach to citizenship had reformed the legislation and the Swedish government distanced itself from the implicit assimilationist policies from the 1960s (Schierup and Ålund 2011: 47; Gustafson 2002: 467-8; Soininen 1999: 686).

¹⁴⁰ A reference to Sadako Sasaki, the twelve year old Japanese girl who died of leukaemia following exposure to radiation at two. Inspired by the Japanese *senbazaru* legend that promised ‘a granted wish from the gods’ for anyone folding a thousand origami cranes, she set about doing this, but only managed 644 before she died. (Coerr 2009)

the latest elections, they've gained more and more power, and one of their focal points is the Muslim population in Sweden: that they don't want to integrate into the society, and you know, that they're not really Swedish people and their culture is not Swedish.

(Salim)

This 'rhetoric' about the Islam problem affects Salim because he is both Muslim and Swedish. Although he has a resolved sense of belonging to the country, he sees the impact of this exclusionary discourse on the young Muslims he mentors. He has the resources to be able to deal with such discourses of exclusion, but his mentees do not. And by momentarily focusing on how he frames his mentees, we can see the potential impact that the Right-wing populist rhetoric is having on certain groups within the Muslim community. But at the same time, we have to be critical that the participants – as social agents – are not only constructing their own narrative identities in order to make sense of themselves (Lawler 2015; Stanley 1992; Ricoeur 1980), but also to legitimise the roles they play as teachers, community leaders, activists and role models.

Salim: As a youth mentor, a lot of youngsters reach to me [...] After Swedish Democrats got a lot of votes, some Muslim youth were saying 'ok maybe it's time to pack and go home' [...]

Yahya: So they didn't feel at home anymore?

Salim: Exactly! If you want to pack your bag and go home, it tells you a lot, you know? But I don't accept that. I'm born here. This is my country. I'm doing great work here, I'm contributing to the society, and this is my country. I'm not leaving here, and I'm going to fight it [...]

Yahya: Is the reason why you're able to react to this in a constructive way based on the fact that you identify quite strongly with this country?

Salim: That's been a very long journey for me [...] If you go to the schools with a lot of Muslims or immigrants [...] You go to them: where you from? Everybody's like 'I'm from Somalia, I'm from this and that and that', and you're like: 'ok, have you been to Somalia?' They're like: we've never been to Somalia [...] They're born and raised here; they say they're from Somalia.

Salim's narrative here portrays one of the outcomes I was expecting when I first embarked on this project. I expected significant concern from Muslims relinquishing

hopes of ever being able to call Europe home on one hand. And on the other, an extremist reaction to an extremist populist provocation. Although not denying such positions may exist, I however did not meet individuals who espoused them in my journey. In sum, we have seen from Salim's portfolio, contexts, relationships and resources which have all significantly contributed to his negotiation of citizenship. We have seen the importance of having good relations with members of the majority ethnic group to bring to light the fact that being Muslim and Swedish were compatible, even if this very group themselves risked being identified as traitors. Being a citizen is to feel and be treated as one. Salim saw his convert friends treat him as one of them and furthermore he saw how they lived the duality of identity. He was then able to amalgamate this with Islamic theology and his university workshops on identity. Salim shows us that it was important to have resources to claim citizenship. The more one had the stronger the claim. He also showed us that to be a citizen was to identify a niche for oneself. With these insights, I am in a good place to start comparing his narrative to others.

* * *

Salim's portfolio unearthed for us that negotiations around citizenship were done around certain contested issues. For him, the issue of culture and religion was in the very thick of these contestations. He was able to navigate around the discourses to identify what he sees as common ground with his fellow citizens – Swedish/Islamic values. In this section, I will compare his narrative with the other participants, focusing on these contestations, seeing how that impacted negotiations of citizenship and belonging. Before going straight into these contestations, it would be helpful to outline some of their causes. Our preconceptions and perceptions of others and of who we are, shapes how we relate to other people (Brubaker & Cooper 2000; Jenkins 2008; Lawler 2015). When I looked at the participants' narratives, certain perceptions and preconceived notions of what it meant to be a Scot, Dane or Swede appeared to be conflicting with being Muslim. To begin with, a significant number of the participants expressed how

they perceived a default distinction between the two: being Muslim and being European. In all the cases, this was the case in their nascent stages. Such narratives therefore tended to be weaved within the growing up stories.

Before I was practicing, I was like a Danish - you know - in the way of thinking, like, the only thing I said that I was a Muslim, it was on your name. It was only a name [...] Of course, the major things we didn't do was: drink or eat swine, because that was haram.

(Farid)

I moved to a Danish school when I was nine. And when you come from a place where it's safe, and everybody knows your family, and you go to another school, but you still think you're Danish. So, you recognise that you're not because people will look at you with your colour, and religion [...] But I noticed when I was in school, I was this kind of person, and when I came home, I was another kind of person. So, should I be more Danish, or should I be more Muslim Somali? Which was like an identity crisis for me.

(Sahra)

When I looked at the growing up narratives of Sahra, Farid, Tariq and Mustafa, I could clearly see the dichotomy and bifurcation of being Scottish, Swedish or Danish and being Muslim or - even, simply - an immigrant or foreigner. There is a default identification process in place that appears to be either culturally inculcated by parents or environmentally reinforced such as the segregated neighbourhood effect (Bonino 2017; Carlbom 2003; Schmidt 2011; Wardak 2000). And in the case where the two identifications of being Muslim and European is possible, some of the participants expressed their perceptions of external pressures defining and restricting what this should be and should look like. One of the most salient features of the contestation around citizenship was therefore the feeling of being torn between two sides. The participants: convert and second-generation made significant references to this. They highlighted the challenges of reconciling between two polarised communities but also the sheer strain and pressure inherent in being constantly reminded of this polarised sense of belonging.

It's when a man steals here in Denmark, they say like: Muhammad stole from this place, something like that! When the name Muhammad is mentioned, everyone will think that he is a Muslim, they don't tell you what Islam says about stealing: if it is right or wrong. So the Danish people think, alright! it's Islam that have taught him to be like this. That is the big deal about it. So when we're here, we have two stands we always use. It's about like differentiating between Muslims and Islam because Muslims are human, and every human makes wrongs, we are not perfect..

