

Tainted Citizens:

The Securitised Identities of Young Muslim Men in Birmingham

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Abstract

In the last two decades, following the Rushdie affair and the emergence of Islamic extremism as a security issue in the UK, there has been a surge of interest in British Muslim communities from academics, politicians and popular commentators. Discourses of Muslims as 'others' and as potentially risky citizens have been reinforced by government approaches to counter-terrorism, chiefly the Prevent programme aimed at preventing radicalisation of young Muslims. Moreover their loyalty and place in British society has been questioned. Yet there remains a disconnect between the treatment of young Muslim men as 'tainted citizens' and the reality of their history and their everyday lives.

This thesis seeks to explore the identities of young Muslim men in the city of Birmingham and contrast it with the way their identities have been scrutinised through the lens of risk as part of the counter-terror agenda. In particular it investigates the impacts of the Prevent agenda and the surveillance scheme called 'Project Champion', both of which had significant implications for Muslim identity and its governance in the city. The thesis demonstrates how these governance processes have resulted in the securitisation of Muslim identities in the city.

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Abbreviations

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ACPO TAM	ACPO Terrorism and Allied Matters (group and funding stream)
ANPR	Automated Number Plate Recognition
CLG	Communities and Local Government (department)
CS	Copenhagen School (of security studies)
CI	Chief Inspector
IR	International Relations
OSCT	Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism (department)
'Prevent'	Preventing Extremism (government policy agenda)
PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism (earlier name for Prevent agenda)
SBP	Safer Birmingham Partnership

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Young Muslim Identities, Under The Microscope

On April 24 2010 I was asked to take notes at an event which was receiving public funding to engage with and research the views of young Muslims. The event, a collaboration between West Midlands Police and Hear My Voice, a Muslim third-sector organisation, was aimed specifically at looking into the apparent multifaceted nature of young Muslim identity and their attitudes towards police and security services. As part of a workshop on 'identity' during the afternoon, young Muslims were asked to anonymously contribute a statement written on a piece of paper, which would give the organisers and delegates an insight into their identity. As St. George's day celebrations took place in Chamberlain Square below, on the first floor of the city's Council House, our young Muslim participants scrawled out their thoughts on small white pieces of paper before folding them and returning them to the facilitator at the front of the room. The expectations of the facilitators may have been to gain a useful understanding of how young Muslims identify themselves and locate themselves in British society. Several participants wrote 'British' and 'Muslim' on their pieces of paper but surprisingly, most provided suggestions which were humorous. 'British Muslim, please inform ambulance' wrote one. 'I love DJs' wrote another. Two participants wrote that they were good at football and snooker. One wrote that they were unique because they had contracted chicken-pox twice. Another simply wrote 'I am because I am.'

Their written statements ranged from descriptive and somewhat mundane, to completely tongue-in-cheek. It was at this point I was prompted to remind myself why this workshop was taking place. The event was being funded by the 'Prevent' programme which was a government programme which involved liaising with Muslim organisations to engage in projects to eradicate violent extremism in the city. The very context of the event as part of the Prevent programme had already set the tone of the discussion; the scene was already set for debates on identity and citizenship which revolved

around the contested place of young Muslims in British society. The young Muslims who attended were effectively under the microscope of the state and its instruments. And yet there was a huge disconnection between the normal and everyday lives of the participants which happened to be of less interest to the organisers, and the issues of extremism, relations with police, cultural clashes and Britishness – which formed the focus of the event. Young Muslims had complex multifaceted identities but only certain aspects of those identities were of interest to the state and their partner organisations. The resulting engagement left some of the Muslim participants feeling somewhat bewildered.

1.2 Placing The Study

This story demonstrates the gap between governmental or institutional conceptions of young Muslims and the ways in which the identities of young Muslims are felt and performed ‘on the ground’, in everyday life. But this single narrative can also be seen as a microcosm of wider discourse. British interest and writing about Muslims and Islam rose dramatically in quantity towards the end of the twentieth century (Fig. 1). Propelled in particular by the Rushdie affair and terrorist atrocities both in the UK and the US, discourses of Muslims in the UK were framed principally around two notions (Abbas 2005; Latain 2010). First, that of Muslims posing a challenge to the British multicultural model of integration (Parekh 2006). Secondly the idea that a minority of British Muslims posed a severe security threat to the UK (Brown 2010; Caesari 2009; Fekete 2004, 9).

These issues have politicised Muslim identity and this has implications for the identity and feelings of belonging of Muslims in the UK, most of whom are second and third-generation immigrants from South Asia. The notions of difference and risk that have helped construct discourses of British Muslims has contributed to an anxiety around their place in British society, posing what Parekh (2006) described as ‘the Muslim Question’. The response to these anxieties from the British government began in the aftermath of the Rushdie affair (Modood 1990; Ansari 2003, 236) but what

evolved initially into an agenda of integration and social-cohesion, after the July 7th bombings in 2005, has now become entangled with the security agenda. In a move unprecedented for the modern British state, the UK government has devised a set of policies to engage exclusively with Muslim communities to prevent extremism and religiously-inspired violence (HM Government 2008, 2011). But this 'Prevent' programme has been criticised from both liberal and conservative perspectives, alternatively for privileging (Murray 2010) and stigmatising (Bartlett and Birdwell 2010, 8; Casciani 2010) those communities.

On these issues, what stands out from a research perspective (and indeed a geographer's perspective) is the inter-connectedness of identity, politics and space. A number of processes are shaping the ways in which Muslims in the UK are being perceived; British Muslim identities, the politics of British Muslim identity and issues of security and risk are merging (see Mythen et al 2009, Spalek 2011). Given the sudden surge of interest in the nature of Islam in the UK and other parts of the 'Western' developed world, and given the number of disciplines to which these dynamics are of interest, the precise nature of those connections have yet to be understood. Yet the thematic breadth of geography offers a useful position from which to better our understanding of these dynamics. Geography's strength as a discipline stems from being able to approach research from a variety of social-science disciplines, and by adding a spatial dimension to their analyses (Johnston 2003, 64-66). By virtue of this interdisciplinarity, human geographers can make connections between people and place to open up arenas including economics, sociology, cultural studies and not least, the study of physical landscape itself.

Furthermore the use of the extended case-study method (Burawoy 1998) employed by this project gives us a framework within which to examine the interplay between religious, cultural social, political and economic actions and processes. In turn this gives an indication of how actions and their associated impacts and discourses feedback over time, in this case, reinforcing particular representations of young Muslim men in Birmingham. In order to research the interplay of these wide-reaching dynamics, the case study area of Birmingham was selected as the research subject.

Birmingham has a history of becoming a home for substantial numbers of immigrants from former British colonies; 14% of the city's population identified themselves as Muslim in the 2001 census (Gale 2005, 1163), compared with a national average of 3%. Furthermore in 2008 Birmingham's City Council was to receive more funding than any other local authority nationally to run its 'Prevent' programme which aimed to prevent the radicalisation of young Muslims in particular. As the opening narrative demonstrates, this funding created an intriguing set of governance dynamics around the very identity of young Muslims in the city. Community groups and third-sector organisations representing Muslims started becoming more prominent and began engaging with local and national state institutions on this new agenda – but other counter-terror measures instigated during the study period also impacted upon the identity and governance of Muslim communities in the city, in particular the surveillance scheme that was dubbed 'Project Champion'.

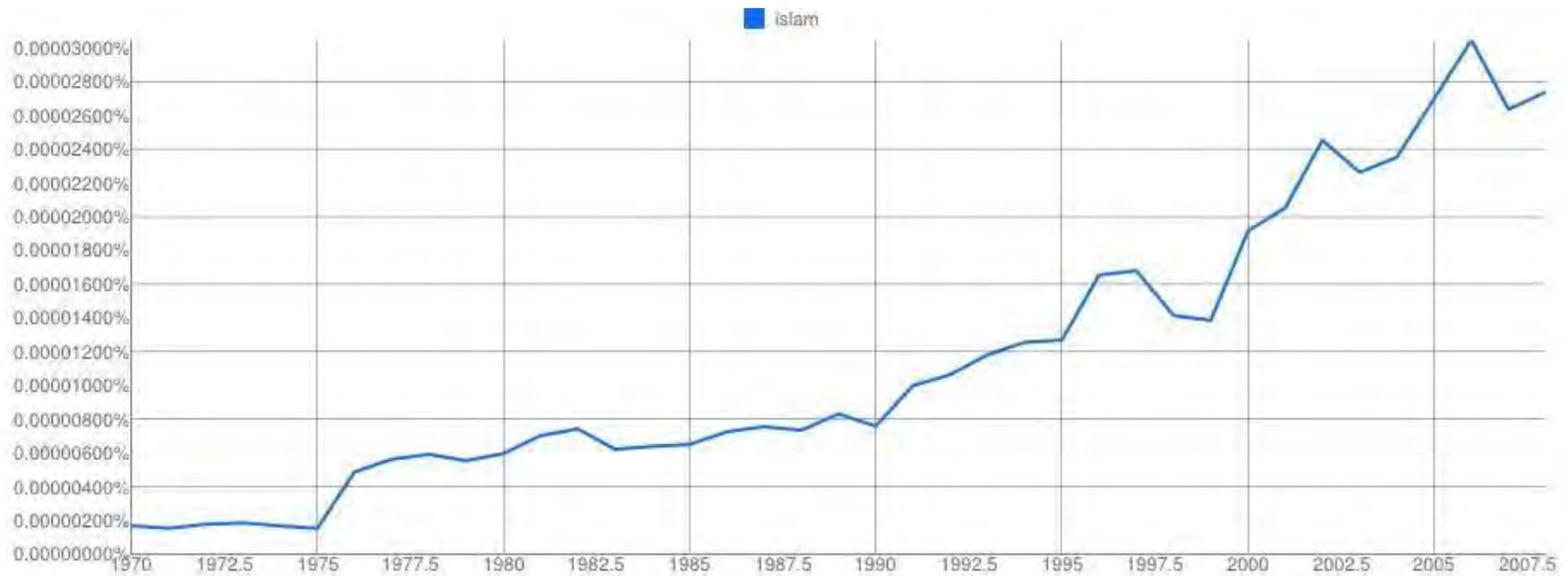


Figure 1: Ngram Viewer graph showing increased usage of the word 'Islam', within books published in the UK only, between 1970 and 2008
 Y-Axis indicates prevalence %, Smoothing Factor: 3 (Google Ngram Viewer 2012)

1.3 Research Focus

If the research was to attempt to successfully investigate Muslim identities as well as their governance, it was essential that a high quality of data could be gathered. But this posed two chief problems. Firstly the Muslim population of Birmingham is incredibly diverse in ethnicity and age. Secondly, from research already conducted on British Muslims we know that identity and representation issues relevant to Muslim women (Phillips 2009; Dwyer 1999) and men (Hopkins 2004) can be gender-specific. Furthermore as a male researcher and being aware of the methodological problems I was likely to face, I did not feel I could do justice to a thorough study of Muslim identity which involved Muslim women. Moreover, there was another rationale for focussing the study on young Muslim men. As far as the threat of terrorism was concerned, there was an understanding that young males in particular were the most vulnerable demographic to radicalisation (Home Affairs Committee 2012, 9). Consequently, not only had the representation of young Muslim men in the media been impacted by the discourses of extremism (Dwyer et al 2008), but the government's counter-terror policies had a focus on young Muslim males.

Correspondingly this research also focused on the identities of young Muslim men, albeit with a recognition that the governance of those identities transcends boundaries of age and gender. The broad research questions were as follows:

- How are the young Muslim male identities experienced and practiced in Birmingham?
- How are institutions approaching 'Muslim identity' through the focus on the counter-terror agenda?
- What does the nature of Muslim identity and institutional approaches towards it tell us about the evolving governance of Muslim identities in the UK?

In responding to these questions the research brought together strands of literature from human geography on identity and place, but also from political science and cultural studies, on difference, governance and security. Those relevant literatures are reviewed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 details the methodology that was employed for the project and how data gathering varied between different types of participant. Chapters 4 and 5 begin to detail the empirical findings of the study, focussing on the experience of Muslim identity in Birmingham and exploring the gap between Muslim identities observed through everyday life, and the 'politics of belonging' surrounding Muslims which is played out in discourses around Britishness and integration.

Chapter 6 explores the governance of Muslim identities in the city in the context of the 'Prevent' counter-radicalisation programme. The final empirical Chapter (Chapter 7) explores the implications of the Project Champion surveillance scheme, which served as somewhat of a lightning rod for the collision of the issues of interest to this study and had profound implications for both Muslim identities on the ground and their management at institutional level. To conclude, Chapter 8 steps back from the empirics to reflect on the implications of the case study for theory and discourses of young British Muslims, focussing on four recurring themes: identities and belonging of young Muslim men in the city, issues of multiculturalism and essentialism, risk-based governance and notions of securitisation.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review

The Introduction emphasised how this research project covers a broad range of themes, crossing through multiple academic disciplines. This broad approach allows us to make connections between processes of policy, representation and discourse, and allows us to investigate those dynamics within an extended case study. Despite the advantages of framing the research in this way, there are also implications for the ways in which existing sets of literatures must be used. The nature of this thesis, which sees varied themes intersecting within specific spaces, necessitates a broad literature review which captures the fundamental background and theoretical dimensions of the project. The literature review must take a selective approach, drawing together some of the most relevant strands from geography, sociology and political science, whilst seeking to trace a line between those constituent parts. Thus the literature review is separated into three sections.

The first section of this review focuses on identity. At its very heart, this research is about how identities are experienced, but also how and why they are governed and how the governance reinforces representation. Thus the first section introduces the concept of identity, particularly its relation to place. Using the concept of 'belonging' and the 'politics of belonging' it explores how identity and place-attachment become politicised. The second section introduces literature available on Muslims in UK and how they have come to be represented and managed as a new 'community' in the UK. The third and final section explores how the spectre of terrorism and its related security risks has changed the dynamics of the state's relationship with Muslims, and it demonstrates how this changing dynamic reflects back onto the questions of identity and belonging.

2.1.1 Introducing Identity

If one wishes to observe the extent to which identity shapes and penetrates our experiences, even at a seemingly mundane or superficial level, one need only to walk from one space to another. Let us

take a hypothetical situation of someone who is visiting the city of Birmingham. First the visitor assumes the identity of a traveller or a tourist, seeing the spaces around them with a new lens, a new gaze, which is itself a product of cultural discourse. Arriving at New Street Station they may be struck by two competing identities of place; the first of these is bound up in the industrial landscape of the city, much of which is immediately visible to those arriving at the city's rail transport hub, the sides of the station marked out by steep walls in dusty and worn red brickwork. Yet exiting the station through its main entrance, a new identity emerges; the city as a site of consumption. The reflective glass of the post-modern Bull Ring shopping centre stands in stark contrast to the pseudo-brutalist station from where the visitor would emerge. These evolving identities involve not just the physical buildings, but the people using and flowing through those spaces. Individuals become employees, moving between transport hubs, offices and shops, and they become consumers as they enter the large indoor shopping centre. Walk down the side of the shopping centre however and a different culture and set of identities are on display. As one moves towards the traditional markets, one notices the sale of lower value goods, grocers selling fresh produce, the smell of fish wafting from the indoor market hall. A different set of shoppers crowd this area and it feels more 'working-class'. But past the market area one moves towards to yet other distinct parts of the city centre, labelled the 'Gay Village' and 'Chinatown'. In these parts of the city 'identities' as static labels are not only being embedded in the landscape and performed by consumers and proprietors, but those identities have also become commoditised; they are attractions for residents and tourists alike.

Thus identity is inescapable, yet it is as misunderstood as it is ubiquitous. In the scenario above we see identity used as performance, as label, as commodity and fundamentally as a basis on which to differentiate between individuals. The pervasive nature of 'identity' derives from its essence which is fundamentally psychological. Freud (1923/2001) described identity as the earliest expression of emotional bonds with another object. As we start to develop as children and begin making distinctions between ourselves and the outside world, we develop a sense of identity. As such, identity is inherently relative to objects we encounter. In Geography, Sibley (1995) has used a

Freudian psycho-analytical approach (object-relations theory) in order to explain how feelings of difference can be traced to the distinctions humans draw between 'self' and 'other' from their very first experiences in the world. Kahane (cited in Sibley 1995, 5) suggests that from birth, infants engage in formative relationships with objects that are perceived as being separate from the 'self'. This is the essence of object-relations theory, which proposes that from infancy we create divisions in our mental representation of the external world. Infants begin to recognise certain externalities as being 'good' whereas others such as excessive noise, excessive heat, cold, bright lights might be mentally constructed as 'bad' (ibid). Security is initially gained by feelings of one-ness with the mother, but as separation from the mother produces anxiety in young children, Sibley suggests that the internal fear of separation is externalised, and 'others' start to represent threats from which the mother can provide protection (1995, 6).

However, Sibley avoids being drawn into pseudo-biological deterministic narratives of the construction of difference (which might be drawn out to argue that discrimination is instinctive) by emphasising that cultural factors play an important role in shaping the way in which we deal with the distinctions between self and other. Some people may be inclined to merge with 'others' in order to gain a sense of increased security whilst others may seek to reject 'others' to seek security with the more familiar extensions of selfhood. How one comes to define what is 'other' depends to a great degree on how parents, society and culture react to the 'other'. As will be discussed further in this chapter, how we construct 'others' also shapes how we perceive challenges to our security.

Whilst the roots of what we know as identity might be as intrinsic as the ego itself, for sociologists and geographers the challenge is to find a sociologically and empirically useful way in which to interpret the concept of 'identity'. Stuart Hall (1996, 2) has suggested that 'naturalised' identity labels could be considered separately from the more complex constructions of identity. A common understanding of the term 'identity' involves categorisations which seek to group people with respect to certain common characteristics through shared heritage, genealogy, practice or allegiance. Hall (1982; 1996) describes such an approach as one which is 'naturalised'; one might be Black,

White, Chinese, Gay, Liberal, Conservative, Muslim and so forth. Hall then contrasts this with a second type of identity which sees identity not as something static but instead as a process, a construction which is never determined, never complete; as Hall puts it, one which is, “lodged in contingency” (Hall 1996, 2-3). It is from this kind of identity that the likes of de Certeau (1984) derive their arguments for more behavioural approaches, emphasising the role of everyday practice. This hybrid and contingent notion of identity as one which is fluid is increasingly part of a sociological orthodoxy. Other influential theorists such as Said (1979), Bhaba (1994) and Giddens (1990) recognise identity as ultimately being reflexive rather than fixed, changing with time and through space. Whilst it may be tempting in the search for truth to dismiss entirely the static ‘naturalised’ notion of identity, it is important to recognise that identity in the popular imagination still carries weight and representation, and this in turn shapes the more complex ways in which individuals perform their identities.

To demonstrate this let us return to our hypothetical scenario of the tourist entering Birmingham. They may wonder through Chinatown, itself a product of branded culture: bakeries, restaurants, Chinese supermarkets, karaoke clubs, and spaces filled with distinctly Chinese and Asian faces. They may assume that they are in the Chinese quarter, recognising instantly the landscape they would expect in such a place. However, whilst this might not in any way represent true British-Chinese identity, some of the Chinese individuals, perhaps those running business in the quarter, would adapt or react to those expectations. The landscape and recognition of a ‘Chinese Quarter’ helps create a market, to which businesses may respond to provide a ‘Chinese’ experience. The commercialised narrative of what it means to be ‘Chinese’ can thus influence a reaction, which then shapes how those identities are performed in actuality.

Furthermore, as we will discover further in this thesis, social interventions by government can also be based upon static, structural descriptors of identity, due to the limits of policy dissemination. But Giddens (1990), rather than accepting that identity is simply ‘performed’ and found in

representation, suggests that identity lies in the capacity to maintain a narrative about one's life, as one passes through different events and situations:

A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor - important though this is - in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going. The individual's biography, if she is to maintain regular interaction with others in the day-to-day world, cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self.

(Giddens 1990, 53)

The importance of narrative and biography to identity is also emphasised by a range of theorists from different disciplines (Somers 1994; Strauss 1995; Fey 1990; Jones 2009). Correspondingly this research project explores the complexity of young Muslim identities, not in isolation, but in the context of the discourses and stereotypes attached to them. It seeks to incorporate the behavioural and the everyday, whilst still engaging with the more structural, more static representations of identity. But as the scenarios we have discussed implies, it is almost impossible to discuss identity without relation to place. The behavioural aspects of identity and everyday experience within which identity is performed, takes place within bounded spaces. Similarly, the naturalised interpretation of identity based on 'ethnicity' or nationality too have a spatial dimension. This leads us to a discussion on the ways in which place and identity are intimately connected.

2.1.2 Identity and Place

When I was a young girl the journey across town to my grandmother's house was one of the most intriguing experiences. It was a movement away from the segregated blackness of our community into a poor white neighbourhood. I remember the fear, being scared to walk to Baba's (our grandmother's) house because we had to pass that terrifying whiteness – those white faces on the porches staring down with hate. Even when empty or vacant, those porches seemed to say „danger“, „you do not belong here“, „you are not safe“.

(hooks 1991, 33)

bell hooks writing about her experience of growing up as a black woman in Kentucky during the 1950s eloquently captures some of the themes which echo through this research project. hooks (1981; 1996) has written extensively about the black struggle and the feminist and civil rights movements and here she conveyed some of the emotions she felt while walking through a neighbourhood which conspired to exclude her and anyone of her description, from the identity of the neighbourhood. She wrote of the fear she felt as the white population of the neighbourhood seemed to stare down at her with hatred, justified by imagined differences; she was being told that she did not belong.

Even though many of us might not have experienced such intensity in our own encounters with urban spaces, most of us can empathise with this experience. Just as we would have certainly experienced a sense of ease and familiarity with spaces within the boundaries that we call 'home', most of us would have also experienced something closely related to fear or trepidation, perhaps in spaces that are not so familiar. Key to both these types of experiences are the concepts of sameness and difference that help us outline boundaries between what is related to 'self' and what is 'other'. These notions of self and other in turn allow us to imagine bonds with people, and place; they are the basis upon which we locate our own identities, and they play a role in shaping our view of where and with whom we may 'belong'. Ultimately these feelings also shape the way we may see ourselves in relation to wider 'communities', allowing us to carve out own identities whilst excluding others from them. As Sibley summarises:

Nervousness about walking down a street in a district which has been labelled dangerous, nauseousness associated with particular smells or conversely, excitement, exhilaration or a feeling of calm may be the kinds of sensations engendered by other environments. Repulsion and desire, fear and attraction attracts both to people and to place.

(Sibley 1995, 3-4)

We can see how some of the white residents of the Kentucky neighbourhood described by bell hooks may have come to view black people as an 'other'; but more significantly, we can also reflect upon

the way in which hooks herself would then perceive that neighbourhood space itself as deeply uncomfortable, if not outright threatening. Mead (cited in Sibley 1995; 10) made an important contribution to debates on identity and place by suggesting that identification processes need not be limited to identification with other people, but could also be expanded to non-human objects and in this case, physical spaces. Space itself can thus develop its own characteristics as a result of the self-identifying of those who are using it. As Lefebvre (1991, 110) wrote, space itself is the outcome of processes involving the mixing of many contributory currents. The characteristics that a place begins to embody are determined by the production and reproduction of values. Division and difference can therefore be controlled by those with power in those spaces and that power can be used to create and maintain modes of social relations (Soja and Hooper 1993, 184). In the case of bell hook's grandmother's neighbourhood, significant power lies principally with a significant section of the white population in the neighbourhood, with hooks and indeed other black Americans being assigned 'otherness' and being dominated by the hegemonic power. This categorising process which identifies 'others' may establish difference, but difference can also be produced and reproduced by positioning oneself and defining oneself in relation to others.

Factors and markers other than race also have a role to play in the construction of difference in neighbourhoods and within communities. Concepts of social class, gender, age, religious faith and the cultures associated with each group within those communities can all be used as categories which can help deconstruct complex identities within spaces. These categorisations are widely recognised to be social and political constructs rather than natural conditions (Bhaba 1994; Hall 1992; 1996b). Social scientists since the 'cultural turn' broadly agree that people are not born into social classifications but are ascribed to them by others, and choose to position themselves within categories. The implication of this is that differentiation itself by positioning or by categorisation implies processes that are intrinsically political. As Smith states, the conduct of politics is "embedded in, and articulated through, the negotiation, articulation and mobilization of sameness and difference" (1999, 130).

The process of social categorisation is fundamental to our understanding of the world and global politics. Smith (1999: 129) observes that important global projects such as imperialism, nationalism and colonialism would not have been possible were it not for the categorisation of 'others' as alien and different. Nor would identity politics such as that which is seen in civil rights movements, and campaigns for gender equality, be possible, without first constructing 'other' categories and without people identifying themselves as being in distinctive groups. Furthermore if we look below the global and national, to local processes and even to everyday experiences, we can see how social practices are regulated by our constructed social categories. Social groups and state authorities actively create and promote rituals, celebrations and codes of conduct to which individuals within the group are expected to adhere. And yet these expectations seem to run counter to the fact that our identities are, in reality, fluid and subject to change over time and space. Identities of human beings are multifaceted, creating complex interplays between aspects of a person's being. Within our lived experiences we identify ourselves and define others not through the singular prisms of 'young/old' British/non-British, Muslim/non-Muslim, but rather we allow these and other aspects of our identity to intertwine and create more complex patterns of understanding of others. Additionally, identifying the impact that categories have in shaping spaces is made tricky by the ambiguous nature of the boundaries, even between categories that may seem to be dichotomous.

One argument to counter the importance of space and place, particularly on a larger global scale is the suggestion that place is no longer as important in a modern globalised world, with waves of migration and emigration, especially in an urban context. As early as the 1970s Relph (1976) was writing about the impact of modernity on place, making it less permanent, more transient. In economic geography the trend of dismissing place was epitomised by Ohmae (1999) who wrote about a transition towards a borderless world where borders that are considered concrete to the point of being almost physical, such as the nation-state, themselves will become more porous. Similarly, Sennet (2000) talked about urban dwellers as part of an increasingly flexible 'city of strangers'. But as far as identity and place are concerned, if anything these transitions have provided

an impetus to study how the changing dynamics of place affect those identities. Bloomfield (2006) makes this very point, but whereas she argues that the impacts of globalisation on identity and place-attachment have been under-researched, I would contend that the study of identities and globalisation in the context of diasporas, which is found in geography, cultural studies, area studies and other social sciences, implicitly covers that same ground. Safran (1991) in the first issue of the journal *Diaspora* identified the area as being under-researched at the time, but as Brubaker (2006, 1) commented more recently, since that period there has been a huge increase in the academic study and of diaspora and greater general interest in the subject. However Brubaker, who has written extensively on this subject acknowledges that approaches involving the study of diasporas can be teleological, inadvertently lending weight to the myth of groups who belong and may wish to return to 'homelands'. Tololyan (1996) contends that they are somewhat 'statist', contextualised by their relationships to movements between national borders. This gives diaspora studies an overtly 'political' slant, and explains why this area of study is a particularly insightful context in which to analyse issues around statehood such as is the case with Kurdish and Palestinian communities and their struggles for political independence (see van Bruinessen 1999; Coleman and Lowe 2007; Mavroudi 2007; Long 2008).

On a variety of scales then, place is closely related to identity. The question 'Who am I?' is not easily separated from 'Where do I belong?' The study of diaspora is extremely effective in establishing nation-state oriented struggles of identity and linking them directly to place. But other forms of attachment to space, often on smaller scales and relating to the everyday are also an integral part of our identities, and these are seldom present in debates around the identities, loyalties and belonging of migrants. The literatures on 'place-attachment' and 'belonging' are the foremost body of academic work in relation to this type of identity.

2.1.3 Place Attachment

In common with the concept of 'diaspora', research and interest in place-attachment has grown substantially in the last decade, despite the narrative of globalisation and the weakening of ties to bounded, local spaces (Lewicka 2011, 207-208). The literature on place-attachment itself spans over a number of disciplines: environmental psychology, sociology, anthropology, urban studies and geography, to name but a few. This literature review focuses on two aspects of place-attachment most strongly related to this study: the socio-spatial nature of place-attachment and the scale of place-attachment.

The term 'place-attachment' has been somewhat contested in the past due to disagreement over notions of what constitutes 'place', and this debate largely centres around the extent we should view place-attachment as either a physical or social entity (Burley 2007 cited in Lewicka 2011; Stedman 2003). Since the cultural turn the tendency has been for theorists in social and psychological sciences to view place as a social construction or alternatively that there is a symbiotic relationship between the physical and social dimensions of place (Alkon and Traugot 2008; Lewicka 2010, 218). For those that emphasise social construction of space in this specific sense, the argument goes that the reasons people might become attached to a place are rooted in the use of those spaces for social processes. These include being sites of social interaction, but also may potentially be sites of significant social and cultural symbolism and association or spaces which due to their physical assets, become sites of social activity (Lewicka 2010, 218). To demonstrate the extent to which social constructivism has become orthodoxy, even scholars whose interests in attachment are from an ecological and environmental perspective, have emphasised strongly how the social dimensions of life shape attitudes and connections of humans towards natural environments (Brehm 2007; Brehm et al 2006). Alternatively there is an emergent discourse which without rejecting the social or community-based components of place attachment, instead addresses the physical component, believing this to have been neglected. Stedman (2003) is chief among those; using empirical data from 1000 residents of

the Northern Highland Lake District of Wisconsin, he argues that landscapes themselves shape the meaning we give *spaces*, to turn them into *places*.

Another significant debate around place-attachment (and one which can also be found in the debates around the concept of 'belonging') is around the scale of its application. Lewicka (2010, 211-212) effectively identifies seven sites of place-attachment in her review of place-attachment literatures: Home, Neighbourhoods, Cities, Regions, Countries and Continents. This prompts a question: on what scale does place-attachment matter, and where is it strongest? This question is very pertinent to this research project. As we will see, attachments to the nation-state are interpreted differently to attachments to neighbourhoods and cities. We will also learn how notions of 'loyalty' seep into our emotional connections to nation-states much more than they do with relatively local spaces.

Unfortunately, to answer this question of what scale of place can inspire the greatest attachment, there is scant evidence from studies which use empirical research. An exception to this is Lackzo (2005) who used data from the International Social Survey carried out in 1995. For residents in 24 nation-states, Lackzo analysed attachment by using a question which asked respondents how close they felt to their neighbourhood, town, province, country or continent. Lackzo found that the 'country' was the focus of the strongest attachment followed by neighbourhood and then town or city. Provinces came fourth and continents last. This does not chime with the assertions of Tuan (1974), an early practitioner of place-attachment theory and research, who suggested that homes and cities would provide the greatest levels of attachment to place, above the idea of 'neighbourhood'. But underlying this debate raises an issue that this study seeks to confront: despite that we can ask people to provide us with practical reasons for their attachment or residence in particular spaces, and we can research their emotions towards spaces that shape their sense of place, this rarely forms part of the debate around citizenship and belonging to the nation-state. At most, the two are considered to be parallel yet unconnected issues. However this study will argue that national-identity and place-attachment cannot be separated and in fact impact on each other.

Moreover, sites of immigration and choice of residency for migrants is often shaped by economics and migration history as well as demographic trends. Thus it is not only valid but useful to connect literatures of place-attachment to larger scale debates around citizenship and national identity.

2.1.4 Belonging

'Belonging' is a word much more prevalent in popular discourse and culture than 'place-attachment'. Belonging as a concept directly connects identity to space, implying an emotional bond of a person to place (Inalhan and Finch 2004, 121-123). Moreover it is useful in the context of this project because its use together with the use of the term 'politics of belonging', connects that which is considered as 'emotional' with the overtly 'political'. However, as this section will reveal, few writers and academics have made sustained efforts to define the term for academic use. This section will look at three particular ways in which 'belonging' has been conceived by researchers and uses this breakdown to arrive at a framework for researching the belonging of participants in this study.

Before moving on to discuss these discourses of belonging, it is necessary to include a note on the difficulty of translating the word 'belonging' to other languages. Antonsich (2010, 646) was keen to include this caveat in his search for an analytical framework for use of the term; he points out, the French equivalent 'appartenance' would rarely be used in the same way as 'belonging' is in English, and the term 'I belong here' would use different words than the one pertaining to the direct translation 'appartenance'. In Italian too the phrase 'I belong here' which translates directly as 'Io appartengo qui' would sound very odd (ibid). Therefore the analysis of the term and the discourses that follows does not seek to make any attempt at encapsulating the use of 'belonging' outside of the English language.

To most theorists and researchers, 'belonging' is something which is taken as self-explanatory. Whilst geographers have researched belonging explicitly and a select few have even debated the meaning of the term, it still does not warrant an entry in the Dictionary of Human Geography (Gregory et al

2009). To some degree 'belonging' can be conceived as something almost synonymous with identity. Belonging implies membership to a group or a place; just as identity is a method by which people understand difference, belonging too can be construed as an outcome of 'difference'. Just as identity is not something objective and fixed, belonging too is contested and complex. However, this section identifies two factors which distinguish the use of 'belonging' as opposed to 'identity' creating a framework for researching the term.

The first of these is the emotional dimension of the term. The use of the word belonging seems to give license to researchers to focus on the emotional aspect of citizenship and the feelings of being 'in-place'. As Ignatieff points out, Belonging is about feeling safe and 'at home' (cited in Yuval-Davis 2006, 197). Home is not necessarily just a physical space in this instance; in fact as some feminist authors have uncovered, homes in the physical sense can be spaces of violence or fear (Blunt and Varley 2004; Blunt 2005; Blunt and Dowling 2006). The sense of being 'at home' in the context of belonging to a place is usually more imagined and psychologically felt. As Vincent Descombes described it, home is a place where a person is 'at ease with the rhetoric of those with whom they share a life' (cited in Auge 1995, 108). If that description of emotional belonging itself seems rhetorical, this is because it is widely recognised that emotional belonging can be idealist to the point of cliché and seem whimsical. In this vein Morley (2009, 425) references the words that can be found in the theme tune of the American comedy *Cheers*; home is a place where 'everybody knows your name'. This rhetoric of security in familiar surroundings can be found in the earliest of studies into belonging such as Young and Willmot's research which looked at community relations in East London;

Bethnal Greeners are not lonely people: whenever they go for a walk in the street, for a drink in the pub or for a row on the lake in Victoria Park, they know the faces in the crowd

(Young and Willmot cited in Buonfino 2007, 19).

Antonsich (2010) describes this sort of belonging as 'place-belongingness', something that he sees as indicative of familiarity, comfort and security (Antonsich 2010, 646). This brings us to the second

aspect of 'belonging' that differentiates it from an identity; it indicates a degree of attachment or rootedness to a specific location. This is an idea that has been explored by environmental psychologists who may write about 'place-identity, place-attachments or 'sense of place'. 'Sense of place' is according to Antonsich (2010b) an ill-defined concept incorporating belonging, place-attachment and any meanings which are attached to a spatial setting. Place-identity is an idea developed in environmental psychology by Proshansky et al (1983) and can be defined as the identity one has in relation to places and objects, as opposed to other people. Place attachment refers to a more emotional bond between people and place (Inalhan and Finch 2004; Giuliani and Feldman 1993).

There are numerous examples of empirical research by environmental psychologists which use these concepts to research, for example, Pretty et al (2003) study 'sense of place', 'place-attachment' and 'place-identity' in two rural Australian towns, Hernandez et al (2007) looks at place-attachment and place-identity among University students in Tenerife, Bejerke and Kaltenborne (2002) investigate the links between landscape preferences and place-attachment in Roros in Southern Norway. Kyle et al (2003) use social judgement theory to look at the way place-identity and place-attachment impacts perceptions of the special and environmental conditions through the Appalachian trail in the United States. While these studies can provide a thorough and useful investigation of the identity construction of its respondents, they are less focussed on investigating how such constructions may be linked to wider political, social and economic conditions. These conditions are inseparable from the rhetoric of feeling 'at home'.

By its nature, the discipline of geography is well placed to investigate the links between personal feelings of 'belonging' and the conditions and factors they may depend upon. Whilst some authors make a distinction between feelings of belonging and the 'politics of belonging', there is undoubtedly an overlap between the two; emotional belonging is strengthened by certain economic, political and social conditions. Antonsich (2010, 647-648), one of the few researchers who have made a concerted attempt to define 'belonging', identifies five factors which contribute to the

emotional feeling of being 'at home'. First he cites auto-biographical factors which relate to a person's history; experiences, memories, the presence of family members in particular places and the places where a person might have been born or grown up are all included in this category. Secondly, relational factors are listed separately. These are the social and personal ties that people have with others that might tie them to given places, and they can range from close relationships to weak links or even those spaces in which people may come into contact with strangers. The strength of the relationship with the person might correlate with the strength of attachment felt to those particular places. Thirdly, are cultural factors; a familiar language, cultural traditions, expressions or habits might all serve to imbue a person to a sense of intimacy with particular surroundings. Fourthly economic factors might play a part in creating a sense of home, safety and security. Being tied into an economy is, Antonsich claims, necessary for place-belongingness due to the material advantages economic embeddedness provides and also to make a person feel as though they have a stake in the future of the place in which they belong. Lastly, legal factors are cited. Just as economic conditions are important in providing security, so too are laws. The importance of laws goes beyond the provision of security as it also extends to the providing of opportunities and rights, including those to healthcare, education and social security. Antonsich's attempt to define 'place-belongingness', although reductionist, is nevertheless a useful if not necessary attempt to decipher the range of situations, thoughts and feelings that underlie this often ill-defined or vague concept. The factors that he identifies can in turn be used to analyse empirical data which seeks to investigate the belonging of various groups of people. Moreover it can be used to provide context for other studies which deal with belonging. In reviewing the body of research on belonging within social sciences it is clear that for many researchers belonging is almost synonymous with citizenship.

Crucially however, much of the literature in geography on 'belonging' is aimed at investigating and evaluating the connections felt by groups of people to the ideas and structures of nation-states. The research often involves case-studies where particular groups or minorities within nation-states provide interesting examples of competing identities and emotions. For instance Hakli (2001) uses

the term to explore competing notions of citizenship in Catalan regions and similarly Lawson (1999) uses the term to chart the effects of neo-liberalism on migrants to Ecuador. Other examples include Nagel and Staeheli (2005), who investigate the experiences of Arab-American activists involving narratives of belonging, citizenship and assimilation and Madsen and van Naerssen (2003) explore Migration, Identity and Belonging in cross-border regions citing a range of cases, once again assuming the term belonging to be self-explanatory.

In the context of Antonsich's work the implicit links between the factors that Antonsich has listed and the notion of belonging become clearer. The above listed research assumes those connections between larger political themes, global processes and personal feelings. Yuval Davis (2006) in her attempt to arrive at a theoretical framework for belonging, also identifies the emotional aspect of belonging as a distinct component. For Yuval-Davis, this usually involves the formation of identity through narratives. These narratives are the stories people tell when they wish to communicate their sense of belonging. A researcher may be interested in which narratives are passed on from one generation to the next. These may involve what some might see as clichés about identity; but also significant might be the narratives that are omitted. These narratives can be individual or collective and may shift or become sharply focussed in the wake of an event which sees the identity under threat or seem less secure (Yuval Davis 2006, 202).

2.1.5 The Politics Of Belonging

The last section suggested that the emotional and political elements of belonging were interconnected. However the phrase 'politics of belonging' has also become used by theorists, in particular Nira Yuval Davis (Yuval Davis 2006a; Yuval Davis et al 2006b). The politics of belonging can be defined as those mechanisms that shape the boundaries between identities. John Crowley defined the politics of belonging as "the dirty work of boundary maintenance" (cited in Yuval-Davis 2006a, 204). It draws the focus of debate towards political struggle to influence the attachments,

affection, dependency or lack thereof, felt by people towards a group. The group in question might be a nation-state or a region but it might also be a religious group, a social group or a political movement. The questions that the politics of belonging seek to influence are about how we define who is 'us' and who is 'them', and what one has to do to be included in the group or excluded from them.

Historically cultures had been understood as being rooted in particular spaces, with stable patterns of interaction of people doing the same things in the same places (Morley 2009, 28). The idea of culture was therefore tied to genealogy and ethnicity and connections prevailed between ideas of 'land' and ideas of 'blood'. However, as globalisation and the constant interaction between cultures, languages and people have accelerated, so has the prominence of theory emphasising the fluidity of identity boundaries and the imagined nature of those identities themselves (Anderson 1991). Migration, the flow of labour and capital between nation-states and the super-national organisations such as the UN and the EU emerging as international forms of governance have all challenged traditional notions of national identity in a process of deterritorialisation. With this movement we have come to question more critically what is meant by being, for instance, British. How does a migrant see themselves and where do they feel they belong if they have moved or are constantly moving from one space to another, from one state to another? According to Mitchell (2005; 263) the idea of national identity has not necessarily been deconstructed and destroyed; rather it has been reshaped. With every deterritorialisation process, there is a re-territorialisation. The nature of this re-territorialisation is summarised by Castells (1997; 2). Despite being in the era of global capitalism we can still identify powerful expressions of collective identity that challenge utopian ideas of globalisation and cosmopolitanism. Some such as feminism and environmentalism seek to influence the relationships between people on a fundamental level, but there are many other movements that resist this trend:

...a whole array of reactive movements that build trenches of resistance on behalf of God, nation, ethnicity, family, locality, that is the fundamental categories of millennial existence

now threatened under the combined, contradictory assault of techno-economic forces...Caught between these opposing trends the nation-state is called into question.

(Castells 1997, 2)

Despite the nature of nation-states being called into question it is still an important actor, and in locating the politics of belonging, it is an appropriate point place to start. Indeed later chapters will examine some of the ways in which the mechanisms of the state have been acting to influence the 'citizenship' of young Muslim men. The problem of belonging towards a nation or a nation-state is the lack of any objective or accepted idea of what the nation actually is. But what actually constitutes 'citizenship' to a nation-state and what does 'belonging' to a nation actually entail?

One difficulty of coming to conclusions about the nature of the nation is the imagined rather than concrete qualities that underpin it. As Anderson (1991) concluded, rather than the nation being an actual community, it was an imagined political community. People within nations will never be able to meet and know all their fellow nationals, and many may differ greatly in terms of their culture, society and politics. But the very real physical separation between them cannot threaten an imagination of kinship of communion between nationalists. The criteria therefore which defines the boundaries of a nation can never be entirely rational or objective, and will likely be hotly contested. This contest and debate is not only abstract but is performed, and some groups have more power than others to influence how the nation may be defined. The national government is one of those actors and its politicians have frequently attempted to draw out the boundaries which distinguish nationals from 'others'. On occasion this struggle is played out very overtly and publically, by those who actively seek to recast debates about belonging. An example of a crude attempt at marking such a boundary is for the 'Cricket test', an idea coined by the Conservative minister Norman Tebbit who in 1990 suggested that whether or not an immigrant supported the English cricket team might be some sort of marker as to how well they had integrated into British society.

The politics of belonging is often closely associated with citizenship as citizenship defines the nature of the relationship between the state and the citizen. Whilst liberal theory tends to view citizenship as being about the reciprocation of rights and responsibilities between individuals and the state (Yuval-Davis 2006, 205), republican and communitarian theories in contrast see loyalty to the political community and commitment to its preservation as crucial to citizenship. Communitarian theories of citizenship are particularly striking because some do not even mention the state in their definitions of citizenship. Instead, for T.H. Marshall (a famous communitarian theorist of citizenship), citizenship is full membership of a community with all its rights and responsibilities (Marshall cited in Yuval-Davis 2006a, 206). This view sees nationality or state-citizenship as merely a layer of community, whilst local identities, ethnic identities, religious affiliations and international affiliations could provide alternative layers. Yet no identity is such that it is completely plural; states, religions, ethnicities all have boundaries beyond which one is not considered British, Muslim or Asian and so forth and the meaning of state membership can be as hotly contested as any other constructions of belonging.