(Hani)

Hani, here, shows us how some of the participants perceive this ubiquitous binary which doesn't appear to go away any time soon. The wider public and media discourse tended to bifurcate Muslim belonging to their European nation states and communities (Jeldtoft 2012). The participants' perceptions of this was more or less uniform. However, their responses to this perception and the resulting negotiations of citizenship and identity exhibited certain nuances. Hani's performance of an outreach role was a primary motivation as well as tactic for his navigation around the macrosocial constructs of nationality and culture. We see that in his negotiation of citizenship he navigates around and even subverts the normative meanings of what it means to be Danish.

I've lived here my whole life, I have grown up with a lot of Danish kids so I feel like it's my home, it's not everyone who will tell you that you have to like drink alcohol to be Danish. That's not all the people. Some people will say that but why does that have to be the truth? [...] I like to live, I like to work, I like to be with people who lives here. So, when people tell me that you have to drink, I tell them no thank you, you can have that perspective for yourself, I think there's more to Denmark than alcohol [...] One thing is like we have this freedom to pray, to be Muslims, that's a part of the Danish society. We have some freedoms, so that's a part of it. That I should force people to do whatever, like, I know that I'm not living in an Islamic society, but somehow we have, we have a better chance to live our Islam in this country than in our so called home countries, like when I was in Syria ...

(Hani)

When I compare Hani's mode of staking his citizenship to Salim's and Michael's, I see elements of the political structures in their respective nations shine through. Salim invokes shared values, Michael expressed the beauty of choice in Britishness, Hani, here

outlines the entitlement to freedom of expression. These standpoints reflect the liberal-universalist model (Sweden), civic pluralism/multiculturalism (UK, Scotland) for Hani and Michael respectively. And when the ‘highly civic, egalitarian and ethno-cultural’ (Mouritsen 2013: 97) didn’t leave much navigation space for Hani, he is left with staking his claim of belonging to what he is entitled to – freedom of religion (Jensen 2008; Hansen 2002 cf. Meer and Modood 2009; Modood 1997; Schierup and Ålund 2011). His practise of that makes him Danish, but he is also aware of the obligations upon him in exchange for his availing the entitlements.

In some of the participants’ narratives, the contestations around citizenship came from within the Muslim community itself, i.e. from its individual members. Contrary to what we have so far seen in - for example- converts having a positive influence in treating and making their Muslim peers feel like citizens and presenting living examples of mutually inclusive citizenship and Islamic identities, some of the participants shared narratives where intra-Muslim relations weren't always conducive to fostering ties of citizenship.

There are some different organisations out here in Denmark such as our dear brothers from *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* who often try to make it a - you know - some sort of, being a Muslim has to be the opposite of being a Dane or European, which doesn’t necessarily have to be the case because being European or being western is being part of the nationality. But carrying some other ideals that are not [...] more spread out in European society doesn’t mean that you’re not European. I feel that I am Danish, culturally, in many aspects. I for example appreciate Danish humour, I appreciate [how] Danish people are very known for being very well behaved in society.

(Erik)

Erik pointed out how certain Muslim ideologies tended to place obstacles in front of Danish and European Muslim citizenship. Erik had to navigate around such discourses, and the extent to which he did this correlated with his strong sense of belonging in Denmark. Erik was able to use certain resources in tandem with the access he had to both the ethnic Danish and migrant cultures to negotiate a position for himself in Danish society. Conversion appeared to be a key helping factor in this negotiation of citizenship

and sense of belonging, and this is resonant with research conducted in a range of European contexts (Dietz 2004; Gudrun Jensen 2008; Roald 2004). By comparison to Farid who like Erik engaged with *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* ideological thought in his narrative, Farid doesn't show this reconciliation of Islamic identity with a sense of belonging and citizenship. Although his narrative shows that he can negotiate his sense of presence in Denmark, it isn't reinforced with reconfiguring Islam with it as Erik and Salim do in amalgamating their Islamic worldviews with being equal citizens.

The narratives have shown that the ability to negotiate one's sense of belonging was contingent upon both macrosocial structures (models of citizenship) and individual agency (being open and active in participation). In between these structures and agencies, ethnic identity appeared as a broker on one hand, and as a liability in the other. My selection of the two cohorts: converts and second generation Muslim was to leverage the analytical potential of comparing these two groups insofar as the ethnicity factor – a focal point in Right-wing populist rhetoric – was a determining factor in the Muslim responses to this distinct populism. And while the responses haven't shown a distinct pattern which can be attributed to ethnicity, the insights we have gained by analysing the narratives has provided constructive insights to contribute to explaining this unique socio-political phenomenon. One key insight is: to be able to stake clear claims of belonging and to effectively navigate around the obstacles, certain resources were needed.

Resources

We have already seen in Salim's narrative how certain resources were used in his negotiation of citizenship to support the claims he would make of being Swedish and belonging to Sweden. His (doing a good job teaching and mentoring Swedish youth, good friendships with native Swedish converts who reciprocated his feelings of belonging and his Islamic worldview of humanity being one) all conglomerated. In comparing his narrative to the others, I will comment on how such resources came

about, how they were used and the effect this had on claims of belonging especially in its relation to Right-wing populism. First, I present an overview of these resources as they featured across the participants' narratives.

The resources can be categorised into three main themes (sub-narratives): (1) active citizenship (2) socio-cultural resources and (3) worldviews. I found that the active citizenship theme to be the most extensive. The participants who used this resource tended to emphasise an element of being an active member of society through one or more of three ways: employment (paying of taxes, meaningful impact on society), community based activism (social work, outreach, *da`wah*) or service (community, military, service in building the country - this included work done by the ancestors). I found certain associated facts and sentiments closely attached to this theme of active citizenship. These facts/sentiments were: claiming citizenship through birth, loyalty to one's country, perceptions of a tolerant folk, perceptions of commonality and affinity to the socio-economic system of the country.

After active citizenship came the socio-cultural resources. This comprised: language, accent, history, culture and different worldviews (see Bonino 2017; Dietz 2004; McCrone 2002). These tended to be used as supporting resources to back claims of belonging. They also appeared to be utilised in situations where belonging was questioned or challenged. Thirdly, the participants' worldviews also played a significant role in their negotiations of belonging and claims of citizenship. Although such narratives weren't as prominent as the first two themes, they were key to the identities of those who referred to them.

* * *

Upon comparing Salim's resource of active citizenship with the others, I saw that this sense of activeness wasn't just restricted to work and careers. Rather being active was quite broad. What was a common factor was: being an active citizen was about playing a role in society - being a social player. I found that this was aligned with the criterion

contemporary political philosophers have used in their conceptions of citizenship (Castles and Davidson 2000: 103; Marshall 1950, cited in Blaug 2016: 204-5; Parekh 2002: 301; Punch *et. al.* 2013: 283). For Muslims like Salah, Sahra and Hani, this element of being active was through social activism, outreach and related activity.

To be honest, I'm kind of anarchistic when it comes to the whole point of identifying myself with a country. I think the whole world belongs to the whole human race, and there's nothing about, of course, if I live in a society, I would take part in it, I am taking part in this Danish society [...] I'm trying to fight for better conditions for the people I'm sharing this earth with, whether it's on the far side of the planet, or it could be my neighbour.

(Salah)

Activism and outreach within the public domain in terms of social, political and economic participation were all parts of resources utilised to negotiate a sense of belonging. For some like Hani, it was crucial to be a part of change needed to build a tolerant and safe society. This kind of activism was both a means of staking claims to belonging as well as being part of the mechanics that would recognise his claims of being Danish. It appeared that the discourses included elements which would warrant the rightful claim to being a citizen. A prominent warranting factor was civic and socio-economic participation through employment and paying taxes. A lesser one which featured would be the claim of service. This included both services rendered by the ancestors as well as to one's country through putting one's life on the line.

Yahya: So does that mean that you feel quite secure with your Danish identity?

Qasim: Of course! This is my home akhi! I cannot go anywhere [...] I don't care what the media says, the media doesn't tell me who I am. [...] They do everything to demonise us, to make us look like we're some sort of issue and problem. Everything we do is: ah! Muslims are doing this! Muslims are doing that! Muslims built this country! [emphatic] Yes! The generations before my father, those were the guys that built this country. My father's brother, he came to Denmark in the early 60s, one of the first black people in Denmark. We built this country, and then you tell me that I'm not welcome here. I don't care what you say: I'm born here, this is my home. I say I'm more Danish than most Danish boys. I served the Danish army. I served! Voluntarily. They didn't force

me, I wanted to serve the Danish Army.

Qasim's claims to belonging to Denmark and stakeholderhsip through service rendered to country by self and ancestors bring about with them certain 'sentiments' which validate and emphasise his claims of being Danish. Loyalty is a core sentiment in this. For Adam, this was so strong that it was even unquestionable. He didn't have to answer the question about where his loyalties lay. By evaluation, the emergence and expression of these sentiments are perhaps amongst the strongest and most powerful narratives evoked by the participants. The reason for this is that they went beyond claims which tended to be tangible to actually feeling and attaching emotion to belonging to the nation and its people (see Bellamy 2008; Castles and Davidson 2000). In Qasim's case, feelings of loyalty led to feelings of affinity and commonality.

My son is being born inshaa Allah in two months, where's his home, his Mom's Turkish: 'go back to where you're from', go back to where you're from in Denmark, go back, where is he from? This is his home. Like I have more in common with a Danish native in Copenhagen than a girl from Zanzibar.

(Qasim)

* * *

Language, accent, history and culture featured as elements which I classified as socio-cultural resources which the participants made recourse to in staking claims of belonging. I found that these resources tended to be deployed as secondary resources to either reinforce the active citizenship elements or as clear-cut undisputable responses to those situations where one's sense or claim of belonging is questioned. Tariq showed how this was the case from the perspective of everyday interactions.

One time in the supermarket, I was packing my stuff [...] 'do-you-have-a-nectar-card?' [mocking-tone, then laughter] [...] 'I thought you were a foreigner'. No matter if you are foreign. You're a bad person for thinking if I can't speak the language I'm not a human being. And I was talking to her in a chavvy accent. I'm not 'yes, my friend', I'm 'aye mate'.... I'm locally Scottish like you, junkie like you, common like you.

(Tariq)

This deployment of socio-cultural resources (accent) as resource wasn't only used in everyday social interactions, it also functioned to assert belonging (see Bonino 2017; Dietz 2004; McCrone 2002). Language, history and culture featured as highly versatile socio-cultural resources which could be utilised to validate and justify claims of belonging. They tended to appear in circumstances which required a different or new perspective. They appeared to be flexibly used insofar as they could easily be re-appropriated to complement particular standpoints - especially from an Islamic-oriented or related worldview.

My dad always talked to me in Danish, but still Danish wasn't the language that I utilized to get by, either it was Swahili or English or other things. But yea, I did learn Danish, especially actually, you know, the funny thing about it is that, I became more fluent in Danish after becoming a Muslim for some reason [laughs] [...] Yea, I guess, you know, after becoming a Muslim and engaging very much in the Islamic ideals on how a Muslim is supposed to engage in his society is that he is supposed to, you know, master that language that society uses in order to address society. I also spent some of my time calling people to Islam.

(Erik)

The socio-cultural resources tended to be used complementary with the reconfiguration of identity in tandem with certain worldviews. I outline worldviews in plural to highlight that - perhaps contrary to expectation - these worldviews weren't always reconfigured in terms of Islam. Salah for example showed how an anarchist worldview was the determining factor in his negotiation and reconfiguration of belonging.

I don't see that there's a conflict, in me. I, first and foremost as a Muslim, always. Because whatever land I am born onto, it's the land of Allah before it's the land of the Scots or the English or [...] whoever. So, I'm Muslim, first and foremost. And now I realise I always was, even though I do identify as being Scottish because that's a learnt behaviour of Scottish, English, or [...] by the [...] hysteria of building walls [...] But the land is Allah's. And so it doesn't matter whether I'm Scottish, English or Australian or Arab or whoever.

(Fiona)

For the participants like Fiona, being a citizen and belonging was about feeling home - whether others reciprocated this was a different matter. The more resources one could make recourse to in feeling home, or the stronger the claims could be rooted, the more secure the identification with the nation and its people. This leads us to the final section of this chapter where I finally focus on this key element - feeling home or like a citizen, and being made to feel like one. This was perhaps the most profound of the resources.

* * *

We have seen how being made to feel different on the grounds of one's visibility as Muslim despite being an indigenous native had the effect of making some of the participants feel nation-less. This was vividly expressed by Emma. She told us that although embracing Islam made her feel more Swedish, however, when she looks at the way society treated her, she feels like she doesn't have a country. To a lesser extent, Isla's family made her feel a near-loss of Scottishness when she heard some of her close family refer to her as a traitor who has 'joined the other side', and she expressed the feeling of hurt whenever her mother would refer to Muslims as one of Isla's 'people'. This is with regard to the converts. Some of these discourses highlight the ethnification and - even - religionisation of citizenship; where being a Scot, Dane and Swede was essentially to be white, non-foreign and - most certainly - non-Muslim (Garner 2006; Garner and Selod 2015; Moosavi 2015a; Nieuwkerk 2006).