Identity politics however is played out beyond the explicitly political arena and hence the politics of belonging goes beyond citizenship, inhabiting the spaces in between the overtly personal and the political, in the grey area between the individual and the collective. Whilst this section has provided a literature overview of theories relating fundamentally to identity and place, there is a need to look more specifically at Muslim experience in the UK to relate to this specific case-study. The next section will therefore proceed to explore how the identities of Muslims have been conceptualised and governed in the UK.

2.2.1 The Conceptions And Realities of Muslims in The UK

The quantity of research into Muslims and Islam within the social sciences has expanded dramatically over the last decade. This interest has been sparked by major international events, geo-political changes and demographic changes in what some might term the 'Muslim World' and here in the so-called 'West'. British attitudes to Islam have been shaped by the UK's colonial heritage, and subsequent post-war immigration. However in the last two decades, what Cesari (2010, 1) calls the 'cultural talk' around Muslims both in and outside the UK has become heightened. Events such as the Rushdie Affair, major terrorists incidents in the UK and abroad including the World Trade Centre attacks and 7/7 bombings in 2005, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and protests around cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed have all contributed to a cultural and intellectual anxiety over the very existence of Muslims in British and global society. In the context of this project looking into how the identities of young Muslim identities are being shaped in Birmingham, one cannot presume that such identities and their representations exist in any sort of vacuum. The context in which they exist incorporates not only our historical baggage with regards to the concept of civilisation, but also the British management of minorities and the policies of multiculturalism. This section explores literatures which explain British conceptions for Muslim identities. It explains through these literatures how a pervasive dualism has been establish in which conceptions of the world are split between the 'West' and the 'Islamic world' and how, in parallel to these developments British governments have sought to manage immigrant and specifically Muslim identities here in the UK.

However, let us begin by reflecting upon two concepts that help explain the historical lens through which we see Muslims. The first of these is Orientalism, as defined by Edward Said (1978) which refers to the ways in which the Orient (The East) has been interpreted, portrayed and sometimes imitated by the Occident (The West). Said suggested that these sets of relationships between 'West' and 'Orient' were underpinned by prejudice and on occasion, a sense of superiority on the part of 'Western' scholars and writers, leading to an inherent dominative mode of operation towards the Orient (Said 1978; 28). According to Said, The Orient has been captured in Western myths and

fables, its people misrepresented and its various cultures undermined. This undermining process would take place due to 'Western' writers using their own civilisation as a yardstick with which to compare those 'other' cultures it encountered. In earlier encounters the yardstick was likely to be Christendom, against which other faiths were considered to be inferior. During the crusades for example, Islamic culture was depicted in Europe as at once decadent and barbaric. Sardar (1999; 1979, 209) believes that the reformation and the enlightenment saw Orientalism changing in dimension, to one which elevated the 'scientific' Occident over the supposed uncivilised Orient. According to Federici (1995, 66), it was only in the nineteenth century during the rise of colonialism that the West became talked about as a coherent entity, including America (until then the 'New World'). This, she argued, coincided with the introduction of the term 'civilisation' as we know it today; the implication being that the West was civilised whilst the areas outside Europe were lands in which the 'west' had either a challenge or duty to spread its new Enlightenment principles.

Orientalism has been written about extensively by academics who are both in general agreement and disagreement with Said's (1979) conclusions. This chapter will not seek to review his work so much as to highlight appropriate points which are relevant to this study. The first key point is that Orientalism and its very discourse has raised difficult questions about the ways in which the 'other' is researched. Consideration has to be given to the question of *who* can represent a particular culture or society and also to *how* one can accurately represent. In this study, this particular question is tied up intrinsically with positionality and as such will be explored in the methodology section. Secondly, it is necessary to understand Orientalism as a process of invention of the 'other', produced in culture and then consistently reproduced. Other than Said, this theme is also covered by Sardar (1995), Halliday (1999) and Allen (2009, 31-25), the latter who uses the discussion to set the context for a critical evaluation of Islamophobia.

We can establish through the concept of Orientalism the emergence in academic and popular discourse of a dualism and separation between the Western and Eastern world, and to some degree, the Western and 'Muslim world'. It is interesting to note that whilst the Christian world, Hindu World

or Sikh World is not referred to in political discourse, the term 'Muslim world' is often accepted as a valid reference to the world's two billion Muslims. As has already been mentioned, this may partly be explained by Orientalist critiques of the Muslim 'other' in the Middle East. Popular discourse around the term has increased in the last twenty years, as global events have been portrayed as pitting Muslims against 'Western' ideology. The Salman Rushdie affair, issues around the segregation between genders and controversies surrounding the depiction of the Prophet Muhammad have been framed extensively by journalists and commentators as a cultural struggle between two forces, those of tradition and Islam on the one hand and those of 'freedom', liberalism and secularism on the other.

Another term coined in recent years is the 'clash of civilisations', and it captures the undertone of the cultural debate around the global issues. Samuel Huntington (1997) coined the term to describe how he believed future conflicts around the world might form. These conflicts, he posited, would occur not because of ideology or economics, but rather due to cultural differences. Huntington identified nine different 'civilisations' including 'The West', the Muslim world, The Orthodox world of Russia and Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America, the Hindu Regions of India and the 'Buddhist countries' in Asia and Japan. Huntington wrote of an impending clash of civilisations based upon his theory that the 'West' was in decline. He identified the Sinic (Chinese) and Muslim civilisations as those which may challenge its global dominance in the future. However it was Huntington's prediction with regards to the course of the future of the Islamic 'civilisation' which attracted the most attention. Huntington predicted a conflict between Islamic civilisations and its neighbours (both Western and non-western) based what he saw as the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the large percentage of young people within Islamic 'society'. Huntington believes that the greatest conflict will be between Islamic and Christian civilisations due to both faiths being missionary (evangelical) and universalist. These aspects of Islamic and Christian religion he presumes, leads to a situation in which differences would be difficult to negotiate.

Some theorists have identified Huntington's thesis as a mere extension of orientalism, or neo-orientalism as Tuastad (2003) puts it. Indeed, Said (2003) himself revisited his own thesis on Orientalism in light of the emerging discourse around a 'Clash of Civilisations'. Reflecting on geopolitical events and the fracturing of relations between some Muslim nations and 'Western' countries after 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Said concluded that skewed and simplistic narratives of civilisational strife were manifesting themselves in global politics and was as pervasive in that arena as it was in culture. Huntington's prediction about clashes with the Islamic 'civilisation' has many inherent flaws, not least the tendency to treat the very diverse set of Muslim populations in the world as a homogenous block, and one which will somehow naturally engage in conflict with other civilisations (Welch 1997, 210-211). For the purpose of this study, Huntington's essentialisation is important to note, not for its accuracy or rather the lack of it, but for its impact. Huntington's separation between 'West' and 'Islamic' has become a widely-used extension of Orientalist principles which has provided an intellectual basis for a range of political and cultural discourses, pitting Muslims and Islamic people and values against Western values and people as antagonists or insurgents. This is frequently and sometimes uncritically becoming the lens through which many local and global events involving a Muslim actor are being viewed and presented.

Popular news websites such as the BBC have in the past run features debating for instance, Islam and modernity, with an underlying assumption that Islam and modernity are increasingly diametrically opposed (Hardy 2002). Popular non-fiction books such as those written by Lewis (1994), Wilders and Lander (2012) and Bawer (2006) not only present the idea of stark inherent differences between these Muslim and Western entities, but suggest that conflict is likely or even inevitable. This idea lays the groundwork for others such as Caldwell (2010) who paint Muslim immigrants and their children as potential threats to Western culture in Europe and in turn there are a host of responses from liberal thinkers critically engaging with this new dualism (Haddad 2002; Gest 2010; Morgan and Poynting 2012). Poole (2002) after extensive research into the portrayal of Muslims in the British

media, also concluded that the tabloid press was latching onto similarly simplistic narratives of opposition concerning British Muslims as posing a challenge to British society.

The dualism goes beyond mainstream literature and infiltrates mainstream political debate. Whilst the political right, more traditionally suspicious of Islamic and Muslim cultural or political power might tend towards oppositional narratives, the political and liberal left encourage dialogue. As an example let us take an emerging divide in American foreign policy between those who advocate stronger ties with 'Muslim powers' and those that suggest positioning the US in opposition to 'Islamist' ideology. On one side, the Democrat President Barack Obama within the first six months of office went as far as to appoint a Special Representative to Muslim Communities who was expected to engage Muslims globally. On the other hand the Republican former Speaker of the House of Congress, and Republican presidential candidate Newt Gingrich has perceived 'Islamist Muslims' as part of a 'mortal' threat to the US, both at home and abroad (Shane 2011). Whilst the two positions seem to be poles apart, they share a commonality in their assumed separation between the 'West' and 'Muslim world'.

This process of othering however is not limited to western essentialising and stereotyping of the East and of Muslims; instead it is reciprocated by the equal and opposite process of Occidentalism. Ahmed (1992) and Malik (1996) characterise Occidentalism as a construction of 'The West' being a hegemonic power, with Islam as the lone counter-balance to a force, determined to undermine and destroy it. As part of the narrative of this type of Occidentalism Muslims take the roles as victims in East and West, their cultures criticised, their nation-states invaded and their presence in the West arousing suspicion. Werbner (2000) offers a counter-argument to this dualist narrative in more nuanced debates around multiculturalism (which will be discussed later in this chapter), but the point to be emphasised is that whilst, the Orientalist dualism is one underpinned by historical discourse, contemporary discourses demonstrate the resilience of these simplistic distinctions.

To summarise the relevance of this topic to the study in question, these Western/Islamic distinctions ultimately influence the way in which we perceive Muslim migrants in Britain, and the ways in which we have come to understand the threat of extremism and terrorism, topics which form a large part of this study. Moreover, for this research, the Orientalist and Occidentalist stereotypes serve as a reminder to researchers to consistently question the use of dualisms, and investigate in a more nuanced fashion the labels of identity, when used by theorists or indeed research participants.

2.2.2 Muslims in the UK: The Rise of British Multiculturalism

Relationships between Muslims and the supposed 'West' may be hamstrung by long-standing historical misconceptions on both sides, but this section explores more specifically how the British state managed its population of Muslims since their migration into UK, and how the ideals of multiculturalism and cohesion (and threats to those ideals) have constructed a distinctive racial political landscape.

Two popular misconceptions abound surrounding the mass migration of Muslims in the UK. The first is that prior to the Second World War, there was no significant Muslim population in the UK. The second is that post-war Britain had no real experience of mass migration. On the contrary, records can be found of Muslim visitors to the British Isles as early as the twelfth century. Research by Ansari (2003) has attempted to provide a summary of all Muslim migration to the UK from the visits of emissaries in that early period right up to the mass migration from the Indian subcontinent in the mid-late twentieth century. Ansari (2003, 26-27) suggests that in 1627 around 40 Turks were living in England and by 1725, English society was "pretty well accustomed" to them as traders and merchants. Colonialism had a significant impact on the beginnings of Muslim migrants to Britain, making it necessary for some in Muslim societies to fashion new ways of pursuing their own interests, as Britain and other European nations strengthened their grip on states from North Africa, through Arabia and to the Indian sub-continent. The British Empire required cheap labour and some

labourers were exported to working colonies other than the ones that they hailed from. By the early twentieth century Muslim seamen formed part of a 'visible' migrant population in Britain (Ansari 2003, 40). The First World War saw a dramatic increase in the size of this migrant population, to replace the men who had been called up for military purposes. Ansari (2003, 41) documents figures from Tyneside indicating that the 'black' (non-white) population increased fourfold in this period. At the same time, the 'black' population of Cardiff rose from 700 in 1914 to 3000 by April 1919.

The second misconception was that Britain was not used to mass-migration. Following the Irish potato famine between 1847 and 1855 alone 300,000 Irish immigrants migrated to England (Macraird 1999 cited in Panayi 2010, 38) and 180,000 Germans (mostly German Jews) migrated to Britain before 1945 (Panayi 2010; 39). 145,000 Poles settled in the UK by 1945, remaining in the UK to avoid returning to a Poland under Stalin (Sword 1989 cited in Panayi 2010, 41). It is examples such as these that provide the historical evidence for the UK being known as a place of seeking refuge and freedom from persecution.

Nonetheless, it was post-war migration between the late 1950s and early 1980s that accounts for the greatest influx of Muslims into the UK. Moreover it was the migration in this period which instigated a wave of policies on racism and integration. Unskilled workers from the Indian subcontinent began arriving midway through the 1950s, firstly primarily from India (who were mostly Hindu rather than Muslim) and later from Muslim-majority Pakistan. During the late 1970s and into the early 1980s a wave of Bangladeshi migrants added to the Muslim population already in the UK. The 1960s was the peak decade of migration to the UK from the Indian subcontinent, and according to Abbas (2005b, 9) until this decade there was a feeling, if not an expectancy by the host community that the migrants would leave after having earned a certain amount of wealth. When this turned out to be a misplaced assumption, Immigration Acts were introduced to curb the levels of migration, beginning in 1962. The first Act sought to reduce the numbers of male manual workers entering the UK, but it also sparked a rush of women and children who wished to be reunited with migrant relatives, fearing that the Act might be the precursor to a subsequent ban. It could be argued, that due to the late arrival of

many women and children, the establishment of settled Muslim communities began after this period just fifty years ago.

From this point onwards two factors became very relevant to the evolution of state-minority relations with regards to British Asians, including Muslims. Firstly, from an institutional top-down perspective, the spectre of racism and opposition to Britain's new migrants became a political issue. Both Conservative and Labour governments attempted to respond to the non-acceptance of immigrants by sections of British society with race-relations legislation. Secondly, and at the same time, the communities who had arrived in the post-war period slowly developed what were initially loose and informal representative organisations, a bottom-up movement. Ansari (2003, 234-235) looks into these developments more closely and observes that up until the late 1980s broad alliances between Muslim groups were eschewed in favour of more self-contained organisations representing micro-communities, providing them with access to communal social resources and assistance in engaging with the welfare-state. In addition a plethora of religious institutions began to spring up in areas with larger numbers of Muslims. To understand the nature of these early institutions, research by Lewis (2002, 76-112) is useful as he focuses on Muslim institutions in just one city, Bradford. His study reveals the complexity of these institutions and emphasises the sectarian divides between Muslim groups. Deobandi, Barelvi and Jamate-Islami traditions were all represented and had separate agendas and ideas of how to progress the Islamic cause.

Encapsulated within these two movements from Muslim groups and successive British governments lies a set of relationships embodying what is now understood to be British multiculturalism. Black and ethnic minority communities are still under-represented in mainstream politics in Britain today, but in the 1970s when Race Relations legislation was being passed, the situation was more pressing still. Simultaneously Race Relations Councils were being established to further the anti-racist agenda and in 1976 these became known as Community Relations Councils (Panayi 2010, 270). By 1991, Race Equality Councils had been established receiving an initial £4.5 million of funding (ibid, 270). Inclusion of minorities was becoming part of public policy, funding was available but democratic

representation of minorities was lacking. This situation necessitated the rise of advocates for 'community' groups, whose input would help direct equality and race-relations policies, and reach minorities. This advocacy is accepted by many to be a particular characteristic of multiculturalism, yet its rationale provokes an intense debate among social theorists. Modood et al. (2002) published an influential paper on this subject arguing that ethnic background was indeed a legitimate basis for sociological separation and groupings, one that can objectively be constructed through family-backgrounds of individuals. In response, Smith (2002) suggested that such categorisations must always be self-selected and argued that the use of ethnicity to group individuals was inherently flawed due to the difficulty of applying labels to complex 'ethnic' identities.

In many ways the debate around multiculturalism embodies a common post-modern conundrum: by deconstructing the categories to which society has become accustomed, policies, such as ethnic monitoring, whose operation depends on broad assessment, become undermined. By recognising specific ethnic groups as legitimate and distinctive, it became possible and normative to collect statistics on how those groups fared within British society. In tackling racism and discrimination, these groups became the vehicles for anti-racist policy. Kundanani (2002 cited in Cole 2003) identifies this as being the start of 'state-funded multiculturalism' in the 1980s when ethnic representatives became welcome in town halls and policy-making circles. Discourse is ultimately productive and this institutionally recognised set of identities would not only be reflected but reproduced by multicultural policy. May (2005, 13-14) is highly critical of this ethnic representation as an essentialising process which goes against the grain of prevalent post-modern theories of identity, which instead emphasise hybridity, syncretism and the fluidity of identity construction (May 2005, 14; Gilroy 1987). Whilst staunch supporters of the multicultural mode such as Modood (2005b, 194-195) do not reject identities as being fluid constructions, they argue that minorities should be free and able to select those ethnic groups with which they choose to identify, and that the state should assist in this self-identification process. Modood (ibid, 195) describes this self-selection as

associational identity and claims that it has the potential empower ethnic-minority citizens to engage in political processes.

Although the debate around ethnic identification continues today, group-based approaches to ethnic minority inclusion became commonplace by the late-1980s. Up until this point Muslims were represented largely as Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians rather than being categorised by their faith. The bulk of research on new migrants tended to be statistical and focussed on socio-economics rather than culture and religion. If Muslim communities existed then they were not necessarily discussed or portrayed as such, but rather grouped with their fellow migrants from South Asia. Muslims were in this respect an invisible group within British society, with not even a single elected member of parliament in their constituency. For the British government to really start to distinguish between Asian populations and recognise Muslims, it would take a controversy sparked by an Indian writer, an Iranian fatwa and a global outcry.

2.2.3 The Rushdie Affair and the emergence of the 'Muslim Question'

The 1990s saw a huge upsurge in the number of press articles and academic research pieces focussing wholly on Muslims. As Werbner (2000b, 308), Peach (1990) and Modood (1990) contend, this was in large part a reaction to the Rushdie affair of 1988/89. The Rushdie affair involved the publication of *Satanic Verses*, a novel by Salman Rushdie in which a character interpreted as being a depiction of the last prophet in Islam, Muhammad, was portrayed in a highly critical light. The publishing of the novel sparked global protests; in his native India the book was banned, as it was in most Muslim-majority countries. The protests included the burning of effigies of Rushdie and copies of the book itself, and culminated in a 'fatwa' or religious ruling from Iran's Shiite theocratic government, which proposed that the author should be killed. In the UK the Rushdie affair saw thousands of British Muslims protest against publishers and retail outlets against the production of the novel, as well as the British government for protecting Rushdie. For the first time, Muslims

became visible to the UK public as a distinct group, in a protest which many people saw as pitting religious sensitivity against freedom of speech. The Rushdie affair is explored in more detail by Modood (2002, 103-130) and Allen (2010, 41-44) but what is of particular relevance to this study is an examination of how a shift would occur from race to religion, as Muslims became increasingly identified by their faith. Also relevant to this study is how this shift would prompt the British government to look for representatives of British Muslims in an effort to create partners with whom to negotiate on behalf of the British Muslim 'community'.

Ansari (2003) has attempted to track the ways in which Muslim organisations have evolved since they started arriving in the UK. He concludes that many of the organisations set up in the 1960s and 1970s were local, often representing communities from one particular ethnic group. Attempts to unite Muslims under organisations such as the Council of Mosques (created in 1984) and Council of Imams and Mosques (created in 1985), had according to Ansari, only a limited impact due to ideological differences between Muslim groups (Ansari 2003, 361). In spite of these failures, the Rushdie affair gave added impetus for Muslims to create a single representative organisation. The UK Action Committee On Islamic Affairs (UACIA) was created in 1988 specifically to co-ordinate protests against The Satanic Verses. The issue was becoming a touchstone for the emergence of a type of Muslim identity that was somewhat more cogent and united than the ethnic identities that had tended to underpin British Asian cultural organisations. Yet with the loose coalition that was the UACIA there was a feeling even among the group's members that Muslim organisations lacked the social, professional and scholarly skills to have any impact on government policy (McLoughlin 2005, 59).

Nonetheless the authority of UACIA was soon challenged by the proposal for a 'Muslim Parliament'. The Muslim Parliament created by Kalim Siddiqi in 1992 was a more focussed attempt at representation by Muslims in the UK, but it relied heavily on Siddiqi who died in 1996. It also struggled to mobilise Muslims in significant numbers, a problem Ansari (2003, 363) attributed to the fact that local representatives were handpicked and members unelected. In 1994, a delegation of

British Muslims requested the Home Secretary Michael Howard to enact anti-religious-discrimination legislation (McLoughlin 2005, 60). However, the Home Office suggested that British Muslims should return once they had established a unified entity which the government could recognise as representative and 'do business' with (Ansari 2003, 364; McLoughlin 2005, 60). A period of consultation between Muslim groups culminated in the formation of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), which still exists and continues to be recognised in many circles as the most effective representative organisation of British Muslims today. However, as McLoughlin (2005, 60) points out, the MCB itself is notable for the prevalence of particular types of Muslims in its leadership, from Indian and African backgrounds, not necessarily representative of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations that make up the majority of Britain's Muslims. Their leaders including Sir Iqbal Sacranie and Yusuf Bailokh were both wealthy businessmen, upwardly mobile and thrived on forming strong relationships with key figures within New Labour during the late 1990s. By 2003 the MCB was regularly invited to the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, with credibility enough to accompany ministers on delegations to Muslim countries on occasion (ibid, 60-61). Some of the MCB's affiliates would also become involved in the government's Community Cohesion agenda.

Reflecting on this literature describing the rise of Muslim organisations a number of points require emphasising. Within the period of a decade, from 1994 and by 2003, the British government had gone from advising Muslims that they required a united representative body to participate in political processes, to a position in which such a Muslim group and others had been created. Those groups also became part of foreign delegations and regular consultation partners with ministerial departments involved in the creation of relevant public policy. But this was also the consequence of a string of events that began with the Rushdie affair. A section of British Muslim society had united to protest against Satanic Verses, surprised the British establishment, and prompted the government to oppose and then eventually engage with the newly recognised Muslim constituency. But to 'deal' with a minority in this way a representative body needed to be created and thus the government was

instrumental in the creation of the MCB. This echoes the themes discussed in the section on the emergence of multiculturalism; the British government's approach to Muslim identification reflected the way in which it began to use group identities as a vehicle for policy relating to ethnic minority communities from the 1960s onwards.

This takes us to another question; if government is playing a major role in creating group-identities of minorities, to what extent are such groups and their attendant ethnic and cultural 'leaders' institutional constructions? Bringing together the research of Ansari (2003) and McLoughlin (2005) it seems that not only were national Muslim organisations never substantially representative of Muslim society in Britain, but that those national organisations never did claim such a position as legitimate representatives. What we see instead is a symbiotic relationship between organisations and the government, who may both derive further legitimacy by engaging with each other.

To complicate matters for both parties yet further, this relationship between Muslim groups and government would have to be forged in a political environment which was increasingly suspicious of Muslim beliefs and activity. The Rushdie Affair marked the first widespread fear among British commentators that its Muslim population might indeed share very different values to its other citizens, not necessarily supportive of freedom of expression (see Appiganessi and Maitland 1990, 77-128). This fear of Muslim values 'invading' British life prompted what Parekh (2006) has called the 'Muslim Question', a dilemma of how to solve the problems faced by and posed by Britain's and indeed Europe's Muslim population. He argues that there is an increasing anxiety around Muslims based on the idea that they have failed to integrate into society as well as their immigrant counterparts.

There are of course structural anxieties which underpin the anxiety about values; government statistics suggest that Muslim migrants to the UK in general suffer from greater social deprivation, lower educational achievement, poorer health and poorer living conditions (ODPM 2006, 38). However Parekh (2006) also cites two types of value issues which put Muslims on the opposing side

of liberalism: gender equality and freedom of expression. On gender equality British Muslim society is believed to be still struggling to allow all Muslim women to work in all sectors of the economy, and to marry who they would like and dress without conservative restrictions (ibid). Gender equality concerns also centre on the conservative and sometimes virulently homophobic views expressed by some Muslims. On freedom of expression beyond the Rushdie affair, the protests around the publications of cartoons satirising and mocking the Prophet Mohammed and the assassination of Theo van Gough for making a film highly critical of the Quran, both provoked protests and counter-protests and re-ignited debates around whether or not 'Muslim values' were compatible with 'Western' notions of liberal democracy. These anxieties also feed back into the debates around notions of belonging and citizenship cited earlier in this chapter. These specific anxieties over multiculturalism recall the politics of belonging for they mark out a distinctive 'other'. For Muslims living in the UK in particular, it raises questions about the balance of their identities and where their hybrid identities may sit within British society, as well as how they may be represented.

However, in the management of Muslim identities by government, a profound change has taken place in the last decade since 9/11. Whereas up to the latter part of the twentieth century the principal concern about Muslim immigrants was related to their cultural practices and values, as international terrorism by Muslim extremists in the West became more prominent in the twenty-first century, the concern around cohesion and integration became muddled with a more fundamental concern for the British government: the security of both the state and citizenry.

2.3.1 From Cohesion to Securitisation

Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and the mainstream. The failure of some to confront the horrors of forced marriage the practice where some young girls are bullied and sometimes taken abroad to marry someone they don't want to is a case in point....This hands-off tolerance has only served to reinforce the sense that not enough is shared. All this leaves some young Muslims feeling rootless. And the search for something to belong to and believe in can lead them to this extremist ideology. For sure, they don't turn into terrorists overnight. What we see is a process of radicalisation.

(Prime Minister David Cameron, speaking in Munich, 02/03/2011)

The speech given by David Cameron was regarded in the UK as the first sign of what a renewed policy on the cohesion of British society might look like under his new coalition government. But as such, the speech had within it, two striking features. The first was the speech in its entirety was devoted to the 'problem' of Muslims in British society, failing to integrate, potentially as a threat; and partly about the reaction of the radical right towards this problem. Secondly, and equally controversially, the narratives of two different phenomena were being combined, conflated even. Terrorism was seen to be linked intrinsically to the failures of multiculturalism and community-cohesion policy.

But whilst this connection was being made in 2011, the relationship between cohesion or integration and terrorism was being speculated upon widely since 2001. It is difficult to understate the extent to which the attacks on the Twin Towers in New York on the 11th September 2001 have impacted upon discourses of Muslims living in the West. The 'Muslim Question' referenced in the previous section has arisen partly from the spectre of Islamic extremism. For some such as Abbas (2005b) and Cesari (2010) 9/11 specifically has provided the impetus for a revised reflection on attitudes of and towards Muslims living in the US and Europe. But in a British context it is also important to recall that the attacks took place following another major event; riots and disturbances in three British towns in the summer of 2001 less than two months prior to the terrorist attacks. Both these major events asked questions of the security of the UK from internal and external threats. This section will explore how

the UK has shifted its approach to minorities and Muslims in particular, away from idealistic notions of racial equality multiculturalism, to one based on a supposedly more pragmatic or rational approach based on the evaluation of risk. Until now literatures on risk and governance have not been discussed in relation to the governance and management of minority communities. But this section will demonstrate how governance and security literatures can inform debates around the governance of Muslims in the UK, amid the emergence of the terrorist threat.

2.3.2 Security and the Logic Of Risk

In the days following the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington DC meetings began to take place in the White House Situation Room that were dedicated to imagining further terrorist scenarios. Taylor (2007 cited in De Goede 2008, 156) gives examples of some of the scenarios discussed; what if the New York Reservoir was poisoned? What if a private plane was to fly into a nuclear reactor? These attempts to find the worst case scenarios through the imagination of nightmares and the need make preparations for any eventuality, seem to be grounded in a specific logic of risk and security, the threats to which were heightened after the 9/11 attacks. A terrorist incident of the same magnitude would after all pose a degree of threat to the authority of the state. However, to demonstrate the logical extremities of risk ideology Beck cites a more extreme example of society's increasing need to anticipate distant dangers. He writes about how the US Congress in 2001 appointed a commission to explore ways in which nuclear-waste sites might be marked as dangerous in such a way that any society in 10,000 years time would be able to recognise those symbols. Homer's epics, markings at Stonehenge and the Bible were studied, anthropologists were utilised to suggest symbols that might remain universal and linguists were asked to contribute their expertise on whether or not any of our known languages may survive for so long (Beck 2002, 40). The Commission unsurprisingly concluded however that any communication over a period of 10,000 years would not be guaranteed to work (ibid, 40).

For Ulrich Beck (1992) the risk society is a particular product of modernity. Society, he argues reaches a stage where the struggle for 'daily bread' loses its urgency, and instead the actions that society has used to modernise and industrialise, in themselves create a plethora of new destructive forces (1992, 20). Thus the intensely personal risk for sustenance is overshadowed by impersonal global dangers. The distribution of these new risks is uneven, and not predictable, and yet the state has modernised sufficiently to design instruments with which to manage those risks. This management in itself can subsequently pose new risks and through this cycle of risk management we move towards the 'new modernity' which Beck (1992) alludes to in the title of his influential book. As Ekberg (2007) notes, the phenomena usually alludes to potentialities of high impact but low probability. Implied within the logic of risk is the notion that security should always be the foremost concern of any state. This conception in some ways reverses the liberalising trajectory of the state to an entity more resembling that which was described by Thomas Hobbes (1651/1962). Hobbes's now famous treatise used the notion of a social contract to argue that since citizens would only be protected from the barbarism of nature due to the existence of the state. They would therefore owe their lives to the state, and the state would legitimately hold the supreme power which was necessary to protect its citizens.

According to de Goede (2008, 161-162) we are seeing a return to the logic of such protectionism, and this is being driven by the mistaken belief that a zero-risk scenario is possible, due to the imaginative technologies that states now have to ensure our safety. In reality however, risk is not real, in that it does not exist as a fact. Rather the word 'risk' indicates the mere potential for something to occur. As Beck himself surmises:

Risks are not „real“, they are „becoming real“. At the moment at which risks become real – for example in the shape of a terrorist attack – they cease to be risks and become catastrophes.

Ulrich Beck (2006, 332)

Nonetheless as society has advanced we have increasingly discovered methods with which to assess 'risks' and counter them. The terrorist risk since 9/11 has become one of those risks most

prominently debated in American and European societies in particular. Narratives of 'new terrorism' play on the sleeper-cell scenario, and the idea that terrorists can operate independently to secure funding, lie low and then strike without any pre-warning (Ericson 2007; Salter 2008 cited in de Goede 2008, 162). This atmosphere of fear too contributes to the justification of increased state power and increasing numbers of supposedly 'exceptional circumstances' which allow security instruments of the state to yield more power than would otherwise be acceptable (Agamben 2005).

Beck's assertion that these processes have contributed to a new 'Risk Society' might be considered a somewhat sweeping argument. Hilary Rose (2000) argues, with some justification, that pre-risk society threats such as natural disasters, disease and hunger still threaten far greater numbers of the world's population than those associated with technological and social advancement. Indeed, there are a multitude of hazards and risks that are not created by modernity, but indeed alleviated by modern technological instruments. However, whilst the concept of ubiquitous global risk-society might be overstated, risk society discourse speaks particularly strongly with regards to the *management* of the terrorist risk. This is something Beck himself has emphasised in a reflective piece ten years after the publication of *Risk Society* (1992) and shortly after 9/11. In this reflection Beck (2002, 45) argues that technological advancement has made spectacular acts of terrorism possible and that this sort of terrorism is also dependent upon the associated advancements in communications and finance. Much of Beck's paper is dedicated to what he refers to as the 'politics of risk society', or how he claims that hegemonic powers (of the US in particular) are being relayed through a newly globalized set of politics, which itself is threatening producing new risks. This notion seems somewhat polemical and generalised, and doesn't appear to appreciate the significance of global alliances prior to the industrial revolution which shaped international relations in a pre-electronics era.

But where Beck (2002) is on steadier ground and where the literature will have direct relevance to this study is his citation of John Dewey and his reference to the rise of expertise. Dewey (1954) in his book *The Public and its Problems* wrote of how political decisions themselves matter much less than

the consequences and resultant subsequent risks that those decisions create. Those very risks can come to define a policy. To find a more thorough explanation of what Beck means by this we must return to his original thesis (Beck 1992). Beck (1992, 57-58) argues that the use of science in a technological society to determine hazards and risks, supposedly objectively, defers power to 'experts'. These experts give the veneer of rationality to the logic of risk, believing it to be calculable and thus tangible.

The world he argues is thus divided into experts and non-experts on any particular subject. The experts create policy, and their expertise ensures that criticisms of those policies are attributed to a problem of information. What this use of experts also does is remove the onus of decision-making from elected officials, placing it instead into the procedures and practices of other actors, including non-state actors. This reliance on experts will be discussed in the empirical sections of this project which investigate the ways in which government is using counter-terrorism policy devised by experts to challenge 'radicalisation' of young Muslim men in Birmingham and elsewhere in the UK. Whereas Beck (2002) and Mythen and Walklate (2008) take an extremely broad view of the way in which American and British foreign policy and its corporate and financial supports create the risks against itself, in the form of terrorism, this study will look in greater empirical detail at how 'expertise' in alleviating risk and democratic representatives connect and collide in the production of counter-terror strategy at a local level.

2.3.3 Governmentality and Social Control

The literature on Risk Society may demonstrate how the logic of risk has begun to shape discourses on security and terrorism, but there is another body of literature on governance and governmentality that also has the potential to inform debates around counter-terrorism strategy and its impact on Muslims. The value of this set of literature lies in in-depth analysis of the very practices of

government and the art of decision-making which shapes policies as much as the ministerial directions from which they initially arise.

It is instructive to recall Foucault's famous treatise on the evolving shape of penal power in Europe, *Discipline and Punish* (1975). Foucault charts the changes in the governance of prisons from a period where punishment was used as a means to control conduct, towards a situation where 'disciplining' took its place. Early in his book Foucault describes in gruesome detail the execution of a man who plotted to assassinate King Louis XIV of France. He then recounts how brutal forms of punishment intended to scare citizens into moderating their behaviour had died out, and instead of the machinery of justice being focused on the physical body of an individual, it was increasingly targeted towards a person's supposed soul. The method of delivering this disciplinary system would be less crude and brutal, but ruthlessly efficient and all-encompassing. It was predicated on the idea that individuals could be trained to moderate their behaviour, and if they were vulnerable to an institutional gaze, eventually they would be trained to monitor and regulate themselves. Foucault depicted the disciplinary society as one which was more subtle in its exercise of power, yet no less effective for it.

However the disciplinary society too has become an outdated model of governance due to its relatively simplicity. In fact both the society of discipline and the society of punishment share an idea which has become derivative; that there is a clear separation and boundary between the state and citizenry, the sources of power and those subject to it. In his later work Foucault (1979) increasingly rejects this separation and moves towards describing what may be termed as 'post-disciplinary' modes of control. Although there is no universal definition of what post-disciplinary governance is, there are several elements to such a society, all of which are relevant to the governance of Muslim communities investigated in this project. The elements include the rise of neo-liberalism, the attempted shrinkage of the state and the use of actors who work in between traditional boundaries of 'state' and 'citizenry'. As Johnson summarises:

Foucault's concept of governmentality rejects the notion of the state as a coherent calculating subject whose political power grows in concert with its interventions into civil society. Rather the state is viewed as an ensemble of institutions, procedures, tactics, calculations, knowledges and technologies, which together comprise the particular direction the government has taken; the residue or outcome of governing.

(Johnson 1993, 140)

'Spaces of flows', heterogeneous networks infusing the technological with the human, have replaced what we traditionally might have termed 'society' (Castells 1996, 407-459). Additionally, 'human society' itself or rather the citizenry in a globalised world is increasingly plural, and exists as part of fractured entities networked inconsistently between each other. Consequently, power is not sourced from a single agent, such as 'the government' or any almighty entity; rather power is distributed among a host of agents. Governance itself is looked upon as a set of process and practices and conduct, rather than as an outcome. On reflection, this evolution and distribution of power may be part of a rational result of having to keep social order in a multicultural, multi-faceted and diverse society. But it is also an ideological preference gleaned from neo-liberal thinking, which has sought to prove that traditional state-controlled policies which try to impact upon 'society' inevitably fail and are outdated and ineffective next to an approach which seeks to 'reponsibilise' and empower the citizen. This is more than a movement towards individual responsibility - the concept of 'community' has become an important territory of governance processes (Rose 1996; 2000b).

With power distributed, dispersed and emanating from new sources and 'communities' in such a radical manner, Foucault posited that there was a need for a new language to analyse government. The term governmentality combines government with 'mentality'. Dean (1999, 16) suggests that this 'mentality' reflects the generally unquestioned, collective thought that goes behind a particular way of governing. It is for this reason that governmentality is seen to be concerned with the 'how' of governance. How does a government seek to exercise power? How does it discipline? How does it choose its techniques and practices? Dean (1999, 20) lists another characteristic of governmentality which is of particular interest to this study: how the government might seek to frame the population

within 'apparatuses of security'. For Dean these apparatuses go beyond the traditional bounds of security infrastructure such as armies, police-forces and spies. Instead it can also involve health, education and other parts of the welfare state. But underpinning this particular facet of governmentality is the idea that governing is ultimately an action which is the best interest of the happiness and wealth of its population:

Rather than replacing discipline or sovereignty, the modern art of government recasts then within this concern for the population and its optimisation (in terms of wealth, health, happiness, prosperity, efficiency), and the forms of knowledge and technical means to appropriate it

(Dean 1999, 20).

As we will see further in this thesis, the new dynamics of power in post-disciplinary society affects governance, particularly in relation to matters of security. The use of third-sector and private actors plays a significant role in the delivery and creation of both 'soft' and 'hard' approaches to counter-terrorism, and the methods employed by agencies and organisations then have a knock-on effect on Muslim identities. But to analyse these developments the new post-disciplinary society requires careful examination of relationships between agencies and actors: an analysis of governance techniques and of the impacts of those techniques. These specific concerns are addressed in Nikolas Rose's much cited essay on governmentality in which he attempted to order the disparate strands of thought emerging after Foucault's lectures on the subject (Rose 2000). One particular delineation he seeks to make is that between inclusionary and exclusionary practices of control. For Rose, there are two 'families' of control strategies:

[first] those that seek to regulate conduct by enmeshing individuals within circuits of inclusion and [secondly] those that seek to act upon pathologies through managing a different set of circuits; circuits of exclusion.

(Rose 2000, 324)

Inclusive strategies offer continuous monitoring and optimising, and its logic is inherently found in a variety of networks all which add up to govern conduct in ways which might be banal and part of the everyday. Rose insists that such practices are misunderstood to be totalitarian when in fact they are not, nor do they seek to be (Rose 2000, 326). Rose stresses that such networks are involuntary and of low visibility but I would contend that these particular qualities are enhanced due to those bureaucratic policy-making networks being seen as or conflated with part of the 'democratic process'. In fact, as part of a democratic process they may not be perceived as strategies of control at all. Exclusionary processes on the other hand are focussed upon individuals who are simply too ill-equipped or dangerous to seek to integrate within the inclusionary circuits. They too are subject to control strategies but will be overtly problematised as non-citizens or failed citizens. Rose (2000, 330-331) gives examples of these; welfare dependants who are seen as lacking the competence to rise out of their situation and for whom the networks of social security are seen to no longer help them; those individuals who due to some level of incapacity cannot make responsible and 'rational' decisions to govern themselves, instead falling into 'uncivilised' traps of crime and drug-use (Rose 2000, 331). This thesis will later use the case-study to explore whether we can use the constructs of 'inclusive' and 'exclusive' control strategies to understand counter-terrorism in Birmingham. However, it is important to appreciate that just as governmentality theory stresses that post-disciplinary techniques are predicated on ensuring the *safety and prosperity* of their citizens, so too are Rose's strategies of control.

This takes us back to the ideas discussed earlier in the chapter which explored how the logic of risk-based approaches to policy has emerged in advanced liberal societies to ensure safety and security. More specifically to this project, it is the terrorism risk that has become the underpinning logic around which relationships between the state and Muslim communities are becoming moulded.

2.3.4 Towards the securitisation Of Muslim Identity?

The final concept to be referenced in connection to this literature review is that of securitisation. This project will refer to 'securitisation' as the logic of security that has come to shape relations with Muslim individuals, 'communities' and representatives. This final section of the literature review asks if and how the concept of securitisation can assist in the analysis of our case study and how the governance of Muslims based on risk feeds back into the discussions of belonging and identity with which this chapter began. It must however be acknowledged that the word 'securitisation' has been used by authors without making reference to securitisation as a concept within the field of International Relations (IR). For instance, Brown (2010) makes reference to the perception of Muslims as a potential threat and to counter-terrorism legislation to argue that a securitisation is taking place. But she does so with no direct reference to securitisation within IR. Bleich (2009) refers to similar dynamics in Western Europe but again without engaging with IR theory.

The concept of securitisation has existed within the field of IR since the 1990s (see Buzan et al 1998). It derived from the Copenhagen school of International relations (IR) theory which has shifted the emphasis of IR towards the social sphere. The Copenhagen School is at the forefront of post-structuralist approaches to IR and as such it has predictably been prominent within debates about the direction of the discipline. The influential Harvard-based professor Stephen Walt (1991, cited in Hansen 1997) for instance has warned against the seductiveness of post-structural approaches which he has characterised as lacking in rationality and as one that eschews the realist approaches to IR which he sees as being derived from rational thought. The securitisation school however rather than taking a realist approach to security, believe that security and insecurity (like the conception of 'risk') are fundamentally constructions. There is a similarity here between the post-structural approach to IR and Beck's Risk Society; both are predicated on the notion that faith in scientific and rational principles in protecting society or providing security is overstated. Instead as Hansen (1997, 371-372) suggests, postmodern IR theory is less about examining subjects and objects of power; instead it focuses on how practices, culture and linguistics helps construct those very dynamics, and most

importantly, the politics lying beneath those processes. Similarly Beck's Risk Society involves analysing the cultural, social and political logic that lies behind governance of society.

This takes us to the matter of explaining what securitisation is in the field of IR. According to the Copenhagen School of IR, security itself is a self-referential process. There does not have to be any existential threat to a state, but the very framing of an issue within a security context itself turns the issue into one of security. The act of securitisation firstly requires an actor, the object of securitisation. Secondly, it requires a subject, an 'other' who will be the target of the securitisation act. And thirdly it requires an audience to whom the act of securitisation must be justified by claiming that whatever threat exists is existential. It is this very framing of an issue as one related to security which finalises the act of securitisation. The framing of the issue is described as a 'Speech Act' (Buzan 1998, 25-26).

One might ask a legitimate question as to what the difference is between securitisation and risk management. Risk management too may involve identifying an issue as being a potential threat and executing actions to alleviate that threat. Van Munster (2005, 8) tackles this very question by highlighting three key differences between security and risk management (Figure 2). His argument is that securitisation is in effect a more extreme step than risk management: one which makes clear steps to 'othering' a threatening object, one which is not preventative and one which might justify taking exceptional measures. Securitisation therefore has the potential to turn traditionally social, environmental or economic issues into matters of security. However van Munster's delineations cannot deliver complete clarity. One may argue that there are various circumstances in which it can be highly contested as to whether or not the state sees an 'other' individual or community as an enemy. Take for example the de-radicalisation project dubbed 'Channel' (see Chapter 6). The Channel project seeks to target individuals who are thought to be radicalising yet who have committed no crime. It marks them out for special surveillance and gives them the opportunity to engage in mentoring to become 'de-radicalised', or to face constant forms of monitoring. One can query if this programme manages risk or securitises by asking whether the de-radicalisation program

represents a normal measure, or an exceptional measure. Similarly can we say that the state does not deem the individual as an enemy simply because they have offered a form of engagement – despite the fact that engagement in the de-radicalisation project is entirely on the terms of the state actors? Whilst van Munster’s model is useful to reflect upon, it cannot provide unequivocal answers to real-world problems.