The ethnic-Muslims perceived this ethnification and religionisation of citizenship. Farid for example had first-hand direct experiences of being told that even if he was to reject Islam, drink alcohol and take on the Danish culture, they would still prefer that he went home. When met with rejection of their claims to belonging to the nation, the participants made recourse to certain resources to validate and justify their citizenships. We saw Farid resort to certain socio-cultural resources such as history as well as active citizenship (his paying of tax) to assert his belonging to Denmark.

Conversely, an interesting feature to emerge is that participants immensely benefited from being recognised as fellow citizens by significant others in society. When their claims to belonging were reciprocated, it led to greater security in terms of their negotiations of citizenships. They became more confident in asserting a belonging. We saw this in the case of Mustafa through his role model teacher and Hani's neighbours treating him as one of them led to his identifying with Denmark. Sahra showed us an interesting case of how being an endorsed citizen could come about when one became 'known' to be Danish. Her white Danish step-uncle accompanied her on her very first day at school to provide that rubber stamp of Danishness. When she moved to another school later on, her black-Somaliness became apparent both for her and her peers.

Conclusion

To be a citizen was to feel like one and be made to feel that you truly belonged. This is the main finding that I conclude this chapter with. To feel and be made to feel was a dialogue between self and others - society's myriad groups (Bellamy 2008; Joppke 2008; Meer and Modood 2009; Mouritsen 2013). Although simple, this conclusion emerges from a complex cycle of interlacing processes. These comprised of tensions, contestations and obstacles against which the participants were having to constantly negotiate their citizenship using certain resources and support relationships to help them feel and be made to feel home - where they rightfully belonged.

The chapter has outlined the various factors at play when the participants negotiated their sense of belonging. These began with the elements which shaped perceptions and pre-conceptions of what it means to be a citizen. Salim's narrative began to unearth the finding that negotiations around citizenship were done around certain tensions and issues of contestation - primarily culture and religion (Islam). Salim was able to navigate around these discourses. This reflected his secure reconfiguration of Islam with Swedish identity.

I noted how the participants deployed certain tactics to deal with specific scenarios related to their negotiations of belonging. Hani resorted to the tactic of outreach to subvert normative meanings of Danishness. Mustafa narrated how some of his friends who grew up with him in the Rosengard neighbourhood resisted the migrant-stigma by proudly clinging onto their home-country nationalities, rejecting Swedishness. Isla made sure to retain her Scottishness post-Islam through food and dress choices despite the pressure to adopt Pakistani-Islam. These tactics were individual responses to lived experiences. They were all trying to belong. When confronted with Right-wing populism, they responded with the same tactics they used to negotiate their belonging.

Tactics aside, obstacles stood out as a central analytical theme in the chapter. If the tactics were participants' responses to the challenge of belonging, the obstacles symbolised being treated differently and being made to feel different. From the narratives, citizenship emerged as an intercourse between tactics and obstacles set within embedded contestations of what it means to be Swedish, Danish and Scottish.

Three main obstacles were identified in the narratives: segregation, discrimination and the traitor stigma. Segregation limited intergroup contact. Growing up and living in such contexts produced certain constructions of boundaries of us and them, and what it means to be a citizen. The participants who grew up in such contexts felt stigmatised and marginalised. This has impacted their sense of feeling home. Being discriminated against was to be treated differently; either as a second-class citizen (Bellamy 2008; Conover *et al.* 2004; Somers 2008) or a stateless foreigner. I found that extended perceptions of discrimination impacted the extent to which participants could draw on resources to claim an active and constructive citizenship. It reinforced perceived institutional racism wherein everyday lived experiences are projected on to the whole social, political and cultural fabric of the nation. This leads to a lack of trust and hence ambivalent claims of belonging to the nation.

The traitor complex unearths for us, a huge potential implication on perceptions of citizenship claims from ethnic minorities - especially Muslims in Europe. The power of conferring and revoking citizenship through the re-appropriation of whiteness puts a huge question mark over whether Islam can ever become a European religion.

Conclusions

I began this thesis articulating for the reader my personal insecurities deeply evoked by the rise of Right-wing populist anti-Islam activism. My individual response was to seek to understand this unique socio-political phenomenon as dispassionately as possible. To make a case for how and why my personal understandings contribute to the public understanding, I had to embark on a sociological journey through the historical, biographical and contextual elements of my subject. And upon my safe return, I share my story which I am about to conclude.

The spectre of an Islamised Europe has led some scholars and commentators on Right-wing populism to write the ‘script’ for the final episodes of Europe’s affair with Islam (Griffin 2017; Lucassen & Lubbers 2012; Marranci 2004; Zuquete 2017). The apocalyptic tone of the writings appeared – metaphorically – to prepare the grounds (graveyards) for Muslims to die a quiet death. By its omission of responsive Muslim voices, academia accorded this minority community a ‘poor man’s science’ (Sayad 2006: 27 cited in Hunter 2011: 102). My contribution to the literature began here.

With Right-wing populism evolving from embryonic networks at the political fringes to occupying centre-politics, scholarship has overwhelmingly remained at structural level analyses (Betz 2017; Betz & Meret 2009; de Lange 2017a; Eatwell 2017; Goodwin 2011; Hainsworth 2000; Klandermans 2017; Taggart 2017; Mudde 2017a, 2017b). The paradox remained insofar as Right-wing populism at its embryonic phase was a response to people at the microsocial level concerned by the profound macro-structural transformations of Western European nation states into post-industrial societies (Andersen & Bjorklund 1990, 2000; Blomqvist & Green-Pedersen 2002; Kitschelt 1995; Rydgren 2007). Here again, a significant gap was found as the literature turned a blind eye to the intricate socialisation and interactional processes occurring at the microsocial level. Addressing these two substantial gaps, the aim of the thesis was to answer the

question: has Right-wing populism affected Muslim identity within these European communities? And if so: why and how has this occurred?

My research interest in microsocial level interactions led to certain decisions regards methodology and research design in the second chapter. The thesis adopted a distinct interpretative sociology, epistemologically rooted in the critical-realist school. This enabled me to approach the research problem as both a social fact and subjectively experienced phenomenon. The substantial lack of literature in my specific field of study was complementary with a more explorative approach and a less theory-driven design. In the absence of substantive empirical material on Muslim responses to Right-wing populism or even to discrimination and prejudice, I had to draw on existing research conducted on stigmatised communities and minority groups (Jews, African Americans, Irish immigrants, Roma, Dalits and Rohingya) and a particular context of intergroup conflict – Catholic-Protestant Northern Ireland (Bradley 2006; Cairns 2010; Farzana 2017; Flint 2008; Ford & Goodwin 2010; Gallagher 1985; Gewirtz 1991; Greenberg 1995; Hafez 2014; Jackson & Feldman 2011; Kumar 2009; McVeigh & Rolston 2007; Mitchell 2017; Reinhartz 1987; Rosie 2001, 2014; Savage 2004; Ullah 1985; Utsey *et al.* 2000; Vasecka & Vasecka 2003; Walter *et al.* 2002).

Multi-sited fieldwork and a pistol approach (Jensen 2012: 48) were best suited for the explorative nature of this research. The research design was operationalised through answering the questions: who, where and how. The reviewed literature indicated to specific empirical choices (answers). Regards (who), scholarship highlighted the present stakeholderhip of the second generation vis-à-vis the first (al-Rasheed 1994; Anwar 1979; Dahya 1973; Finlay *et al.* 2017; Hopkins 2018; Jeffery 1976; Maliepaard *et al.* 2010; Otterbeck 2012; Schmidt 2004). Converts, who, like the second generation know Europe as home, were added to leverage the analytical potential of the race/ethnicity factor in impacting the participants' responses to Right-wing populism. The question (where) led to identifying two main European geographic contexts: the UK (Scotland) and Scandinavia (Sweden and Denmark). Malmo, Copenhagen and Edinburgh fit into a

‘most similar case’ bracket (Anckar 2007 cf. Faulkner 2006) in terms of size, economy, ethnic diversity and – especially – the Muslim demographic presence.

As for the question (how), I utilised semi-structured interviews, described as the ‘mainstay’ of qualitative research (Knight 2002: 117; Silverman 2013) in tandem with narrative analysis (Lawler 2015; Ricoeur 1980; Seale 2013). Adopting certain ethical considerations from (PAR) Participatory Action Research (Alvesson & Skoldberg 2017; Kindon *et al.* 2007; Tolia-Kelly 2007), I was able to articulate and frame my study in a way which opened possibilities for the participants express their voices in ways which significantly enriched my data. The collected empirical material comprised of responses from 45 participants, but the actual analysis which tells my story was from a smaller subset of 28 participants (19 second generation and 9 converts).

Chapter three presented social, economic and historical contextualisations of the three cities of study. Muslim migration patterns, demographics and citizenship models of the three nations were detailed to provide a good contextual grounding for the study. The Scottish context was distinguished by its imperial and colonial experience vis-à-vis the Scandinavian cases whose refugee and asylum policies in the 1980s-1990s became a ‘shock to the system’ (Bevelander 2004; Bonino 2017; Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015; Otterbeck 2010; Sander 1997). A small, dispersed and predominantly self-employed Muslim community would characterise Scotland; over against the state welfare dependent segregated enclavisations of Muslims in Sweden and – less so – in Denmark.

Chapter four looked at the second generations’ narratives of growing up Muslim. Segregation, intergroup contact, role models and the reconciliation of Islam with everyday life surfaced as key determining themes relevant to the participants’ responses to Right-wing populism. Growing up Muslim in Europe entailed growing up conflicted – rather unfortunately. Upon comparing the narratives to empirical findings on intergroup conflict involving other minority groups, a number of similar coping tactics emerged from the participants’ responses: ‘rediscovery of cultural roots’ (Bradley 2006: 1193), ‘downplaying’ of identity (Ullah 1985) and ‘avoidance’ (Utsey *et al.* 2000).

The converts' narratives of being Muslim followed in chapter five. Here, the tools acquired by them, the traitor trope and the challenge of being a convert were key determining factors in their responses to Right-wing populism. Being gatekeepers, by virtue of their ethnic and religious identities (Baker 2009; Mandel *et al.* 2015; Ozyurek 2014; Roald 2004), converts endured feelings of being torn and conflicted. They are re-racialised by majority society as 'not white enough' (Franks 2000; McDonald 2005; Moosavi 2015a, 2015b) especially when their Islam became visible. This related to their experiences, perceptions of and responses to Right-wing populism because they became increasingly susceptible to direct encounters of anti-Islam sentiment as a result of their visible betrayal to the nation.

In chapter six, I looked at the gender factor, focusing on the contestations, contexts and performances of gender roles; seeing how they related to the participants' responses to Right-wing populism. A fragile masculinity adopting a gendered interpretation of migration and Islam (de Lange & Mugge 2015; Mudde 2000; Mulinari & Neergaard 2014) was one of the key emergent themes in the female narratives. And from the male participant perspective, perceptions of Right-wing populism were interlaced with narratives of protection (policing) of Muslim female bodies (Carby 1992; Flood 2008; Odem 2000; Ong 1990; Parker & Gagnon 2013) and performances of hyper-masculinity.

And finally, the seventh chapter looked at the analytical theme of being a citizen. Here, certain obstacles, negotiations and resources determined the extent to which the participants felt they belonged to the collective social (national) identity as equal citizens (Bellamy 2008; Joppke 2008; Mouritsen 2013; Meer & Modood 2009). For the second-generation participants, segregation and discrimination surfaced as key obstacles obstructing this equal citizenship and therefore tended to accord them second-class citizen status (Castles & Davidson 2000; Conover *et al.* 1991, 2004; Parekh 2002). The traitor stigma on the other hand represented the key obstacle for the convert participants

in attaining equal citizenship. To be a citizen was to feel and be treated as such by fellow citizens. For both cohorts, lack of this element of validation was a shared factor.