	Securitisation	Risk Management
Representation of threat	Friend/Enemy opposition and personification of the enemy.	Friend/Enemy Continuum and correlation of factors liable to produce risk.
Measures/ strategy	Exceptional measures that bypass normal political procedures; measures counteract existential threat.	Normal measures such as surveillance and risk profiling; measures contribute to the social control of large populations.
Objective	Elimination of threat; the elimination of a threat secures the collective survival of a socio-political order.	Management of risks against the background of uncertainty and contingency; risk management seeks to prevent risks from developing into existential threats.

Fig. 2 Differences Between Securitisation and Risk Management Securitisation (van Munster 2008, 8)

Cesari (2009) and Brown (2010) have both written on the effect of securitisation on Muslim populations specifically. Whilst neither has engaged with the Copenhagen School literature on securitisation, this does not necessarily discredit their arguments. Cesari (2009) describes securitisation as an atmosphere in which security practices have been widened in relation to Muslim populations due to the threat of terrorism. She argues that the threat posed by Muslims in Europe is smaller than the measures targeted at Muslims would suggest. But she also makes the point that new security measures have gone hand-in-hand with renewed debates and even laws on immigration policies, particularly in France, Spain and the Netherlands, leading to those debates becoming securitised (ibid, 9-10). On the other hand Brown (2010, 176) provides an analysis of the ways in which Muslim communities are being problematised by the UK’s counter-terror strategy

called the CONTEST agenda. Brown (2010) specifically talks about the 'othering' process of the strategy, part of which identifies Muslim populations in order to direct policy specifically to target them, as a security issue. This is a crucial point; both the theories of securitisation and Rose's (2000, 321) governmentality-based critique of government and control implicitly target part of the population for management and thus make them potential 'Others'. Brown (ibid) also connects this securitisation process to the issue of identity, (Brown 2010; 176). Brown observes that the UK government's counter-terror policies seek to distinguish between those kinds of Muslims who would make good citizens and those that might be seen as not being genuine citizens due to their extremism and radicalisation (ibid, 176). Brown also recognises that the UK government has itself made a link between questions of identity and the motivations of British Muslims to embrace extremism and practice terrorism (ibid, 177) and this is an issue which will be examined in greater depth within the empirical chapters of this thesis.

It is this 'othering' process that makes securitisation potentially dangerous, as this in turn can feed discourses of diametrically opposed groups in society, the protectors and the threats. This distinction is key to securitisation; as Archer (2009, 330) writes, the protectors become the 'we' who need to be protected from 'them', the threats, the others. Seen in this way we can link the literatures on identity and essentialisation with theories of securitisation. Securitisation is inherently reductionist, taking complex, hybrid identities and reconstructing them as being one half of a binary equation. In this equation the threats lie on the opposite end of society as a whole; the process of securitisation therefore marks out the different and dangerous within society. This discourse in itself can lead to greater discord and between vulnerable groups and society at large. Civil-liberties are also threatened by securitisation processes; Ohana (2007, 5) claims that a securitising actor restricting the rights of free citizens might be hailed as 'patriotic' if it is done in the name of security. Once again the restriction of liberty is not only in itself problematic, but can also contribute to greater societal tensions and potential disorder.

One of the key values of securitisation theory is that the links between security processes and identity are recognised as significant, even if the empirics behind them are seldom explored in depth. And this brings us to another gap in data and literature: a lack of understanding of the very spatial and bounded nature that security practices take. In literature that seeks to examine security policy primarily, whilst the concepts of 'identity' and 'otherness' of Muslim security targets are being discussed, there is little discussion of how these processes of othering and of identities being challenged are likely to be closely connected to spaces at a city or neighbourhood level. Peter Hopkins (2004, 2007, 2008) is a geographer who has looked extensively at young Muslim identities in Scotland, and he has made significant contributions to discussions around Muslim identity and urban space. Of particular interest is a study he carried out during a one year period which included the World Trade Centre Attack in 2001 (Hopkins 2008). Hopkins has used interviews and focus group data to show that young Muslims in Edinburgh were very aware of the negative perceptions of Muslims as being a societal risk (ibid; 16-161). Despite this he found that his participants carried hybrid identities and did not express any sense of conflict between their national (Scottish) identity and their Islamic faith (ibid).

Significantly, Hopkins also speculated that experiences of discrimination might have made Muslims in the deprived Pollokshields area of Edinburgh turn towards their local neighbourhoods to look for safety, thus creating place-attachment as resistance against exclusion (ibid; 190). Similarly this research project will discuss the possibility that localised identities can act as a counterweight to exclusion from British identity. Moreover Hopkins in his conclusion suggests that more work needs to be carried out to investigate how discourses of fear, terrorism and risk affect the identities of young Muslim men (ibid; 195). The case study that forms the basis of this piece of research can therefore be seen as a response to that research gap.

As the first empirical chapter will explore, Muslims in the UK and even in Birmingham are spatially concentrated and security policy is also targeted to focus on Muslim populations. But Muslim populations in for instance, inner-city Birmingham are shaped by very specific social, cultural and

economic processes. Their identities as British Muslims can only be understood in the context of those processes, and are also shaped by experiences within those spaces. Security actions therefore can have localised impacts upon how identity is experienced, how governing processes shape those experiences and how the heterogeneous Muslim identities come to be represented. For instance, a surveillance scheme targeting Muslims in Birmingham in the areas in which Muslims tend to live (see Chapter 7) would have localised impacts on how those areas are perceived, and it would therefore specifically challenge notions of identity, and belonging. Alternatively a social programme aimed at harnessing aspects of Muslim identity for a counter-terror programme (see Chapter 6), may speak very strongly about the representations and conceptions of Muslim identity among policy-making elites.

As this thesis will explore, there is a link between security practices and the debates around Muslim identity, and this link has a spatial dimension. The literature on identity demonstrates how we conceptualise difference and identify 'others' as a means of distinguishing ourselves from the outside world. This 'othering' is particularly stark in the case of Muslim communities in the UK and takes place within the historical context of Orientalism which has shaped our relationships with the so-called 'Muslim world'. This discourse has evolved rather than evaporated since the Rushdie affair, which has sparked debates alluding to a renewed separation and alleged incompatibility between 'western' and 'Islamic' culture. The nervousness of Muslims in the UK is further entrenched by the emergence of the threat of Islamic-inspired terrorism, which is now being tackled by UK security policy focussed on reducing that terrorist risk. But these policies too have their own impact on the identities and representations of the Muslims they target. The challenge for this thesis is to find a way in which these traditionally divergent issues might be examined in such a way as to flesh out those links, and give us an insight into the very ways in which Muslim identities in Birmingham are being impacted by British security policy.

Chapter 3:

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

If we are to educate a new era of urban geographers in qualitative approaches, our research and writings need to be much less opaque about the complexities and practicalities of method and methodology. The credibility of our research is at stake.

(Lees 2003, 108)

As the literature review demonstrated, there are several key themes to this study, identity, belonging, representation and security chief among them. Traditionally, these elements have usually been part of separate disciplines: identity and belonging are of interest to cultural theorists, social scientists, and psychologists; security often being of interest to international relations theorists, political scientists and criminologists; and the theme of governance cutting across all those disciplines. Yet as the literature review and the remainder of this thesis demonstrate, these concepts cannot be bound by discipline; both in everyday life and within theoretical reflections these discourses converge, conflict and often illuminate each other. At its core this thesis draws links between the strands of identity and belonging on one hand, and representation and security policy on the other. It seeks to investigate how policy and identity impact upon each other, whilst at the same time acknowledging the broader context of these interconnections. In order to achieve this, the research seeks to focus on these dynamics within one case study area, the city of Birmingham. This study also corresponds with what Burawoy (1998) described as the 'extended case method'. For Burawoy the extended case study is ethnographic in that it relies heavily on participant observation. It rejects the notion of objectivity yet does not reject the role of theory in advancing human

understanding of the world (Burawoy 1998, 5). This allows the ethnographer to draw connections between micro-level data macro-level processes (ibid).

To develop a robust approach to methodology and data-collection it can be useful to acknowledge criticisms of case-studies as a method. Flyvberg (2006) notes five common misconceptions about the use of case-studies and chief among them is the idea that case-studies cannot be generalised, allowing only for an investigation of one bounded example. Such criticisms of case studies which have also been voiced by Campbell and Stanley (1966 cited in Flyvberg 2006), Dogan and Pelassy (1990) and Diamond (1996), are based on the advocacy of a scientific approach to sociological and anthropological research. Non-modernist approaches to sociological research (alongside which this research sits), rather than seeking to construct evidence to test specific existing theories or create new ones, instead reflect, often retrospectively on the networks of power, agency and technology. The sociological and spatial components of this thesis cannot be treated in isolation. As Bruno Latour asks somewhat rhetorically:

What sort of world is it that obliges us to take into account at the same time and in the same breath, the nature of things, technologies, sciences, fictional beings, religions large and small, politics, jurisdiction, economies and unconsciousness? Our own of course.

(Latour 1993, cited in Kendall and Wickham 1996; 95)

The case-study can therefore be considered an appropriate method of inquiry so long as the resulting claims of the study do not over-reach to claim scientific deductions and truths that post-modern approaches epistemologically reject. However, challenges of method are also posed for the post-modern social scientist, for the complex assemblages of knowledge cannot be captured by a single approach, from a single perspective. For this reason, although ethnography and participant observation lie at the heart of this thesis, multiple methods of data-collection were employed to capture and construct data. Another dilemma for this specific project was how to gather useful data on identity and belonging of young Muslim men in Birmingham, given that pilot interviews found that young Muslim men unfamiliar with research processes might find it difficult to engage

effectively in standard interviews. The following sections will explain how ethnography, participant observation, walked interviews and more formal structured interviews all played a part in the data-collection process. But first the subject of positionality will be tackled.

3.2 Positionality in Ethnography and Participant Observation

At different points in the research process the qualitative and ethnographic researcher is constantly challenged in the field of research with regards to how he/she presents themselves (Cook 2005; Butz and Bessio 2004; Ganga and Scott 2006). Addressing issues of positionality is of particular importance in the use of qualitative and especially ethnographic research, elements of which form important parts of the method of this study.

The importance of considering positionality can be understood if we take a brief look at the history of ethnographic methods. Ethnographic methods concentrate on research depth as opposed to width, to dig deeper into issues than what may only be apparent immediately from any data collection. The method has been used extensively by social scientists since the 1930s (Adler and Adler 1987), and it purports to offer a 'view from the ground' as researchers embed themselves within researched communities. However, the notion of such embedded ethnographic research was not unprecedented even in the 1930s; indeed, ethnography has been used in more primitive forms since the colonial dawn of Geography as a discipline to study communities, tribes and places, usually in a non-Western or non-European context (Clifford 1988; Marcus and Fischer 1986). In both colonial and post-colonial approaches to the study of 'other' communities and places, one could read the juxtaposition between binary forces presented in the research, between the colonisers and colonised, powerful and powerless, white and black, rich and poor (Mullings 1995). Invariably and inevitably, the researcher's own personal background and experience would result in research being communicated through a masculine, white, coloniser lens.

What this narrative of colonial-era ethnography highlighted is the problem of positionality; the view from the ground does not necessarily provide a more 'truthful' insight, because the very lens through which the research subjects are seen was tinted if not tainted. Similarly, Jacobs (1993, 828) asserts that there has been a tendency to anthropologise studies into urban areas. Qualitative approaches, both in Western and non-Western cities have still tended to focus on the exotic 'other' and just as colonial geographers may have rushed to find distant and culturally diverse communities and tribes to write about, modern researchers have sometimes been chastised for their own willingness to look for supposed outcasts in more familiar urban territory, closer to home. Fox (1973, cited in Hannerz 1980, 2) described anthropology's shift into the urban setting as an "undignified scramble to find substitute savages in slums". 'Ghettos', ethnic groups and racial groups or sub-groups have been identified and studied and whilst these groups may have been under-represented in research, ethnographers can fall into the trap of attempting to accrue evidence of dysfunction and deprivation or alternatively solidarity and resistance.

Whilst the pitfall of 'exoticisation' still exists, the key difference between early qualitative approaches to researching urban areas and more recent approaches is that analyses tend to go beyond description, to interpretation and a search for meaning. On the heels of ethnographic methods, there has also been an increased recognition of the importance of symbols and representation of spaces. This is furthered by then investigating how social, cultural and political processes would have developed and interacted in order to produce the apparent nature of the particular city or space. All of this provides a more in-depth and comprehensive analysis based on a broadly ethnographic approach. Nonetheless the danger of exoticisation and the undermining of the agency of young Muslims as a minority group is still a concern.

In this study specifically, my positionality as a researcher was complicated by my own Indian-Muslim heritage which was enquired about by many Muslim interviewees. As some might expect this heritage did not automatically confer to me 'insider' status. And yet rather than shying away from the methodological challenges that were encountered, it is useful practice to reflect on these

difficulties. This reflexivity can provide the thesis with a certain transparency (Rose 1997). As Moss asserts,

Self-scrutiny, individual and collective can contribute to a better understanding of and provide a clearer insight into who we are and where our world has come from.

(Moss 2001, 9)

I would contend that it is simply not possible to maintain a normative or neutral stance towards the insider/outsider conundrum. No ethnographic research can be value-free or 'objective' (Sherif 2001, 436). As discussed in Chapter 2, identities are not fixed but fluid constructions (Hall 1992; 1996; Bondi 1993) and this applies for the researcher as well as the researched. Whereas research based upon post-structural approaches shuns the idea of revealing and exposing, it encourages exposure and revelation of the self – a notion Cook et al (2007) describe as de-fetishisation. At this point I should 'reveal' that although I am not religious, I have a culturally Muslim background, and my upbringing has ensured that I have a good grasp of Islamic theological beliefs and practices. Indeed, my Muslim background has prompted my interest in Muslim identities and the way they are conceptualised by society more broadly.

However this background knowledge and experience of being raised as a British and dare I say 'Brummie' Muslim does not automatically give me insider status when interviewing young Muslim men. In fact, my religious heritage coupled with my religious non-practice can provide difficulties negotiating the boundary between insider and outsider. Sherif (2001) wrote about the difficulties of non-religious practice as a nominal 'Muslim' in researching within Muslim environments, and the tendency to be criticised for not observing religious rituals that many Muslims might see as compulsory to claim to be a Muslim. My research with young Muslims and Muslim community leaders was sometimes fraught with similar complications. Some Muslim participants who were usually community leaders or familiar with academics of higher education, saw me as part of a wider Muslim group or a Muslim professional class. In a subtle example of religious performance, Muslim greetings would be exchanged by participants and language including words like 'alhamdulillah'

(thanks to Allah) and 'insha-allah' (Allah-willing) would be used by participants and I reciprocated politely with similar greetings and religiously-inspired words of goodwill. In more overt cases I was asked to pray with participants. As someone from a Muslim background I found it easy to slip into such a role where such acts of religious observation were expected, and I found that it generally helped participants feel free to express themselves in my presence.

However, this is not always the case; Mohammed (2001, 109-110) for instance notes that during her research with Pakistani Muslim women, presenting herself as an outsider gave interviewees the confidence that information about them and their families would be safe. However, within this study I found that it helped communicate that I wasn't a threat, and that they could perform their Muslim identities linguistically and be understood. Some of the most candid statements respondents made, particularly around the Prevent agenda (Chapter 6), might not have been heard had respondents not felt so at ease, or if they had not felt that I was somehow on 'their side'. From the opposite perspective, just as the researcher might be consciously or otherwise assessing the position of the research participant, often the research participants were also curious as to my position. This is not a dynamic that only impacts upon researchers and interviewees – it also has an effect on Muslims working with each other within government programmes. The following is a statement by a Muslim interviewee involved in the Prevent agenda about working with other Muslims using faith-based approaches to their work, which as a researcher I can relate to:

I had instances where (Muslim colleagues) would start mentioning that „they were in this together“ and other vague comments that I would have experienced in the Islamic Society at University – they would say that they know „what the real agenda is“. There is this conspiracy theory overlap that you are supposed to know what the language is. So for example, „we know that they are against us so we are supposed to be in this thing together“ But what is being together? Are we on the same hymn sheet?

(Layla, Interviewee, 15/05/2009)

This demonstrates that positionality is interesting to more than just academics; it is something that participants too are constantly considering and evaluating. During the research process particular

difficulties with positionality were experienced especially in relation to investigating the Prevent programme. Chapter 6.7 in particular details my experiences at a Prevent programme-funded residential for young Muslim males. During this stay every young participant, their elder mentors and youth-workers all took part in a number of religious rituals. These included prayers five times during the day, fasting and classes of religious instruction. My familiarity with these faith-based practices allowed me to blend in with the group, observing the fasting and religious communal practices with the rest of the group. The motivation for taking part was to ensure that those around me felt comfortable with my presence, but it also ensured that some of the participants perceived me as an insider – as one of them. This led to some participants making some very blunt and honest statements about their approach to the Prevent programme (see Chapter 6.4-6.6). But it also provided an ethical dilemma; did my actions constitute to acting or misrepresenting myself for the sake of more data collection? After all, when interviewing policy makers from the city-council to the West Midlands police, my approach would be markedly different, allowing myself to come across as politically and academically informed. And it would be different still when interviewing young Muslims, where I was particularly keen not to come across in any way as pretentious; I noticed too during interview transcription that my rhythm of talking in these interviews had changed, almost unconsciously. My sentences were shorter, my language relatively colloquial.

Critics of ethnographic and other ‘deep’ qualitative approaches might argue that complexities in positionality such as those cited above undermine the ‘objectivity’ of such methods (Spano 2006; Wilson 1977). On the contrary I would contend that the idea of research taking place upon a blank state is an illusion. As the sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) contended, in social situations we become actors, aware of the signals we emanate from our words and actions, adapting our behaviour from one social stage to another. Analogous to the Heisenberg principle, by observing the field, one inevitably alters it. These observer effects cannot be negated (Monahan and Fisher 2010) but as Sidaway (2000, 266) has suggested, critical reflection and reflexivity not just at the point of analysis but also whilst within the research field, is useful to provide a challenge to counter the

negative manifestations of research interaction, as well as providing a reminder to the researcher to use accountable and ethical approaches to their investigations.

3.3 Method

The specific methods employed in this project needed to capture two key strands of data. First it was necessary to investigate young Muslim male identity 'on the ground' as it were, which would provide a platform from which to judge institutional treatment of Muslims in Birmingham. Secondly the research method needed to capture the impacts of counter-terror policies on the identities of young Muslim men in the city. The first is a bottom-up approach aimed at manoeuvring around preconceptions of young Muslim men. It seeks to approach questions of belonging and identity, in isolation from the counter-terror agenda. The second is a top-down approach aimed at analysing how governmental institutions would perceive and then attempt to impact those self same men and their identities.

Before proceeding it is important to recall the literature review and the idea that identity is inescapable and in scope almost incalculable, due to its fluidity and the multiplicity of its dimensions. This raises the question as to what aspects of Muslim identity this thesis would seek to evidence and how the evidence could be gathered. The initial plan was to collect traditional interviews with young Muslim men in the city after a period of deep ethnographic research which would allow interviewees to feel comfortable in the presence of the interviewer. However, following initial contact with potential interviewees and informal discussions on identity and belonging, two problems were identified. Firstly it was feared that younger participants and particularly those not familiar with academic research, might not feel comfortable enough to express themselves about the deeply personal issues of identity. Secondly, being aware of how so many aspects of Muslim identity might be missed if interviews were conducted 'traditionally', I was also anxious to ensure that elements of everyday life and behaviour were captured with regards to the young Muslim participants. The importance of acknowledging the importance of everyday life was emphasised by Michel de Certeau

(1984), who was influential in shifting the focus of some urban geographers towards the study of everyday practices. In particular de Certeau emphasised the importance of mobility in capturing those everyday experiences, writing that:

...the act of walking is to the urban system, what the speech is act is to language or the statements uttered.

(de Certeau 1984; 97)

To de Certeau, the reality of cities has been camouflaged by thinking of cities as a single, static and panoramic text. He argues that the city cannot be read if it is removed from the obscure interlacing of everyday behaviour. He contends that in order to touch upon the reality of city life one has to look at the city, not from the top of what was the World Trade Centre, but from the hustle of the streets below:

The ordinary practitioners of the city live „down below“, below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk – an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers. (They) make use of spaces that cannot be seen...the paths that cross in this intertwining, unrecognised poems in which each body is an element signed by many others, elude legibility. The networks of these moving intersecting writings compose a manifold story that neither author or spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces; in relation to representations, it remains daily and indefinitely, other.

(De Certeau 1984, 93)

The importance of mobile research methods in getting at 'richer' urban experiences goes beyond the analysis of direct physical contact between human actors; the networks de Certeau speaks of are both performative and psychological. Movements to de Certeau are writing, and walking is poetry. As human subjects come into contact with each other, the writings as performed and imagined by the individual subjects intertwine and collide to form new writings, new memories and new histories. Casey (2001; 684) goes beyond speaking of human networks to argue that people and place are co-ingredients, and spaces themselves are intrinsically and inseparably part of human identity. He points out that in contemporary philosophical thought there is no neat way of distinguishing between

people and places. For Casey, places are not stages but are mediums that structure and facilitate human existence. Moreover, they are an *outcome* of thought, action and practices of humans (ibid; 683-684). Furthermore, as humans experience places, they form memories and experience feelings. These feelings, according to Casey (ibid) are then transcribed back onto those particular places, which then begin to embody those characteristics.

Methodologically it was important to capture these practices and the memories, histories and imaginations and their intertwining. For this reason it was decided that to supplement the ethnographic participant observation, a form of walked interview would be the favoured method of more formal interview with research participants. As part of this method, respondents were asked to give an interview in an area of the city in which they were the most comfortable and where they could demonstrate aspects of their everyday lives. All but three of the twenty interviewees who were consulted using this method chose their immediate residential neighbourhoods as the places where they would be comfortable. The interviews were recorded on Dictaphones worn around the neck of a participant, to capture their voice clearly amidst the sometimes loud hubbub of the street. This tended to work well with the exception of one incident in which an interviewee, having bumped into a friend towards the end of the interview, fiddled with the device and deleted the interview file. In this instance field-notes were written up to compensate.

With the growth of the new mobilities paradigm (Sheller and Urry 2006) much has been written about the advantages of walked interviews. For those specifically interested in place it gives a detailed picture into the way human interactions with the environment take place (Solnit 2001; Kusenbach 2003). During most of the walked interviews it was clear that the technique was having the effect of empowering the participant. The participant was able to wield a degree of power shaping the walk as he pleased; his knowledge of the area in comparison with the researcher's relative outsider status allowed him to express himself more confidently. In their typology of walking interviews Evans and Jones (2011, 850) describe this particular type of method, with the route chosen by the participant as a 'participatory walking interview'. This method brought to life

interesting and relevant details about the everyday life of participants; in the inner-city neighbourhoods every single walked interview participant during the interview perchance encountered a friend with whom he was able to exchange greetings, talk and sometimes introduce the interviewer. On one occasion it was noted that an interviewee was interrupted eight times during his 54 minute walk by passers-by and he was by virtue of this contact, able to arrange a football game with his friends. Through this observation the importance of neighbourhood spaces to the social life of this participant became apparent.

A criticism of this approach might be that in ascertaining the tropes of identity and senses of belonging, by providing the stimuli of local place, the conversation would tend spatially towards the local as opposed to national or transnational aspects of identity and belonging. I would counter this with two points; first this thesis partly aims to capture facets and dynamics of belonging and identity of young Muslim men that have been sidelined. Indeed this research does emphasise the fact that in discussions around Muslim identity in Britain, the 'local' is often ignored in favour of pre-figured debates around Britishness and Muslim 'culture'. Secondly, the walked interview method was part of a wider set of methods which helped triangulate data; a number of other data-gathering exercises took place including in-situ participant observation at youth centres, an all-day workshop on identity and interviews with youth workers for their perspective on issues of Muslim youth.

Between February 2009 and September 2010 and following initial conversations and contact with respondents, twenty in depth interviews were conducted with young Muslim men between the ages of 18 and 30. As the nature of the ethnographic research conducted emphasises research depth over breadth, it is not possible to engineer a completely 'representative' sample of Muslims in the city, yet efforts were still made in order to ensure both a geographically and socially diverse set of individuals took part in the research project. The interviewees were recruited largely through access to youth and community groups in three areas of Birmingham: Lozells, Washwood Heath and Sparkhill. This also allowed for an even spread of interviewees geographically, from a number of neighbourhoods in Birmingham with significant numbers of Muslim residents. However, to ensure that a diverse social

range of interviewees, five were also recruited through the city's universities. Full details of the residential areas and the employment backgrounds of the participants can be found in the appendix to this study. In addition 34 visits were made to youth and community sessions in areas of Birmingham's inner-city suburbs which have large Muslim populations. During these visits relationships were made with individuals who would then on occasion give formal interviews around notions of identity and belonging. These visits also allowed for participant observation and would usually take place on weekday evenings and lasting between one and two hours. To ensure that individuals beyond the reach of government-provided services were reached, religious groups and university Islamic societies were also asked to provide respondents. Emphasis was placed upon making initial contact with interviewees and developing a rapport with them prior to an interview taking place.

Whilst this thesis investigates young Muslim identity from the bottom-up, this focus is matched by a view from the top-down focussing on the politicisation of Muslim identity by governmental institutions. Data relating to counter-terror strategies relating to young Muslims was obtained principally through 13 in-depth interviews with policy-makers and practitioners. But information was also gathered through numerous local-authority and third-sector events and conferences related to the Prevent agenda. Twice I participated in Prevent-funded residential courses for young Muslim men, which took place over four days in August in both 2009 and 2010 (see Chapter 6.5). The interviews with policy-makers (including Muslims) were very different in nature to the walked interviews and participant observation with young participants. Richards (1996) and Cochrane (1997) both emphasise the importance of making the 'right impression' and gaining trust of local elites in obtaining rich data from those holding office or a position of responsibility or power. Interviews with these policy-makers were thus conducted generally in workplace and office settings, and were much more structured to elicit data relating to specific sets of policies and practices.

Finally, in exploring the impact of Project Champion on the city (see Chapter 7) I attended four public meetings on the scheme, four meetings of organisers of protests against the scheme, and on eight

occasions I accompanied protestors manning stalls where petitions against the scheme were being signed; this participant observation allowed me to gauge how Muslims in particular were reacting to the scheme once knowledge of its existence had become public. In analysing government approaches to young Muslims in a counter-terror context a number of policy documents were used, including some relating to Project Champion that were obtained following Freedom of Information requests. Field-notes were kept to ensure that pertinent conversations and happenings during meetings, events and field-visits would be recorded.

Chapter 4:

The Identities Of Young Muslim Men in Birmingham: Exposing The Disconnects

4.1 Reframing The Debate

From the literature review we can establish that due to prevailing political conditions there are faults with the ways in which Muslim identities are prevalently investigated and discussed. Chapters 1 and 2 demonstrated the extent to which Muslim identities in the UK are problematised and contested, in particular with regard to the identity of Muslim men. Chapters 6 and 7 will detail the politicisation and securitisation of Muslim identities in Birmingham as a result of counter-terror policy and its associated discourse. An analysis of the representation of Muslims through this pervasive lens of security is fundamental to the argument contained within this thesis. However, in order to contextualise and evidence such misrepresentation and explore their effects, it is essential that an analysis first takes place of the nature of Muslim identities on the ground, as it were, as well as an inquiry into how these were identities are constructed. This first empirical chapter seeks to do precisely that, in order to create a vantage point from which the more overtly 'political' elements of the research can be observed.

In order to make space for our new vantage point we must consider the merits and inadequacies of existing debates on Muslim identity. Current debates around British Muslim identity generally take place within two sets of contexts. The first is through the lens of security and terrorism, which since the September 11th Twin Towers attacks in New York and the London bombings in 2005 has resulted in Muslim communities in the UK being viewed with suspicion (Brown 2009; Abbas 2005; Allen 2009). The second is amid a background of fear that Muslims in the UK are less well integrated than other immigrants, a fear that was fed by a series of riots in Bradford and Oldham in 2001 (see official reports by Home Office 2001; Ouseley 2001 and response by Robinson 2008). The ensuing discourse

sparked by these events has covered a range of issues from the freedom and rights of Muslim women in the UK, the wearing of religious clothing, the role of faith schools and faith education in integration and the alleged segregation or ghettoisation of Muslim communities. These two contextual outlooks are also merged into one discourse by some (Cameron 2011) and connected to the supposed failures of multiculturalism. Furthermore, popular discourses in particular demonstrate a tendency to create binaries between perceived Muslim identities and an alternative 'British' identity. Driven by representations in the mainstream media, popular debates around young Muslims are often reduced to transparent tests of citizenship, which are all too often ill-defined to serve any purpose other than becoming part of a crude narrative setting out to exclude a section of British society from its collective identity. These narratives and their tendency towards hinting at potentially dangerous if not apocalyptic future provide certain glamour. The risk for researchers is that in evaluating the threat of terrorism or a lack of integration and policy directed at solving these issues, the gap that exists between those legitimate policy debates, and the reality of Muslim identity and organisation on the ground remains unexamined. If we ignore Muslim identities and experiences on the ground and the structural factors that have allowed them to develop, the danger is that existing discourse will be duplicated and reinforced. Sociological observations stand then to become problematised and politicised.

Although academics have started producing research which challenges narratives of alleged violence, separatism and segregation of Britain's Muslims, there is a tendency to set aside aspects of identity which are performed everyday and locally; yet their identities are partly dependent on those very practices which occur with specific places, and in this case, specific spaces in the city of Birmingham. Thus the chapter has two broad aims. Firstly it seeks to understand the structural factors, economic and social which underpin Muslim identities in the city. Secondly it seeks to demonstrate how structural factors have in turn shaped a variety of lived experiences which are spatially bound and for which the specific 'local' components are focal points for feelings of belonging and attachment. The findings emphasise at times the sheer ordinariness of young Muslim men in Birmingham; but they

also demonstrate how the identities of young Muslim men in Britain, who are routinely the targets of negative representation, are inherently bound up with the British spaces to which their loyalty is sometimes questioned. It seeks to set the tone for the research by demonstrating the disconnect between policy discourse and ground-level reality. It seeks to de-mystify Muslim identity and emphasise how Muslim identities in the UK are inherently 'British'.

4.2 Muslim Identities in Birmingham: The Structural Context

In summer the streets are deceptively green and leafy, and the houses stand back from the pavements; but ornate facades are crumbling, the paint peeling, and in many blocks the front gardens are beaten into flat areas of hard earth littered with broken bricks and glass....Unfamiliar cooking smells and loud music issue from the windows. Forty years ago people put on their best suits to cross the Stratford Road into this area. Now they avoid coming over unless it is absolutely necessary.

Rex (1967, 43-44) on Sparkbrook in inner-city Birmingham

Post-colonial narratives of the vast changes of Britain's urban landscape resulting from mass migration may already seem antiquated and somewhat irrelevant. However the above is a stark reminder of the dramatic shift in the ethnic make-up of areas in Birmingham since the post-war immigration boom. This boom had implications for migrant identities and has come to shape the ethnic landscape as it still exists today. The spatial concentrations of Muslims in Birmingham and their experiences of everyday life are inseparable from the structural economic and social processes that have formed those patterns and those experiences.

The basic pattern of large-scale immigration into the UK and into Birmingham began with migrants from the Caribbean and Indian subcontinent in the late 1950s. The late 1960s and 1970s saw a further wave of migrants arrive from Pakistan, and the 1980s then saw a similar wave of migrants

from Bangladesh. However if we are to ignore some of the smaller-scale migration that preceded the mass migration of the 1960s we might miss some important observations. By 1940 Sikhs immigrants from India and Muslim immigrants from the Yemen, all for them working as merchant seamen had begun to arrive in Cardiff to look for work (Dhaya 1974, 95). Dhaya writes of how the Ministry of Labour at the time directed them to Birmingham to satisfy the need for workers to do low-paid jobs in the city. Many ended up in Balsall Heath in the south and central parts of the city and by 1940 two of the Yemeni immigrants purchased an artisan cottage on Mary Street near Balsall Heath Road to establish the first mosque in Birmingham (ibid, 96). The majority of Muslims in the city today are from Pakistan and Bangladesh but the early arrival of the Yemeni community in the city ensured a head-start in developing community and religious infrastructure. Today, about half a mile away from that original mosque building, is the Muath Centre, a large cultural and religious Yemeni-run project housed in the buildings of an old grammar school on the very edge of the city-centre (Fig. 3). The Yemeni community might be outnumbered by other ethnic Muslim groups but they still retain a very visible presence, and offer services to the larger Muslim and non-Muslim communities. As we will see from interviews with a young British-Yemeni youth worker further on in this chapter, the shared history which has now located itself in one particular part of the city is an important part of the identity of young Yemenis.

A much larger wave of immigration followed two decades after those Sikh and Yemeni merchants arrived in Birmingham. By 1961 immigrants from the Caribbean and Indian subcontinent were beginning to settle in Edgbaston, Balsall Heath, Rotton Park (north Edgbaston), Sandwell, Moseley and King's Heath as well as around the Soho Road in Handsworth (Rex 1967, 47). The speed of the migration was such that by 1961 these areas all contained ethnic minority populations of over 25% (ibid, 47). Meanwhile Rex (ibid) was producing groundbreaking research by studying migrants in Sparkbrook in South-East Birmingham. Sparkbrook at this point only had a black and Asian population of 1068 from a total population of 15,035. By 1964 this had more than quadrupled to 4723 (ibid, 50).



Figure 3: The Muath Centre, A Yemeni-run community-centre and mosque in a 19th Century-build Grammar School in Sparkbrook

Rex's interviews with residents from English, Pakistani and Irish backgrounds captured the changes in social fabric of inner-city Birmingham during this period, explaining how the mass migration sparked suspicion, discrimination and fear among both the new arrivals and the multiple 'host communities'. The new arrivals on the whole this time were not well-travelled merchant traders. Instead they arrived from regions in which they are likely to have had a far less multicultural environment and are unlikely to have come into contact with the cultural diversity that they would now be living amongst. The result was that stereotypes were constructed of immigrant communities and host communities alike. In an interview with a Sparkhill resident (Rex 1974, 62) those stereotypes were reeled off; the Pakistanis described as lazy and unscrupulous landlords who kill chickens cruelly, the Jamaicans friendly and easygoing but with a tendency towards drugs and partying and the Irish prone to drunkenness, fighting and vandalism.

Research by Gale (2009, 8) shows that in this period of unpredictability and in an atmosphere of uneasy race relations, quite understandably perhaps, the new immigrants formed communities in residential clusters. Pakistanis were concentrated in Moseley, Sparkbrook, Small Heath and with the exception of Moseley which has been partly gentrified, large Pakistani communities remain in these areas today. Sikh migrants were concentrated towards the South of Balsall Heath and in Smethwick, the latter which is still an area with a large Sikh population. Muslim immigrants of Gujarati origin settled in Aston and Edgbaston, and from the research conducted in this study we can confirm that the largest numbers of Gujarati Muslims in Birmingham today can be found in Aston and neighbouring Perry Barr. Gujarati migrants weren't behaving as part of a homogenous 'black' or even Asian group. But nor were they clustering simply because of a Muslim identity, as the ethnographic data in this research reveals. Instead there was a certain tension between those Gujarati Muslims who had arrived directly from India and those who had arrived after residing in Malawi, Africa. A struggle for control of religious infrastructure ensued and in 1982 when the new large purpose-built mosque at the top of Trinity Road between Aston and Perry Barr opened (the mosque was originally named after the Iraqi President at the time Saddam Hussein who contributed financially towards its construction). The Malawi Gujarati Muslims retained their own mosque in old Victorian houses only a few hundred yards down the road. Both buildings still exist today and are in large part controlled by those same sections of the Gujarati Muslim community (Fig. 4 and 5). What is more, a third mosque is being built by another community of Indian Muslims from Bihar on the same side of the same road between these existing mosques.

What we have seen taking place are various forms of residential clustering, sometimes based on sub-categories of ethnicity. However this clustering occurred for various socio-economic reasons and cannot be reduced to notions of 'Muslim clustering' given the cultural and religious separations between Birmingham's Muslims, even for those emigrating from a single country or region. Just as Phillips et al (2007, 222-224) found in Leeds, clustering is a complex phenomenon driven by economic as well as socio-cultural factors. Furthermore the strength of division between younger

Muslims of various backgrounds in Birmingham does not seem to have the same currency with younger Muslims today, and is even mocked by some of this study's participants. Nevertheless those histories remain pertinent as they have helped create the Muslim religious infrastructure of the city. Not only does the evidence here demolish any idea of black-white duality when speaking of ethnicity in the city (Gale 2009, 9), the resilience of that ethnic clustering shows how historical patterns are relevant to the contemporary geography of the city. If Muslim communities from the Yemen, West Africa and West India retain heritage around certain hubs in the city, it demonstrates how belonging for Muslim migrants starts to develop. The retention of links through the communal use of particular spaces goes some way to explaining how the conceptions of particular spaces in the city as 'Asian spaces' or 'Muslim spaces' came to be understood.



Figure 4: Gujerati Indian-Muslim run 'Jame Masjid', previously called the Saddam Hussein Mosque, Trinity Road, Perry Barr



Figure 5: Just less than three-hundred yards away from the Jame Masjid, Indian Muslims from Malawi maintain their own mosque, also on Trinity Road, Perry Barr.

4.3 The Economics of Clustering

It has been suggested thus far that migration history and cultural attitudes shaped the way in which Muslims and other immigrants, as well as their spaces of cultural production, became conceived. However, those constructions were also formed by the economics of migration, or perhaps more accurately, the economics of migrant communities after they had arrived in Birmingham. It is clear that when migrants from the Indian subcontinent and Caribbean arrived and settled in inner-city Birmingham, some of those areas were already experiencing decline. Irish immigrants had settled in parts of inner-city Birmingham towards the south and south-east as it represented some of the cheapest accommodation in the city. The new migrants followed suit, locating themselves in some of these very areas whilst taking up unskilled and semi-skilled work. Rex and Moore (1967) and Dhaya

(1974) both cover in detail how the initial migrants from the Indian subcontinent who were mostly male, shared lodging houses and lived in cramped conditions in order to save money, which could then be remitted to families who still lived in India and Pakistan.

In the 1960s the West Midlands had a healthy labour market in which unemployment was lower than the national average (Rex and Tomlinson 1979, 101). Birmingham in particular due to its heavy industry had a reputation as being the 'workshop of the world' (Bryson et al 1996). Shortly after the arrival of the large numbers of Asian migrants in Birmingham in the early 1970s, manufacturing began to decline. Unemployment in Birmingham started to increase despite a rising demand in the services sector, a sector of the economy which the city's immigrant population were often either not suited to or excluded from (Rex and Tomlinson 1979, 101). Between 1971 and 1987, Birmingham lost 191,000 jobs, and the manufacturing sector in that period reduced its workforce by almost a half (Henry et al 2000, 3). Smith (1977) conducted research which showed how nationally, immigrants in the UK were over-represented in parts of the manufacturing sector, including in vehicle manufacture and textiles. Indeed, writing in 1979, Rex and Tomlinson (1979, 99) suggested that if vehicle production was to cease in Longbridge, the effect on the city would be 'cataclysmic' given that 14% of all employment in the city was directly or indirectly linked to the motor industry. That cataclysmic impact did take place, albeit gradually over the next three decades, and the immigrant population was in a position where it would be affected disproportionately.

As commuter-led suburbanisation was pushing the affluent to move outside the city in less densely populated and larger housing, those left behind were those who could ill-afford to pay more in house rental or buy larger properties. Thus the inner-suburbs of Birmingham came to house the most deprived of Birmingham's residents: to the north, Lozells, Newtown and Aston; to the north-east, Handsworth; to the west, Winson Green and Ladywood, to the east, Small Heath and to the south-east, Sparkhill and Sparkbrook. Edgbaston towards the South West of the city maintained its affluence due to the large, suburban character of its housing within the area, as did Harborne.

It is not the case that all those who moved outside of the inner-suburbs of Birmingham would go on to live in more prosperous parts of the city. Outlying suburbs in Northfield, Longbridge, Castle Bromwich, Yardley and Kingstanding remain largely white and poor. However two maps produced here as an analysis of deprivation in the city and of the concentration of the city's Muslim population are instructive. Figure 6 shows the concentrations of Muslims in Birmingham and shows the areas which contain the largest concentrations of Muslims in the city, particularly towards the east, south-east and north-west of the city (ONS 2007). Figure 7 shows deprivation levels in Birmingham; whilst pockets of deprivation are scattered around the edges of the city's boundaries, the most striking feature of the map is the high levels of deprivation in a ring around the centre of the city (ibid). Sparkhill, Sparkbrook, Alum Rock, Washwood Heath and Handsworth, all form part of the deprived inner-suburban ring, and have high scores in the deprivation index. Figure 8 is the same map as shown in Figure 7 overlaid with data showing those areas with Muslim populations of 40% and over. It shows a co-presence of high Muslim populations and areas of the city with high levels of deprivation (ibid).

Some Muslims of course were always professional and considered themselves middle-class; others have moved to more 'up-market' areas of the city, but the maps show clearly that Muslims in the city are still more likely to experience different forms of deprivation in their neighbourhoods. The economics of industrial decline are important in establishing this pattern. In turn this pattern together with the cultural production of immigrants has produced and engrained new identities, both ethnic and religious onto communities living in these spaces. These identities are by their nature tied inexorably to local spaces. But how have they been formed and what does it tell us about the identity of young Muslims in Birmingham? How do these structural forces connect with the experiences and agency of young Muslims in Birmingham and their choices about how to live their lives? The most appropriate way to begin to deconstruct these identities is to start with the narratives of some of the young people interviewed for this research project.