The Nations and Cities

The sociological journey would have been ‘incomplete’ (Punch 2013: 9) had I failed to consider the intersections between history, context and narrative in understanding my subject. I presented substantial research detailing how history, migration, economics and politics shaped the contemporary faces of the contexts of my study. The post-war industrial boom from the 1950s up until the 1973 financial crisis was a momentous point in the timelines of all three contexts insofar as it beckoned an era of labour migration (Castles 1986; Freeman 2015; Guardia & Pichelmann 2006).). Whilst Scotland had already accommodated steady flows of Muslim migrants from the 1880s (Ansari 2004; Bonino 2017; Maan 1992, 2014), for the Scandinavian context, this ‘event’ would be the first time the linguistically, culturally and ethnically homogenous region would host a Muslim demographic presence (Jacobsen 2009; Larsson 2009; Nielsen & Otterbeck 2015; Otterbeck 2010; Sander 1997).

The ‘shock to the system’, inexperience and resulting chaos precipitated the immediate segregation of migrants into the industrial-residence enclaves like Rosengard (Malmo, Sweden), and, to a lesser extent, Norrebro (Copenhagen, Denmark). The heyday of refugee migration during the 1980s and 1990s would only accentuate this segregation as family reunifications and support networks drew migrants together. Lack of intergroup contact fed into limitations on socio-economic integration; and an inclusive, generous (paternalist) welfare system intended to support new arrivals would be perceived by the majority social group as a burden and means to a dependency syndrome.

Mustafa, Qasim and Farid were born and raised in such segregated neighbourhoods in Malmo and Copenhagen. The aspects of segregation and enclavisation which featured in their narratives were the cumulative product of decades of the above outlined urban-migratory processes. As social agents, they exercised their autonomy to navigate around

the strategies mapped out for them by the political establishments. By doing this, they produced distinct narrative identities and performances. And while these identities and performances subverted the socio-political discourses and narratives (strategies), they were shaped to a significant extent by them. To conclude what I learnt from my explorative-comparative fieldwork in the three city and national contexts, I highlight two major factors of substantial relevance to my research question: segregation and citizenship. Whilst citizenship represented a sense of 'feeling at home' and staking a claim to belonging, segregation represented a major obstacle impeding this. It affected the growing up experiences of Rabia, Tariq, Safiyyah, Mustafa, Dwayne, Qasim, Farid and Salah.

Segregation

The narratives of segregation were more pronounced in the Swedish and Danish contexts vis-à-vis the Scottish case. The causes and effects featured most clearly in the Malmo and Copenhagen stories. All the narratives depicting the socio-cultural enclavisation of Muslims came from participants residing in the Scandinavia cities. Segregation therefore took on a distinctly ethnified and religionised profile in the two cities. Intergroup contact with the majority society was significantly hampered, leading to negative perceptions and prejudice in the labour market (Bevelander 1999; Bevelander & Lundh 2007; Mouritsen 2006; Otterbeck 2010). The segregation narratives shared by Tariq and his sister, Safiyyah, did not feature Muslim enclavisation because it doesn't exist in Edinburgh (Bonino 2017; Wardak 2000). The segregation they narrated was socio-economic deprivation. This fundamental difference between the Scandinavian and Scottish cities reflected their historical, socio-economic and migratory profiles.

Edinburgh's Muslim community is distinguished by being small and dispersed by comparison to the Scandinavian cities. No part of the city has become renowned as a 'Muslim area'. Muslims therefore live side by side with their Scottish neighbours and thereby establish relationships through intergroup contact. Furthermore, by being a

predominantly self-employed community, they have not only stayed away from outwardly competing with native Scots in the labour market, they have instead created employment opportunities for them (Bonino 2017: 190). While not being a welfare state on par with its Scandinavian counterparts, Scotland certainly has fared better in terms of the socio-economic and cultural integration of its Muslim population. This has been further supported by a progressive Scottish politics, civic nationalism and aspirational pluralism (Bonino 2017: 195; see also Meer 2015).

In relation to the topic of the thesis: segregation inhibited meaningful intergroup contact. This was vividly portrayed for us in Mustafa's narrative. His secure responses to Right-wing populism, his ability to discern between racist ideology and xenophobia and positive self-identification with Sweden as his country were a product of the intergroup contact outside Rosengård. I cannot however conclude that a correlation exists between segregation, contact and the nature of responses to Right-wing populism because my data did not show this. We saw how growing up in socio-economically deprived areas exposed participants to prejudice and discrimination from the majority ethnic group. But instead of stimulating insecure or hostile responses, this contact with discrimination produced narratives of relating to Right-wing populism and seeing things from the other side's perspective. This was the complete opposite of what I had initially anticipated when I started my journey.

As surprised as I was to see my participants being able to relate to and look at matters from the Right-wing populist perspective, I was heartbroken by the narratives they shared about their attempts to relate not being reciprocated by the majority social group. To feel home and belong there – to a significant degree – was to be made to feel home and belong there. Citizenship represented both an aspiration of this sense of belonging as well as an obstacle to it. And since the concept innately touches what it means to belong to the nation and be part of its people, it directly pertained to the central topic of the thesis.

Citizenship

The narratives of citizenship showed a greater tendency for the Malmö and Copenhagen participants to express sentiments of being accorded second-class status. The obstacles to citizenship (segregation, discrimination, traitor-ism) appeared to be relatively more insurmountable for the Swedish and Danish participants vis-à-vis the Scottish. Their negotiations around what it means to be Swedish and Danish; and the resources they made recourse to in staking their claims of belonging to Sweden and Denmark were comparatively more voluminous. If anything, this reflected the immense difficulty they endured in their attempts of making themselves feel home. It is therefore unsurprising, if we have a look back at the Citizens chapter, the negotiations and resources sections are filled with the Scandinavian narratives.

This empirical manifestation is accounted for by models of the citizenship across the three national contexts. Whilst Sweden's liberal-universalism warmly welcomed Muslim migrants and opened the doors 'on paper', in reality, it created ethno-cultural enclaves (graveyards) where residents 'live until they die their natural deaths because they have already died their social deaths' (Goffman [1952] 2000: 19). On paper, the Swedish model hoped for the newcomers to 'exercise substantial citizenship' through active participation in civil society – which in turn was expected to 'respect and draw on the cultural and social resources of migrants' (Schierup & Alund 2011: 48; see also Gustafson 2002; Soininen 1999). Segregation rendered this hopeless. To make matters worse, Sweden's generous – dubbed, paternalist - welfare system has not encouraged a spirit of civic participation. It has led to perceptions of a dependency syndrome. Muslims have come to be seen as a burden, not equal citizens contributing to the welfare state.

Denmark's ethno-cultural assimilationism deliberately obstructed any departure from homogeneity and consensus (Gudrun-Jensen 2008; Hansen 2002; Kærgård 2010; Mouritsen 2013). Obstacles were therefore erected, creating formidable discursive structures which the Copenhagen participants had to navigate around in producing their

narrative identities. The Liberal-Conservative government's integration policies aimed to address the Muslim migratory flows. It precipitated a two-tiered conception of citizenship: *medborgerskab* (civic membership, i.e. being one of us) and *statsborgerskab* (legal nationality) (Mouritsen 2012: 97). A politicised belonging therefore distinguished the Danish narratives from the Swedish and Scottish contributions. And hence, the Copenhageners (Qasim, Farid, Erik, Salah, Hani, Sahra and Riem) tended to make references to media discourses, government policies and public opinion in their negotiations of citizenship. They also exhibited 'political manifestations of identity' (Schmidt 2011: 109) through community-based activism (social work, outreach, *da`wah*) as a resource for staking claims to belonging to the nation.

Despite the overall picture indicating to a more inclusive civic nationalism in the Scottish context, it should be highlighted that some of the Edinburgh participants - Tariq and Safiyyah especially – encountered obstacles in their citizenship aspirations. A progressive politics, 'aspirational pluralism' and civic nationalism have been outlined as creating a fertile breeding ground for hybrid Scottish identities (Bonino 2017; McCrone 2002; Meer 2015). The converts Fiona, Isla and Adam's narratives showed us glimpses of such hybridised identities. Fiona's conception of the nation as flock and family incorporated those with SDL sympathies. It resonated with scholarship identifying Scotland's civic nationalism as moving beyond homogenous ethnic boundaries in conceiving the nation (Bonino 2017; Kyriakides *et al.* 2009; McCrone 2002; Meer 2015; Mycock 2012). This, it is argued, has 'starved racist movements of the oxygen that they need to take root in the country' (Bonino 2017: 195).

Muslims: Second Generation & Converts

The empirical selection of second-generation and convert Muslim participants was based on one commonality that both cohorts shared and one factor in which they fundamentally differed in. As for the common factor, then, it pertains to their active

stakeholdership and recognition of Sweden, Denmark and Scotland as home (al-Rasheed 1994; Anwar 1979; Bevelander & Otterbeck 2012; Dahya 1973; Hopkins 2018; Jeffery 1976). The race/ethnicity variable constituted the differential factor. And hence the analytical potential of comparing these two cohorts existed insofar as race/ethnicity is a major component of Right-wing populist ideology. As clarified in the Citizens chapter, the responses from both cohorts to Right-wing populism have not shown a clear pattern attributable to race/ethnicity as a distinct analytical variable.

Regards the commonly shared factor, (present stakeholdership and recognition of Europe as home), this was connected to the factors of citizenship and segregation. Apart from Dwayne, none of the participants expressed an absent stakeholdership in terms of home and belonging. Qasim, who spoke of Hijrah did so as a last resort; something which made him loathe Copenhagen and love it just the same. For the second-generation participants, segregation obstructed civic participation; whereas for the converts, the traitor stigma brought on by visibility caused the re-appropriation of their whiteness and belonging.

The journeys of self-discovery were another commonly shared factor. Participants in both cohorts lived lives - once upon a time - without Islam being there; and some continue to live life in ways not framed by an Islam-consciousness. The participants used Islam in a wide variety of ways to construct their narrative identities. As far as the research question was concerned, Islam was not a determining factor for the participants' responses to Right-wing populism. Regarding the major factors of citizenship and segregation, Islam provided tools for more positive self-identification with the nation; and for some participants, Islamic values, recognised in members of the majority society made them role models and sources of positive contact.

The race/ethnicity factor would be the differentiating factor between the converts and the second-generation participants. And it is here that the converts have emerged as faring worse – in certain respects – than their ethnic-Muslim counterparts. They belong to the majority social group by virtue of their race/ethnicity (Baker 2009; Roald 2004),

however, by their decision to convert to a ‘foreign’ religion and visibly show it, they are labelled as traitors (Franks 2000; McDonald 2005; van Nieuwkerk 2006) who have betrayed the nation and therefore have their citizenships revoked. For some like Emma, this has left her feeling stateless despite Islam making her feel more Swedish. It was a painful irony that being gatekeepers potentially able to broker good intergroup and cross-community relations, they are identified as a danger to the borders which demarcate us and them. The parallels existed in the Northern Irish context whereby crossing sectarian borders through conversion and intermarriage is a danger to the social order (Cairns 2010; McVeigh and Rolston 2007; Mitchell 2017).

Responses to Right-wing Populism

At the outset, I was expecting extremes. I anticipated narratives of Hijrah and Jihad against the Right-wing populism. As I articulated in the preface, I watched Europe’s relations with Islam from a distance for about a decade, in absence. As a trained Imam, I couldn’t help but feel the hurt, pain, anguish and panic as Islam, my religion was implicated in atrocity after atrocity – and hence no surprise when Right-wing populist groups emerged in response to extremist Islam. At this explorative phase, I outline that I came across no such stimulated, reactive responses in this project. It was therefore a case of either: (a) that Muslims just aren’t perturbed by the rise of Right-wing populism or (b) that other matters were of greater importance/concern. I incline towards the latter based on the empirical data whose broad patterns outlined that segregation and obstacles to citizenship were two key factors (themes) in the participants’ narratives.

There were no distinct patterns of response stimulated by Right-wing populism. Viewing the participants’ accounts through the perspective of narrative analysis shows them produce distinct identities and perform certain roles not attributed as a response to Right-wing populism. Using the intergroup relations theoretical framework, it became recognisable that they were engaged in social creative responses (Cairns 2010) and positive reaction formations (Cohen 1955; Lemert 1951, 1974 cited in Bonino 2017: 50-

51) – to resist the stigma and social crisis of being Muslim. The thematic analysis also revealed a gendered dynamic. The female participants (Momina, Chantelle and Fiona) perceived Right-wing populism as a fragile masculinity threatened by a liberated femininity whose sexual energies threatened the border demarcations.

I am therefore able to conclude that Right-wing populism as a discrete analytical unit has not – by itself - stimulated any specific pattern of response from my participants causing them to re/construct identity. Having clarified this, I can outline that my data has shown that the Right-wing populist factor has provoked reactions. Although such reactions were manifest, they however fell short of constituting core elements used by the participants to emplot (Ricoeur 1980; Lawler 2015) their narrative identities. I briefly outline the main reactions.