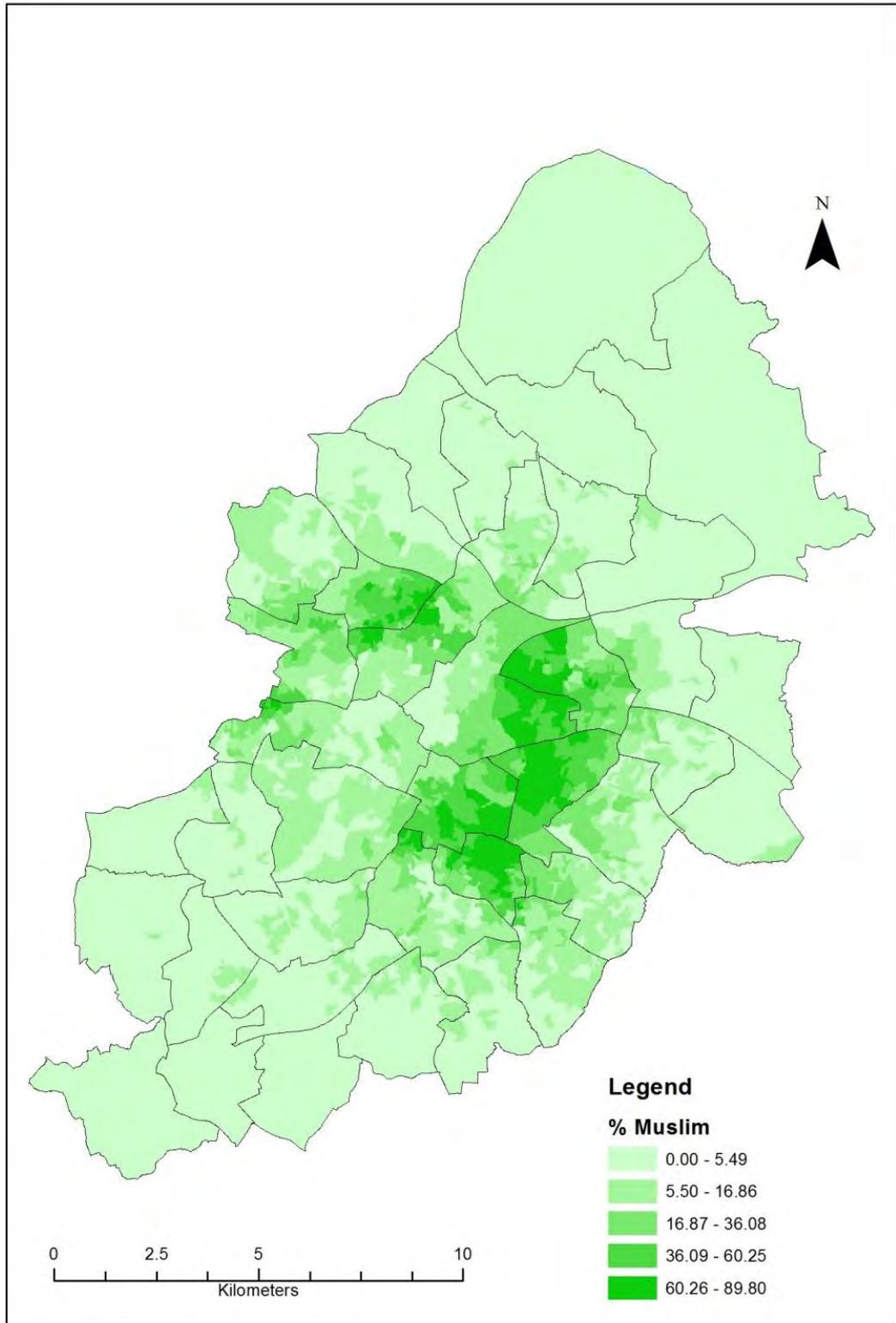


Figure 6: Map showing the concentration of Muslims in Birmingham (ONS 2007)

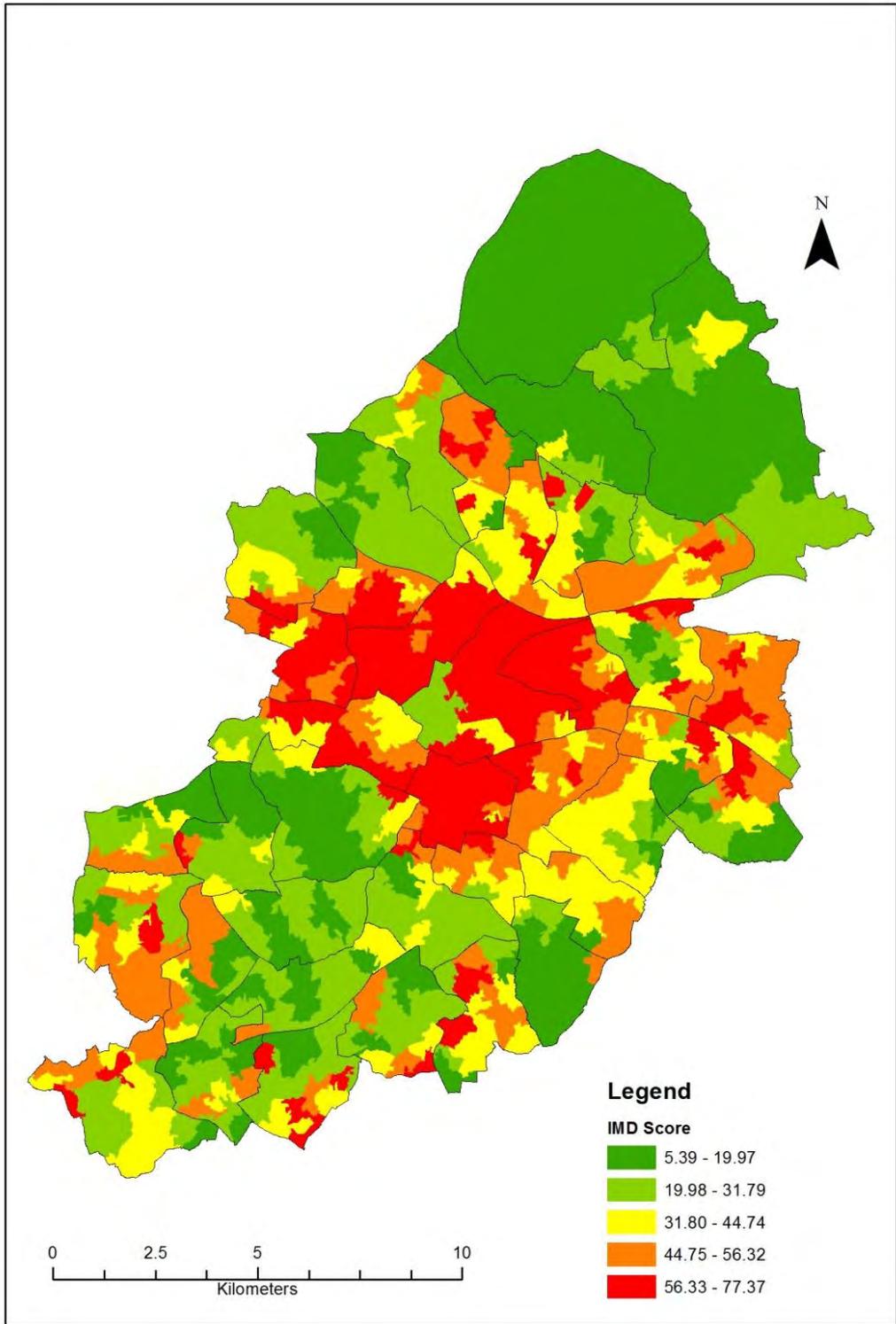


Figure 7: Map showing the Index of Multiple Deprivation score for Birmingham (ONS 2007)

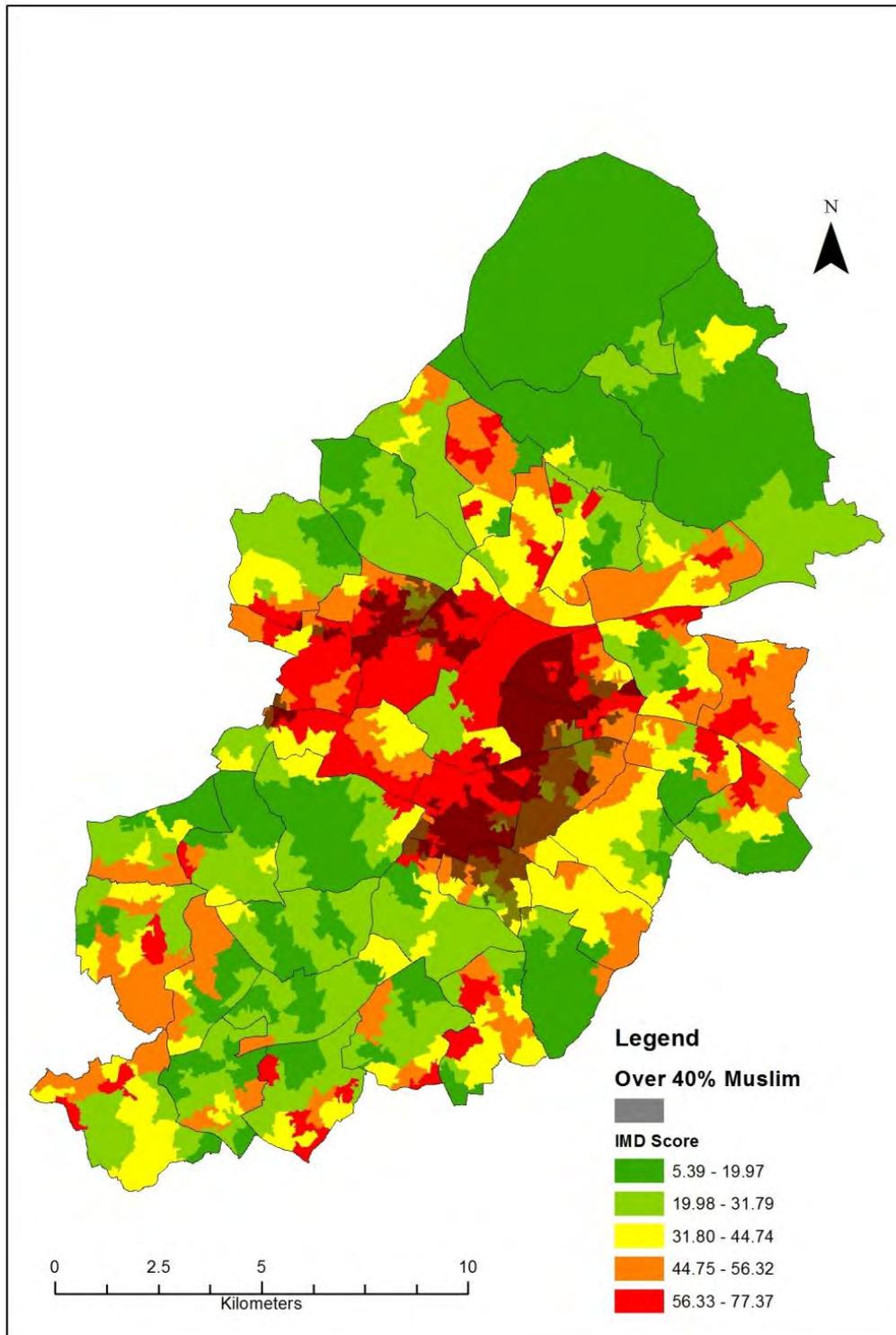


Figure 8: Map showing the areas of Birmingham with a Muslim population of 40% and over, overlaid on a map of deprivation scores for the city (ONS 2007)

4.4 From The Beginning...

Places form a reservoir of meanings which people can draw upon to tell stories about and thereby define them

(Nigel Thrift 1997, 160).

The reservoir of meaning that is attached to place comes from practice and experience, and to illustrate the depth of those experiences that life in the city can entail I will transmit the data collected from the first interview conducted, in some depth. It was on a cold Friday morning in January 2009 that I set off from the University campus in Selly Oak to Witton in Birmingham for my first interview, the first formal attempt to collect data for this project. Naheed was my interviewee, a resident and community-worker aged 30 who had lived in Witton in the ward of Aston almost all his life (see map, Appendix D). The interview is an important one as it serves as an example of the life of one young Muslim in the city, and for that reason it is described in some depth in this section. Data gathered from the 2001 census suggested that the Aston ward in which he lived was among the twenty most deprived wards in the UK and in 2010, according to the city council's statistics, 53% of Aston's population were among the most deprived 5% in the UK (BCC 2010, 12). Aston is home to a large number of Asians, who as an ethnic group makes up almost fifty percent of the total population (BCC 2003a). The 2001 census which also asked about the religious affiliations of citizens and in this ward 44% described themselves as Muslims (BCC 2003b, 21), making Islam the religion with the largest representation in the ward.

Having had a conversation two days prior to the interview, I had told Naheed that the interview would involve asking questions around how he and other young Muslim men identified themselves, how they experienced urban spaces in the city and I had told him that discussion would also revolve around issues of identity and belonging more widely. As a first year doctoral researcher I had been studiously sifting through the debates around Muslim identity that had increasingly been dominated

by debates which were being had as to whether the Muslim community had integrated sufficiently into 'British society' or whether they should be integrating at all. The Prevent agenda aimed at tackling extremism was taking shape, and money had been allocated for Birmingham's counter-terror agenda, with much of it being invested in community projects designed to reach young Muslim men. Naheed's extensive experience as a youth and community worker and Witton's predominantly Muslim population led me to believe Naheed would have a lot to say on these pressing issues.

Indeed Naheed was passionate about issues affecting his area and eager to talk about life in Witton. But the issues that he was passionate about were local and mundane; the enthusiasm he showed was in conveying the depth of his roots in Witton and projecting onto me the sense of what it meant to be a 'part' of the area as a long-time resident. The roads we were walking on was as he put it, part of his personal history, and this history was inter-woven with specific local spaces;

I walked this road for many years...I used to go every day...So it's a case of these roads (being) special to me. Every road I look at I've seen them develop. I've seen them change. It's part of my personal history.

(Naheed, Interview, 30/01/09)

And so as Giddens might suggest (1991; 53-54), Naheed was demonstrating his identity by providing his own narrative and biography through the interview. Herman (2009; 105-6) might refer to this framing as providing the researcher with a 'storyworld' in which identity was situated. Through his narrative, Naheed was able to provide an insight into the close attachment he had developed with Witton, bumping into neighbours and friends several times during the interview, and stopping by in a local shop to have a chat with the owner, a personal friend. He did not fit into easy stereotypes of Muslims in the UK - popular and well-known in the area, Naheed comes from a mixed race background, with a father born in Pakistan and his mother having been 'white' and British-born. By his own contention he never prospered at school or college, citing distractions and a lack of drive, but the museum and library in the centre of Birmingham was, for him, a focal point for social

activities in his youth. However what was particularly striking about Naheed's interview and many interviews conducted since was the strong sense that local surroundings and interactions played an integral part in shaping the participant's belonging and identity. Witton and Aston might have been perceived by those living elsewhere in the city as areas of high levels of social deprivation, with a publicised problem of gun-crime, a marginal inner-suburb in a major European city. But for Naheed it was the distance from the flows of money and labour, its seeming stability that made it special to him:

...people in this road have been here since I can remember...in some areas people live as a bit of a stop-gap...but here people have built their lives here, so they are comfortable here.

(Naheed, Interview, 30/01/09)

A comparison can be made here between interviewees from Aston and Lozells who also reject prevailing notions of their area being 'dangerous'. Lozells has had a degree of infamy following the riots that have taken place there in 1981 and more recently in 2005 (see King 2009). Having also had a reputation for gun and gang crime, the riots in 2005 in particular demonstrated a certain level of ethnic and racial tension. Sparked by what turned out to be false rumours that four Pakistani men had raped a black girl in neighbouring Perry Barr, a wave of protests against perceived police inaction turned into confrontation between predominantly male members of both the black and Pakistani communities. However, interviewees for this project from Lozells unanimously pointed out that the image of Lozells was somewhat distorted, and many tended to attribute a large part of the blame for the disturbances to 'outsiders':

The thing about the riots is that after a while everything went back to normal a couple of days – nobody knows that do they. Just the way it was, shops were back to normal. Funny thing is that the thing that happened wasn't in Lozells – it was in Perry Barr. The fake rape allegation happened in Perry Barr so why did they have to come here.

(Sadiq, Interview, 12/03/09)

There was this rumour that twenty lads raped a girl – in Perry Barr, not Lozells.... black people coming here protesting, broke windows...Black and Asian lads bumping into each other and before you know it there's fights. And one or two hours later lads were coming from outside the area that I didn't know and I didn't recognise. One guy, what he done – they were bored, came for a fight, entertainment. People like fighting.

(Zaahid, Interview 23/05/09)

Another interesting observation is that in Naheed's mind, Witton is sheltered somewhat from the flows of people from place to place, which have accelerated and widened in scale within the modern globalised economy. Appropriate longitudinal data which may prove or disprove Naheed's perception of Witton as a relatively stable neighbourhood, does not exist. But this perception is still significant; in some respects this might coincide with the thoughts of Relph (1976) whose treatise on place is underpinned by the notion that modernity and globalisation undermine rigid conceptions of place. Naheed saw himself as living within a relatively static and traditional form of community in which neighbours had known each other for years, sheltered from the potentially dislocating flows of globalisation. However, in contradiction, those very communities that exist in Witton are predominantly the families of those who immigrated to the UK in the 1970s and 1980s, products of a wave of immigration that occurred only forty years ago. In reality these too are part of that self same process of migration, albeit on an international scale. Varying perceptions of space and time between different sets of people can lead to vastly different perspectives on migration processes. An outsider, perhaps from an area not so ethnically diverse might walk through Witton Road in the ward of Aston (Fig. 9) and look upon its shops and the area's inhabitants and surmise that what they were seeing were the development of growth of new migrant communities. Naheed's idea is that constancy, familiarity and a sense of stability are factors in the making of 'home' and in this case it also provides the shared experience that legitimises his sense of community.



Figure 9: Witton Road, Aston, and the development of businesses catering to its largely Asian population

This narrative and others heard in the research process also contradict the any broad notion that might seek to paint modern cities as part of a flexible city of strangers (Sennet 2001). As geographers we are concerned with scale and delineating between identities on spatial scales such as the global, the national and the local. But identities are also fundamentally about the conceptions of time. Identities define the continuation of personality and whilst they cannot be objectively defined by time, perceptions of identities certainly can be influenced by subjective judgements about how the amount of time spent in spaces can shape their grouped identities. Milligan (1998) described this as the ‘interactional past’, and this past may be imagined. This also applies to discourses of community; the length of time in a defined space required to become part of a ‘community’ may be as hotly contested as the time it takes for a migrant to assume the identity of a ‘host’ or ‘native’.

Furthermore, Naheed chose to do the interview in Witton in Aston, as the place that meant more to him than any other area of the city and despite claiming to have moved out, it was still 'his area'. In the walked interview he described the pressure to move away from the neighbourhood in which he had grown up:

Well my personal experience was my wife wanted to move out but I wasn't wanting to move. When I was walking out from the first time I felt, I will definitely come back. But when I moved it was the best thing I ever did. But at the time I was very reluctant. I had so much association with this area. I tell friends now, „move out and come by me – come live with me – you got a car and you can park in a garage“. And they say, „No – love it here“.

(Naheed, Interview, 30/01/09)

On the face of it seems like the typical experience of anyone moving home, perhaps leaving neighbours and friends behind. What was interesting about Naheed's experience became clear when he revealed that his moving home involved a move of less than a mile from where he had previously lived, to Broadway in Perry Barr. Similarly two participants, who had moved from Aston to Handsworth, again only two miles from their original home (see map, Appendix D), lamented moving what they considered to be a different area entirely. This prompts the question as to why such a strong and spatially small area of the city can become so important to a person's sense of 'home'. Paasi (1991, 244-247) makes a strong case for local and regional spaces being constructed, regulated and sustained by institutional processes. However, I would contend that rather than the state acting as a 'supreme coercive authority' (Gore cited in Paasi 1991, 244) creating idealised forms of community, what was witnessed within this case study was more attributable to everyday practice. Some nuance is required however: whilst it may be true that some of the participants lived an integral part of their lives close to their physical homes, it would be false to paint them as insular. Rather, in order to understand the issue it is crucial to appreciate the historic and social context of Birmingham's inner-suburbs and to analyse more precisely *how* the lived experiences and movements of participants might contribute to their feelings of attachment towards an area.

Like many other respondents, Naheed had concerns about his neighbourhood, but those concerns were in a dimension far removed from the foci of government policy towards Muslims. Twice Naheed asserted that car-parking was what he saw as the biggest problem for residents. Other participants spoke of the pressing need for individuals and communities to tackle drugs, worklessness and other social problems in their area, but the overall picture drawn by the participants suggests that whilst the identities of young Muslim and their sense of belonging was influenced by their religious beliefs and heritage, other aspects are unrelated to their faith and much more closely related to their immediate surroundings. This then raises the question as to how these more locally specific identities are created.

4.5 How Strong Local Identities Are Created

Let's start here – I'm 23 and I've lived here all my life. My dad's shop has been here 33 to 34 years. He came in about 1960 as a young lad...

(Zaahid, Interview, 23/05/09)

A strong sense of localised belonging permeated the narratives and biographies of many of the interviewees, prompting the question as to why that might be the case. Before answering that question it is important to stress that the reasons may not be exclusive to Birmingham's young Muslim men; non-Muslim and non-Asian communities with strong senses of belonging and strong localised identities exist in many places in the UK. It would also be inaccurate to portray this localised collective identity as one which is based on faith. Nevertheless this section seeks to explain why, in the context of inner-city Birmingham, a range of factors are contributing to creating this spatially bound collective identity among the young participants that took part in this project. The factors affecting place-identity in this case can be categorised by the sub-sections that follow.

4.5.1 Identity Through Narrative and Everyday Life

My mum can't speak English and she's comfortable here. My dad prays five times a day, goes [to the] mosque, comfortable here, knows everybody. He's been in a routine for 30 years with the shop.

(Sadiq, Interview, 12/03/09)

Everyday practices and routines play an important role in shaping space. Over a long period of time these individual experiences build up to a narrative of a resident's life in their area. This is why identity is often expressed by participants as if retelling a personal drama: a measured yet evolving script, being updated and adjusted in a bid to retain the thread upon which identity hangs (explored in Bauman 1986, Gubrium and Holstein 1998). And this thread inevitably involves the very physical

structures that make up each person's neighbourhood. Corcoran (2002, 204) thus emphasises the importance of the built and natural environments as part of what drives feelings of place-attachment. For those with longer histories in neighbourhoods of the city a feeling of comfort and belonging becomes stronger (Lewicka 2005, 392), which is as suggested by the participant quoted above. Furthermore, Corcoran (2002) posits that the physical environment can itself come to represent the very security and comfort that a person feels living within those spaces, reproducing feelings of place-attachment. But security and resistance are also built up through local knowledge of the potential threats, and the development of tactics to be shielded from such threats. Another participant, Samir gives the following story about being mugged as a teenager;

[Samir disrupts the conversation to point to a passing car]...that was a local gangster named Yunus. He's a gangster innit. I don't know, he beats people up and...I don't talk to him much thankfully. I remember once actually, I was on the bus and it was me and my brother. We were 12-13 at the time. And my brother had a Nokia 702 – a brick, you know one of them ones, but a really good one, and this guy says, „give us your phone“ and whatnot. And we say, „shut up“, and got off the bus just up there [pointing to bus stop on Stratford Road] and they followed us, started chasing us, chasing us, three of them and two of us and they started pushing us...Even then he was kind of well known because he was a bit of a crazy guy. And then we said „We know Yunus“ and he was like, „You know Yunus? Ah ok“. And that was it! So it kind of helps to know these people [laughs].

(Samir, Interview, 12/08/09)

Samir cuts a slight figure, at no more than 5'6 in height, friendly and far from intimidating in his persona. However, so confident is he in his use of tactics to counter threats that just seconds after narrating this story he insists that Sparkhill was the,

...kind of environment where it's relatively safe. Even though it's quite worn down in a sense, it's quite dirty, rats are all over the place. But it's safe. You can send your 10 year old son to go down to the chippy, get some food for ya. Without any problems. Without any problems.

(Samir, Interview, 12/08/09)

The issue of safety has been considered by environmental psychologists to be an important component of places which are seen as significant by individuals (Manzo 2005, 78). But sometimes the pride shown in a neighbourhood by some of the participants indicates something more subtle: a contradictory love-hate relationship which researchers have associated with the phenomenon of place attachment (Corcoran 2002, 201). Privileged knowledge can be used to ensure safety and cement one's own idiosyncratic place-identity, to demonstrate a sense of place that the researcher does not possess. The researcher is led to believe that danger exists, but simultaneously encouraged to recognise that the participant is confident that he can avert it; his knowledge and experience provides him with the tools to survive.

The narratives of belonging are not necessarily always positive, and the love-hate relationship towards one's area is a theme that recurs throughout the interviews. Osman for example has lived for most of his life in Small Heath, but after getting married at the age of 25 he moved further outside the city towards Hodge Hill. He chose to be interviewed in Small Heath because it was the place that held the most meaning for him in the city. But despite his attachment to Small Heath he is not necessarily a simple cheerleader for the neighbourhood. He describes his attachment to the area as a force that sometimes has to be challenged in order to progress. For him, moving away from Small Heath and Boreadesly Green represents ambition, and failing to move away shows fear:

When I went to Cadbury College it was 45 minutes bus ride from time. I went to University in Aston so I was always travelling. Many of my friends who stayed here are embedded in the community, the stuff around here. I've lost contact with a majority of them because I've moved on...I moved away from Birmingham to Chester for over a year having moved out. But what I would say to my wife and others is that you gotta appreciate the hand that feeds you because it's who you are.

(Osman, Interview, 19/06/10)

Once again we see that for Osman, going to Cadbury College on the south side of Birmingham was considered a move 'away'. This narrative brings into sharp focus once more the interaction between structure and agency, choice and socio-economics, the grey zone in which decisions are made as to residential choice, aspiration and ultimately identification. Osman describes how his brother has not had the same opportunities to expand his horizons, as Osman sees it:

I can look at my brother now and he's the opposite of myself, He didn't go to college, felt like working...now he feels trapped...Not trapped - he just feels he can't leave this neighbourhood because that's his security. Any time he steps outside it he's out of his comfort zone. I'm looking to buy a house in Hodge Hill and he's looking to buy a house next to my mum's house. It's strange because that's all he knows.

(Osman, Interview, 19/06/10)

At some points in the interview Osman moves from describing the 'cruel world' of parts of Small Heath but he also explains that despite the perceived dangers, he would still be 'content' living those very areas. One may ask what lies behind this seeming contradiction. Billig (2006, 251-252) in a review of place-attachment and risk perception cites a number of psychological studies which show that attitudes towards risk are often not entirely rational – and are ultimately culturally and socially constructed. However something else is also at play - other narratives from participants in this study about being chased by dogs, buildings being hit by a tornado as well as anecdotes about the changing physical nature of neighbourhoods all play a part in exploring the types of experiences which can accumulate to create a knowledge and sense of place of a neighbourhood unique to a resident, as an insider. I interpreted another incident in a youth club with young males in Sparkhill almost boasting about the danger for outsiders in their neighbourhood, as an assertion not only of their masculinity and ability to confront danger, but their belonging to a place where they had the necessary know-how to stay safe.

Other narratives can also give clues as to how values can be imprinted upon space as a result of everyday practices and subsequent place-attachment. The closer one feels attachment to a place, the more likely he/she is to feel a sense of ownership or responsibility over it. Thus the narratives and everyday experiences provided by an interviewee can serve as a reflection of the beliefs and social and cultural value systems for participants. For instance, Bilal, a participant who also teaches part time in after-school madrassah classes tells the following story;

I remember we took the kids to the park once to play football – the mosque kids. And there was this Muslim guy and he came and he was all drunk and he started messing about with the kids and started chasing them and stuff. Scaring them. And it wasn't very nice. Because I knew who the guy was. And he was older than me – he knows my eldest brother and so I didn't want to say anything to him. OK, if you're gonna drink it's not permitted in my religion but at least drink responsibly.

(Bilal, Interview, 28/02/10)

Bilal later mulls over the possibility that the closure of local pubs might be making his neighbourhood safer. His values and feelings towards alcohol consumption are reflected in his narrative of this particular incident and it is an occasion where the 'Muslim' aspect of his identity is drawn out. Two other respondents tell the story of how they and their friends were beaten during madrassah classes, when laws on corporal punishment went ignored. Their memories in these instances are stirred by walking past the buildings which used to house those mosques and the narratives they tell explain how the values of the participants reject those more violent approaches to religious education. One of those narratives is wrapped up in a broader narrative of liberalisation of Muslim communities, and adaptation to the new social realities of living in the UK (which will be discussed in Chapter 5). It is by listening to these stories of belonging that we can begin to understand how the routes their lives have taken have helped create an understanding of who they are. But amongst those stories are other narratives too, ones that more firmly embed our participants in the economy of Birmingham.

4.5.2 Identity Through Economic Capital

The contribution of the proliferation of Asian businesses is regarded as important in studies of Asian businesses in the UK. But existing literature tends to focus on how ethnic minority identities and social networks are utilised for economic purposes (Ram and Jones 2008; Basu and Altingay 2002; 2003). What this research seeks to emphasise is that these businesses are not only sites of entrepreneurship but can gain a critical mass which allow them to become representations of the spaces around them. These representations too can become focal points for belonging and identity for the young Muslim participants in this study.

Many of the interviewees for this project were second-generation immigrants whose parents arrived from the Indian subcontinent. Their stories of how their parents and grand-parents experienced migration and adapted to life in the UK have been told and re-told within families. Part of these experiences as new immigrants and outsiders in a vastly different environment from those experienced in their 'home' countries involved the establishment of social spaces, but also of centres of economic activity. The small grocery store established by Zaahid's father between 1977 and 1978, represented one of the physical marks that the emerging 'community' has left in the area. It is typical of the kinds of businesses Asian immigrants tended to set up after immigration; selling low-value goods, mainly groceries and confectionery (Jones and Ram 2003, 492). Although such businesses still exist in large numbers there is an increasingly diverse set of Asian businesses on display. On walked interviews that took place near Stratford Road in Sparkhill (Fig. 10), Coventry Road in Small Heath (Fig. 11), Alum Rock Road in Washwood Heath and Witton Road in Aston, interviewees elaborated upon the importance of the array of Asian businesses which filled those streets selling fast food, Asian sweets, dessert cafes, snooker and pool halls, Asian fashion outlets and travel agencies. These local 'high streets', usually located on key routes between areas, are also spatial markers of those neighbourhoods. To the visitor, Lozells Road *is* Lozells. Coventry Road *is* Small Heath, Alum Rock Road *is* Washwood Heath.

Abuzar an interviewee, when describing Lozells, begins immediately with the description of his father's shop. Similarly, Ahmad talks extensively about how the businesses on Alum Rock Road have changed throughout the years; from the decline of larger supermarkets, the subtle changes in the types of Asian food available on the main road and the slow demise of pubs along the main road. He describes how one proprietor engages in the business of buying out rival take-aways, subtly changing the menu and improving the food quality before selling for a profit with which to buy another failing business. On his recorded interview the sound of Asian music, Islamic nasheeds (spiritual hymns) can be heard. You can hear passers-by conversing loudly in Punjabi, and stall-owners selling international phone-cards and fried sweet-corn on the street, this time in Urdu (Fig 12). As Ip (2005) suggests in his study of a 'Chinatown' suburb of Brisbane in Australia, places such as these are indications of both economic capital and socio-cultural capital being imported into an area by immigrants. The streetscape is transformed as Ip suggests, both physically and by cultural practice (ibid, 73). Furthermore, upon returning to this road 9 months after the interview during the protests over Project Champion (see chapter 7), it was striking how the month of Ramadan had altered the rhythms of street life. With residents fasting it was quieter, with shoppers moving at a slower, more predictable pace, the rhythm and atmosphere of the high street becoming shaped by religious practice, faith identity imprinting itself onto the identity of physical spaces.

Figure 10: Traffic on Stratford Road, a busy Asian shopping area through Sparkhill and Sparkbrook





Figure 11: One of Several Islamic stores on Coventry Road, catering for the Muslim population of Small Heath



Figure 12: Sweet-corn stall and other traders selling Islamic hymns (to the rear of the photograph) on Alum Rock Road

As mentioned in the literature review, Antonsich (2010) in his deconstruction of 'belonging' does indeed include economic relationships as being a key component of feelings of belonging. Separately he also talks about social and personal ties that bind people to place (ibid). But the two can be linked; culturally-specific businesses fulfil economic necessity for producers and consumers and they also serve as sites of social interaction. Furthermore they are an integral part of the mundane realities of everyday life which also bind residents to an area:

In this particular area – this is known as the Aston triangle – every possible amenity is available to you at walking distance. There's mosques, schools, shops, different types of shops, for all home essentials, (the) comfort part of things which has kept myself and the majority of people here

(Ahmad, Interview, 17/02/09)

Look how we do – you can't go wrong in this area. You look at some posh areas now and the schools are much further away and the doctors are much far away. Here within 2 miles you got everything that you need - doctors up the road, brand new building with lots of doctors there and schools here you got police station a mile away – what else do you need?

(Sadiq, Interview, 12/03/09)

Culturally specific businesses can also be significant for young people in another way; for young Muslim men whose avoidance of alcohol would make them unlikely to socialise in bars and nightclubs, the sheesha lounges, dessert shops and snooker halls for some provide a focal point for an evening's social activities. These are invariably clustered around areas with high numbers of Muslims. Some of the young men interviewed wished to stress that they did travel and had significant experiences of places outside their immediate neighbourhoods and cities. But equally, for many of them their regular social activities were concentrated in the city's inner-suburbs. As the interviewees put it:

You probably go to Alum Rock and have some food and go to play snooker in Soho Road or you go town and play snooker there. It's not as if we stay in Lozells every single day.

(Azim, Interview, 06/01/11)

I use city centre but I don't like shopping too much as its hot and stuffy and I don't like it too much. If I do go to town...you got Snow Hill snooker club. In 147 (another snooker club), more religious background going on – no smoking, no drinking. [it is] more strict. It depends where you want to go. If you want to drink or smoke, go [here], or religious brothers, go elsewhere.

(Sadiq, Interview, 12/03/09)

This last statement is interesting because it demonstrates the ways in which businesses can not only help focus place identity and attachment, but in turn they can reflect values. Latham (2003) and Bell (2007) have researched the importance of alcohol in generating a sense of community and the UK has a social culture and history in which the traditional pubs, working men's clubs and other sorts of themed bars all play a very visible role as far as night-time sociality and economy are concerned. The avoidance of alcohol can be construed as a result of the everyday codes shaped by the common practices of Islam. However these codes for many Muslims also involve the avoidance of places at which alcohol is served. Valentine et al (2010) researched Muslim attitudes towards alcohol consumption and found that the culture of alcohol abstinence was regulated by social obligation. Valentine et al (2010) proposed that Islam did not provide any specific rationalisation for this tenet of faith. Their interviews suggested that despite some Muslims expressing a dislike of the effects of alcohol consumption, the self-regulation of avoiding alcohol was conceived by Muslims to be based on following the word of God, finding virtue and personal fulfilment in abstinence and maintaining honour and a sense of respect for both their families and the Muslim community around them. Valentine (ibid, 18) suggested that this abstention was filtering Muslims from public spaces which

were used in conjunction with alcohol-related activities, and that as a response Pakistani young people were creating their own oppositional leisure spaces. Some of these oppositional spaces in Birmingham include the take-away outlets adapted with extra seating areas for those who wanted a cheap meal on a night out, sheesha lounges and dessert-cafes; all of these can be found in inner-suburbs of Birmingham with high numbers of Muslims, creating a space that is more than just ethnically distinct, but also religiously shaped (Figure 13).

Similarly three interviewees commented on the ways in which their areas have changed by pointing to pubs that have closed down along the interview routes. Bilal aged 23, a religiously observant participant with a part-time job in a local mosque, expressed a level of satisfaction that a place, as he saw it, which attracted vice and encouraged drinking among young people, had gone out of business. In contrast, a non-religious interviewee living in Washwood Heath observed that the closure of the last pub on one section of Alum Rock Road embodied the changes the area had seen since the influx of Pakistani migrants in the 1970s:

This pub was sort of like the last bastion...there used to be quite a few pubs up and down this road but they've all closed apart from this one – this one recently got taken over. It used to be, when I was in primary school – A Sikh family, their kid was in my class and now finally, in the last couple of months it was taken over and its going to be turned into something. Something that's not a pub.

(Bilal, Interview, 28/02/10)

The citing of this example demonstrates the way in which landscape can become symbolic of change (Kaups 1995). The strong suggestion from the participant is that the last pub standing can be interpreted as the end for one particular type of culture associated with a perceived 'non-Muslim activity'. After the recording of the interview with this participant he reflected on a recent video promotion by the British National Party which consisted of footage taken along in Wembley which houses the English football team for its 'home' international matches (Wales BNP 2009). The footage takes the viewer on a tour through the area in which non-white people from the majority of people walking the nearby shopping streets. The participant reflected that if he was white and he had seen

such profound change in his area, and if he did not have the resources to move away, he too might be perturbed by this phenomenon. He claimed to understand what a section of the 'white community' might be feeling when seeing the characteristics of their local neighbourhoods change.

During this interview too, walking along Alum Rock Road, the microphone on the interview picked up Quranic recitation and religious songs from passing cars. Hijaabs and niqaabs (headscarves and face-veils) could be seen being worn by a few women. Asian fashion and food shops dominated the streetscape and an array of Asian languages including Urdu, Punjabi and Farsi could be heard being spoken by passing shoppers. The character of spaces like these change as these Muslim symbols, sounds, food and fashion appear to dominate a particular part of the city. And it forms a living example of precisely what Lewicka (2010, 218) referred to when suggesting that use of a place can lead to it becoming a significant site of social and cultural *symbolism*, as well as social activity.



Figure 13: A Pastry House, Arab Restaurant and a Palestinian Charity store; faith-driven consumption on Coventry Road, Small Heath

4.5.3 Childhood Memories and Play Spaces

Beyond businesses and amenities, informal social spaces and childhood memories of those spaces are also significant contributors towards place identity (Fenster 2005, 221; hooks 2001). Identification with childhood experiences serve not only as markers of important events, but also as a reflection of one's life. Leach (2005, 300) compares the act of walking in a familiar place to that of a child expressing joy at seeing their own reflection in a mirror. This analogy may in some way explain how identity and feelings of belonging can be provoked by memories. In the series of interviews conducted there was a great emphasis placed upon on the role of childhood play spaces in particular on the feelings of attachment to local areas:

Green Street, the youth centre and that. That's important. It's where we hang out, used to play football. There was this park where the Surestart building is which was burnt down – that used to be there – and in between the club and the place where we're standing, we used to play sports and football and the older people used to come out for cricket. It's like a proper community feel. The club was open we played snooker. It was a break from everything. On a rainy day when we had nothing to do, instead of hanging out on street corners we played football and went to the club, so you aren't seeing much of the badness as a kid. They're knocking this down – they're knocking down all the new houses to make a big new Holte School. All my mates are from here – all my best friends.

(Zaahid, Interview, 23/05/09)

We used to play near the garages. There was a lot of grass but there was a hill here – might have been soil dumped from a few places which created a small hill. It was council owned but we still played here. We played cricket on this side of the bump on the flat part and it wasn't tarred like it is now...it was bubbly but it was good fun. [Fig 14]

(Naheed, Interview, 30/01/09)



Figure 14: Urban space behind Fentham Road where young Astonians would play football and cricket – though now a purpose-built play area has been built



Figure 15: A play space of significance: A football 'arena' on Highgate Middleway between Highgate and Balsall Heath

For many of the respondents the spaces they played in as children and teenagers held significance; few of the residents of Witton for instance, would have access to an open space in their back yards. Boys in particular were allowed out into open spaces or even derelict land such as those that Naheed talks about, between rows of garages situated behind houses on Fentham Road in Aston; here they could play football, using trees as goalposts and milk crates as wickets (Fig. 14). Abdullah, a participant from Sparkhill talks nostalgically about games of football in the park after madressah classes on weekday evenings. Similarly Adam from Balsall Heath talks about playing in what the young people referred to as 'Arena', a former football and basketball court along the Highgate Middleway dual-carriageway (Fig. 15). He particularly recalls how in the month of Ramadan he and his friends would have 'suhoor' a breakfast before sunrise at around 4am or 5am when he was a teenager. This would be followed up by visiting the mosque for morning prayers and then spending an hour reading the Quran before heading out to Arena for a game of football for a couple of hours, whilst fasting. Adam laughs and remarks that he doesn't know how he had the energy as a child to play football for hours whilst fasting;

There was nothing else to do...nothing to do in town (city centre) really and my parents wouldn't let me keep going to town anyway...this is okay because mum knows all the lads or their mums .

(Adam, fieldwork notes, 02/09/10)

Racialisation of space has been discussed with regards to representation of those spaces (Sibley 1998; Delaney 2002) and it can be significant in the experiences of young people. In those earlier experiences of urban spaces, divisions between the safe and the dangerous might have been more pronounced, and this in turn led to some of these play spaces becoming racialised or perceived as exclusive. Young people in Aston during my fieldwork spoke of how one play-area was considered to be for 'Gujis', meaning Gujerati Muslims as opposed to Muslims from other (Pakistani and Bangladeshi) backgrounds, though they also stressed that as they have grown older, they have

increasingly played and socialised together. On another walked interview Zaahid from Newtown explained how, when he was ten years old, he and his Pakistani friends were confronted in the green space around Farm Street by black youths:

Newtown – there was a lot of black people – older – they’d end up beating and robbing. I remember one time we went to the park and there were a group of black lads and we were playing at the swings and before you know it they’d circled us and they wouldn’t let us go. They said who do you support? Man United then you’re alright but Liverpool? A punch (he punches his hand). But I’m a big lad now and I see these people and obviously I got hate in my heart and I’m not gonna forgot that because they did torment us when we were young. I’m older now at 23 but a few years ago I was looking for people, out for revenge. I’m not saying what I done but you can put two and two together.

(Zaahid, Interview, 23/05/09)

Zaahid however also stressed that such racialisation was no longer prevalent, and indeed on his walked interview, youths who were Asian, black and white stopped to talk to him at different points. Nonetheless, there are several particularly salient points we can draw from these anecdotes. Firstly it is that landscapes can be imbued with specific racial and ethnic identities in the minds of children, and these landscapes need not be large neighbourhoods such as particular wards and districts, but can be confined to relatively small spaces. Secondly, whilst outsiders might perceive areas to be imbued with ethnic minority or specifically Muslim identity, even at a young age some young people may differentiate between minority and faith groups. Theorists such as Ford (1992) and Goldberg (1994) have argued that it is the territorial division of space itself which helps to construct race identities. Delaney (2002, 7) also analyses this body of working, suggesting that these spatial entities and their construction act as a ‘freeze’ the multifaceted, heterogeneous and indeed hybrid identities that might exist, by imprinting static ethnic or racial labels.

It is also worth noting here that as far as Muslim communities in Birmingham go, divisions have in the past existed between Muslims from different ethnic and theological backgrounds. The

development of different mosques which are located in close proximity to each other can often be explained by their serving those different communities. Take Aston for example; some mosques with Bangladeshi clerics such as that on Victoria Road in Aston will have occasional prayers and announcements in Bengali reflecting the congregation and the ethnic background of the cleric and the mosque committee. Another Bangladeshi mosque is on Albert Road just a couple of hundred metres away, but it satisfies a Bangladeshi congregation which follows Barelvi rather than Deobandi Islam (see Behuria 2008 for an exploration of the differences between Barelvi and Deobandi sects). In contrast there are two mosques on Trinity Road, between Aston and Perry Barr which are known for being run by Gujarati Muslims; one of them by Gujarati Muslims whose families emigrated from India directly and the other by families who arrived from Malawi. Gujarati respondents, who did not give walked interviews, confirm that there were at one point divisions between even the relatively small Gujarati community leading to the development of two mosques a quarter of a mile apart in Birmingham.

The significance of this is not to emphasise inter-community tension; indeed no evidence was found that such significant tension exists today either between young Muslims today in Aston or Perry Barr. Instead the community infrastructure, divided along ethnic and sectarian lines, is illustrative of a range of sub-ethnic and sub-religious identities which can often remain invisible to those outside those specific groups. Nonetheless the research also suggested that among younger generations of Muslims there is less recognition and sometimes even outright opposition to these intra-faith divisions, in favour of a more inclusive British Muslim identity.

4.5.4 Social Spaces: Connection and interaction

The thing is where would you move to that gives you a community? The houses might be nicer in the suburbs, the streets cleaner, but that's not all that makes a place. It's ultimately people that make the place.

(Ahmad, Interview, 17/02/09)

As was discussed in the Chapter 3, the most significant advantage of the walked interview method was in discovering the intricacies behind place-attachment through a use of a mobile method which was able to give an insight into everyday experiences of participants. Not a single walked interview was conducted wherein at some point the interviewee did not inadvertently meet a friend, a neighbour or relative in their local area. Methodologically this is noteworthy for the intimate way in which the interviewer or researcher physically experiences those connections which participants might otherwise struggle to describe. But it is also telling of the interconnectedness of residents of these neighbours, based on how much social interaction their mobility and their use of spaces allowed them.