By far, the most reactive was anger, hatred and refusal to try to relate to Right-wing populism. We saw this particular response from Michael. As a convert having clearly perceived the traitor label/stigma, Michael declines to engage with anything related to Right-wing populism. And to his admission, this isn't the usual way he does things. But why should he try to understand something that clearly hates him and would target him first before the ethnic Muslims?

For a number of the participants - and I note the Copenhagen cohort - activism (community, outreach and service) constituted a constructive reaction to Right-wing populism. The Copenhagen context is distinguished by these 'political manifestations' of identity (Schmidt 2011). Salah, Sahra and Hani demonstrated this response in their narratives very clearly. For them, it served as a resource for staking claims of belonging in a heavily politicised context.

Disinterest in the subject due to lack of relevance to everyday life contingencies was another reaction we found espoused by Mustafa and Huda – both Malmo, Rosengard residents. I outline that this response is very different from the absent stakeholder response shared by Dwayne. In this case, some of the participants did not see the

relevance or importance of Right-wing populism on their everyday lived experiences. This didn't just emanate from a sense of blissful ignorance as could be deduced from Huda's narrative; but also from detailed and precise knowledge like Mustafa's piercing distinction between racism (ideology) and xenophobia (ignorance). For him, there will almost be xenophobia and bigotry; trying to eliminate it is akin to trying to erase crime from human society.

Concern for community was a response we found with Riem, Salim and Momina. As community workers, teachers and mentors, although secure about their self-identifications, they could see first-hand the effect of such exclusionary discourses on their young students, mentees, siblings/relatives and the ethnic minority community. They therefore expressed concern at the long-term effects of the Right-wing populist discourse. This was especially pronounced in the Scandinavian context where 'the Right' are in the halls of power and exerting influence on national policy-making.

And finally, there was a type of reaction expressing the desire to build bridges and enhance intergroup relations and community cohesion (Fiona, Erik, Isla, Hani). I note that from this list, all are converts except Hani. The convert cohort as already outlined has been distinguished by virtue of their ethnicities as gatekeepers with the ability to broker good cross-cultural and intergroup relations (Baker 2009; Roald 2004). Sadly, and challengingly, this potential of theirs is being obstructed by a traitor trope nested in a rigid conception of belonging. Like the Catholic-Protestant border in Northern Ireland, religion is ethnicity and therefore not permeable (Cairns 2010).

Evaluation of the Theoretical Frameworks

In the absence of empirical studies on Muslim responses to Right-wing populism and modes of coping with prejudice and stigmatisation, the study had to look to other contexts and studies of other minority groups. It was here the theoretical frameworks of the thesis emerged: contact theory, intergroup relations and social identity theory arose alongside intergroup conflict theory focusing on the Northern Irish context. A range of

alternative theories were available: social/cultural loyalty theory (Hirschman 1970; Laver 1976), consociational theory (Lijphart 1975; McGarry and O'Leary 2004) and readiness theory (Pruitt 2007). Overall, I found the intergroup conflict theory advanced by Cairns (2010) from Tajfel (1978, 1981, 2010), highly useful to my study. Besides approaching social, cultural, political, economic and religious factors from individual and group-level perspective the theory also considers the dynamic component of intergroup relations (Cairns 2010: 278). This shed more light onto complex terrain and thereby offered more nuanced explanations.

Contact theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 2007) was useful in explaining the intergroup relations that a number of the participants shared in their narratives – Mustafa notably. By looking at these relations from the perspective of contact theory, it was possible to draw analytical inferences on the extent to which that influenced identity production. It was likewise helpful in analysing the narratives of segregation where meaningful contact with members from the majority society was a lacking factor.

Viewing the narratives from the perspective of *intergroup relations* was effective in distinguishing the types of responses shared by the participants. Deploying the theory gave me the awareness that social categorisations are dynamic and highly creative. Social agents are continually seeking to enhance their group's standing; in failing to do so, they may attempt to change how values of desirability are defined and therefore important, in order to achieve a positive social identity (Cairns 2010; Tajfel 1981). I was therefore able to identify, interpret and evaluate individual agency. This helped offer an explanatory framework when it became obvious that the participants' responses weren't stimulated by Right-wing populism. Rather, for a significant number of the narratives, it was a response to stigma and social crisis of being Muslim.

Contributions of the Thesis

With its focus on the microsocial level to begin with, this thesis adds to the literature on Right wing populism, which has, up to now, principally focused on the macrosocial level adopting primarily structural modes of analysis. By its focus on the individual level, this thesis has shown the effects of social, historical, political and economic factors on migration patterns, and therefore how community relations specifically relate to individual identity negotiation. It has therefore given additional insights to complement and enrich the structural perspectives.

This thesis contributes to the literature on Muslims in Europe firstly by its change of focus and perspective. A lot is known about Muslims in Europe through using the national context(s) as a primary frame of analysis to understand their negotiations and reconfigurations of identity. My study provided nuanced insights showing how individual Muslims engage with their local city contexts to stake claims of citizenship and respond to the xenophobic discourses of exclusion which question their belonging. And although the literature on Islamophobia is relatively more developed than that of Muslim responses to Right-wing populism, my small-scale, in-depth qualitative approach has provided substantial material giving an important voice to Muslims about where they stand in the rise of Right-wing populism. The thesis also contributes to the literature on Muslims in Europe with its overviews on how the social, historical, political and economic aspects of the Muslim existences across the studied contexts have shaped how my participants understand themselves and their fellow Europeans.

The thesis also makes a contribution to the field of intergroup conflict. The case here (Muslim communities in Sweden, Denmark and Scotland) adds empirical and theoretical insights into how ethnic, religious and cultural minorities respond to stigma and marginalisation.

In the thesis are key messages to policy makers, local government, community leaders and families to look out for disenfranchised youth. The finding that Muslim youth

experience conflict as part and parcel of their growing up in Europe should compel these institutions to support them so they can find themselves home and belong.

Personally, the fact that this thesis actually brings Muslim voices to the fore is a major contribution to the literature. These are voices which, have for the most part been referenced in the third person, framed as problematic and accorded a ‘poor man’s science’ (Sayad 2006 cited in Hunter 2011: 102). I found the media and sections of writing the script for the last days of Islam in Europe. By giving Muslims a voice we have seen that such apocalyptic visions do not shape the narrated realities and identities.

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