The contact that participants had with their neighbours was usually but not exclusively with other pedestrians. On average during a walked interview which would last a little under an hour, a participant would meet three people, and stop to talk to them. In one interview a participant, Ruhul, stopped for up to 15 minutes, prompting him to fiddle with the dictaphone and accidentally deleting the walked interview file (see Chapter 3). During the course of the interview Ruhul had come across a friend of his father's who stopped to talk about some problems with his health and a recent operation. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the conversation I made some space for the two to converse. These incidents (rather than 'interruptions', for they play a crucial role in the interview itself), were the starkest examples of how social connections, interaction and contact was fundamental to establishing a sense of place-identity and belonging in participants.

The best example of this occurrence is an interview which was conducted with the participant Zaahid, which lasted for a little less than an hour. Less than five minutes into the interview Zaahid received a phone-call. Some friends of his were organising a football game at an indoor venue later that evening and he was asked if he could play and recruit others to attend. He agreed. Shortly afterwards some other young men pulled over in a car to discuss the possibility of a football game that evening. Just over half an hour into the interview he met another group from whom two agreed to take part in the game, (but not before asking what the strange device is that is dangling from his

neck and recording the conversation). After joking that he was a spy or 'informant' he summarised who was attending the game so far:

Listen, we got football at nine – you know Asad, we're gonna play some of his lads. Me you, Baja, Asad, Spektor, Chief...

(Zaahid, interview, 23/05/09)

It was then he turned to me and reflected on this interaction and what it demonstrated:

This is the community thing – this is what brings me back here. Funny ennit. Very very funny. It something else. I've been to Alum Rock, I've been to Aston but they haven't got that community. Next door neighbours are talking but its not the same.

(Zaahid, interview, 23/05/09)

However, it is not that Aston has any more or less of a strong feeling of community. It is simply that Zaahid's networks or perhaps the lack of them in Aston, would mean that cannot feel as 'at home' as he does here. Zaahid's strength of connections in Lozells is already such that through a walk along just a handful of streets he can arrange for a football team to take part in a match that very evening.

The significance of his encounters can be summarised thus:

What we see at work...is the production of alternative spatialities – encounters with everyday space and the opportunities for action that it affords which, in turn, become ways in which spaces, their extents, their boundaries and their capacities become legible, understandable, practical and navigable

(Dourish 2006, 7)

These encounters also recall some of the observations famously made by Jacobs (1962) in 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities'. Criticising swathes of the American planning system for seeking to destroy vibrant and cohesive urban communities, Jacobs suggested that sidewalks were critical in providing a space for contact between neighbours (ibid, 67). Jacobs talked about the need for a

balance between contact and privacy and argued that in the 'great cities' one cannot have an open-house; a certain amount of contact is enjoyable and useful, but beyond a certain point it becomes an irritant (ibid, 67). However, the inter-connectedness of the communities of young Muslims as demonstrated by the interviews shows evidence of a community underpinned by interaction and practice. For young Muslim men in their late teens and early-twenties, who in inner-city areas are likely to live in relatively crowded homes, the streets of the neighbourhood have become extended social spaces. As Phillips et al (2007, 219) note, supportive social networks are one of the great benefits of 'communities', especially those suffering from high levels of deprivation, clustering in certain areas – and those positive impacts of clustering have in the past received less attention (ibid).

From all the walked interview participants, only one wished for the walked interview to take place in a neighbourhood in which he had never lived. His neighbourhood of residence was Kindgstanding, a relatively deprived suburb of Birmingham with a below-average percentage of Muslim population in the city. Instead this participant believed the city centre was more of a representation of space in the city where he felt he belonged, and even in this interview which lasted slightly under an hour, he encountered an old school friend. Zaahid in another interview notices the driver of the car driving past, and he congratulates him on his recent marriage. It is the sort of contact which is difficult to imagine happening so regularly in a more suburban part of the city. The strength of social connections in inner-city Birmingham's neighbourhood spaces were even strong for Ihteshaam, who made little effort to engage in religious activity, stating instead that he was anti-religious and 'anti-Islam' (but who culturally identified as a Muslim). But having grown up around Alum Rock, he too insisted that despite his numerous reservations about Alum Rock and Washwood Heath and in particular the religious ideologies upheld by some of his neighbours, he felt he belonged there and claimed that despite working for the investment arm of a bank in the city centre, he had no intention of moving away.

However the interconnectedness has its downsides for some of our participants. Some feel the disciplinary gaze (Foucault 1978) of the community's 'eye', the one which looks out according to one

participant, to see if you might be doing something untoward or disliked by one 'community' you might belong in. Gossip travels: having a girlfriend is the kind of the thing you can only do 'under-cover' as one participant put it. Mohammed (2005) writes about this extensively with reference to the working practices of young Muslim women and similarly Phillips et al (2007, 225-226) in their research into British Asian narratives of urban space noted how Muslim women in particular found the scrutiny of a closely-knit community to be restrictive. But such restrictions also apply to the lives of young Muslim men. Another participant confides in me that he had a girlfriend in my hometown of Walsall, before he was married, but it's something he would not do in 'his' area; 'shitting on your doorstep' is his description of what such an act would amount to, in his mind. This illustrates how that disciplinary gaze not only acts as a form of social control but also helps construct the boundaries between 'home' or community, and spaces outside the aforementioned 'doorstep'. Similarly another participant Osman who still wished to perform his walked interview in Small Heath, explained he had decided to move away a year previous to the interview, to get away from what he saw as the more intrusive nature of the neighbourhood:

What can I say, it's a bit like Eastenders. Everyone gets to know everyone's business (laughs). Gossip travels. News travels. It's a predominantly Asian area and Asians love to talk, man...It's relatively small, everyone knows each other - that's how it is.

(Osman, interview, 19/06/10)

As Wert and Salovey (2004) suggest, gossip can at least in part be explained by the need to establish moral information, and this may reflect once more on values being imprinted on space through the gaze of neighbours. These examples cited however are the only examples of participants bemoaning the near constant social encounters. These encounters take place on the pavements and the alleys, in the parks and shops, on residential roads and on high streets. These very streets were in turn shaped and sometimes physically constructed through the underlying economics of Britain's industrialisation, its colonial past and its industrial decline. These streets helped reproduce the

specific sets of social interaction, the social cohesion and the values that have become imprinted on parts of inner-city Birmingham. And crucially, these spaces are inescapably constructs of a very British history and a very British geography.

4.6 Conclusions

There's a sort of life to the place. I suppose if you're looking for a study and you look at all the worklessness and crime you think, what a horrible area to live in. But it's not actually like that.

(Ihtesham, Interview, 29/12/10)

Two major findings result from the interviews on identity and belonging conducted for this study; firstly the sheer ordinariness of young Muslim men in Birmingham, whose feelings of identity are shaped by everyday experiences and practices in the spaces which they tend to consider to be home. The specifically 'Muslim' aspects of their identity occasionally come out through their values and the values of their community whose gaze might fall upon them, but the concerns of young Muslim men range from those associated with community and faith to concerns that are universal, such as issues of finding housing, socialising, working and escaping crime.

Secondly, many young Muslim men living in inner-city Birmingham show a strong level of place-attachment to their local neighbourhoods or the city of Birmingham. The reasons for this lie between the high degrees of street-level social contact, the production of specific cultural and economic spaces in those neighbourhoods and the experiences and memories associated with growing up within those spaces. Aligned to this point is the recognition of certain streets and neighbourhoods as having developed specific cultural characteristics; Stratford Road along Sparkhill and Sparkbrook, Alum Rock Road in Washwood Heath and the Coventry Road in Small Heath are not only considered Asian areas by some, but 'Muslim' in the fact that they cater for the dietary, culture and leisure requirements of the region's Muslim population. These spaces become focal points for feelings of belonging and also provide a cultural imprint on the physical landscape which acknowledges the stake that ethnic-minority communities have in the city as a whole. Furthermore, these urban spaces that can shape patterns of behaviour are themselves products of a particular set of interplays between different sets of governmental policies, immigration policy, economic policy and housing

policies. The physical and social landscape of inner-city Birmingham has been shaped wittingly or otherwise by government's economic, migration and housing strategies throughout the last half a century.

The research presented in this chapter also reaffirms that old geographer's refrain, which although might seem tired, remains pertinent: place matters. When we speak of Muslim identities in the UK, it makes little sense to do so without reference to the actions and the performance of the everyday. Those performances are contained, regulated by and sometimes shaped by the physical characteristics of the urban spaces in question. We cannot reduce this explanation to the caricature of environmental determinism; instead we need to appreciate the ways in which residents of neighbourhoods adapt their movements to sustain their required amount of social contact.

The conclusions made with regards to the belonging of young Muslim men on a local level are not necessarily exclusive to young Muslims. This research makes no claims as to whether or not feelings of belonging and identity can be extrapolated to populations of Muslims on the outer edges of the city or outside it completely. Nor can it make any suggestion that the strength of place-attachment is in any way reduced for those of other faith or ethnic backgrounds. The gendered narrative provided, relevant to young Muslim men rather than women also limits what we can learn. However the conclusions made are still very significant because they pose a strong challenge to binary discourses that either portray Muslims as immigrant 'others' or pits trans-national identities against 'British' identities. On the contrary, young Muslim men in Birmingham have identities which are expressly British and this research demonstrated that they often speak eloquently of their attachment to British spaces such as those around which they might live.

All this might seem somewhat removed from the more persistent debates about national identity and integration, and the connections or disconnections between citizenship in the UK and the feeling of faith identity, which would transcend national borders. Surely, one might suggest, Muslims having identified with a particular religion must in some way feel part of a wider religious movement.

Otherwise, how does one explain the more organised Islamic groups that have campaign on particular issues, such as for example, the anti-war movement, campaigns for Palestinian rights? And does this conflict in any way with notions of British identity? The next section seeks to address those issues and examine whether or not it is possible to construct any useful or operational idea of national and global Muslim identity using evidence from this study.

Chapter 5:

The Politicisation Of British-Muslim Identity

5.1 Faith Identity and Britishness: A Phoney War

In the literature review we saw how the identities of young Muslim men have been contested and their 'loyalty' to the UK scrutinised. We have discussed how debates over multiculturalism in Europe and 'the West' reflected anxieties with Muslims specifically, a phenomenon which Parekh described as the 'Muslim Question' (Parekh 2006; 2007). These anxieties and the historical spectre of Orientalism (Said 1978) contribute to the drawing of Muslims as being in inherent conflict with being 'Western', European or indeed British. Subsequently in the previous chapter we observed how the lives of young Muslim men in the UK are in fact shaped by a very specifically British history and geography. These histories and geographies engender a more localised sense of belonging which coexists with the Muslim aspects of their identity. The implication is that British Muslims in Birmingham are as 'British' as their 'white' counterparts, and this is reinforced by their everyday lives and practices. The previous chapter thus made claims based on our empirical evidence of how 'British' young Muslim men in Birmingham actually are. However, it may be argued that such an argument is a somewhat inadequate response to the charge that the national loyalty of British Muslims is in some way compromised. It does not explain why, for example, Muslims might feel very much attached to imagined transnational communities than to national ones Archer (2009). Nor does it address the concerns of some commentators that there is a discord between liberalism and the values of some Muslims (explored in Joppke 2004).

This chapter seeks to address these very points. Firstly it investigates the notion of 'Britishness' (as distinctive from citizenship) and explains the difficulty of obtaining empirical evidence on the feelings of Britishness, exploring the elusive, sometimes banal and often politically loaded nature of the term. It also discusses how Britishness can be asserted in response to young Muslims having their identities

questioned by others. Secondly it investigates how Muslim identity is constructed by our participants, and how Muslim identity and practice is perceived by the young men in our study as a more fundamental, tangible part of their lives than the almost mythical sense of 'Britishness'. Using the evidence gathered, it argues that Muslim identity is not in any way inherently contradictory to British identity, employing the concept of cultural hybridity (Bhabha 1992; Hall 1992). Finally the chapter suggests reasons why the binary discourse of Muslim identity versus Britishness is increasingly prominent, observing that the state seems to focus policy towards Muslims when they are seen as a security threat.

5.2 Britishness: Between Myth and Reality

I wouldn't say I belong to Britain. But I wouldn't see where else I belong.

(Abuzar, Interview, 06/04/09)

An underlying theme that comes out of this project is that of how scale affects identity. When the scale is small, neighbourhood-level communities can demonstrate more clearly the bonds that hold them together and that make them feel like they belong. Chapter 4 examined just how such local processes work and what was demonstrated was that a 'British' belonging was part of the experience of everyday life; place-belongingness, as Antonsich (2010) described it. However, when the scale is widened from the 'local' to the 'national' and 'trans-national', belonging and attachment become somewhat more political and simultaneously more intangible. Anderson (1990) asserted in his treatise of nationalism that nations themselves were 'imagined communities' but this intangible nature of nationality however does not render it any less meaningful. Instead, we engage in a discourse where the notion of an 'imagined' sense of community starts to become as important if not even more important than direct connections in physical spaces. Belonging then becomes something that lies between reality and imagination, performance and belief. But this dimension of belonging is also more political, as the very construct of the nation is inherently a Political entity.

Debates around national belonging therefore tend to be politically loaded, and more closely associated with the concept Antonsich (2009) and Yuval-Davis (2006) described as the 'politics of belonging'.

In debates around 'belonging' and 'identity', *Britishness* is spoken of, rather than British *citizenship*. Britishness is to the 'nation' what citizenship is to 'the state'; it is inherently a politically loaded term, and it is worth investigating its historical roots. Colley (1992) in a reflection of Britishness through the last two and a half centuries suggests that Britishness and the idea of the British nation has always been used to distinguish Britain from the 'Other', and that in the post-war era, with a lack of any external threat, the 'Other' has become somewhat of an internal threat, helping to define what is 'British'. Similarly Robins (1997) and Wallwork and Dixon (2004) detail in their studies the socially constructed, imagined and often exclusionary nature of nationhood, with specific reference to Britishness. Through their studies it is clear that 'Britishness' is a term that fits in with Yuval-Davis' (2006) notion of the politics of belonging; she argues that there is a space in between legalistic notions of citizenship and emotional components of belonging; and these can be used and manipulated to exclude the Other.

Given the politically loaded nature of the term then, it is perhaps no surprise that during interviews for this project, the subject of Britishness was one which seemed to draw out the difficulties of defining nationality for our participants. When asked directly about their belonging to the UK or sense of Britishness, responses tended towards expressing citizenship, rather than the more emotional affirmations of belonging referred to when discussing more localised identities. It may seem mundane, but once again many young British Muslims see the UK as their home; the one they have grown up in, are comfortable in, the state in which they have constructed social and cultural networks and the state in which they envisage living in the future. This reflects the ideas of Antonsich (2010) who proposed that comfort and socio-spatial engagement are key components of belonging. For our participants there is little in the way of anxiety about the nature of that British identity; some express contentment, one respondent even pride at being British. But they struggle to elucidate on

the emotional component of that identity. Instead they are rationally able to explain why *place* is important.

To be honest with you I'm a British Muslim Pakistani...I mean, at the end of the day I was born here, grew up here and I've been back to my old country a lot. I've been back on ten or eleven occasions and for a week or two or six weeks or once for six months – and the last two times I went was for three months at a time so I do love it there...its where my parents were bought up and my grandparents are from there. But I do see England as my home though. Cause its where I grew up, you know what I mean.

(Imran, Interview, 04/04/09)

The reference to Pakistan is important to note. Although a few of the respondents spoke about emotional attachment to their parent's homelands, generally it was something that did not come up in conversation. Being 'Pakistani', 'Bangladeshi' or 'Indian' was a component of identity but certainly not a place where any of the respondents felt they belonged. When asked about identity or whether or not respondents feel British, the answer tends to revolve again around the social networks, the everyday and life experiences that are all formed here in Britain - the question evokes 'place-belongingness' as Antonsich (ibid) describes it, rather than the 'politics of belonging' associated with more political debates about nationality and Britishness:

If you ask an immigrant his home country he don't say [the UK] because his friends and all that aren't here but my friends...everybody is here. So when you go back to Pakistan you have a good time and that but my friends are here. This is it.

(Sadiq, Interview, 12/03/09)

Two respondents who said they did still consider India to be where they belonged because both had both lived there until the age of eight and nine. With that exception it may be startling to some that the young men in the study did not speak too much about belonging to their 'original' homelands, where their parents were born. This raises the question of whether researching second-generation youths of South-Asian heritage through the concept of diasporas is relevant any longer. Instead as Mitchell (2000, 273-274) has suggested, through migration, national identities are being reshaped

and re-territorialised. Nonetheless there is also a possible contradiction within the data gathered. Whilst identity crises were generally not an obvious feature of the data collected from interviews and participant observation, several professional youth workers seemed to be quite concerned about young Muslims not feeling like they belong in any single place. This concern harboured by the youth workers for their young clients is brought out by this stark, yet not necessarily representative quote from one participant:

When I went over to Pakistan they was friendly, very very friendly. But you go there and they call you „anglesee“ – you come here and they call you Paki. It’s a bit like being hit like a tennis ball from one place to another – you don’t know where you belong. People say a dog can be born in a barn but doesn’t make it a horse you know. I would say though I belong in England, Lozells.

(Zaahid, Interview, 23/05/09)

Whilst the quote might not be representative, three youth workers who were interviewed spoke at length of the internal conflicts felt by young Muslims about where they might belong. This brings us to another important finding, that discrimination and a questioning of British identity can lead to that self same identity being asserted by Muslims, to demonstrate that they have a *right* to belong. It is in this space that the emotional aspects of belonging and the politics behind the concept of belonging collide. For all the theorising of the diminishing importance of national-identity in a globalised world (Castells 1989, 6-7), when national identity of minority groups is challenged it can provoke a strong and emotional reaction. In the interview excerpt above, although Zaahid suggests that his identity is called into question by outsiders, ultimately he still feels he belongs in England. Once again, assertion is built not on romantic notions of loyalty to the nation-state, but on the facts of his existence in the UK, his experiences in Lozells and in England and the constant performance of his identity in those local, English, British spaces. However he also touches upon the spectre of racism and xenophobia, referring to being thought of not as a British person but as a ‘Paki’. Britishness might be an altogether ‘woolly’ concept, but it suddenly seems more concrete when an actor moves to exclude someone who they believe does not fit in. Britishness in this instance becomes an identity cemented through

exclusion both for those who seek to exclude and those who resist that exclusion. This could be viewed as the point at which something as personal as identity gets drawn into the politics of location (hooks 1991; 145, Yuval Davis 2007, Antonsich 2010), and counter-hegemonic discourse begins to take form. This is something that Nasser, a youth worker from Aston is all too aware of:

We've done many workshops and one was about the army and in World War 2. Many from the Asian subcontinent and with Bangladeshis Gujaratis and Indians (were) on the front line – the battles they fought in Italy and France – they had an active role to play and they don't have an understanding of that – people don't know that. So when people say "fuck off to your own country" – they can answer and say listen, I am part of this country, this is my history and this is the role my forefathers played and I am part of it – if someone says „Paki go home“, normally they might think, „fuck it, I don't like them or this country anyway.“ But we're combating that.

(Nasser, Youth worker, 02/02/09)

Indeed, racial discrimination is a theme that ran throughout the walked interviews; stories abound of encounters with abusive passers-by and suspected discrimination at the workplace. These experiences have a pervasive effect. There is recognition on the part of youth workers that demonization and negative representations of Muslims as 'threats' or simply not 'British' may make them yet more resistant to claiming their own right to a British identity. The discrimination experienced and the demonization of Muslims together and may go some way towards explaining why there is little in the way of an emotional attachment to 'Britishness'.

Nonetheless, other youth workers suspect that there has been a significant shift towards attitudes to ethnic minorities even in the last decade, which has seen an uptake of 'British' identity by young Muslim men, or at least an English one. The interview and discussion which follows sprung up in the summer of 2010, just prior to the football World Cup, one of the few events which inspire an overt display of nationalistic symbols, flags, t-shirts, and the sound of chants as one wanders through the city centre. On the eve of England's final group game (on June 22 2010), a discussion is had by Muslim men in their 20s outside Aston Park. Muhammad remarks that when he was growing up a

decade ago it would have been frowned upon for Muslims to fly England flags outside their houses, it being associated with violence and hooliganism of football fans as well as the historical symbolism of the red English cross as the sign of the crusader. By the summer of 2010 however the participants suggested, even some young Imams and Maulanas (religious scholars) were displaying England stickers on their cars. I relayed this to Kamran, an experienced youth worker in the city. He continues:

You know what. It's a funny...I'm in a bit of a confused...over the last ten years there's been a change around the ways in which young people feel. Those years ago you wouldn't see people wearing a blues top or villa top or an England top. You wouldn't do that because you remember your own experiences; seeing skinheads walking down Stratford Road in the pubs with England tops and you associate it with that. But now in the last six years or so and with the last World Cup just gone it's changing – kids are wearing these tops and this generation has no issues with these tops – that's a hell of a change. This generation has no issues with flying the flag. Compared to my generation that's massive – a really big shift in where there allegiances lie even if it's on the football pitch as nations

(Kamran, Youth worker, 16/09/10)

This study's research indicated that nationalism and feelings of national pride are not identities that can be constructed solely through shared values; the reality is that they are loaded with ethnic and racial imprints, products of ethnic and racial conflict. This is of course despite the fact that ethnic and racial constructions of Britishness or Englishness are mythical. There are always actors in whose interest it might be to use ethnic identity as a marker for national allegiance: identity-politics at its most vulgar. Nonetheless the power of exclusionary narratives of Englishness or Britishness seems to be on the wane.

The tale of generational change which is told through the symbols of English football might seem crude as an illustration of Britishness, but that itself is very much the point. What one sees in the stories above is essentially the tracing of what Billig (1995) describes as 'banal nationalism'. It fits Billig's (ibid) definition of banal nationalism in that the displaying of flags and supporting of national

sports teams is demonstrative of a nationalism that is apparent, ubiquitous yet often unquestioned, often in the developed 'west'. As Skey (2009, 342) neatly summarises however, just because nationalism exists in a banal form, it does not make nationalism and 'Britishness' any more or less concrete. Identities such as these are by their nature imagined.

The politically loaded, banal, ephemeral and mythical nature of Britishness ultimately does not lend itself for easy analysis in this sort of academic study, nor are they easily explored by our participants, some of whom seemed nonplussed by the very mention of the term. Instead, the significant finding is the very discourse of Britishness, which itself tells a story about how and when national identities become important. Britishness and the questioning of national identity of immigrant populations derive from nationalist discourse which seeks to draw boundaries around those who belong and those who do not. Unlike place-belongingness, it is part of a very political discourse. And as it is centred around notions of citizenship, values and banal symbols it is difficult for Muslim participants to engage with on an emotional level, again unlike place-belongingness which is performed in everyday life.

Unlike Britishness however, the Muslim identities of our participants tended to be easier for them to illustrate, explain and practice.

5.3 British Muslim Identity: A Discourse of Conflict

Having established the problematic notion of Britishness (and Englishness), we have to next address the other half of the equation with which Britishness is meant to be in conflict: Muslim identity. It is worth noting that Muslim identities have already been discussed, especially in Chapter 4. Although the place-attachments are local, we have seen that the Muslim aspect of the identity is immersed and intertwined with other facets of identity, affected by other values and strengthened as those identities are played out in the realm of the 'everyday'. There is no binary conflict between these 'Muslim' practices and 'Britishness', certainly in the minds of participants. Nonetheless one of the

key questions posed at the start of this chapter is the one relating to a collective Muslim identity, an identity that some suggest superseded all others, and one that is not constrained by citizenship, language, by physical boundaries of land, or the imaginary boundaries drawn between nation-states. It's the identity that explains why at some points in time Muslims across those boundaries have protested, marched and even fought together in order to achieve common goals (Saunders 2008). There is also a word for this collective identity: the Muslim 'ummah', an Arabic word which refers to a universalist Muslim community (see Ahsan 1992; Halliday 2002).

Most of the young Muslims who were spoken to expressed some form of Muslim identity and several went beyond that and suggested that they belong to a wider Muslim 'community' as well as other non-faith-based communities. That is not to say however that the immediate circle of friends around these individuals were necessarily all Muslim. Nonetheless, whilst identity is embedded in practice and strengthened by it there were comments from participants that suggested that even without observing all religious rituals, Muslim identity still resonated and held meaning for them. It is typified in the statement made during an interview with Bilal:

I'm a Muslim. I'm proud of being a Muslim. It comes first. Its my religion – what I'm bought up with. We don't practice it 100% but we are still Muslims and we pray and it means something . We believe.

(Bilal, Interview, 28/02/10)

This sentiment is echoed by two youth workers in separate interviews who make the following claim:

(Young Muslims) couldn't hold onto nationality; they were only ever two questions away from having their Britishness questioned: Where are you from? Birmingham. No, I mean where are you really from? But their faith is beyond question: „I'm a Muslim.“

(Kamran, Youth worker, 16/09/10)

When I went abroad, I am only two or three questions away from my British identity being challenged. I was in Holland and was asked where I was from. I said that I was from England. They asked, „but, where are you really from?“ I said that I was from England and

then they asked as to where my mum and dad were from – and there it is – my identity was flawed. And a shop-keeper can do that, never mind anyone else.

(Imran, Youth worker, 13/09/09)

In the ethnographic research several youth workers spoke about an ‘identity crisis’ among young Muslim whereby young Muslim men would not feel fully part of either British society or the culture of their parents and grand-parents from South-Asia or the Middle East. These statements do still suggest that Islam is a fundamental part of the self-conception of young Muslim men and it suggests that young Muslims struggle with dealing with competing sets of identities. In the eyes of Muslim organisations and counter-terror practitioners the perceived cultural schism between Islam and British is real and requires resolving. Yet these fears are not borne out fully by this research which suggested that the dilemmas and traumas affecting young Muslim men were not so easily attributed to an identity-crisis. Their frustration around having their British identities questioned did not translate into any conscious cultural unease.

Rather than taking the discourse of such identity-crises at face-value, we can use the concept of hybridity to question *why* the notion of co-existing identities might seem problematic. As was discussed in the literature review, hybridity may be a concept which is taken for granted; Werbner (1997) for instance describes all cultures as being hybrids and thus concludes that the term itself is theoretically useless. But whilst Werbner (ibid) might be correct in suggesting that no pure form of identity or culture exists, remembering this idea and applying it to minority groups prevents us from essentialising them. Muslim identities in Birmingham as we have seen can be deconstructed to show how very specifically British they are and thus it undermines simplistic descriptors of Muslim identity. As McLoughlin (1996 cited in Dwyer 1999a, 56) has suggested, not only do British Muslims have an array of different identities, but those different aspects of identity can come to the fore depending on any specific context or situation. Others interested in Muslim identities including Dwyer (1999a; 1999b; 2000) in her extensive research on British Muslim women and similarly Hopkins (2004; 2007) researching Muslim men all emphasise these complexities. The sharp focus on the ‘problems’ of

Muslim men in resolving dual identities sometimes amounts to a fetishising of Muslim identity itself, that it is in some way uniquely threatening or at odds with Britishness and the ideals of citizenship. Such contradictions however were simply not felt by the young Muslims interviewed for this project.

Ultimately Muslim identity might be easier to hold onto for young Muslim men than Britishness; this is in part due to the fact that values and everyday behaviour are greatly influenced by religious belief, and this was the case for most of our participants. For many it influenced how often they prayed, their attendance to the mosque whether it be daily or weekly, what they ate. It is therefore an identity constructed by and embedded in action: it is not only ideological but is also performed. 'Britishness' however is much more difficult to consciously 'perform', not least due to its ill-defined nature. Nor can Britishness be captured by a specific ideological framework in the same way 'Islamic values' are interpreted.

This difference is not something which is inherently problematic but because the religious component of a person's identity can influence a person's values and their own interpretation of the landscape around them it has become seen as a reason to be suspicious of Muslims, not only from the traditional political 'right' which has usually been more sceptical about immigration and multiculturalism, but also parts of the liberal wing which has been categorised as 'liberal'. The unease of liberal critics of Islam can be characterised as based on the cultural and religious attitudes of some Muslims in the UK, but in the research conducted for this study it is difficult to find elements of young Muslim identity influenced by religion which posed a direct threat to what we might loosely term as liberal values. In the previous chapter we heard from Muslim respondents who, for example, might have preferred not having pubs on their streets, or seeing Muslims drinking alcohol public, as they believed, in line with their religious faith, that these constituted social ills. But there was no evidence that young Muslim men in Birmingham were participating in any movement or individual action to curb enterprises or behaviour that they would deem 'un-Islamic'. Moreover, cultural preferences such as these are hardly indicative of traits which threaten citizenship.

Instead the anxieties about Muslims seem to be very much rooted in the private behaviour and attitudes of Muslims. If the 'liberal west' takes issue with individual practice of what they see as relatively illiberal cultural practice then this raises a fundamental dilemma with liberal discourses - that liberalism is caught between ensuring freedom of belief and expression, even if those expressions might support illiberal doctrine. Whilst this dilemma and surrounding issues are explored in more detail and from varying political perspectives by Parekh (2006), Caldwell (2010) and Laitin (2010) it is not within the purview of this thesis to discuss that particular dilemma. What is of more importance to this research is that for the participants there *was* certainly a more concrete sense of Muslim identity -but this existed without any conscious conflict with British citizenship. The very politically loaded construction of 'Britishness' and the polarising discourse between 'Muslimness' and 'Britishness' is ultimately a phoney competition which ignores the hybridities, complexities and overlapping nature of the identities of young British Muslims in Birmingham.

5.4 Towards The Securitisation Of British-Muslim Identity

Up to this point we have established the politicised nature of Britishness and the ways in which aspects of Muslim identity have been sidelined in favour of a discourse which suggests a conflict between Britishness and Islam. Furthermore, we have seen a limited amount of evidence which points towards the politicisation of Muslim identity. It is at this point in the project that we arrive at a juncture flagged up in the introduction to this project: a disconnect. This dissonance is between the way that identity and feelings of belonging are experienced and played out among young Muslim men on one hand and how their identities are then governed and institutionalised on the other.

Even without regard to very specific policies targeting Muslims in Birmingham (which are the focus of Chapters 6 and 7) there were three notable occasions during the research process in which officials in institutions including the West Midlands Police and Home Office and Foreign Office became particularly interested in Muslim identities in Birmingham. The first was in January 2009 when

opposition to the Israeli invasion of Gaza (in the occupied Palestinian territories) led to anger and protests in the UK, including in Birmingham. Following the invasion of Gaza the British government was seen as reluctant to condemn the incursion into the Gaza Strip. On Saturday 6th January 2009 approximately 1000 protestors gathered in the city centre as anti-war politicians and councillors gave speeches condemning the Israeli invasion. According to an interviewee within the counter-terrorism unit in the region at the time, counter-terrorism officials were put on alert in the city that at a time when Muslims in particular might be angry with British foreign policy, potentially raising the threat of terrorism.

The second occasion involved the visit to Birmingham of the then foreign secretary David Miliband and Secretary of State for the Middle East Ivan Lewis. During their visit they held closed talks with 'Muslim leaders' and academics, but Ivan Lewis also allowed for a select audience of young Muslims to question him about British policies towards Muslims. This second event was one I attended and the session was facilitated by an organisation also active on the Prevent agenda (see Chapter 6); the session was notable for the sometimes tense atmosphere and terse replies from the minister to questions raised by the young participants, particularly towards the Palestinian question, the Iraq war and the conflict in Kashmir. The event ended with an argument between two invitees to the event and Ivan Lewis over his appointment to the position of Secretary of State for the Middle East, having been a former Chair of Labour's Friends of Israel group, which some saw as a conflict of interest.

The third such occasion was during the English Defence League march in Birmingham on 5th August 2009, prior to which advice from West Midlands Police was distributed to young Muslims through local Muslim organisations, imploring them to stay away from the city-centre and any counter-demonstrations in order to ensure that violence did not ensue. Messages were forwarded informally among Muslims as a consequence, and as a researcher I received several text messages asking me to 'safeguard the reputation' of Muslims by not attending.

These instances of government departments becoming interested in young Muslims and their concerns, demonstrates something important. Young Muslim men might have an array of identities which help them understand their way through life, but these identities only become interesting to the state when they are thought to pose a threat, a risk to British security. Of these security threats, two of the three dangers were related specifically to the threat of terrorism. What follows this institutional focus can be the start of a process of securitisation of Muslim communities, based on the logic of risk. The following two chapters cover two policies, explicitly aimed at Muslim communities in Birmingham, which did just that.

Chapter 6

Governing Identities: The Prevent Agenda In Birmingham

6.1 'Prevent' Reaches Birmingham

As we saw within the opening empirical sections, the identities of young Muslim men in Birmingham, as in any given city, are multifaceted, difficult to generalise about and operate on a variety of scales. Local spaces are important in defining what some young Muslim men feel about their place in the world, and beyond this there is also a strong sense of Muslim identity which does not inherently come into conflict with British citizenship. However, the British government were not to be interested in those aspects of Muslim identity simply because they were not in any way an impediment to economic or social progress. Social problems and urban issues were not tackled through the utilisation of Muslim's faith identities but through social agendas which assisted communities based on economic needs, as one would expect in a relatively secular society. The emerging spectre of Islamic-inspired terrorism from 2001 onwards however reframed government approaches towards its Muslim population and Muslim identities became increasingly politicised and securitised by the state.

Before discussing the politicisation of Muslim identities in Britain it is worth recalling that there is a history of the British government actively seeking out representation from Muslim groups, particularly in the two decades since the Rushdie affair (Lewis 2002; Birt 2005, 99-100). As the literature review demonstrated, this short history is littered with political manoeuvrings by officials from the various political parties as well as various Muslim groups attempting to exert some sort of control over the processes that would give Muslims in the UK their representation, both politically and in the public-eye and glare of the media (see Chapter 2.2.4). The events of the last decade have

further politicised Muslim identity and raised issues around the supposed barriers for Muslims to adopt 'British', 'secular' or 'liberal' values (as explored in Parekh 2006).

However, even with that background the Preventing Extremism programme (dubbed 'Prevent') in its aims, its methods and as a concept constituted a radical step-change. For the first time in the UK a minority population identified solely by their religion would be targeted with state policies and funding; the resulting projects had the express aim of making the UK a safer place for all its citizens. The policies were established and justified on the basis of a catastrophic risk, that of terrorism and the potential for mass murder. In order for these policies to work as planned they had to focus their energies on one already stigmatised group: Muslims. Prevent in Birmingham had its successes, and the research carried out suggests that although policy-makers and practitioners began quite ill-equipped to embark on such an ambitious scheme, fraught as it was with challenges, the learning curve for some of those involved also appears to have been steep. This chapter gives an overview of what happened when in 2007, Birmingham City Council began to receive over £2 million worth of funding for projects which help reduce the 'risk' of young Muslims becoming 'radicalised'. Using interviews with individuals who led and administered the project centrally and youth workers on the ground who worked with young Muslim men, it pieces together the process of Prevent from policy to practice. It also traces the disconnections in those processes which occurred when seemingly cogent policy formulation translated more incoherently when its objectives had to be actualised. Finally it critiques the governance template through which Prevent was administered and the impacts the policy has had on Muslim identities in the city, as Muslim identity variously became the object of fear, stigmatisation and conversely, also a commodity.

6.2 Prevent: An introduction

The first government strategy to tackle mainly Al Qaeda inspired terrorism was first published in 2003. Dubbed the 'CONTEST' strategy, its development began in the aftermath of 9/11, the Afghan

war and the war in Iraq which also began in 2003. Most of the original strategy's focus was aimed squarely at the detection and neutralisation of actual plots. It concentrated on the policing strategies associated with terrorism; to pursue and prosecute those responsible. However, in the aftermath of the 7/7 London bombing attacks the government's approach to the prevention of extremism and terrorism shifted. The new CONTEST strategy was published in March 2009 and divided into four strands: 'Prevent', 'Pursue', 'Protect' and 'Prepare' (HM Government 2009).

The pursuit objective remained as it was, the goal being to detect and apprehend terrorist suspects. 'Protection' and 'Preparation' were introduced as two separate strands. These recognised the importance of protecting the general public from attack by devising strategies to make it more difficult for terrorists to penetrate security. It also involved preparation for attacks and the development of contingency plans which could be activated in response to materialising threats (ibid 2009).

However, it is the 'Prevent' strand which has proven to be the most controversial and contested aspect of the strategy. The 'Prevent' strand is focussed not at preventing actual terrorist plots directly; rather its aim is to prevent 'radicalisation' of individuals themselves, to prevent them from becoming terrorists or resorting to violence. It is instructive to note the key aims of the Prevent strategy as noted in the 'Guide for Local Partners in England':

- Challenging the violent extremist ideology and supporting mainstream voices
- Disrupting those who promote violent extremism and supporting the institutions where they are active.
- Supporting individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism
- Addressing the grievances that ideologues are exploiting

(HM Government 2008, 6)

At first glance it might seem that there is little of any controversy in those stated aims. As senior police officers have pointed out to me throughout this research, the police are often involved in conducting prevention projects for other types of criminology. For instance, in Birmingham the problem of gun and gang crime has been tackled through projects which involve the police liaising with social-workers and youth-workers as well as schools, giving appropriate presentations and providing information on the dangers of gang membership and the carrying of weapons. These comparisons with anti-gang projects were made by several police and city council interviewees during the course of this research. Targeted mentoring of individuals thought to be vulnerable to gang-related offences has also been piloted through Local Authority partnership work (Elkis 2010). Similar schemes have also seen police liaise with community groups to prevent knife crime and vehicle theft. Furthermore, such prevention activities are specifically targeted at groups that are thought to be vulnerable to those particular crimes. In one interview, a senior police officer emphasises that it would be unjustifiable and a waste of resources for police to visit a Grammar School to deliver a programme around vehicle crime, because the students at selective schools are unlikely to be those 'at risk' of such criminal behaviour. In short, his point is that targeting particular social groups is not only a common tactic, it is also a practical and common-sense method of crime prevention.

However the nature of the crime of terrorism and the language used in policy documents as to how to counter it are unprecedented in the UK in the following respect: they target not action, but a *process* in which an individual's personal view of the world is supposedly altered to the point that it constitutes a threat to the security of the state and its citizens. Vehicle crime and gun crime might have cultural facets but they are not ideologically driven; on the other hand radicalisation or extremism is thought to be an ideological stance (Meah and Mellis 2009; Carpenter et al 2008). The focus of anti-radicalisation efforts is not on a social group but on a religious group whose beliefs and ideologies are broad and disparate. Nevertheless, in name and basic principles they share a common religion, and to many, a common identity. Their identity as Muslims and the assumptions that come

with that identity might not be assumptions that all young Muslims would have necessarily constructed or consented to, but it is certainly one which is imposed upon them through representational processes and politics in the public sphere.

This focus on Muslims however poses some very difficult questions for policy-makers, few of whom are likely to have any detailed knowledge of militant Islamic ideologies, the functioning of Muslim 'communities' or the processes of 'radicalisation'. The generalised guidance with which Prevent began seems to suggest that policy-makers at a national level were also either unaware or unequipped to engage with pressing issues that practitioners would face in actioning Prevent on the ground. This would apply to an even greater degree for local authorities towards whom responsibility was transferred for handing out Prevent funding. It is difficult not to sympathise with local authorities who were effectively identified as the institutions which would directly be responsible for both allocating funds and delivering Prevent projects with limited guidance from the Communities and Local Government (CLG) department, which would take the lead on the agenda at a national level. The inference was that Prevent, despite having an input from the Police, was not primarily a policing directive, nor was it a conventional law and order problem which would be tackled by the Home Office.

Rather unfortunately, the subsequent CLG strategy document was entitled 'Winning Hearts and Minds' (CLG 2007), the same rhetoric which had been used as the basis of counter-insurgency propaganda by colonial forces (Carruthers 1995) and NATO forces engaged in combat with 'Muslim fundamentalists' in Afghanistan (Mockatis 2003). It would not be fair to use this mis-step by the CLG to suggest that it considered Muslim communities or even fundamentalist or radical Muslims to represent an insurgent force within the UK but the language did demonstrate uncertainty on the part of the government as to how they should characterise and form partnerships with British Muslims. Nonetheless the importance of local solutions was justified thus:

Whilst tackling violent extremism is a national priority, the nature of the challenge can vary greatly from place to place. That is why approaches driven from Whitehall are not enough.

Working with local communities, particularly Muslim communities, to deliver local solutions is the key. This is not just about local authorities, it is about wider cultural activities and inter faith work in our communities.

(CLG 2007, 7)

The implication is clear: whilst extremism was conceived as a national problem, its source was identified as local. With local authorities generally having even less interest and expertise in counter-extremism than national government, the 'communities' - Muslim 'communities' - would be at the forefront of counter-extremism efforts (Briggs 2010). Spalek and McDonald (2011, 12) in studying the relationships between police and Muslim youth in the context of extremism contend that in literature on actual terrorism, 'community' is often omitted, being displaced by discussion on 'identity'. However they contend that when discussing radicalisation, community-centred approaches have become somewhat of a policy mantra. They distinguish between 'community focussed' approaches that encourage the involvement of members of community in the governance of projects, representing a relatively bottom-up approach and community-targeted approaches which subjects the community to exercises of power, representing a top-down approach. The 'mantra' of working with communities aligns itself to the former bottom-up approach and the research conducted suggested that the primary reason why this community-focussed approach might have been seen as the most appropriate was due to a simple lack of requisite skills and knowledge on behalf of local authorities and police to proceed with Prevent in any other way. Governance in this case was dictated by the capacity to deliver. Thomas (2010, 453) found that nationally this governance process resulted in formal co-operation of local authorities with central objectives, but in practice the range of responses by those different local authorities have varied immensely. This point was also made by one policy-maker and one practitioner interviewed for this project.

The 'local' aspect of Prevent purports to be a response to the recognition that central government is not well placed to address vulnerabilities and grievances of Muslims, which have a local dimension or

might be exploited at a very local level (House Of Commons CLG Committee 2010). The Sixth Preventing Extremism Report of the House Of Commons Select Committee on Communities and Local Government stated as much but also pointed out potential pitfalls, such as that whilst local authorities might have important local knowledge, they would lack expertise on religious and political ideology even more so than central government (ibid). This furthermore put onus onto the role of 'community' representatives and leaders who would have to be relied upon to fill this gap, and their heavy involvement subsequently ignited debates around their legitimacy either as representatives of any 'communities' or their suitability to run counter-extremist programmes, a subject that their own funders at the local authority would be unqualified to deliberate upon. Thomas (2009, 287-288) also questions the anti-racist educational approaches to Prevent work which he claims risked being rejected by young Muslims who would understand and interpret the agenda differently from what well-meaning programme designers might intend.

An additional notable aspect of the Prevent strategy was that any lingering notion that the government's foreign policy particularly its impacts in 'Muslim' countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan and its stance on Israel and Palestine was in any way a major contributor to extremism was, officially at least, wiped out of the government's anti-extremism strategy. Indeed at the National Prevent conference held in Birmingham during December of 2009, during a whole day's discussion around extremism and its prevention, involving speeches from Chief Constables and the Labour Home Office minister at the time John Denham, the impact of foreign policy was not mentioned once by any of the speakers.

It was a surprise then, when in 2011 a senior police officer with a leading role on the Prevent programme, on being asked during an interview what the key cause of extremism was, answered without any hesitation whatsoever that it was Anglo-American foreign policy. This apparent contradiction will be returned to later in this chapter but such glaring discrepancies highlight an important fact. There is no doubt that the government refuses to acknowledge the role of its foreign policy in causing extremism as such an admission would call into question its own foreign policy. If

the offending policies shifted in any way, it might be perceived that the government was allowing its foreign policies to be dictated in the face of violence rather than through democratic debate. Brighton (2007) details how, although it is his belief that foreign policy cannot fully explain radicalisation, the government's report on 'Preventing Extremism Together' (CLG 2005) whilst suggesting foreign policy played a role in radicalisation, failed to detail exactly how the two were connected, and thus the focus shifted towards integration and cohesion. This lack of acknowledgement and understanding of foreign policy impact may be explained as an attempt on the part of government to use its power to limit the expression and power of a particularly important part of the radicalisation process for the sake of political expediency (Brighton 2007, 3). The government chooses not to acknowledge, at least publically, that terrorism is in part an expression of politics and Muslim identity against Anglo-American foreign policy. Subsequently one inconvenient dimension of Muslim identity is extricated from the policy-making arena.

But whatever those politically motivated omissions might be within national documents, as the policy moves down institutional levels it becomes, for want of a better phrase, increasingly de-politicised as the pressure of public perception is reduced. Interviews conducted with police officers in the West Midlands demonstrate the Police as having an acute understanding of the impact of foreign policy on increasing the threat of domestic extremism. Furthermore as the policy filtered down yet further towards youth and community workers, they saw it as very much part of their job to focus the political anger of young Muslims about foreign policy, into non-violent avenues. As this chapter will later demonstrate there were large gaps between the conceptualisations of the problem of extremism and the actions required to prevent it between institutional layers, but as the policy filtered down, practitioners were often able to use their own intuition to alter if not completely disregard national policy pronouncements if they saw them as unrealistic.

Indeed the single greatest challenge as Prevent moved from policy to practice was how any sort of programme would be developed that would make meaningful inroads into challenging extremist ideologies. The official Preventing Extremism Pathfinder review calculated that nationally, only 20%

of projects worked with individuals 'at risk' and only 3% with those who were glorifying or justifying acts of terrorism (cited in Bartlett and Birdwell 2010, 13). This concern has been raised by many including Thomas (2009b) in a submission to the CLG committee responsible for the Prevent programme. As this research will reveal, even some of those chosen to work as teachers and mentors to young people as part of Prevent were sceptical about how to practically proceed with the agenda. Some who ran programmes even scoffed at the idea that they had done anything to prevent extremism with their efforts. In an atmosphere of scepticism and suspicion of the Prevent policy, and with a lack of clarity as to how Prevent would establish itself on the ground, before establishing the Prevent programme within Local Authorities, the government did at least recognise that time was required for policy development. Consequently, before announcing the £53 million national Prevent fund, a £5 million national pathfinder fund was established, to begin in 2007.

6.3 The Birmingham Pathfinder: Coming To Terms With Faith Identity

The Prevent Pathfinder in Birmingham began in February 2007. From the £5 million allocated to the national scheme £525k was given to Birmingham City Council, and its PVE Projects board chaired by Councillor Allan Rudge subsequently administered eleven programmes under four broad themes (Waterhouse Consulting 2008). The Pathfinder case and the controversy that followed one of those eleven programmes is important to acknowledge as it flagged up major concerns about Prevent. But the nature of that very controversy also highlighted an immediate dilemma for those within and outside the state's apparatus: how does a modern secular state interact with the faith and beliefs of a group of its citizens?

The post-enlightenment era in the developed 'west' has pushed politics and governance away from the religious sphere and towards the secular (Chaves 1994). This is not to say religion itself is necessarily in decline; whilst its political authority might be reduced, the rise of religious fundamentalism, the movement of 'believers' in a globalised world and the importance of religious

beliefs even in the politics of some 'Western' nations, all seem to suggest that secularisation is by no means the inevitable successor to modernisation (Berger 1999). Nonetheless as Habermas (2006, 3) writes in an essay on religion in the public sphere, whereas liberal states allow positive freedoms of belief to be exercised, if religion moves into the public sphere in any way which is conceived to pro-religious, it calls into question strongly held ideals such as the separation between church and state, and becomes a matter of controversy. The Prevent pathfinder is a case in point.

On reflection, the projects rolled out as part of the pathfinder were very similar in nature to those that would be part of the mainstream Prevent programme a year later. Under the theme of 'Reclaiming Islam' projects were aimed at establishing good governance at mosques and some forms of citizenship education were introduced in select madrasahs (Islamic schools) attended by children and younger teenagers. Also part of this theme was the creation of a 'Young Muslim Leadership'. Young Muslims who took part in this programme were able to take part in workshops designed to better their understanding of citizenship rights and responsibilities, and equipped them with various skills to 'challenge violent extremism' (Waterhouse Consulting 2008, 28). Some of the individuals who were interviewed as employees working in Prevent funded schemes were involved in these same workshops, and later others would be involved in the resistance against Project Champion (see Chapter 7). Other 'themes' of the pathfinder included enhancing the roles and organisational capacity of Muslim women, equipping Muslims with media skills so they can better represent themselves and a focus on issues pertaining to 'young people'.

It is one project in this last group which caused the greatest controversy during the pathfinder year bringing criticism in local and national media and leading to a re-organisation of Prevent management in Birmingham. The project was entitled 'Journey of the Soul' and it consisted of a series of study-circles aimed at giving young people access to 'mainstream' Muslim scholars to discuss theological issues whilst simultaneously giving these 'credible' Imaams (Muslim leaders) the opportunity to 'reconnect' with young people. For a scheme that courted such controversy, it is

perhaps surprising that the official pathfinder evaluation by Waterhouse Consulting (2008) barely mentions anything about the way in which the project worked. It notes the following;

The Journey of the Soul project...focussed on issues of spirituality, helping young people to better appreciate their roles and responsibilities in wider society according to faith. Mainstream Imams were given an opportunity to become more proactive in relation to building cohesion and improving inter-faith relations. (It) helped to promote confidence in religious identity...(which) allowed the development of a distinct British Muslim identity providing a space to help open minds within an environment...where an individual's Imaan (faith) is revitalised and nourished.

(Waterhouse Consulting 2008, 28)

A further sentence follows describing the project as being an example of 'an excellent' project. What is omitted from the 'evaluation' is that the project also involved taking a group of young people (the numbers of which were not made available to researchers, journalists or mentioned in the evaluation), to visit Saudi Arabia to perform 'umrah', a religious pilgrimage. The cost of the overall project was reported to be £63,000 and also involved taking young Muslims from Birmingham to see the graves of Muslims who had died fighting for the Allies during the First World War. The young Muslims chosen to attend the course were selected based on perceived 'vulnerabilities' and identified by youth and community workers who were also actively involved in designing the programme. The information on who participated is not available but discussions with some of those closely involved in the project suggests that vulnerabilities included a range of social and economic factors such as coming from low-income and deprived backgrounds, having been suspended or expelled from school or having been dealt with by the police either resulting in warnings or cautions. Freedom of Information requests have been submitted for a full breakdown of these 'vulnerabilities' but access to information has not been granted to date.

Six months after the overwhelmingly positive official Pathfinder consultation the Birmingham Post (2008) ran a story on Journey of the Soul, suggesting that spending money to send young Muslims on a religious pilgrimage was a waste of public money and had a questionable impact extremism

prevention. This demonstrated a difficult dilemma for policy-makers; the practitioners whose job it was to actualise the Prevent agenda with grounded projects had to walk a fine line between discrediting particular actions influenced by theology, without overly promoting any other theology in its place. I put this point to a Police official working on connecting the overall CONTEST agenda projects at a regional level. He suggested that it was a difficult dilemma for those working on the 'Prevent' strand of the CONTEST strategy, but one which could be worked around by conceiving as Muslims as 'communities' rather than as a 'faith group':

It's a very difficult one. I think you have to say that this is about Community Cohesion and obviously the most important link between these (Muslim) communities is their faith. The variations inside that faith are massive but this is about trying to engage with the community that is more closely associated with its faith (than other communities)...My argument would be that we are not targeting their faith but we are targeting their community.

(Graham, Police Officer involved in the Prevent programme, Interview 16/03/10)

Having conceived of extremism and terrorism as a problem to be dealt with by a faith group, united by a shared religion, and indeed dealing with a faith-inspired problem, it cannot credibly be denied that faith would be promoted to some degree as part of a government programme. It would be unrealistic to believe that the problem of religious extremism and its ideology could be confronted by a faith-neutral programme. Among those who research anti-extremism strategies in detail, the debate has in fact moved beyond confirming that religious teaching must be part of effective counter-radicalisation, to debates about the extent to which government should be working with conservative and 'Islamist' groups (Vidino 2009, Lambert 2008). Furthermore, whilst the Police were well aware of the complexity of identities of young Muslims men, in order to provide a focal point to the policy the concept of 'community' was used to extrapolate common identity among those young Muslims.

Moving down the institutional level to those actively involved in monitoring and managing projects, it is accepted even by senior police officers that public bodies and public-sector employees would

necessarily have to be engaged with faith issues in order to prevent potential extremism. A senior local government official heading Prevent projects suggests it was inevitable that faith would have to be used and to some degree promoted for the scheme to work. And he insisted that he was comfortable with that, as the only practical solution:

One of the prevent mantras was that funding shouldn't go to support religion. And in theory some of our projects do that – in fact in practice they do that. I think in Birmingham, we're blowing our own trumpet but I think we're ahead of the game on these issues. We recognised what we know now. Americans looked at studies that said that if you're really up to date with your religion then you will feel comfortable with your religion – you're less likely then to get misled and take a narrow narrative that Al Qaeda are spouting everywhere because you're comfortable with who you are. It's the people who aren't comfortable who were looking for answers elsewhere who get sucked in.

(Maurice, senior officer involved in Prevent in Birmingham, Interview 13/09/10)

Another practitioner who had worked on Prevent projects since the pathfinder stated of those projects:

It is naturally faith based. You can't de-radicalise someone without faith. If somebody is radicalised by faith then you cannot de-radicalise them with something else.

(Abdul, Prevent Practitioner, Interview 24/05/09)

It was thus accepted and expected that Prevent projects would look to deal actively in matters of faith and theology. But whilst this might have caused some controversy if highlighted publically, some Muslim practitioners looked upon this as an opportunity to finally use faith to substantially improve the lives of young people in a way in which they had currently been wary of doing, using public funds:

It was an incredible move when PVE came in. Prior to that there was an acknowledgement of identity in the youth service and there was this idea that identity was important and needed to be discussed with young people but it was not encouraged that this identity

should include a faith. In fact it was discouraged to the point where if you put a bid in and used the word Islam or any other Faith for that matter it wouldn't see the light of day.

(Kamran, Youth worker on Prevent projects, Interview 16/09/10)

He goes on to explain that in his experience as a youth worker there was frustration at the inability to harness faith when it came to reforming the lives of young Muslims with social problems. He contends that social workers were reluctant to acknowledge the usefulness of faith as a 'protective factor' and that this represented a missed opportunity:

With the Muslim community no matter how far down the road they are towards integration or whatever you want to call it, they have a very deep set emotional bond with their faith, whether they know two words about it or whether they know they believe in the Prophet and in Allah, irrespective, they hold it close to their hearts...it's something that came to us many many times even before I worked in PVE and it was something that was being ignored.

(Kamran, Youth worker on Prevent projects, Interview 16/09/10)

Another youth worker involved in Prevent from the pathfinder stage onwards echoes this opinion:

It is very hard for non-Muslims to understand the inherent attachment that a young Muslim has to their identity as being Muslims and the reason is that it is the identity that nobody can shake off it or take it away. Whether a young Muslim smokes weed or drugs or has a girlfriend and gets her pregnant, drinks alcohol or is involved in criminality, all of which is counter to Islam's teaching, however deep down they have an emotional attachment to Islam thus if Islam was being attacked and being slandered then they would still feel that they had to stand up and protect Islam.

(Ismail, Youth worker and consultant on preventing extremism, Interview 13/09/09)

Thus we see that as the Prevent agenda moved from policy to practice, the attitude towards the role of faith was changing between those holding the reins of the policy at different levels. Whatever qualms about using faith proactively were present in the directives nationally handed down, when it came to the local level, an ulterior pragmatic approach was taken which considered the role of faith-based work as not only useful, but key. Some practitioners spoke during the research period of taking

Prevent funding as an opportunity just to do ‘something useful’ whether it actively prevented extremism or not. The view that Islam could become a ‘protective factor’ was one that had been promoted in a report for the Recora Institute (Meah and Mellis 2009) and was echoed in an interview with Yusuf Meah (the co-author of the Recora Institute report) himself, who had experienced the challenges of working on Birmingham’s *Prevent* pathfinder project. Others were keener still, sensing that that religious identity could be used expressly as a corrective social tool for the first time. In fact one practitioner went as far as to suggest that he was happy, as he saw it, being paid to propagate his faith to young people:

PVE is just Muslims’ excuse to give da’wah (invitation towards Islam). I’ve said this before and I’ll say it again, it is just paying Muslims to give da’wah.

(Abdul, *Prevent* Practitioner, Interview 24/05/09)

The views expressed here are all from those involved with working with young people on the *Prevent* Pathfinder and they demonstrate tensions within the policy’s creation and implementation. The government conceived Muslims to function as a group of communities, but without any real knowledge of the workings of those communities and the role of theology in the lives of young Muslims. Instead, they were dependent upon youth and community workers to mould the kinds of programmes which might have an impact in preventing radicalisation. As the literature review demonstrated, social scientists have in the past debated the merits and failures of using cultural identity, which can be exclusive, as a tool for political action (Hall 1996, Grossberg 1996, Modood 2005b). A very similar dilemma confronted the policy-makers and practitioners who were to pick up the *Prevent* agenda at the local level. For the most part the aims of their projects were laudable: to take individuals ‘vulnerable’ to taking on an aggressive and dangerous identity, and instead allow them to embrace a new renewed Muslim identity which would give them confidence as well as a sense of belonging to the UK.

But as more Muslims were required to take on projects after the pathfinder year when a further £2million was made available for *Prevent* projects, practitioners would have to first battle with their

own fears that the agenda was doing little more than stigmatising Muslims, pathologising them or even blaming them for the problems of terrorism.

6.4 Prevent and the Fear of Stigmatisation

It is a simple statement of fact that Al-Qaeda tends to focus for its recruitment operations, on people from Muslim communities...Inevitably if you start with Al-Qaeda you end to begin to look at the constituencies that they focus on, and that means Muslim communities.

Charles Farr, cited in House of Commons Select Committee 2009-2010 (2010, 10).

Charles Farr, the Director General of the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism thus effectively summarised the governing logic underlying Prevent. Government policy-makers recognised that it did not have the skills, knowledge or ability to prevent processes of radicalisation on its own, using a traditional top-down method of policy implementation. Instead it would have to rely on local partners working closely with 'Muslim communities' or rather more accurately, those people who were well-placed to work with local authorities and who could also claim to carry influence among Muslims living within those local boundaries. But for Muslims and those who would eventually be putting forward young people for programmes and workshops, dilemmas of retaining integrity were widespread. Young Muslims would be targeted for referral to these programmes with no agreed-upon definition of how extremism would be defined and with no profile from which to draw clues as to those who might be 'vulnerable' to radicalisation. This was echoed in a leaked MI5 briefing note, details of which were published in *The Guardian* (Travis 2008) which concluded that that it was not possible for a typical profile of a 'British Terrorist' to be constructed. This same conclusion was reached by the House of Commons Select Committee in its Sixth Report into PVE (2010, 10) as well as being reported by youth and community workers in Prevent as part of this research. The lack of extremist profile when coupled with little guidance from central government as to what kinds of projects would be appropriate, sparked fears that rather than achieving success by reducing the threat of terrorism, Prevent schemes would do little more than stigmatise Muslims further as they increasingly become subject to the gaze of the state.

As the policy moved down towards the local level, non-Muslim officials whilst acknowledging the dangers of stigmatising a minority community, believed that by looking upon Prevent as a crime-reduction strategy like any other, such fears of stigmatisation might be allayed. As one official put it:

I was here to do a role which is basically a crime prevention role and a public safety role, and this is where it's difficult for people like me because we don't see it as targeting Muslims or demonising Muslims or stigmatising Muslims. We're targeting criminals. Its no different really from...work that we do to stop kids in Tipton from stealing cars or work that we do in Handsworth and Lozells to stop young black kids from taking up guns and shooting each other....But it's unfortunate because it's couched around the Muslim faith. Obviously that's where the difficulties lie.

(Maurice, Senior Police Officer, Interview 22/09/10)

For the police in particular, it was helpful to view the problems of extremism as a criminal matter, not one relating to the uptake of a problematic or dangerous identity. However, the very goals of the Prevent agenda which included the tackling of *ideology* gave the Prevent policy an identity-focus. To demonstrate this conflict, in the same interview the official went on to discuss the supply and demand factors that were thought to lead to an individual becoming radicalised. He cited a theory developed by Mellis (2010). In this theory Mellis (ibid) suggests that the 'supply side' of radicalisation involves those with anti-liberal, anti-democratic and violent ideologies who are looking to recruit others to their cause. But these 'suppliers' of violent ideology depend on readily available recruits, which is where the 'demand' side of the model comes in. The demand is in the form of disillusioned, alienated and ill-informed Muslim (usually) men who are also facing challenges of crises of identity and belonging. In the official's own words the demand can be perceived as follows:

...there's a demand from second and third-generation Muslim youth that they want to fight their way from their parents traditional religious Pakistan-placed beliefs – most Pakistanis – India – its all India anyway isn't it – most of Pakistanis here came from Mirpur which is a very very poor – its like the equivalent of Norfolk – poor, rural, not greatly sophisticated. And they come here and they've still got that...in the nicest way, a backward mentality – very traditional. The second and third generation, bright lights of England, want to get more

involved, want to get away from the parents background which the parents want to hold onto and they become more westernised with a little „w“ but they aren't quite accepted either because a number of white folk are suspicious so they are stuck in this middle land

(Maurice, Senior Police Officer, Interview 22/09/10)

The so-called vulnerabilities crucial to the process of radicalisation are therefore believed to be cultural; it is about the displacement felt by migrants and the difficulty of second and third generation Muslim immigrants to negotiate the conflicts an identity that some young Muslims find, is being challenged externally. What is more, in relation to Mellis' model (Meah and Mellis 2008), Prevent very much focuses on targeting the 'demand' of radicalisation rather than the supply and according to the model the demand itself is dependent upon a breeding ground of frustration, discrimination, humiliation, alienation and injustice (Meah and Mellis 2008, 27). Thus those who are 'vulnerable' are conceived of, almost pathologically, as victims, but these victims also constitute a potential threat.

It is worth noting here that although models of radicalisation such as the one cited above are undoubtedly influential in counter-radicalisation policy, the models themselves are based on very little empirical evidence that is relevant to the UK context. Nevertheless, as far as Muslim policy-makers and practitioners were concerned, the very discourses around radicalisation processes were themselves the sources of stigmatisation. Their concern was that by supporting the Prevent agenda, those Muslim agents would also be flagging individual young Muslims as potential dangers to society. Dean (1999, 192) explained that risk-related discourse can often seem apolitical, but as this example demonstrates, the politics of risk is intrinsically political or as Beck would have described it, it is part of sub-politics (Beck et al 1994, 34). This sub-politics is evident when risk is countered by governance processes. As in the example of Prevent, there are implications for the representation of Muslims as a group, and for individuals who are encouraged to engage. In the case of Prevent, rather than countering media representations of young Muslim men as dangerous and misleading, an engagement with the Prevent agenda and its notions of vulnerabilities give credence to a

government policy which might drive that same negative representation. There was a fear among those charged with established Prevent schemes that an unfocused ill-informed or ineffectual policy would exacerbate such stigmatisation and that young Muslims would increasingly become subject to the gaze of the state, whilst ultimately the threat of extremism would not decrease. The language used by some of the practitioners reveals just how stark this fear was:

As a Muslim I was concerned that actually, Islam is being perceived nationally on stage in view of the national public, by policy makers...there was a real potential for Islam itself to become demonised.

(Mohsin, Prevent project co-ordinator, Interview 27/05/09)

The credible people that got involved [in Prevent] did so after a lot of trepidation and question marks; feeling their way through the darkness

(KM, Muslim community activist, Interview)

[On being asked if the practitioner felt uncomfortable working for Prevent] Yeah. Every day. Every day. We used to have a team meeting every week and we used to say, are we doing the right thing?

(Abdul, Prevent Practitioner, Interview 24/05/09)

The fact that you had policies and laws targeted at Muslims, we were seeing a rise and stop and search of Muslims, the fact that they were trying to profile Muslims but weren't able to come up with a profile for anyone who was a potential terrorist...these are all things that stigmatised the community.

(Irfana, Practitioner involved in Prevent programmes, Interview 20/08/10)

The fear also extended to the stigma that individual young people participating in Prevent programmes might be subject to. Early on in the Prevent programme a conflict arose in which one group of youth workers refused to give information about the specific young people they would be working with, for fear that they may be identified and tracked by police when they had not engaged in any remotely illegal activity. The fear of stigmatisation of individuals was so great that in one particular meeting, a youth group leader stormed out upon hearing that his new superior, the lead Prevent officer in Birmingham, was a former Special Branch officer. Reflecting this story, which was heard from two separate sources on either side of the policy-making/practitioner divide, is the interview of another youth worker who claimed to have similar fears. This youth worker expressed the fear that youth workers would lose credibility by engaging:

...There were massive risks – huge risks to ourselves as workers when we are pitching this to parents to get their kids involved...“Will our child be on a list and how can we be sure?” and so forth. And then the head of PVE at the time [name removed] granted us anonymity for every young person we have in our programme none of their details will be kept or required.

(Kamran, Prevent Project lead, 16/09/10)

It is interesting to note here that on the subject of social training and discipline, Hunter wrote,

Before individuals can begin to reflect on themselves as the subjects of their own conduct – before they can take an ethical interest in themselves – they must undergo a certain kind of problematisation.

(Hunter 1996, 158)

From the institutional standpoint we can see Foucauldian notions of subjectification and disciplining at play in the Prevent agenda. Both the logics of risk and the concept of ‘discipline’ require the subject be problematised and then these concerns ‘addressed’ or the citizens subjected in order for them to be made safe. The governmental procedures of calculating risk and then providing programmes to alleviate it form the underlying, unquestioned logic that will then lead to ineffectual

policies. This may prompt a question about the role of those Muslim youth-workers and community representatives whose engagement was crucial to Prevent being implemented. If the fear of stigmatisation and subjectification was apparent, then it begs the question as to how and why Muslim agents and individuals engaged. There are a number of reasons that those who took part agreed to do so. Firstly some found their fears being allayed once they met with those heading the programme, and they were able to conceive of the work as akin to similar crime reduction strategy work. An example of such is Ismail a youth worker turned Prevent consultant:

I had huge concerns about the agenda and a lot of the concern for me was myself not being informed properly ...once I became informed that it was more about me about preventing violent extremism [it] sat easy with me...I am doing preventative work to build up capacity and resilience. [The people I work with] have no tendencies of extremist ideas – I am doing preventative work based upon the way I do preventative work with gangs as well.

(Ismail, Youth worker and Prevent consultant, Interview 13/09/09)

During formal interviews none of the interviewees working within Prevent stated that the opportunity to receive funding for projects influenced their feelings about the agenda, but during informal discussions, this topic arose. For instance on 14 September 2009 a project lead commented that funding for social community projects was scarce and that the Prevent funding could be used to achieve other favourable outcomes, even if it did not reduce the threat of extremism. Similarly another project worker agreed that the young people they were working with were unlikely to be potential extremists but the funding could be used to improve their prospects. Returning to Ismail, the youth worker who compared the work of preventing extremism to that of preventing gang-related criminality, when I put it to him that his projects might be doing much that is useful for young people but not really anything to prevent extremism, he answered:

Listen, this is exactly what I was thinking and to be honest with you it gave us an opportunity now to tackle some of the ills in our community...gang culture, territorialism, drugs – as you

know that is a huge vice and ill in the community. It's about building capacity and resilience...all these issues are vulnerabilities.

(Ismail, Youth worker and Prevent consultant, Interview 13/09/09)

You have one of two choices...one of the choices is (to believe that) this is discriminating and vilifying Muslims again and putting the community under the lens of security services. Or there is that other perspective that is...for me to get involved and fight the corner a little bit from that perspective.

(Mohsin, Prevent project coordinator, Interview 27/05/09)

Throughout the research period there was also a noticeable change in attitudes towards Prevent from those working with young people. An initial cautious and sceptical attitude seemed to shift towards optimism between 2008 and 2010 during the research period. The reasons for this are not wholly clear. One reason for this shift maybe that relationships between the Prevent-administering authorities at local level (the police and city council in particular) became more comfortable as they worked with one another. One aspect of Prevent that was covered in mainstream media was the allegations that the scheme was a vehicle for surveillance of Muslim communities. In an article in The Guardian (2009) two years into Prevent it was suggested that Birmingham's head of Prevent, Paul Marriott, who had replaced Yusuf Meah, was a senior counter-terrorism officer. It was implied that because Prevent targeted those who were not involved in criminality, Prevent itself was an exercise instead in intelligence gathering first and foremost. This allegation of spying was repeated in a report by Kundhani (2009) in which the author claimed that Prevent constituted an elaborate system of surveillance of Muslim communities. When I put this to Paul Marriot he vehemently denied any such allegations, and counter to those allegations, in many candid conversations formally and informally with practitioners working in Prevent, those suggestions were discredited with the exception of one interview in which the charge of spying was addressed:

It didn't help that Paul Marriot denied for the first three months denied completely that he had anything to do with terrorism saying he used to be a police officer but was now totally a BCC worker. That tactic changed many months later when he realised that anyone isn't

believing a word he is saying. Now it's, „I'm a CT officer and I'm open about it.“ But he was very closed about it at first. We struggled for quite a while...Why on earth should there be a CT officer at the head of a very delicate operation. It makes sense from a strategic point but from a community point it makes no sense at all.

(Anonymous, Prevent Project Coordinator, Interview)

The charges of spying are not entirely simple to accept or deny entirely. In theory at least, authorities presumed that some or most of the young people who were being engaged on the Prevent agenda were vulnerable to radicalisation. The police expected that if individuals were found to in specific danger, the police would be made aware and authorities would co-operate in order to counter their radicalisation. This process of referral was and still is dependent upon the exchange of information between youth and community workers and the police. What one person might perceive as information exchange and information gathering, another might term 'spying'.

Nonetheless the Home Office has rejected outright the notion that Prevent programmes were aimed at spying (Home Office 2011, 31). Whilst the research did not uncover evidence that Prevent was being used as a Trojan-horse through which to gather information on Muslim communities, it is significant that such allegations were reported in newspaper reports and policy reports detailing the experiences of Prevent employees nationwide. This perception, whether true or false, undoubtedly increased the stigmatisation of Muslims by suggesting that Muslims warranted such an invasion of their privacy for the protection of UK citizens.

6.5 Hands-On Preventing Extremism: An excursion to Markfield

To date the only publicly available evaluation of the prevent programme in Birmingham is the Pathfinder report by Waterhouse Consulting (2008). Earlier in this chapter it was suggested that the disparity between the public controversy over the 'Journey of the Soul' programme and a brief but

overly positive affirmation of the scheme represented evidence for a weakness of the scrutiny of the programme. Some of the opinions expressed by project workers in this section have also highlighted the gap between how authorities and youth and community workers perceived the scheme. However it is difficult to scrutinise Prevent schemes when those who might evaluate are distant from the programme's activities and dependent upon programme administrators to provide data for the evaluation. Access for researchers is also difficult; it is reasonable to suggest that the ambiguous attitudes of some Prevent staff towards the policy and the fears of stigmatisation of individuals involved in those schemes goes some way to explain the restrictive nature of access. Nonetheless, for four days during August 2009 I was invited to accompany 14 young people and six members of staff on a Prevent funded away-day. These young men from Lozells, a deprived inner suburb of Birmingham, were given an excursion to Markfield, a village in Leicestershire. They resided within the premises of the Markfield Institute of Higher Education, a research and training centre for Muslim students and researchers. The project however was led by a former youth worker with Birmingham City Council who was now running Prevent funded programmes in the city.

This particular project was aimed at engaging young people through the use of their faith; it would challenge their ideas of who they were and it would seek to enshrine particular, 'Muslim' values in their lives which would encourage them to achieve their potential rather than fall prey to under-achievement, truancy or criminal behaviour. As a researcher from a decidedly different 'world' – an academic one, alien to most of the young people on the excursion there was a certain amount of trepidation on my part for the behaviour of these 'vulnerable' children. I was soon put at ease; the leading youth workers were for the most part professional and adept at negotiating their roles from friends to mentors to authority figures as and when the situation required. Rather than being rowdy or unruly, the young clientele were polite, friendly and only rarely disruptive in group situations. Furthermore, the youth workers all seemed to be able to 'reach' the teenagers and modify their behaviour when required. Their methods ranged from humorous put-downs to the occasional stern lecture.

As a researcher in this environment, living with the group, whilst many of the youths struck me as coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, they did not show signs that they were particularly vulnerable to any forms of extremism. This was confirmed by the Youth Worker leading the project - and another scoffed at the idea that there was any potential for the young people chosen for the excursion to be radicalised. Once again the disconnected policy is visible: the Prevent policy looked to Muslim 'communities' to prevent extremism; the police and local authorities on the other hand had the more modest approach of addressing the vulnerabilities to extremism. Yet the practitioners on the ground were under no illusions that the scheme would address vulnerabilities to extremism. Instead, these practitioners were content that by providing opportunities to young people, broadening their horizons and allowing the space to express themselves, they would be protected from social ills. Extremism was not being seriously investigated or detected and therefore was not being tackled.

From the interviews conducted there was little in the way of direct criticism towards this stance that practitioners had taken, but a representative of MPACUK (Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK) in Birmingham suggested that there were dangers that any young people taking part in such programmes, even if they were not identified, could then be used as evidence that significant numbers of young Muslims in Birmingham were vulnerable to radicalisation. Indeed that remains a key criticism of the scheme, that youth and community work was being dressed up as in Prevent clothing in order to attract funding.

This youth and community work however was different from conventional projects. There was no need to develop euphemisms for using faith as a protective tool for young people as had previously been the case. The residential excursion took place in the month of Ramadan and the young people were expected to wake up at just before 4am for breakfast (though most stayed up until that time and only slept after breakfast and morning prayers until midday). Fasting among young Muslims is common to the point that it is almost universal and there is little doubt that the youths would have fasted at home in any case: they certainly were not forced to do so.

The staff and youths all ate communally at breakfast in the morning and during the evening would eat out in Leicester's city centre on most days. The actions of the group contributed to a sense of togetherness which the youths seemed to enjoy tremendously; Hellman (2008) writes in more detail about the ways in which fasting for Muslims makes an everyday practice (ie. eating) a collective act, creating feelings of togetherness. The five daily prayers were observed by everyone present and students were also given guidance from an Islamic scholar as to how to perform the rituals of those prayers correctly. The young people were reminded that it was their religious obligation to perform those prayers, as they might be reminded at their local mosque or by religiously inclined parents. The etiquettes of eating, of sleeping and of washing, all derived from the reported practices of the Prophet Muhammad, were all promoted. Anthropologists and ethologists have written extensively as to how rituals performed jointly can be viewed as approaches to create social solidarity (Sosis and Alcorta 2003; Durkheim 1995; Turner 1995). These religious acts also give insight into the issues of Muslim identity and its performance, discussed in the previous chapter. At the heart of the activities of fasting and praying we see how the Muslim identity is fundamentally embodied. Durkheimian thought sees ritual as key to the integration of disparate sections of society (Coleman and Elsner 1998, 49).

The religious and theological component of the excursion was its driving force; students were reminded of how to behave according to Islamic teachings. Cleanliness, ikraam (assisting fellow Muslims), respect for elders and modesty were among the values promoted. The teenagers were reminded that outside the Institute they would be surveyed by members of the public, and would effectively become representatives, not just their group, but of Islam itself. They were told that good behaviour is a form of propagation of faith, itself something to aspire to. They were assured that prejudices against Muslims and negative or cynical attitudes towards them could be countered by appropriate behaviour. By implication they acknowledged that negative stereotypes of Muslims existed and believed that it was through this same collective faith identity that such problems could be addressed. Thus this government-funded programme would be encouraging young people to

uphold these particular Islamic values. Specific identities would be performed and their corresponding representations projected.

Whilst the young recruits were able to enjoy free time playing football on the spacious grounds of the Institute (somewhat of a challenge on an empty stomach), there were more organised activities too in horse-riding lessons and archery. These activities were chosen due to their being performed, according to religious belief, by the Prophet Muhammad – performing and re-establishing those actions within daily life is known as performing a *sunnah*. From a theological perspective the *sunnah* is believed by some Muslims to constitute an act of *ibadah* (worship) and character development (see Duderija 2007). But sociologically too this re-establishment of religious ritual or mimicry serves a clear example of how institutional activity through communities can help re-establish rituals which can be important to sustain and re-shape identities. As such these sporting activities can serve as examples of multicultural policy, even if they took place within a counter-terror context. Even if Prevent was not designed as a multicultural policy, it fits precisely Templeman's (1999, 19) definition of 'primordial' multiculturalism, one that exists to protect cultures that the state chooses to recognise.

For the breaking of fast on most evenings the participants were driven to the centre of Leicester to Masjid Umar, a large mosque. As it was Ramadan the mosque was full of hundreds of male worshippers, the traditional prayer halls over-spilling with men of all ages. Among the local Muslims, most of whom were Indian Gujeratis, mosque attendance was high, reflecting the practicing, religious character of that local community. After the breaking of the fast and the prayer as we drove towards a restaurant for dinner one of the young attendees remarked that he was struck by the vast numbers of people who turned up with dates and fruit to share out with fellow worshippers – in particular a young child who would have been little more than ten years old who insisted on giving the fried snacks his mother had made to some of the visitors from Birmingham. The shared experience of foregoing food and the encouraging of generosity doubtlessly contributed to a feeling

of togetherness; a camaraderie even, and one which was felt by the participating researcher as well as the staff and young people present.

After dinner on the final evening, at close to midnight the youngsters were taken to a grave-yard for a contemplation of mortality. Muslims, similarly to Christians believe in a life after death in which misdeeds are punished and good deeds rewarded eternally. With this crucial aspect of faith in mind the youths gathered around a Maulana (religious scholar) as he sternly described the physical torture that he believes sinners would be subject to after death. A youth worker also joined in, describing how 'gangsters' – drug dealers whose names were known to most of the young people in Lozells, met violent, tragic early deaths. He reminded the young people that they had potential to live productive lives but warned them that by succumbing to the egotistical desire to become loved for money and violent power, they would end up gaining little from life in this world, and that a fate far worse would await them in the hereafter. As the group members raised their hands to pray before leaving, the leader of the prayer asked God for forgiveness of the sins of the whole group. In what was a spiritual moment for some of those involved, the sniffles of tears being held back could be heard; indeed crying in prayer is believed by many Muslims to be a part of the process of submission to God and a sign of humility and piety.

However other more controversial values construed as 'Islamic' were also emphasised, albeit informally. When on the minibus one of the young participants started sharing what his friends testified were somewhat provocative pictures of his girlfriend, he was admonished, albeit calmly by staff. They explained not just how such a violation of privacy might be immoral but also implied that his being a young Muslim, he should not have been having a girlfriend in any case. Worryingly, it was also possible for discriminatory values to be propagated too; in one isolated incident a youth worker mocked a child wearing a Valentino T-shirt, by suggesting that the child had a 'fag's name' on his shirt. As Halstead and Lewicka (1998) documented, reconciling Islam with the normalisation of homosexuality may be tricky, yet this openly aggressive attitude towards homosexuality was not encountered at any other point during the research process. Nonetheless it raises a salient point; the

opposition to homosexuality is one of the 'Islamic' values often cited by both right-wing and liberal critics of Islam and Muslim attitudes. This ideological difference with the liberal west allows for critics of Islam in Europe (Caldwell 2010) to talk about a 'rational Islamophobia' (Laitin 2010), where fear of Muslim immigrants is justified rationally, usually citing illiberal Islamic practice. Yet through a lack of oversight of the Prevent programme, these same illiberal attitudes may be transmitted even within a scheme designed to tackle extreme views.

It is telling that as part of the excursion there was no promotion of British values, national identity and citizenship. However it is difficult to envisage how any ideas of civic nationalism would have had a similarly strong hold on the young people. The environment of the institute, the atmosphere created by fasting and the performance of rituals resonated with the young people emotionally in a way in which, for example, values pertaining to British citizenship never could. This emotional resonance is difficult for the young people to express explicitly yet some of them when asked about what they felt about the Islamic teachings explained that it was who they are. Two young men reminded me that they were, as they saw it, privileged to be born Muslims, that it was 'who (we) are' and vowed that they would make concerted efforts to engage in regular religious practice upon returning to Birmingham.

This case study provides an insight into some of the problems and dilemmas of Prevent programmes. Prevent technically was not an anti-extremism programme; the programme might be more accurately described as part of a process that aimed to create 'resilience' against radicalisation. But at no point was the issue of extremism elaborated upon explicitly on this residential. The reason for this was practical; none of the young people involved provided any meaningful threat. None had been identified as realistically vulnerable to radicalism; rather it seems that youth workers were more concerned with preventing youths from falling prey to the attractions of petty theft and drug crime. Additionally, the governance of the programme was structured in such a way as to give youth-workers who were sceptical about the aims of the programme, the authority to drive it.

Furthermore, due to the sensitive nature of Prevent and a lack of faith and trust in the policy from its aims to its potential impacts, no scrutiny or oversight was possible. The lack of scrutiny was particularly problematic when one considered the freedom of practitioners to promote religious values. There is no single or accepted idea as to what being a 'good Muslim' entails and the values promoted as objectively attune to Islamic beliefs are usually contestable. Whilst the homophobic comment cited earlier was exceptional and would be unacceptable to most Muslims who might morally object to homosexual relationships, in a faith-driven environment there was at least the potential for values which might be illiberal and counter to those promoted in civic institutions, to be propagated. Similarly, the promotion of modesty and religiosity and a shared faith identity would also be difficult to construe as being aligned to wider 'community cohesion' objectives.

The case study is also important in that it shows how Prevent can be interpreted as a policy which directly seeks to assert control over identity issues. Forms of Islamic identity are promoted but these are not under control of central government or even those administering the Prevent programme. Once again it demonstrates that with uncertain objectives and a lack of consensus on either its aims or its methods, when translated into action it falls into the hands of those at ground level to assert their own values and religious doctrine. This provokes another important question: if Prevent is endorsing a particular type of Muslim identity then how can it be described?

6.6 Prevent: Creating A Safe Muslim Identity?

One of the biggest concerns about Prevent from Muslims has been the fear that the programme would in effect promote a government-friendly version of Islam. This is not only a fear for those anxious to ensure that government remains secular (Johnson 2009), it is a charge which is also levelled at the programme by the notorious 'Islamist' group which campaigns for Shariah law in the UK, *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* (Hizb-ut Tahrir 2010). Far from being a concern for those who were opposed to

Prevent entirely, the fear that Muslims were effectively being handed a 'sanitised' version of their faith using Prevent was one communicated in all but one of the interviews with practitioners. "Messing with the religion" is how one interviewee starkly described those fears. Another explained how he initially questioned the motives that lay behind the Prevent fund;

Is Islam to be redesigned to fit into a British context? Are they going to tweak and prune it a bit or [alter] it so it becomes more acceptable to British society?

(Ismail, youth worker)

We have already seen how faith was expected to be used to counter the extremist threat. Ultimately however, there is no objective set of beliefs which constitute 'Islam' or 'Islamic ideology'; they are social constructions and therefore open to debate. By challenging one particular interpretation, by definition the state is favouring its alternative or opposite, something problematic for a secular society (Johnson 2009, 27-28). However, this would not necessarily be as problematic for Muslim practitioners; after all 'mainstream' Muslims including all those interviewed for this project would of course shun the idea that their faith justified murder or terrorism. However some Muslims would be very nervous about promoting *any* religious doctrine if they felt they lacked the requisite theological knowledge to ascertain its credibility. Indeed, others took the view that there were objective truths around the Islamic belief system, and that tailoring those truths to fit with an alternative agenda would violate the Islamic faith and would represent an abdication of their own responsibility as Muslims:

I don't like messing with the deen [religion]. I'm in no position to mess with the deen. I can offer my issues and policy, but when it comes to the deen, I have no right.

(Abdul, Prevent Practitioner, 24/05/09)

This fear was also driven by events at national level, in particular the way in which some groups were acquiring funding over others. In two of the interviews conducted the government's support for the

Quilliam Foundation, an 'anti-extremist think-tank', was cited as evidence that the government was trying to actively create a British Islam. The Quilliam Foundation was founded in 2008 by Majid Nawaz, a self-proclaimed ex-extremist who stated his aims in founding the organisation as follows:

I am hoping to achieve two things. The first is I want to demonstrate how the Islamist ideology is incompatible with Islam. Secondly, I want to develop a western Islam that is at home in Britain and in Europe

(Nawaz cited in Sexton 2008)

By January 2009 the Quilliam Foundation were reported to have received £1 million of government money through funding streams allied with Preventing Extremism objectives. The organisation had rightly or wrongly developed a reputation as one which was willing to attack other Muslim groups in order to enhance their political position and thus be better able to attract government funding. An egregious example of this behaviour was evident in 2010 when a leaked Home Office memo showed how Quilliam had sent a list of Muslims to the Home Office who it considered to be 'Islamist inspired'. The word 'Islamist' has increasingly been used to differentiate between 'good' and 'safe' Islam as opposed to one which is dangerous. An Islamist is now defined as being a Muslim who sees his religion as political as well as theological ideology, and a co-founder of the Quilliam Foundation Ed Hussain has described Islamism, even in its non-violent form as the mood-music to terrorism (Hussain cited in Githens-Mazer and Lambert 2009). By compiling a list of alleged 'Islamist' individuals and groups they effectively sought to ensure that those people and organisations would not receive grants from the government as part of *Prevent* or any other related agendas. The list included many groups considered 'mainstream' including the umbrella organisation of mosques, the MCB Muslim Council of Britain, the Islamic Human Rights Commission, Birmingham's own Central Mosque and even politicians including Birmingham's Salma Yaqoob, an elected councillor, one of the most visible Muslim women in British politics and a politician with a history of opposition to extremism.

The perception of some Muslims involved in *Prevent* in Birmingham was that competition for funding was driving the government to promote Muslim groups who would be critical of Muslim communities and their mainstream organisations and leaders, and that this would perpetuate a stereotype of a dysfunctional Muslim community in Britain:

Quilliam are seen as a million quid funded Home Office [group] - often derogatory and often a bit dismissive about who they really are - yes they are a whole bunch of ex-extremists - and who are now making a shitload of money. They have a disproportionate impact on the government at the risk of alienating community, and I think that because it is very vocal in terms of criticising various Muslim communities and actually savvy in getting their voice heard at the expense of other local voices. I don't know anyone who actually likes them within the Muslim community...What do they want to achieve, nobody knows.

(Layla, Prevent Officer, Interview 15/05/09)

During the research period I was given access to young people in several Prevent events from the residential which I attended in both 2009 and 2010, a project in which young Muslims took part in a photography and poetry exhibition, an all-day event in which young Muslims took part in discussions on identity and citizenship and an evening of performances at the end of the Prevent funding in which young people who had taken part in the programme were in attendance. Whilst there was trepidation from practitioners that government was at a national level promoting particular forms of Islam over others, at the local level projects aimed at young people could not be said to be acting in such an organised manner. Values were being promoted in all cases ranging from values of caring for the vulnerable, engendering pride for neighbourhoods, values which discourage sexual promiscuity, the promotion of different types of 'Islamic' values including that of prayer and fasting and so forth. But there was no *consistent* drive in any particular direction, and ultimately those running projects on the ground would have a great deal of freedom to mould projects as they saw fit. It would be inaccurate to suggest a 'safe Islam' was being promoted to young Muslims; rather various anti-violence ideologies were espoused. Indeed the way in which Prevent was administered and the difficulty of scrutiny meant that even if at national level the government intended to develop a

British version of Islam that was government-friendly, the lack of trust of Muslim practitioners and lack of structure with which to exert control down the policy-making chain would all but ensure that any such policy would fail to reach young, 'vulnerable' Muslims such as those I encountered in Prevent projects in Birmingham.

6.7 The Channel Project and the Future Of Prevent

You asked how the future of Prevent is going...80% of work that we've done is really cohesion work but it has [just become] lost. It's just there was great work for three years and it's gone. We're trying to keep the integration work going by keeping the links we've got but the resources will be used for the hard edged stuff like Channel...We've got more referrals and more people know what the issues are and we are putting in interventions for people who are very vulnerable – not that broad brush across the whole community.

(Ismail, youth worker and Prevent consultant, Interview 13/09/09)

This 'hard' aspect of the Prevent programme which Ismail refers to rests mostly on a scheme known as Channel in which individuals thought to be at particular risk are de-radicalised, with the help of a range of appropriate government agencies (House Of Commons 2010). This multi-agency approach allows individuals to be given support, for instance, with housing, education, and health as well as receiving counselling to help 'cure' the individual of extremism. Mentors and counsellors have been recruited and given further training which is aimed at enabling them to challenge the extremist ideology of those who have been identified as being at risk (ibid 2010). This fits almost precisely with what Mitchell Dean described as case-management risk, which draws upon case-notes, files and interviews as forms of screening of individual pathology (Dean 1999, 189-190).

Channel has until now been a small yet controversial part of the Prevent agenda. Once an individual is suspected to be in the process of being radicalised but has not yet to the knowledge of authorities, committed any crime through the planning or carrying out of terrorism, he or she will be informed that the Police will monitor his activities. He is then given the choice of engaging with the authorities

to accept assistance for his 'problem', which is his ideology. According to sources working within Channel in Birmingham all of those who have been approached have accepted this assistance of authorities through the scheme. No figures have been published detailing exactly how many people have been through the Channel programme in Birmingham and how successful the programme has been in preventing offending. As of April 2011, two individuals working within the Channel Project (and who wished to remain anonymous) suggested that at any one point in time, on average three individuals were being assisted through the Channel project in Birmingham, with a maximum of five. Of these more than half were thought to have significant mental health problems, usually involving personality disorders such as schizophrenia.

The multi-agency approach helps to address these issues, but it also raises difficult questions about the pathologisation or 'medicalisation' of extremism, conceiving of it as an illness that needs treating. The tendency of modernist society to 'normalise' action and thought and pathologise deviance has been observed by Foucault (1976) and others such as Feder (2011) who have used Foucault's ideas to deconstruct the ways in which our ideas of 'normalcy' or rationality are constructed. Particularly in the case of radicalisation and extremism, this pathologisation is unhelpful. It creates a facade of science; of illness and cure, which does not correspond to the complex lived experiences which actually construct 'radical' thought-processes.

Due to the limited amount of data available on the Channel project and the lack of access to the programme, a full analysis of its aims, impacts and significance has not been conducted for this study. Nonetheless, as it stands at the time of writing, the new Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government has produced a new Prevent strategy which paves the way for a shift from cohesion-centred 'soft' approaches to Channel-style 'hard' approaches. Existing Prevent projects in the meantime are in a precarious state and have been since the last round of funding expired in March 2011. Those projects left running are doing so on a six-monthly basis, with the Communities and Local Government department and the Treasury not having decided upon the level of funding that Prevent projects will receive nationally. Additionally, as city councils cut spending drastically

across other community and youth services, many working in Prevent may struggle to find work in their other areas of expertise, should the Prevent agenda also suffer from similar cuts. Although it is too early to envisage how the Prevent agenda might develop as the level of its resources change, the governance of Prevent is, either intentionally or unintentionally engineered in such a way that makes it reflexive. One might anticipate that whatever the direction of future funding, be it towards intervention or cohesion, whether resources increase or decrease, there will be organisations on the ground with the experience and the will to develop it. Whether any of these organisations and their schemes will make any significant dent to the threat of extremism however, is another matter.

6.8 The Creation of Institutionalised Muslims?

During this research on several occasions police officers insisted that in the city of Birmingham and in the West Midlands, 'real' and serious risks existed and potential plots were being constructed, with Police surveillance working to establish and restrict their progress. Yet as Beck (1992), Lidskog (1996) and others have suggested, risks are not; 'real' in the sense that they are by definition not actuated, and viewed through cultural and social filters. In actuality, within Birmingham itself, not a single terrorist act has been committed. As a senior officer asked, somewhat rhetorically, could this be taken as evidence that between Prevent, might actually be working? The point he was making of course is that defining what constitutes 'success' in counter-terrorism is very difficult indeed. More difficult still is to gauge whether or not Prevent was having any positive impact in blunting the radicalisation process.

Prevent programmes reached hundreds of young people in Birmingham but tens of thousands of young Muslims were *not* involved in the programme. Of all of the walked interviews I conducted with young people, none of the young Muslims I had spoken to who had not been directly involved in Prevent knew anything at all about the agenda and the related programmes. On some occasions conversations with young people on Prevent programmes showed that even they were not

completely aware that the funding for projects was in any way related to eradicating extremism. This was exacerbated by the fact that such programmes rarely explicitly approached the issue of extremism; practitioners were not always entirely convinced that their own programmes were addressing real vulnerabilities to radicalisation and were happy to mould them towards achieving objectives that they themselves preferred. Many Prevent programmes were also not aimed at directly connecting with young Muslims, but indirectly affecting their lives through projects around, for example, Mosque governance or training for Imams.

It was not long after embarking upon interviewing young Muslims at ground-level that I stumbled upon Prevent-funded groups in Lozells and Washwood Heath, engaged in both Prevent and non-Prevent youth-work. Increasingly it became clear that those working in the Prevent programme represented an important class of individuals. Discussions about 'gatekeepers' have been of interest to social scientists and ethnographers studying British Muslims, who recognise the methodological implications of selecting elites and representatives as research subjects (Mohammad 2001, Gunaratnam 2003). Furthermore research by Smith and Stephenson (2005) had demonstrated the difficulties of engaging black and minority-ethnic communities in Birmingham due to the highly contested nature of representation in the city. As Muslim communities specifically were now engaged with by policy-makers in such a focussed manner, the concerns about community gatekeepers had now become a policy-making issue.

At institutional levels nationally and crucially, locally, individuals from the 'Muslim community' would be exchanging information, receiving funding and would be involved in programmes that would see both institutions and the individuals in some ways benefitting from the relationship. These individuals would also become representatives of Muslim communities in the eyes of institutional leaders within the police, city council, and nationally to leading government figures. Kundnani (2009, 23) in his highly critical report into the Prevent agenda cited the use of gatekeepers for community engagement as being potentially divisive and damaging to community cohesion objectives. Similar

concerns were echoed by Briggs (2010, 978) who suggested that local authorities delivering the Prevent agenda had a poor understanding of their client/target groups.

At a national level we have already discussed how support for the Quilliam Foundation and Muslim Council of Britain at different times indicated a shift in attitudes towards Muslim groups; the intense criticism to which rival Muslim groups have subjected each other gives the impression that Muslims in the UK have no clear leadership and representation is highly contested. This impression also happens to be an accurate one; to date no organisation can claim representation for British Muslims and the manoeuvrings and dealings between Muslim groups at national level have not resulted in any broader mobilisation of Muslims. From the evidence gathered in this project, the most substantive and consistent impact of the Prevent programme in Birmingham was not de-radicalisation but the creation and development of a new institutional and representative class of Muslims in the city.

At a local level, increasingly the individuals who were becoming linked with the Prevent programme were being seen as the 'go-to' people for Muslim engagement - liaison with whom equated to liaising with the Muslim community. One of the most revealing comments from a senior police official involved in the Prevent programme was made regarding the representation of Muslims and the inability of authorities to ensure that representation was in any way fair or accurate. He provided an anecdote about what he asserted to be the myth of 'community' governance, which involved his experience policing four neighbourhoods in a British town. Three of these neighbourhoods were relatively poor and suffered relatively high levels of crime, whilst the fourth (referred to as HG) was wealthy and had low levels of crime. However most of the complaints around policing and safety came from the wealthy area, where individual members of the community with the time and know-how would take it upon themselves to lobby for greater police presence:

So I said right, we have this shift of 15 people – and an old guy there who had only a few years left, and he didn't like working shifts and he had his own skills and qualities – communicating and talking. So I said „would you like to be the beat bobby for HG – you can

work whatever hours you like, you don't have to drive a Panda or work nights. I want you in HG and these are the lists of the seven people who sit on the local committee who's on the neighbourhood watch who are always moaning about the police. They are always the first...your job is to keep those seven people happy. You will go and drink tea with them. You will walk past their house because I know they are looking out the window, and you will go to their meetings – your role in life is to service those seven people". And he said „I can do that," and he did a great job. I used to get letters from them "Since this new inspector has come I've never seen so many police – isn't life fantastic – I look out the window and I see a policeman walking by." That's the community sorted now and I learned a lesson from that and that's how I've tried to adopt things ever since.

(Maurice, Senior Police Officer, Interview 22/09/10)

He went on to explain that as far as representation on the Prevent programme was concerned, the authorities did their best with the time and resources available. Ultimately however, 'those who wanted to be heard' would get the chance to be involved. This cynical attitude towards community engagement might be practical for authorities but a number of problems are produced through flawed community approaches. First there is the very question of who should represent Muslim communities in Birmingham. Representation is usually a tricky issue for any policy which drives towards engaging 'communities', something borne out by the fact that the Home Office (2004) review of community engagement barely dealt with the issue at all in its 72 page report. In contrast academics such as Healy (1997) and Raco and Flint (2000) have gone to lengths to explore the difficulties associated with representation in urban policy. Raco and Flint (ibid) in particular cite the difficulties of acquiring useful representation in large, diverse urban areas such as Birmingham.

But despite difficulties and a lack of initial support, funding was available and was tempting to the opportunistic as well as the proficient and enthusiastic. In the early stages of the Prevent pathfinder there was a concern that a clique or family of individuals with personal and professional connections were dominating the bidding process. Furthermore, several of those who successfully applied for funding through Prevent, working in part with young Muslim men, left the employ of the city council and set up their own third-sector organisations and consultancies, which allowed them to gain access

to Prevent funds. One disgruntled individual on the board of a Prevent programme board of a neighbouring council described these moves as 'predatory', citing the case of an individual (also interviewed for this project) who worked for the city council, and was assisted by city council employees to set up a consultancy which then charged the council for 'Prevent' related work.

It can be argued that Prevent created an industry of people who were making a living from the job of representation and responding and actuating government policy. Authorities were, in private at least, well aware of this, and it was noticed how the same individuals across the city would be invited to local events, seminars and workshops aimed variously at increasing awareness of Muslim-specific issues (such as the prevention of Islamic extremism), and also promoting the work of specific organisations who were involved in those agendas. Indeed, I was told that among some workers at Birmingham City Council there was a joke which satirised this situation which involved asserting that since there were only the same fifty Muslims at such events, only fifty Muslims existed in Birmingham. Humorous as it may be, this engagement can serve a useful purpose for state institutions, as it can train individuals and allow them to practice engagement within institutional structures. As Cornwall suggests:

Even where institutionalised participation has little or no policy efficacy, there are tactics to be tried, alliances to be built; and what participants bring into and take from these spaces may have all kinds of possibilities for them as actors in other spaces and, more broadly, for the practice of democracy.

(Cornwall 2004a, 9)

As the next chapter will demonstrate, this participation can be beneficial for both community actors and authorities when tensions around policies arise. According to individuals on the Prevent pathfinder board, there was initially a shortage of projects proposed, and so projects that did not match the criteria were helped in re-applying for funding. This institutional encouragement seems to run counter to idealistic narratives of community-engagement which sees these initiatives as a form of power-dispersal. As Taylor (2006) suggested, a contradiction arises when the engagement occurs

on the terms of the state, and one can question whether it amounts to genuine empowerment or co-option by the state. These questions can be asked of the Prevent agenda. Muslim youth and community workers were reluctant to engage with the government's agenda, and their eventual participation demonstrates the power of the state to push its policy agenda and co-opt representatives, engaging Muslim practitioners in a discourse around the risk their communities are thought to create. The importance of this point should not be under-estimated. As Foucault (cited in Hall 2001, 72-73) among others has asserted, discourse is a productive process and through legitimising the discourse of 'young Muslim men at risk' through a range of social as well as security policies, these 'dangerous' representations of young Muslim men were being reproduced.

Due to the focus on Muslims, the problems around acquiring a reasonable level of community representation is more urgent in the case of Prevent than other broader social policies, as it has the potential to securitise, stigmatise and 'other'. Governance practices have the power to shape and produce Muslim 'communities', and it's that power to do so drives at the heart of debates around multiculturalism and the dangers of state-sponsored essentialism. As discussed in the literature review there is disagreement between commentators and theorists about the value of the model of multiculturalism which has been practiced in the UK, and from which the Prevent programme does not stray. Singh contends that multiculturalism as a policy in the UK has been, "heavily localised, often made voluntary and linked essentially to managing diversity in areas of immigrant settlement" (Singh 2005, 170). Community identification and self-selection was couched in the language of community rights. The Prevent programme saw a shift in that similar self-selection and identification would now be framed as an issue of security (Meer and Modood 2008, 481-482).

The inability of multicultural group representation to reflect complex hybrid identities pushes multicultural policies towards the edge of essentialism. The danger of essentialism has been transferred into security policy through the Prevent agenda, and since the Prevent agenda is about security rather than simply managing diversity, the policy risks twin problems of misrepresenting Muslims through networks of privileged individuals on one hand, and essentialising Muslims as a

whole on the other. Indeed the theme of essentialism and conceptions of community is discussed in the context of the project as a whole in the Reflections in Chapter 8.

6.9 Prevent and Muslim Identity: as Threat and Commodity

We have already established that the politicisation of Muslim identities was a reality prior to Prevent but the Prevent agenda has taken such politicisation a step further, by engineering a programme that seeks to directly modify the ways in which young Muslims, and particularly young Muslim men, feel and think, to reduce the risks of terrorism in the UK. Having provided the detail around working relationships between authorities and practitioners at different levels of the governance structure, we can conclude that the Prevent programme was plagued by practical difficulties. Most of these difficulties emanated from the fact that the policy was not targeted effectively and was supported by Muslim practitioners through the leverage of resources rather than their shared goals.

But it is also useful to take a step back from that milieu and assess how we can conceptualise the underlying logic of the project. The concept of a terrorist risk that could be alleviated by social programmes lies at the heart of the Prevent agenda. If we view Prevent as risk-management, we can also conceive of it as a method of social control. Using Nikolas Rose's ideas on governance, it can be suggested that 'Prevent' as a programme amounts to an inclusionary method of social control. Rose (2000) developed ideas on criminology and penology, including those of Feeley and Simon (1992) who suggested that governance of deviance was shifting from approaches which were concerned with responsibility and fault, with ones geared towards managing groups, based on their dangerousness; their levels of risk. Rose describes this as an inclusionary circuit of security in which:

One is always in continuous training, life-long learning, perpetual assessment...to improve oneself...never-ending risk management.

(Feeley and Simon 2000, 325)

It is in answer to the question of 'who controls' that governmentality and social-control literature provides insight. In a post-disciplinary society and an advanced liberal state, no single actor or agency controls - and no single actor or agent controlled the Prevent programme. Central government was able to activate the agenda, promoting it as a means of managing terrorist risk. However as the policy was dispersed towards the local level, this initial risk management goal became lost. It was usurped by a series of other logics, at each level dictated by the situation of the individuals and organisations involved, and what they perceived they could gain from the agenda, be it promotion of religion, the regeneration of their communities or the ability to access and influence the agenda through their own engagement. Deleuze's (1992) ideas around societies of control are relevant to this example as they describes post-disciplinary societies as one in which the job of training is never complete, and layer upon layer of risk management is activated endlessly. This produces a situation in which, in the case of the Prevent agenda, ignites layers of preventative action of questionable impact which become hard to restrict, like the ever-widening and yet ever-weakening ripples of water from a stone thrown into a lake. The resulting policies eventually are so weak as to almost look benign. Control as Rose himself suggests, is:

not centralised, but dispersed, (flowing) through a network of open circuits which are rhizomatic, and not hierarchical.

(Rose 2000, 325)

This loose, almost elusive power dispersal has an advantage though, in that central authorities at national level such as the Home Office remain incredibly reflexive and able to pursue and alter strategy, whilst maintaining just enough of a level of support from organisations on the ground to carry out their agenda, at least on paper. However, the power they hold is also restricted by their own organisation and the disconnections between policy goals at different governance scales.

Ultimately, establishing whether or not the Prevent programme has reduced the threat of extremism is almost impossible to judge given the paucity of information on intervention programmes. We therefore cannot tell whether or not society in the UK or in Birmingham was made safer by the

Prevent programme. But what of Muslim identity and the impact of the agenda on the young Muslim men whom the strategy seeks to save? As the interviews of young Muslim men in Chapter 4 and the interviews with police officers involved with the Prevent agenda suggested, the average Muslim would have little knowledge if any of the Prevent agenda, let alone contact with it. Its funding ensured it could only reach a few hundred young people from a population of around 30,000 young Muslims in the city. But its impact on Muslim identities revolves more strongly around the representations that it draws out, and these can be categorised as two-fold. Firstly the stigmatisation that comes with the agenda: hundreds of young Muslim men were involved in various schemes because officially at least, they were vulnerable to violent extremism. In reality, they were not.

Secondly, the representation afforded to some individuals and organisations as a result of Prevent was such that Muslim identity for them was not stigma, but a commodity. There was a need from government agencies on different scales for actors able to carry out the appropriate agendas, and those that chose to with engage, did so and were able to justify it with their own logic, citing benefits for their communities and their work, despite the fact that those benefits did not necessary align with the agenda of central government. For various government agencies however they would be valuable assets: 'community representation', a commodity for governing bodies. Their value was in their Muslim identity, their willingness to engage. That identity can become a commodity has been suggested by many researchers, particularly those who have looked into how culture (Linnekin 1997; Medina 2003) sexuality (Clark 1991) and religion (Peck 1993; Moore 1995) can be marketed as a commodity or attraction. Indeed as Motion (2000) suggests, the public-relations industry itself is a reminder of how identity is commoditised and consumed. In the case of the Prevent agenda, Muslim identity's consumers were the local authority and other government agencies charged with putting the Prevent agenda into practice. As with any other type of commodity, this Muslim identity could be traded by a select group as part of an exchange, including financial exchange, with interested buyers. Similar findings have been reached by Malik (2005), a writer notable for anti-racism who has also

heavily criticised multiculturalism for allegedly producing competition and strife between ethnic groups in the UK.

Yet we must remember that no obvious divisions were created by the Prevent agenda between sections of the Muslim community in Birmingham. Despite the limitations of those who engaged, despite their gaps in knowledge, despite the lack of clarity of the Prevent programme at a central level and despite the lack of experience of police and practitioners, some genuinely good social work was done by the Prevent agenda, by well-meaning workers looking to solve a range of long-standing social problems, predominantly in inner-city neighbourhoods in Birmingham. This social work however was not related to preventing extremism.

As far as most ordinary Muslims in the city were concerned, Prevent was working unseen, in the background; at most a white noise forming part of a cacophony of government agendas and discourses, perhaps spreading suspicion and fear of Muslims. And Muslims might have objected to it, were it not for the fact that Prevent simply did not interfere with their daily lives and experiences as British Muslims. Yet Prevent was not the extent of government counter-terror policy in the city. In contrast to what Rose might have termed, Prevent's 'inclusionary approach' of control, a rather more controversial, contested and exclusionary method was being exercised on the part of authorities. The next chapter explores this, the surveillance scheme which was dubbed 'Project Champion'.

Chapter 7

Project Champion: From Scrutiny to Surveillance

7.1 Introduction

The Preventing Extremism agenda and its policies, for all its faults might still be described as inclusionary towards its subjects; the programme involved seeking to openly engage Muslim representatives and groups, and to involve them in the policies which would be directed at their 'communities'. It fit in with the 'inclusionary' methods of social control described by Rose (2000, 323), methods seeking to foster capacity for action upon the subjects whose behaviour they seek to regulate. It could be seen as a subtle method to influence identity to maintain order, so much so that in its day-to-day working, it was almost easy to forget that the programme was chiefly enacted on the basis of security. But the Prevent agenda was not the only counter-terror measure in operation in Birmingham. Around the same time mainstream Prevent funding was being distributed in 2008, a more clandestine anti-terror policy called 'Project Champion' was being designed. Unlike the Prevent programme, it would be implemented covertly but its creation when discovered would become well-known to Muslim residents city. The case of Project Champion would not only have consequences for the reception of the counter-terror policies and community partnerships with Muslims in the city, it would have profound implications for the identities of young Muslims that were explored in Chapters 4 and 5. As part of our case study, it was a counter-terror policy that was created a perfect-storm of controversy and protest that cut across the key themes of this research project.

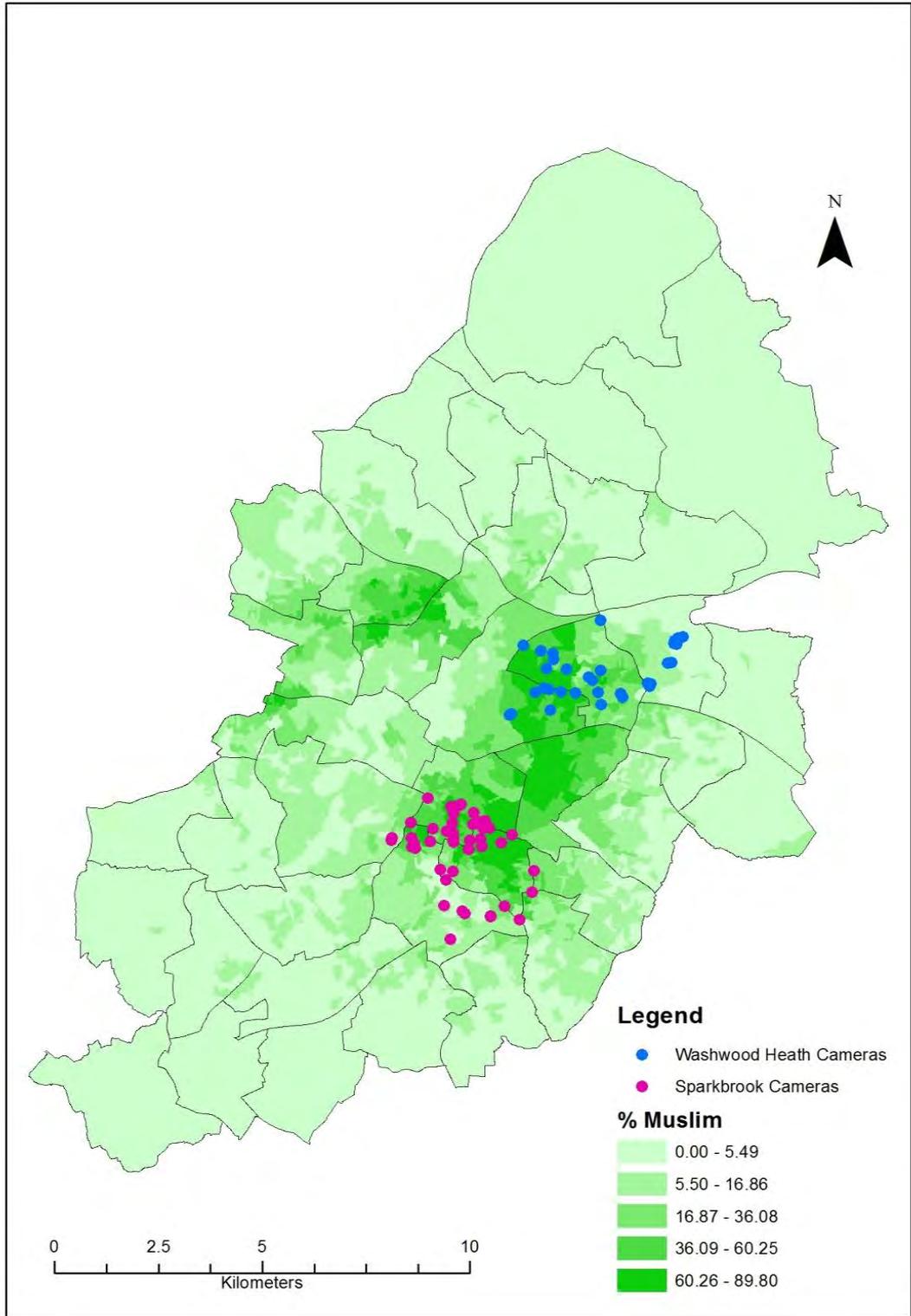


Figure 16: The (overt) Project Champion cameras overlaid on a map of population density of Muslim residents (ONS 2007)

Project Champion involved the installation of 216 cameras (OSC 2010, 7) in two areas of Birmingham, primarily spanning four electoral wards (Sparkhill, Washwood Heath, Springfield and Washwood Heath) which contained the greatest concentration of Muslims in the city (CASWEB 2001). 144 of these cameras were overt and visible and 106 of them rather than being standard CCTV (closed circuit television) cameras, had ANPR (Automated Number Plate Recognition) functionality. ANPR cameras are designed to track vehicles moving through junctions by reading and recording vehicle registration plates. In addition to these 142 cameras, another 72 covert cameras were installed on a number of sites, the precise locations of which remain unknown, but which were also confined to these two largely Muslim districts (Figure 16). The total cost of the scheme was £3.5million with an additional £375,000 a year put aside annually for maintenance and running costs.

Discussions around the implementation of the scheme began between West Midlands Police and Birmingham City Council as early as 2007 (Thornton 2010, 12). However it was not until April 2010 that any substantial knowledge about what Project Champion was and what it was designed to do became available to residents. Between April and June 2010 a group of community members and leaders attempted to obtain more information about the scheme, eventually campaigning for it to be disbanded. By October 2010 the campaign had been successful but the process had profound implications for debates around the place of young Muslims in Birmingham.

This chapter firstly gives a narrative of the implementation of Project Champion and the events that led to its removal. Subsequently it describes and explores how reaction to the scheme, particularly but not exclusively from Muslim members of Birmingham's communities, triggered a set of responses from the local authority and the West Midlands Police, culminating in Project Champion's eventual demise as an active counter-terror project. In its analysis of events, the chapter also demonstrates how the facets of Muslim identity and belonging that were discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 were influenced by the fallout over Project Champion. Finally it examines how the scheme fits in with the Prevent agenda explored in Chapter 6 and uses governance literature to place the scheme in the context of social control.

7.2 Project Champion: The Policy Framework

Terrorists operate in secret.

(HM Government 2006, 16)

Thus begins the section devoted to 'Intelligence' in the 2006 edition of the UK's Counter-terror strategy. It is a simple observation that terrorists like other criminals acting against the social order, seek to do so covertly. The response to this from state security services comes in the form of its own covert security programmes, even if they sometimes run counter to civil-libertarian ideals (Ali 2002; McCulloch 2002; Hocking 2009). As the literature review in Chapter 2 suggested, state security services can harness covert methods and extra-legal measures if the subjects of their operations are thought to provide an existential threat to the state. But this covert security activity can undermine democratic accountability. In the case of Project Champion, security actors shrouded details of the construction of the scheme from public view including democratically elected officials. In drawing out the policy narrative which shows why and how Project Champion came into being, we have to rely on documents that were produced and published only from June 2010 onwards. Indeed until April 2010 there was no public knowledge of the scheme. Even the Strategic Outline Business Case (see Appendix A) which, it is safe to assume, represents a succinct justification as to why Project Champion might have been necessary, was released in June 2010, only in a redacted form.

The version of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy relevant at the time Project Champion was conceived (HM Government 2009) is built around four approaches to tackling terrorism, namely to Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. The Pursue strand focuses on stopping terrorist attacks, either in their planning or operational stages. To this end it argues, Intelligence is crucial to detect and therefore be able to disrupt a so-called 'terror-plot' (ibid, 72-723). The strategy elucidates on the need to intercept communications and to be able to have access to communications data such as the

phone numbers dialled by a suspect. It suggests that future developments in covert surveillance techniques could be useful in combating terrorism, and references the Intercept Modernisation Programme (IMP) which extends data of interest to internet-based communications including VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) and social networking websites (ibid, 73). Finally the section examines how such intercepts from a variety of sources might be used in evidence. There is no mention of CCTV technology or ANPR technology.

We know now from documents released by Safer Birmingham Partnerships (SBP) that at some point during the 2007/8 financial year, discussion about Project Champion began and involved Mike Whitby, the leader of Birmingham City Council at the time, West Midlands Police, the Cabinet Minister for Transportation Stephen Hughes and Glen Gregory of SBP (SBP 2010, 2). On the 14th of February 2008 the scheme appeared as an agenda item during a meeting of the West Midlands Police Authority, though the discussions took part in private. However we know it was at this time that a decision was made to apply for funding for the scheme from the Association Of Chief Police Officers' Terrorism and Allied Matters group (APCO TAM). It was also at this meeting that Birmingham City Council agreed to invest £500,000 towards the scheme and to share its running costs with West Midlands police (ibid, 2).

Given that surveillance techniques are only referenced in the CONTEST strategy with a limited scope in relation to the actual pursuit of terrorists, Project Champion seems to sit uneasily beside the government's stated anti-terror strategy. Rather than responding to the need to gather data on particular suspects, the strategic outline business case for the project (Appendix A, 1), a document originally confidential and not available publically, instead stated its aims as being to capture large amounts of data, particularly about vehicle movements, as part of a 'net' of surveillance technology. The background to the project and its aims, at least at the project's inception, are best gleaned from this document which was made available after freedom of information requests were submitted in June 2010. The document described the aims of the project as being around capturing data constantly on an, "as and when" basis (ibid, 1). The surveillance net would help track 'subjects' but

data would also inevitably be gathered on all vehicle movements in the designated areas. Thus the aims of the project were rather about the building of 'surveillance capacity' as part of a counter-terror infrastructure *in preparation* for any future requirement to monitor movements of 'subjects'. Although Project Champion involved the installation of overt and covert cameras, the Business Case document emphasised the covert nature of the project (ibid, 4).

To provide both context and advocacy for the Project, the Business Case cited the 'severe' nature of the security threat from international terrorism and pointed to the London suicide bombings in 2005, perpetrated by individuals living and working in West Yorkshire, as evidence that agencies needed to be able to operate, "across organisational and geographic boundaries," (ibid, 1) in order to address the threat. The Project Champion Review (Thornton 2010) would later state that the terrorist attacks on Glasgow Airport and the 'Tiger Tiger' nightclub in London also demonstrated a need to be able to track vehicle movements across geographic boundaries as and when required. The report continued to cite another incident in which West Midlands Police thwarted a plot to kidnap and execute a Muslim soldier. It went on to use a report in the *Times* newspaper to suggest that the Police Operation was focussed on British-born Pakistani men living in Birmingham and concentrated on Alum Rock and Sparkhill. However a subsequent look at the report in the *Times* shows the only reference of Sparkhill to be a non-evidenced quip about Sparkhill's residents being used to terrorist raids (Jenkins and McGroy 2007). Furthermore the article states that raids were carried out in other areas of the city, whilst also demonstrating a lack of understanding of the geography of the city by suggesting Washwood Heath represented a place 'further afield' than Alum Rock, when they lie alongside each other in the same electoral ward:

Residents in the city's predominantly Asian areas of Alum Rock and Sparkhill have grown used to the early morning raids and become sceptical of their value. But, as officers arrested suspects in a dozen homes and businesses, including further afield in Edgbaston, Kingstanding and Washwood Heath, it became clear that this was a much bigger operation than normal.

(Jenkins and McGroy 2007)

Nonetheless the Business Case asserted that the West Midlands as a region contained, 'significant features of vulnerability' (Appendix A, 1). Intended benefits of the scheme included an increased quality and quantity of intelligence as well as evidence-capture from 'hits' of subjects on ANPR cameras. One of the listed benefits was predicted to be the potential for 'evidential product' for investigations which were not related to counter-terrorism, but which would help incidents of 'serious harm' to communities (ibid, 4). This however included the caveat that such use of the cameras would depend upon specific protocol arrangements (presumably between counter-terrorism police and investigators of non-CT incidents). It would also not be used in any way in which the location of the covert surveillance equipment might be disclosed (ibid, 4).

Even if we put aside for a moment that the money for the scheme was being sought from the Terrorism and Allied Matters fund, the Business Case document made it plain that the principal steer of the scheme was to counter the threat of terrorism. Project Champion was not targeted at local crime and anti-social behaviour as would later publically be claimed by, among others, Jackie Russell of Safer Birmingham Partnership. By early 2010 the installation of the cameras had begun and in order to cordon Sparkhill and Alum Rock with cameras, wards around the two areas also had to host camera installations. In total nine wards (see Appendix D for map) were affected by the scheme by having cameras installed within their boundaries (Thornton 2010, 25).

7.3 Consulting on the Covert

The Thames Valley Police review of Project Champion (Thornton 2010) contains details on how senior police officers working on Project Champion would come to view their responsibilities with regards to public consultation. In January 2009, Assistant Chief Constable Patani and Assistant Chief Constable Hyde were part of a meeting with 'senior officers' in which ACC Patani and Chief Inspector Marriot (who at the time headed Birmingham's Preventing Extremism programme) agreed to

formulate a narrative to support Project Champion which would involve details about 'high-crime areas' (ibid, 16). Furthermore ACC Hyde and Patani spoke of the need to have a "storyline on which to hang the project". The details of the meeting continue:

A discussion was then had around how to use the data to specifically support the need for cameras in Alum Rock along the Stratford Road Corridor

WM CTU badge NOT to be included on any Project Champion documentation

(Minutes of Project Champion meeting cited in Thornton 2010, 17).

It was at this meeting that a decision was taken to remove Counter-terrorism insignia from the scheme and replace it with a Birmingham Safer Birmingham Partnership logo. The project was effectively being rebranded as a scheme which did not relate explicitly let alone exclusively to counter-terrorism objectives.

Following this rebranding, on April 28 2009 a meeting took place between SBP, Birmingham City Council officials and elected local councillors in the affected wards. The minutes of this meeting (Appendix C) were also restricted and only released in June 2010 following Freedom of Information requests. Assistant Chief Constable Stuart Hyde chaired the meeting, one which is crucial to determining the way in which those in charge of running the scheme would view democratic oversight. The purpose of the meeting was to ensure democratic accountability for the scheme, but the information given to councillors was misleading. The Business case for Project Champion which by this point had been submitted and approved for funding was not shown to the councillors. Instead ACC Hyde described how funding, "had been made available to Safer Birmingham Partnerships...for CCTV and ANPR (to) bring a greater sense of safety for local residents and (to) increase revenue into the area by promoting small business in the locality" (Appendix C , 1). Then followed a 'crime pattern

analysis' and a presentation in which Stuart Gardner of SBP asserted that personal safety and community trust and confidence would be increased by ANPR and CCTV initiatives.

Crucially, Councillor Salma Yaqoob asked why her constituency had been chosen for the ANPR and CCTV initiative and the response from Chief Superintendent Turner was that although ANPR was in operation on arterial routes and major ring roads, the new scheme represented, "an opportunity to localise these facilities and tailor make them to work for local issues such as anti-social behaviour and criminal damage (Appendix C, 2). Given that the business case for Project Champion was clear that in crimes outside the remit of counter-terrorism would need to be ones which involved serious harm to the community (Appendix A, 4), this again represented the misleading of elected officials as to what Project Champion was, fundamentally. Furthermore Councillor Salma Yaqoob also enquired as to how the scheme was being funded, and rather than mentioning APCO TAM, according to the minutes, ACC Hyde answered that the money came, "solely from the Home Office and it would not be used to provide additional Officers but would be used to Police in a new smarter way using up-to-date technology" (Appendix C, 2). Discussion continued and general arguments were made between the importance of safety and privacy with regards to CCTV. However towards the end of the discussion Councillor Yaqoob voiced her opinion that the meeting was somehow around the government's Preventing Violent Extremism agenda and this provoked a response from ACC Hyde:

Cllr Yaqoob...added that if the funding was for tackling the extremism agenda this would breach the very little trust that has taken so long to build in the community and that it will be viewed as targeting the Muslim community.

ACC Hyde responded that if he said that additional CCTV and ANPR facilities would not have any benefit around counter-terrorism then he would be lying, and that is why the element was in the briefing note...

(Appendix C, 3)

The Thames Valley Police review into Project Champion mentions this meeting in terms as it being an opportunity to improve oversight and it asserts that councillors asked prescient questions about the

scheme and which, “should have been noted by senior officers as critical elements that required further discussion and a response” (Thornton 2010, 43). Instead, the minutes from the meeting suggest that a ‘rebranded’ narrative of the scheme and the creation of the story and narrative to support the cameras was being performed., obscuring Project Champion’s true aims. In reality a ‘target population’ had been narrowed down to two Muslim-populated districts in the city. The populations within those districts were being represented in the meeting on April 28 2009 by six councillors, all of whom were of a Muslim background and none of whom would be privy to ‘real’ narrative of the scheme. The inability of government agencies to be truthful to those Muslim representatives, and the choice to exclude them from that policy-making circuit would become a particular bone of contention when the scheme became public knowledge.

7.4 Resistance To Project Champion

“I’m just an ordinary bloke in Moseley really and I accidentally got involved in this stuff. I had just been to visit friends in Leeds and walking back from the bus stop to my flat on Coppice Road – every time, the same route, and I got half way and I saw this new lamp post thing which didn’t look like any other lamppost and I thought that has got to be for a camera. And I thought why is that there – what’s it doing there – what’s it for. Cameras; here?”

(Steve Jolly, Interview 29/07/10)

The narrative provided by the protestors against the scheme provides valuable information as to how and why the scheme was challenged and who was responsible for challenging it. One counter-terrorism officer who was not involved in Project Champion but attended a fractious West Midlands Police Authority meeting as ‘an interested observer’ quipped that were it not for ‘one white, middle-class guy from Moseley’, the vociferous public opposition to project Champion would never have come to the surface. The, ‘white middle class guy’ in question is Steve Jolly, a former civil-servant who was unemployed at the time he noticed the surveillance cameras being installed on his road in

Moseley (Fig. 17), on the edge of the ring of cameras around Sparkhill. Moseley is a relatively affluent suburb of Birmingham, the history of which can be traced back as far as the publication of the Domesday Book in 1086, in which it was listed as 'Museleie'. The centre of the suburb is still referred to as the 'Moseley Village', and it contains a range of shops and boutiques and hosts a regular crafts and farmer's market. Increasingly it has a reputation for being a desirable place for young professionals and post-graduate students, with cultural enterprises, restaurants and small venues for live music looking to cater for such a demographic. Moseley Road runs through the suburb, but taking the road north towards the city centre takes you into Balsall Heath and roads heading east lead to Sparkhill, both of which formed part of the surveillance zones in Project Champion. In contrast these areas are populated by a large Asian and Muslim population, and the high street is characterised by take-aways and independent grocery-stores selling cheaper food catered for Asian households. Steve Jolly acknowledges this distinction between the population of Moseley and that of the areas surrounding it:

No I didn't really know any Muslims [before the Project Champion protests]. I have a Muslim neighbour...a couple of Muslim neighbours...one of them is very friendly and comes to bring me food and stuff. And I know a few Muslim people from around who I say hello to, but they are really two separate communities side by side, who talk but who are quite distinct and different.

(Steve Jolly, Interview 29/07/10)

It was from Moseley that the complaints initially emanated. Chris Jones, an IT consultant living on School Road in Moseley was the first person whose complaints were recorded in the Birmingham blog *The Stirrer* on the April 17 2010 (The Stirrer 2010). By June 2010, West Midlands Police and the city council were concerned about the increasing publicity the scheme was attracting, resulting in an internal meeting with senior police officers to discuss the issue (Appendix B). Jolly's lobbying and media skills had been honed working in the public relations department of a local authority, and it is these skills and contacts he utilised in order to get the attention of a major national broadsheet newspaper. After contacting Paul Lewis of *The Guardian*, an article appeared on July 4 2010 as the

headline on the web edition of the newspaper, and on page three the following day of the print edition, describing how Project Champion in Birmingham was “spying on Muslims’ every move” (Lewis 2010).



Figure 17: The View from Coppice Road in Moseley where Steve Jolly first spotted a set of cameras installed as part of Project Champion

At this point the story of Project Champion was catapulted to national significance and other activists increasingly became aware of the scheme. Three constituency meetings followed shortly after the Guardian article was published, in Hall Green, Moseley and Sparkhill, the first reportedly attracting 100 residents, and the next two over 60. At the Sparkhill Community meeting local councillors were also in attendance, including Salma Yaqoob, a nationally prominent local councillor, who gave an impassioned speech criticising the conduct of the police in implementing the scheme. Some seasoned campaigners from Stop The War Coalition, The Muslim Public Affairs Committee, and

Socialist Workers Party were in attendance, but the floor also seated many residents of surrounding areas who were not affiliated to organised groups and who did not hold positions at any relevant institutional level. What resulted was a raucous, passionate public ward meeting at which pointed criticism was levelled at Jackie Russell, chair of the Safer Birmingham Partnership and CI Moore, who represented West Midlands Police at the meeting. Some of the criticism sought to directly challenge the narrative of the police which had been arranged by senior police as evidenced from minutes of the meetings that were not available at this point. Questions included whether or not local police would have access to data from the cameras (a question which was addressed but not answered by CI Moore). Salma Yaqoob and another audience member upon hearing the narrative that Project Champion would help solve local crime, asked if the business case for Project Champion reflected that assertion that tackling local crime was a key objective. CI Moore responded;

I've been involved in some of this agenda and there are all sorts of funding schemes and this funding stream appeared to be a good one...it had to have broader utility (beyond CT) to have any chance of getting funding.

(CI Moore, Fieldwork notes, Sparkhill Community meeting 22/07/10)

The seeming inconsistency between the redacted Business Case (Appendix A) that was now distributed among activists, and the narratives provided by the Police and Safer Birmingham Partnership seemed to contribute to an atmosphere of mistrust, directed towards the Police and SBP. The following comments recorded from residents who spoke from the floor are indicative of this:

I'm reading this document and it says trust and confidence. I have to say, after this I don't trust you [Applause]. Sparkbrook now – national media. Police are saying 11 arrests in this area due to terrorism – 0.001% of the population – so you've imposed these cameras and gone and spent 3 million quid on it. We don't normally take part in these sorts of things, but when the powers that be accuse us as being terrorists and terrorist sympathisers, that's when we have to speak up

(Resident, Fieldwork notes, Sparkhill community meeting 22/07/10)

Hidden cameras are for spying on people – why are you spending money – we don't trust police for a second – all you do is lie. One day you say one thing, another day you say something else..."You put everyone off applying [to join the police].

(Resident, Fieldwork notes, Sparkhill community meeting 22/07/10)

You said you put cameras here to stop crime – you don't need cameras, you need officers. How can we trust you guys?

(Resident, Fieldwork notes, Sparkhill community meeting 22/07/10)

7.5 A Spycam Summit

A defining moment of opposition to Project Champion came on July 4th 2010. Plans for an event dubbed the 'Spycam Summit' (Fig. 18) were discussed in mid-June as an opportunity to galvanise opposition and seek a direct response from authorities. The event would attract among its speakers, House of Lords peer Lord Nazir, Director of civil-liberties group Liberty Shami Chakrabati and Respect Party Councillor Salama Yaqoob. Other organisers for this event included Steve Jolly, Abdullah Saif, a Yemeni youth and community activist who was also part of the government sponsored Young Muslims Advisory Group and Majid Khan, a management consultant who had engaged in unpaid advisory work in relation to the Prevent agenda.



Figure 18: Salma Yaqoob addresses residents and invitees at the Spycam Summit 04/07/2010

The inclusion of Liberty's Shami Chakarabati at the event was more than mere good publicity for the protestors. Two days prior to the event on the 2nd of July 2010 Liberty had written to Chief Constable of West Midlands Police Chris Simms, notifying him that the group's lawyers had proposed a judicial review of the ANPR scheme (OSC 2010, Appendix). The 16 pages of the letter went on to make a case against the camera picking out some of the apparent contradictions from Project Champion's Business Case to the meeting with elected representatives and the case then presented to residents. Liberty referred to the 2001 census data which showed Sparkhill and Washwood Heath as being the wards with the greatest percentage of Muslims within its boundaries, and suggested that targeting of these areas specifically would have had to legally involve an Equality Impact Assessment, which Safer Birmingham Partnership failed to carry out, contravening Section 71 of the Race Relations Act (ibid 2010). It also challenged the Police and SBP on the grounds that they failed to consult. Thirdly, it suggested that Project Champion breached Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights, which allows for CCTV in public spaces for 'normal use' but which also seeks to protect citizens from covert surveillance and invasions of privacy. Liberty also claimed that Project Champion breached Article 14 of the ECHR which protects against discrimination on grounds of race and religion (ibid 2010). Liberty's lawyers requested the removal of all cameras and a recognition of their unlawfulness, and threatened that non-compliance with those requests would result in an application for judicial review and a request for disclosure of all 'relevant documents' relating to the planning and implementation of Project Champion.

This potential legal challenge may have been the reason for the issue being carefully watched by government ministers. According to one figure in the protest movement who had also worked with government officials on the Prevent programme (we will refer to him as KM), the issue of Project Champion in Birmingham had by this point been flagged as a 'critical' situation at the Home Office and relevant government ministers were regularly being briefed on the issue. KM played a crucial role between protestors against authorities, to pave the way towards a resolution with regards to the future of the scheme. It was through his connections that news travelled to the Home Office that

Assistant Chief Constable Suzette Davenport of West Midlands Police had declined the invitation of the protestors to appear and speak at the planned Spycam Summit, citing medical reasons. According to the source, senior civil servants were uncomfortable with this potential absence, and Suzette Davenport's soon-to-be-replacement Assistant Chief Constable Sharon Rowe was asked to attend to represent the police, before she had officially begun her role. This single operative within the protest movement was more detached from the most vocal elements of the resistance to Project Champion. KM was crucial to setting up the Spycam Summit and attended a meeting specifically for organisers and groups who were to protest against Project Champion. Prior to Sharon Rowe's appearance at the summit he claimed to have a conversation with Sharon Rowe in which the position of the Police and SBP seemed to shift:

Sharon Rowe was appointed on Thursday... she called me to discuss the matter, and say, "What is the situation? With regards to the covert cameras, I said to her „Look, what the hell is going on? There are 72 of them and they need to go before anything else is discussed." Her senior staff officer was there as well, and she said „OK, what else?" I asked her if she could get any independent oversight into this whole process, and she said, „OK, what else?" I said that you need to get more community involvement in this whole thing to move forward and she said „OK, what else?" I said that she needed to consider the whole option of scrapping this system. She said „OK, what else?" – She wasn't saying [she would] definitely do this [sic]. I said that a review was needed to address what had gone wrong and why, and how we've managed to get this far with no community conversation in relation to such an issue that, even a child could've told you, would have s a massive impact on the community, and she said „OK, what else?" She called me back on the Saturday, and she said that „basically, I will say yes to everything." – That is how fast she works.

(KM, Interview)

The use of this operator shows the flexibility and reach of modern bureaucratic agents and it also demonstrates how engagement by community representatives can be seen as a form of training for cooperation with government institutions (see Chapter 7.11). The level of outrage against Project Champion might have been heightened by the fact that government authorities had hidden the

scheme from the view of Muslim community representatives. But this reach also facilitated the eventual reversal of the position of authorities on Project Champion.



Figure 19: ACC Sharon Rowe speaking with community activist and protestor against Project Champion, Reverend Ray Gaston, in the aftermath of the Spycam Summit 04/07/2010

From conversations with Steve Jolly and other protestors at the time, it did not seem as though they were aware of the extent to which others might have been working at institutional levels to influence events in the favour of the protestors. It resulted in one prominent senior member of the protestor's group stating that he felt uneasy with KM who seemed to have more inside information and connections, referring to him as 'this shady figure in the background'. Nonetheless ACC Sharon Rowe did attend and offered an apology on behalf of the Police (Fig. 19), admitting that, 'mistakes had been made'. The apology was followed by pronouncements promising to review how best the CCTV infrastructure already installed might still be used to fight local crime within the affected neighbourhoods. She also promised that:

...the community would be part of the monitoring and scrutiny...(having) a totally open and transparent access to the cameras.

(ACC Sharon Rowe, cited in Fieldwork notes 04/07/10).

Additionally activists had been notified that a 'reference group' was to be set up comprising of ordinary members of the community, as a means for the police to use public voices as part of their decision making with regards to the future of Project Champion. There was some tension between delegates around the issue of which individuals would should be nominated and included in this new consultation. However the conciliatory move by authorities touting community represented was also contradicted by Sharon Rowe and fellow Assistant Chief Constable Anil Patani in a newspaper article in the week after the Spycam summit (Stuart 2010) which seemed to indicate that West Midlands Police were considering retaining Project Champion. It was not until the meeting with the West Midlands Police Authority on 10 August 2010 that protestors became confident that they would succeed in over-turning the Project.

7.6 Climbdown

The West Midlands Police Authority representatives are seated on a stage at the Amaanah Centre in Sparkhill. On the floor over about 150 residents are seated in chairs, and press and TV cameras are also in attendance. The Chair of the Police Authority Derek Webley has already announced that the meeting cannot be used to discuss the issue of whether Project Champion's surveillance equipment can remain in operation, but rather to discuss how trust and confidence can be maintained. The protestors whisper among themselves that this is a tactic, designed to show the Police are engaging with local communities whilst refusing to allow voices of dissent. If it was a tactic then it failed spectacularly. Steve Jolly from the floor along with Salama Yaqoob and dozens of residents make impassioned speeches railing against Project Champion to near unanimous applause. Then come the two moments which ultimately will appear on the following day's news headlines. First the audience break out into a chant of „Take Them Down!“ whilst the chair of the police authority is attempting to speak. Secondly, a protestor, known by fellow campaigners for his angry outburst at meetings stands up and shouts at the top of his voice that the UK has, “More spy cameras than Imperialist America and Communist China”. He storms out, and the cameras capture the moment, which becomes part of the lead story in National News the following morning.

(Fieldwork notes, 10/08/2010)

The West Midlands Police Authority is one of 43 such bodies in the UK. Its role is to both guide the regional police force's aims and priorities as well as providing a civilian scrutiny to their work. Members of the Police Authority had been in meetings regarding Project Champion, certainly by February of 2008 (Birmingham City Council 2010, 27). However at this meeting the chair of the organisation would insist repeatedly that responsibility for the cameras did not rest on the shoulders of the Authority, which was acting only in an oversight capacity. If this claim was intended to reduce the anger being directed at the stage at the meeting on 10 August 2010, it failed. It would be wrong to characterise the West Midlands Police Authority meeting as being a crucial turning point in the way in which the police were approaching the future of Project Champion. However it returned the issue to national news headlines adding public pressure, and it also for the first time saw the Police Authority being attacked by residents and councillors for its failure to scrutinise Project Champion

effectively. Institutionally it represented another body facing questions as to its role in the decision making process, which faced challenges as to its transparency.

By this point in time an advisory group (which was alternatively referred to as a 'reference group') was being created in order to advise the Police and Police Authority regarding the future of Project Champion. The Advisory Group/Reference Group would have oversight responsibilities for the Project Board which would take the scheme forward, and would have two seats on the Project Board itself. It is difficult to ascertain precisely how the creation of the reference group took place and how members of it were chosen. One individual involved in the process of setting up the Reference Group reported that delegates were chosen from various groups reflecting the demographics of those affected by the scheme. Women's groups, local residents, faith representatives and campaigners were all specifically sought to play a role. Some from the group had been known for engaging with the Preventing Extremism agenda; Abdullah Saif and Tasneem Mahmood for example had both worked in Prevent projects and were also part of a group of five people who in July of 2010 had been asked to have an informal lunch with Chief Inspector Chris Sims to discuss their views on Project Champion. Amir Karim who later became the Chair of the Advisory Group had been heavily involved with the Prevent program as part of his job as a Youth Inclusion Officer in the Lozells area of Birmingham. Another member of the project board noted:

It's interesting that 90% of the reference group are openly against the cameras. The police knew that and they still got behind the rest of the project board to actually allow that to happen. We got Steve Jolly in our reference group and in doing so, the police were taking a massive risk because you know better than I do how organisation works; if there is a perceived critical voice, it is highly unlikely that they are going to be round the table. More likely, they are going to be blacklisted and sidelined. To have him and others around the table is brilliant. They said that they want a critical oversight as opposed to an independent representation. They would rather have someone rather critical for it can't be seen that they're just bringing out yes-men.

(Anonymous Advisory Group member, Interview)

By September 30 2010 the Project Board was meeting and being advised by this newly created Reference Group. Shortly before this meeting one member of the Reference Group told me that the group would not consider anything as an option short of the total removal of all cameras that were part of Project Champion, and a key member of that group claimed that if offered anything less, they would publically resign from that position. Speaking to three members of the advisory group during this time period it is clear that there were a variety of attitudes among members. Two members were still deeply mistrustful of the Reference Group initiative, one expressing his concerns that the Reference Group would amount to little more than 'police propaganda' and the other fearing that the group would be pressured to keep Project Champion in some form, which he considered to be an unacceptable proposition. Ultimately these fears proved unfounded.

Two further events eventually helped to direct Project Champion towards being decommissioning. The first was the publication of the Thames Valley Police report into Project Champion (Thornton 2010) which was released on September 30th 2010. The report was highly critical of the project management throughout Project Champion, and concluded that the separation of the 'political' part of the project with the actual delivery resulted in the scheme being advertised in way that did not match the delivery. The acknowledgement of the gap between how the scheme was sold to residents and how it had been planned satisfied some of the protestors, though the diplomatic language in which this critical failure was catalogued was frustrating to others. The conclusions on the compliance of the scheme with various ethics laws as well as police procedural law was also damning. The National CCTV Strategy is a document that includes a code of practice to which CCTV schemes must give consideration; the Thames Valley Police report concluded that, "there (was) no indication that the (relevant) research was carried out," which would have amounted to compliance with that code (Thornton 2010, 37). the report concluded its analysis by confirming that the consultation phase was, "too little too late, and the lack of transparency about the purpose of the project has resulted in a loss of trust" (ibid, 47). It cited and approved a comment by an unnamed

community leader who had suggested that Project Champion had “set back community relations by a decade” (ibid, 47).

The second event was the West Midlands Police Authority meeting on 25 October 2010, an event at which the general public were permitted to observe but not participate in. At this meeting Birmingham City Council presented its own report from the Local Services and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC 2010). Criticism in this report was provided in harsher terms than the Thames Valley Police report, especially with regards to consultation failures. On the very aims of Project Champion the OSC found that Safer Birmingham Partnership misrepresented the case for the project and went as far as misusing statistics, “to divert public attention from the real intent of the project (ibid: 47). It was scathing personally of Jackie Russell, the then Director of Birmingham Safer Partnerships who had asserted that Project Champion was about all forms of crime rather than being explicitly about terrorism:

We find it very hard to accept that someone could attend agenda items of meetings of the Counter Terrorism Executive Project Board which had responsibility for implementing the project and fail, in this context, to understand the purpose of the Project.

(OSC 2010, 50)

The report’s conclusions were summarised thus,

At best it can be said that there was a catastrophic lack of inquisitiveness about this Project by the two organisations that should have been scrutinising the project on the Public’s behalf: The Police Authority and the Safer Birmingham Partnership. Basic questions were not asked: what were the specifications for the Project, how was the data to be used, what would be the impact on community relations, how effective would the Project be, and more seriously, they failed to recognise the significance of the Project and its impact upon local communities.

(OSC 2010, 60-61)

After this meeting the decommissioning of Project Champion was eventually approved and the process of dismantling the surveillance infrastructure then began.

7.7 Project Champion: Community and the Gaze

As part of the contextualisation of Project Champion we must examine the rationale behind the scheme and the implications this has for our conception of the Muslim identity, community and risk. As far as the explicit business case is concerned, Project Champion existed primarily to prevent an attack similar to the bombings in London in 2005. Its goal was the protection of society through the method of collecting data as part of a monitoring process. But at this point we must ask why it is that protection against this particular risk of terrorism might require relatively drastic action in the form of a covert surveillance scheme. A clue lies in the use of a phrase which is often recalled in relation to politically motivated criminal acts: 'national security'. Terrorism is not taken by society as a mere crime against individuals but against the state itself; terrorism is considered an existential threat. The UK's national security strategy lists terrorism as the most significant challenge to the very existence of the state as we know it, even ahead of the threat of nuclear warfare (Cabinet Office 2008, 10). The urban theorists Peter Marcuse (2006) and Mueller (2005) both claim that the terrorist risk is routinely constructed and exaggerated in order for powerful actors to justify their position and obtain greater resources and discretion for their actions. It is also useful to refer back to the idea of risk itself being intangible (Dean 1999, 177). It merely marks the *potential* of a particular event. As Ewald summarised succinctly:

Nothing is a risk in itself; there is no risk in reality. But on the other hand anything can be a risk; It all depends on how one analyses the danger, considers the event.

(Ewald 1991, 199 cited in Dean 1999, 177)

Some domestic counter-terrorism approaches such as Project Champion do not seem to use any particular matrix to calculate risk associated with terrorism. Instead, the idea of qualitative case-management risk is applied (Dean 1999, 189). Nonetheless the underlying modernist logic of government which supposes the ability of 'rational' programmes to counter what is ultimately an incalculable risk seems to have been accepted in the case of Project Champion. Corresponding to the

logic of existential risk to the state, security actors were able to design Project Champion and bypass normal scrutiny measures. The scheme's chief actors including OSCT, ACPO, SBP and the Olive Group also seemed to face no democratic challenge or scrutiny at national or local government level until after Project Champion had become public knowledge.

Targeting surveillance towards Muslim populations would not have been unusual in the face of dealing with a terrorist threat: after all, the state has long targeted crime-prevention strategies for more mundane criminal acts at other 'minority groups', using community leaders and representatives to distribute and enforce public policy. However, in relation to surveillance infrastructure these targeting regimes can then become part of the process of creating boundaries between populations (Gandy 2006; Raco 2003). But when we try to scrutinise precisely how the risk of terrorism might be reduced by targeting certain populations, and by extension certain geographical areas, the difficulties in adequately conceptualising the 'risk', become all too apparent. From the documents and data available to us this question cannot be answered, nor any specific institutional methods assessed. However drawing on what was learned from assessments of the Prevent agenda and Project Champion, we can observe that such risks seem to be often laid at the door of 'communities'.

As with the Prevent agenda, we can refer back to Rose's (1996) idea that the death of the 'social' in government processes necessitates 'community' as a new territory of governance. Correspondingly there seems to be a political consensus that any effective anti-terror strategy requires absolutely the support of 'communities.' At the Home Office's Prevent conference in Birmingham in 2009 John Denham, a then Home Office minister spoke, along with several keynote speakers, about the importance of Muslims and Muslim 'communities' in preventing terrorism. And yet, contradicting this view, according to two senior CTU officers interviewed for this project, the majority of terrorism cases investigated by police are brought not by information within communities but by the work of intelligence services. Additionally individuals interviewed for this project who have worked in *Prevent* schemes concede that they have yet to meet any young people they feel were particularly vulnerable

to extremism any more than they were likely to fall into other types of criminality. If the reality for those who are constructing counter-terror strategies is that communities lack the mythical power some ascribe to them in preventing 'their' young people from falling into extremism, the need to provide additional layers of security becomes apparent. For police and security services, forms of monitoring, surveillance and investigation which do not depend on 'communal' knowledge are therefore considered to be essential in the development of a comprehensive preventative counter-terrorism strategy. This is the point at which the counter-terror measure moves from engaging and training a 'community' (as was the case in the Prevent agenda) to a more covert monitoring and surveillance process.

In his exegeses of disciplinary power Foucault (1975) had suggested that the signs, symbols and evidence of potential surveillance rather than their precise apparatus needed to be felt for the surveillance presence to be thought of as omniscient. This would allow the state's eyes to become perceived as inescapable, prompting subjects to monitor their own behaviour. However Project Champion's infrastructure was always intended to be covert. It is easy to succumb to a simplistic notion of a coercive if not malicious 'state' raising a clunking fist in order to solve a problem it struggles to understand. However, the state in reality is a network of actors, institutions, organisations and apparatus (Miller and Rose 2008; 55) and relationships with power sometimes delegated, and at other times centralised. In this instance the West Midlands Police's officers were primarily responsible for protection and community safety. Their position within the network of security actors, their prerogative is to emphasise that safety over other concerns around personal and collective liberty. Demonstrating this, CI Richard Moore spoke to the residents at the Sparkhill Ward meeting on 23 June 2010 imploring his audience to let him protect them by keeping the surveillance architecture in place. This argument was echoed by another senior officer who when interviewed, suggested that the idea that civil-liberties were in any way threatened by the proliferation of data-collection or the gaze of the state, was ludicrous. He went on to suggest, not with jest but with conviction, that if there was a camera on every street he would favour it, as that

would help him 'catch the criminals and the bad-guys'. This brings us to an important point about the visibility and stealth of Project Champion's surveillance and the implications of those who are watched becoming aware of the scheme. The gaze of security apparatus just as the gaze of other people, can be construed as an act of power and subjectification (Foucault 1975; 1980). As Jean-Paul Sartre put it:

I grasp the Other's look at the very centre of...[the]...solidification and alienation of my own possibilities...the look alienates me from them.

(Sartre cited in Yar 2003, 259)

Yar (2003) himself criticises the 'pathologisation' of the gaze which he considers to be a normal human act, but the power implications of a clandestine gaze within the context of covert security policy is impossible to dismiss. The reality of the surveillance mechanisms was limited to privileged individuals within the upper echelons of the local authority, West Midlands Police and a private security contractor. The covert nature of the scheme was enhanced by the installation of the 72 covert camera installations that were part of the scheme. When protestors and residents of the neighbourhoods in question were asked about how they felt about the differences between the overt and covert installations although a few suggested there was no difference, the majority perceived the covert cameras to be more problematic, or more 'insulting' than the overt installations. Merfat, who took part in protests by running street stalls and petitions, describes the hidden cameras as 'an invisible enemy'.

One you can see, and one you don't know where the hell they are – it's like an invisible enemy and sometimes when me and my husband talk I wonder if we have one fitted here as well – you have that fear it could be anywhere...you need to be private and you want to be free as a human being that you aren't being watched.

(Merfat, Fieldwork notes, 21/08/2010)

Interestingly, Merfat was suggesting as so many others had done so, that if covert surveillance was being used, then it gave licence to believe that such technology might indeed be everywhere and

anywhere. This point was echoed by a particular resident of Alum Rock who refused to sign a petition against Project Champion despite disliking it, on the basis that the covert nature of the project demonstrated that 'we', which I took to mean Muslims, were being watched and spied on in any case. He insisted that whether or not the campaign against Project Champion would be dismantled, 'next time they will just do it secretly' (Fieldwork notes 22/08/2010). This was not the view of protestors at large but it reflects the disciplinary thesis of Foucault (1975) once again, which suggests that subjects can be coerced into believing in the omnipresence of security infrastructure. Whilst I would reject the idea that this view is in the very *intention* of state actors, it was undoubtedly an effect.

But the revelations about the scheme had a similar effect in the opposite direction. Merfat's 'invisible enemy' as she put it was suddenly made visible. Those forces and authorities that she believed had tried to subjectify her, now had individual names and specific organisations behind them; ACPO, Safer Birmingham Partnerships and to some, even Birmingham's City Council. In the eyes of many protestors, battle lines had been drawn between 'us' and 'them', the infrastructures of the state and a collection of citizens. The creation of the dichotomy between subjects and objects of power is crucial to influencing the way in which Project Champion was viewed by many residents. However complex and non-linear modern governance processes may be (Lash 2003), Project Champion instead came to *represent* a simplistic, linear and indiscrete act of power on relatively powerless citizens. This is why the passionate, seemingly sincere and well-delivered speeches of police officers such as CI Moore at the aforementioned Sparkhill community meeting would be respectfully heard, but would not placate his audience.

7.8 ANPR: A More Clandestine Gaze

Project Champion was also distinct from traditional forms of camera-based surveillance in its emphasis on automated number plate recognition. ANPR technology is surveillance capability that

uses road-side sensors to read vehicle registration plates on cars, and then cross-matches them with vehicles that are being tracked or targeted in relation to crime. It allows for vehicles and by extension, the 'subjects' that Project Champion's official document refers to, to be tracked through public space on a real-time basis. ANPR technology is digital and automated, capable of collecting data, storing it and furthermore analysing it without the need for human involvement in monitoring behavioural patterns (Haines 2009, 28).

The precise technological break-down of what Project Champion's ANPR system consisted of is not clear from the data which has been made available by authorities thus far. What is clear is that the number-plate recognition cameras were planned for use in conjunction with a more traditional CCTV system which was to provide visual data alongside the number-plate logging that the ANPR element would conduct. Watson and Walsh (2008, 2) compare ANPR technology with speed camera technology and suggest that whilst they share similarities in ability to identify vehicles through number-plate recognition or a combination of automated and non-automated data capture, the key difference lies in the fact that ANPR databases make visual and data logs of every vehicle that passes through its checkpoints. ANPR technology is not new to the UK and instead has been pioneered here from the late 1990s (Coaffee 2004; Watson and Walsh 2008).

A comprehensive discussion about the appropriate ways in which ANPR and other forms of advanced video surveillance technology should be used and how much in the way of civil liberties can be traded for strategies to increase crime detection has been tackled elsewhere (Norris and Armstrong 1999; Norris and MacCahill 2006; Haines 2009; Murakami Wood and Webster 2009). However interesting information which sheds light on the Project Champion case study comes in the form of Haines' (2009) survey-based research looking into public attitudes towards ANPR technology and its effectiveness. Of 1573 respondents over 90% of those surveyed agreed or agreed strongly that ANPR systems would leave police better equipped to track and identify criminals, as well as giving them helpful evidence for investigations which could be used to secure convictions (Haines 2009, 188). Only 13.6% suggested that ANPR cameras would represent an infringement of civil liberties, with

88.9% agreeing with the statement often invoked in support of surveillance, that those who had 'nothing to hide, had nothing to fear' (ibid, 208).

Additionally Haines (2010, 162) also suggested that public support for ANPR actually outstripped public support for more traditional CCTV systems, claiming that the general public has seemed happy to give up civil-liberties for increased feelings of security. This raises questions as to why the resistance to Project Champion's own ANPR system was so vehement. The most obvious finding from the ethnographic research in this project was that the discriminatory element of the scheme which focused on large Muslim areas sparked particular outrage (and this will be explored in the next section), and the anti-democratic nature of the management of the project. Other factors also played a role. Steve Jolly's campaign of information and resistance against surveillance of all forms was crucial to gallivanting support and extending it beyond those Muslims communities who were directly targeted.

Significantly too was the view that ANPR represented a police action that was disproportionate. It was seen as clandestine as some, more closely aligned to policies of wars on foreign soil in Afghanistan and Iraq, than on domestic policing policy. This is why the police protestations in the wake of the scheme being uncovered, that suggested the scheme was a locally-targeted crime reduction policy, was dismissed by many of those attending the public meetings. It is also interesting to note that the ANPR system is one which has its technological roots in military technology that was tested in the first Gulf War in 1991 (Coaffee 2004, 205). Midway through July 2010 it became known to protestors that the contractor involved in managing and installing the project was Olive Group, an organisation which had a security presence in both Iraq and Afghanistan as a private contractor. This furthered the feeling that Project Champion was constructing a discourse of Muslim residents as insurgents, rather than legitimate citizens.

7.9 From Local Policy to Global Conspiracy

A worrying outcome of Project Champion was that the project acted as a catalyst for discussion on global conflict, to the point where Project Champion was spoken of by ordinary people as part of a wider battle between Muslims and the West. The literature review explored the ways in which the historic dichotomy between the 'West' and the Muslim 'East' has been created through Orientalist (Said 1978) and indeed Occidentalist (Buruma 2004) narratives. These narratives have been given new impetus through related discourses around a potential 'clash of civilisations' (Huntingdon 1992) and a renewed anxiety about the place of Muslims in the West (see Parekh 2004; Allen 2010). The danger of these binary narratives was also touched upon in Chapter 5. Furthermore the British government has been keen to stress that the war on terror was not one against Islam per se (Brown 2010, 174) but some of the evidence gathered during a period of protests against Project Champion and presented in this section suggests that some residents of the areas affected saw the installation of the cameras as being a manifestation of that dichotomy.

Alistair and Asma were two individuals who would actively campaign and petition for the decommissioning of Project Champion. Previously they had both campaigned for the Stop The War Coalition and during an interview they described hearing about the cameras at a party. Alastair describes feeling 'absolutely furious' about hearing that, as they saw it, Muslims were being targeted. Similarly Asma expressed her anger at what she saw as an inherently discriminatory policy:

It was shock really – a proper punch in the face like woah...these attacks on Muslims and this is the last hit I felt. I don't live in the area and someone said that to me but that's an attack on Muslims I said. Anyhow, I felt it was attack on me as a person.

(Asma, Interview, 30/06/10)



Figure 20: A series of photographs taken on Alum Rock Road in Washwood Heath, from the street protests against Project Champion that took place during August 2010

As Figure 2 illustrates above, a series of protest ‘stalls’ were installed around locations within the areas affected by Project Champion. Data was collected in the form of conversations with residents when these stalls operated, usually on weekends during July and August 2010. On my first morning at the protests on Alum Rock Road, a pedestrian caught me off guard by asking me what opinion I had of the scheme and before I could provide a suitably nuanced answer given my position as a researcher, he told me that he thought there would be war in Iran:

Young man: “They’re gonna bomb Iran. That’s next.”

Arshad: “What makes you say that?”

Young man: “This is what they’re doing. First Iraq and Afghanistan – they want that Muslim land, Muslim blood. And now they want to know what Muslims in their own countries are doing – that’s what the cameras are about”.

(Fieldwork notes, 21/08/2010)

Another protestor who spent a weekend handing out leaflets on Stratford Road Sparkhill made a similar connection between local counter-terror and global conflict:

because there are some people that will go to extremes – and we will see more terrorism and that will justify the cameras and they will say „oh we told you that it was an issue in the community“. But they started them. And its nothing to do with the terrorism – its just like a cover-up for the war on terror..the Imperialism [sic] war on the Muslims and so on

(Fieldwork notes, 21/08/10)

Many of the campaigners against the cameras carried with them slogans relating to civil-liberties, and the civil-libertian argument is indeed one referenced by many of the Muslims protesting against Champion, with whom I spoke. Others were equally angered at the scheme’s targeting of Muslim communities as well and the lack of transparency. A few had heard of the issue on the news and one man driving down stopped abruptly in his black Mercedes Benz to peer out the window and offer to sign the petition, “It takes the fucking piss”, he added before apologising for his language with his young daughter sat in the backseat. For the protestors at least there was some satisfaction that the views they were encountering were so passionate and the anger against authorities almost palpable. However, a sizeable number of people who were involved in protesting, who might have stopped to have conversations with supporters and sign petitions, also sought to place Champion as part of a broader global conflict. Global issues were never too far away when Champion was being discussed. On that sunny Saturday morning several young Muslims began to speak to me about their fears. Some spoke of being ‘targets’ for government and many expressed the view that Champion was mere confirmation of that Muslims were being singled out as security threats. Another young Muslim father signed the petition nearby and communicated a sense of helplessness at the then ongoing situation:

It just gets worse and worse for us. It’s no good that they’re able to do stuff like that to us – what terrorism is there here? You tell me what terrorism there is here! It’s just bullshit.

(Fieldwork notes, 22/08/10)

A protestor reassured the individual that with enough signatures on the petition there would be a real chance that Champion will be discontinued, but not all residents agreed. Several young men from the local Tablighi centre approached and greeted me warmly (see Sikand 2006 for a critical appraisal of the Tablighi movement). They had taken some time out of their religious duties of preaching and learning Islam at a local Islamic centre to find some food to eat on Alum Rock Road. An interesting discussion took place; first of all two of the young men eagerly signed the petition but another of their company questioned their actions:

You know what I think – it's pointless to sign things. They are always going to do things like this. We aren't in a Muslim country...this is how it is. We should just concentrate on doing our own ibaadah (worship) and protecting our iman and yaqeen (faith and belief)

(Fieldwork notes, 22/08/10)

Another older man, who until that point had been standing by the stall and watching quietly echoed that sense of powerlessness, declaring to me that he agreed with the objection. When I asked why he placed a friendly hand on my shoulder and advised me that I should use my abilities to do well for myself, study hard and help my community without making too much trouble. On subsequent days a small minority of passers-by would express sympathy but disillusionment, contending that whilst 'we' (Muslims) can't change anything and that Muslims should 'do sabr'. To 'do sabr' as such is perhaps best translated as 'to be patient' and is often heard as an almost spiritual evocation to reassure a person going through suffering that God will reward that suffering which is endured patiently. Similarly, another older gentleman stopped as he heard one of these arguments, chuckled and nodded in agreement but asked me not to waste my time and to consider how 'protesting' might be looked upon by non-Muslims driving past: the 'other'.

These encounters raise issues of power and 'othering'. The sense of powerlessness of some Muslims in the face of their 'brothers and sisters' facing oppression and opposition elsewhere in the world is a phenomenon that has been recognised by cultural theorists and security analysts. Just as discourses of clashes of civilisations (Huntingdon 1992) are prevalent in right-wing politics in the West, in the

Muslim a similar narrative is one used by Al Qaeda and other militant Islamic groups. In this narrative the Muslim world is 'humiliated' as it is dominated by Western military security apparatus as well as acts of aggression, from Iraq and Palestine in the Arab world, to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia in South East Asia (Esposito and Mogahed 2007). Western-led attacks on these countries themselves reinforce this dualist notion; Barber (1996) famously dubbed this dichotomy as 'Jihad vs McWorld'. However simplistic this narrative might be, it is that very simplicity that is appealing to the more reactionary analyst. Bringing counter-terror infrastructure, installed by an international security contractor, into Muslim neighbourhoods in the UK allowed for this precise global narrative to gain credence. Local policies became evidence of a global conspiracy.

This local security policy also became a means of 'othering' the Muslim population of Birmingham, differentiating between them and their non-Muslim neighbours. As discussed in the literature review, discourses of terrorism have the capacity to create a culture of fear (Mythen and Walkate 2006). In communicating the idea of citizens becoming responsible for their safety, almost inevitably the terrorist other, usually male, usually non-white, becomes seen as a threat. Project Champion takes this further by drawing the threat as one which exists in specifically dense Muslim neighbourhoods or 'communities'. This might be seen as an inevitable consequence of security moving into territories of 'community' in order to tackle the terrorist threat. According to Ohana (2007, 16-19) Islam has become the implicit subject of othering through a discourse of securitisation.

Buzan et al (1998) detailed what constituted an act of securitisation; an actor, a subject and an audience towards whom the act would be justified citing an existential threat. Project Champion created a net for potential subjects covering entire neighbourhoods in Birmingham without the knowledge of residents, based upon the existential threat thought to lie within Muslim communities. But as Van Munster (2005, 8) posited, Securitisation is a more extreme act than risk management; firstly it draws a clear line between 'friend' and 'enemy'. In drawing the physical boundaries of Project Champion as it did a demarcation was being made that strongly suggested that there were populations which were relatively more dangerous than others. Unlike risk management,

securitisation also involves the use of 'exceptional measures' which bypass political processes, and once again we can observe how the normal democratic oversight procedures were skewed in order to push through the scheme. However, according to van Munster (ibid) securitisation is also about the elimination of threat as opposed to ongoing management of it. Project Champion did not aim to eliminate threat in this drastic way, but the fulfilling of the other two criteria suggests evidence that securitisation of Muslims was widely perceived and the 'othering' of Muslims in this context was potentially very problematic. The very notions of conflict between Islam and the West that should have been scrutinised were instead being strengthened.

7.10 Project Champion and the Stigmatisation of Space

How [could] we make people scared of their neighbours and suspicious? How can we make ghettos of these areas – that they are the bad ones that are being monitored from the outside? You'd create Project Champion.

(Salma Yaqoob, speaking at the Spycam Summit 04/07/10)

Not only was Project Champion seen as a besmirching of Muslim communities in Birmingham, it was also seen as an implicit stigmatisation of 'Muslim space'. If we recall the identity issues explored in Chapter 4, we found that Muslims in Birmingham were concentrated in certain parts of Birmingham. They were especially concentrated in inner-suburbs to the East, South East and North West of the city. It was within those eastern and south-eastern inner-suburbs that Project Champion was also concentrated. Chapter 4 also explored how young Muslims in the city had formed close attachments with the urban spaces around them. This was attributed to various factors, chief among them though were factors that could be termed loosely as the 'everyday actions' that constitute the performance of identity (de Certeau 1984). The use of urban spaces for social, commercial and cultural activities designated those spaces either as sites of everyday performance of identity (Giddens 1990, 53); they thus became the focal point for feelings of belonging and place-attachment.

What is more, these sites have acquired a representation in the popular imagination and in the imagination of residents as being 'Asian' or 'Muslim' areas. Conceptions of 'Muslim-ness' or 'Asian-ness' are thus re-embedded into the character and identity of places. Spatial suppositions and prejudices are reinforced in this social construction of space (Shields 1991, 46). It is clear from both the ethnographic research carried out, referenced in Chapter 4, that Washwood Heath and Sparkhill, the two neighbourhoods most affected by Project Champion were known as Muslim and Asian areas by residents and visitors. Furthermore as Salma Yaqoob's comments at the Spycam, Summit suggest, there was an awareness that some outsiders might see these relatively deprived Asian spaces as

'ghettos'. This is certainly true of far-right groups such as the BNP (2010) who claim that inner-city Birmingham has become 'occupied territory'. But it also extends to more mainstream discourses which claim that a dangerous level of ghettoisation is taking place in Birmingham, and that ethnic minorities are not engaged in civic processes (West 2011; Anonymous 2011¹).

Ghettoisation as both a contemporary discourse and a process stems finds its roots in the American urban experience (Clark 1965; Wacquant 1994; 1997). But the idea of Muslim self-segregation in various parts of the UK has been touted in recent times – and indeed robustly challenged (Phillips 2006; Finney and Simpson 2009) Project Champion with its stark spatial implications worried residents and forced them to confront the representation of their areas that was being constructed by the choice of camera locations:

I'm a taxi driver – you drive around Birmingham, not many cameras. You reach Sparkhill and there's loads of cameras here. This isn't about crime and safety. At the end of the day Chelmsley Wood and Kingstanding [two predominantly „white“ deprived areas of Birmingham] are high crime areas and if they applied for the same funding would they have gotten it? This is just around Muslim areas isn't it?

(Resident, Sparkhill community meeting 22/07/10)

The pernicious effect of Project Champion was to effectively mark neighbourhoods apart, from those that required protection and those that warranted surveillance. This may not have been the intention of SBP on implementing the scheme, but the perception of protestors, who were shielded from the background and true aims of Project Champion was that such demarcations were being made. Furthermore, just as local urban spaces were important in the performance of everyday life, some felt that the securitisation of those spaces similarly intruded upon their everyday activities:

¹ This anonymous article appeared in the magazine *Standpoint* and was written in a regular column, 'The Mole', which allows for selected anonymous articles to be published.

When I go out my house...and I go outside to buy milk, and I see camera after camera after camera...do you understand how I feel? Please try to understand that. We're just meeting friends and family and there's one camera here and here. Just coming to this meeting I was frustrated thinking „they've got one here as well“ it's so frustrating for us – we know some cameras have a purpose but it's extremely insulting. I understand the great jobs some of you are doing but please take on board...live here for a week or so and then see how you would feel living under a cage of cameras [audience applause.]

(Resident, Sparkhill community meeting 22/07/10)

The phenomenon that is then produced is comparable to the stigma that has in the past been the unfortunate hallmark of some deprived and poverty-stricken neighbourhoods. Jansson (2005) observes that in a media-saturated world, representation rather than internal social dynamics come to define places. He continues to describe how underpinning this stigmatisation of deprived neighbourhoods is the concept of an underclass (ibid, 3). With respect to Muslim 'communities' in Britain the danger is that they will become seen as dangerous rather than a deprived underclass, threatening the safety of others around them. This danger is extended to the places in which Muslims reside, and eventually it is the idea of 'dangerous space' that drives the rationale for the spatially bound securitisation of Project Champion.

We can also understand this anger and fear of exclusion by revisiting Antonsich's (2010) work in which he specified the elements that constituted the emotional component of feelings of belonging. Although 'security' is not mentioned explicitly as one of those factors, a feeling of security and safety underpins all of them: knowledge of a place and intimate connections and memories connected to it counteract the fear that outsiders may have of neighbourhoods; the social support structures in an area provide comfort and feelings of security; economic embeddedness within a city or neighbourhood promote financial security; and legal rights reinforce personal legal security as well as that of community 'groups'. Project Champion might have been intended to provide added security, but the exclusion of residents and Muslim representatives from the scheme's construction can be construed to have undermined one group's legal and political rights to representation and

information. What they felt was a loss of input and ownership of policies that would affect them directly and rather than feeling 'secured' as a result of Project Champion they felt excluded or even threatened by it.

There were indeed relatively isolated voices that supported Project Champion, and those sometimes serve as a reminder that there was indeed a logic and rationale for the scheme, however poorly it may have been conceived and executed. To the dismay of protestors against Project Champion a (non-Muslim and white) Community Support Officer who wandered past one of the petition stalls on Alum Rock Road several times, stopped to talk to them and explained how he felt that as it was Muslims who were the chief terrorist threat, it made sense that counter-terror infrastructure would be in areas populated by them. At public meetings the very small minority of residents who spoke out in favour of Project Champion, (usually with the belief that general CCTV in the area would prevent drug crime and anti-social behaviour), were not Muslim. Some protestors observed the irony of a movement against state policy being able to unite those from different political, ethnic and religious backgrounds but there was also evidence that Project Champion and the opposition towards it was sometimes seen to be dividing residents along political and ethnic lines.

7.11 Project Champion and Institutionalised Muslims: Engagement and Resistance

By the time Project Champion was uncovered during the spring of 2010 the Prevent agenda had been running in the city for over two years. An originally highly sceptical set of Muslim youth and community workers in Birmingham had begun to trust more in the West Midlands Police department which claimed management and oversight of Prevent in the city. Project Champion disrupted that trend. Thames Valley Police's review of Project Champion was to state, somewhat hyperbolically, that community relations had been set back a decade due to the bungled management of the project (Thornton 2010, 47). But the community engagement that followed the scandal sought to transform what Dean would describe as 'targeted populations' into 'active citizens' (Dean 1999, 167).

As Chapter 6 demonstrated, we had been told by policy-makers and indeed by youth and community workers that partnership working between communities and police was key to reducing the threat of extremism. But as Project Champion began to accrue opposition some of those people who had co-operated with and even championed the Prevent programme were now to be found attacking the authorities they had previously worked closely with. What is more, during Project Champion's public disclosure, as the police became aware that trust in the police was eroding, they looked to consult with Muslim communities. Those Muslims with whom they had become familiar, particularly since the start of the Prevent agenda were usually the same individuals who would be approached for consultation around Project Champion. These dynamics are telling of the governance of Muslim communities and the power-dynamics between community representatives and government agencies.

A first example of this comes as early as June 2010, before the Spycam Summit and shortly after the article exposing Champion to the national media was published in *The Guardian* (Lewis 2010). The Chief Constable of West Midlands Police Chris Sims invited several individuals to an informal lunch meeting to discuss the Project and resistance towards it. Four of the five invitees had all been Muslims working with Government agencies as part of the Prevent agenda. One individual had worked alongside public officials in Prevent as part of the Young Muslims Advisory Group (YMAG). Another was working at Hear My Voice, a consultancy which was assisting the Prevent agenda by liaising with young Muslims and researching their lives and attitudes. A third attendee was working for Green Lane Mosque in the Small Heath area of Birmingham and he had also worked with the Police as part of a Prevent programme. We can see how the government through the Prevent agenda has thus identified a new territory of government in the 'Muslim community' (Miller and Rose 2008; 88, Rose 1996), which allows it to focus state resources. But this new 'community is useful beyond allowing the state to run efficient programmes. In theory at least this should also act as a decentralising force which is empowering Muslim communities to what Atkinson (2003, 117-118) and Taylor (2006, 302) might label 'active subjects'. As Cornwall (2004a, 9) suggested, the

institutionalisation of community actors can help them form alliances which help them further their community causes. Ironically the engagement with the state of these individuals on the Prevent agenda allowed them to be surer of the avenues of protest that they could take when resisting Project Champion.

Two of these attendees were not prominent in the protest movement against Champion and did not attend organisers meetings, though they were both known to be against the deployment of the scheme. Nonetheless, through their work within the Prevent agenda they had become known to police and policy-makers as people with whom to consult around 'Muslim issues' in Birmingham. The Police and Safer Birmingham partnerships had to somehow reach into what was in reality a blurred patchwork of communities to contact people who might become influential in influencing opinion. We can recall the senior police officer working with Muslims in the city (Chapter 6), suggesting that Police had little realistic option, given constraints of time and expertise, but to speak to those who 'shouted the loudest'. This might be a form of empowerment of individuals, but for what is essentially a virtual and imagined Muslim community (Miller and Rose 2008; 90), that empowerment equates to a privileged access to governing processes (Taylor 2006, 310).

The young Muslims invited to the event had previously and subsequently spoken out in strong terms against Project Champion, in private at least. In the meeting with the Chief Constable, one attendee alleged that the criticism was toned down and not as harsh, perhaps because some of these individuals worked closely with the police and their organisations had an inter-dependent relationship with policy-makers. This suggestion was refuted by another of the individuals present at the meeting, who claimed that he and all the others there put pressure on the Chief Constable demanding nothing less than the dismantling of the scheme. Another individual involved in the protests against the cameras suggested that the invite to four individuals who had 'proven track records' of working with police authorities ensured they were unlikely to 'rock the boat'. At this point in time before the Spycam Summit with protestors and residents pitted against the Police, the Police would have no doubt found the links it had established with its work with young Muslims very useful

in allowing them relatively 'safe' conversations with those in the thick of the protest movement - safe in the sense that these individuals might communicate the feelings of community members without using the meeting as an opportunity to acquire additional information which might then be used against the Police publicly.

The role of KM is once again an interesting insight into the mechanisations through which state power and influence has to travel in order to reach its intended aims. KM was crucial to providing steer to the police and SBP towards engagement with the protestors, in effect offering them a way out of the political and media storm that was brewing over the issue. The New Labour government in promoting community participation recognised that this knowledge-transfer would be a major advantage of de-centralised governance:

Local people understand local problems. They know what is and isn't working and what needs to change. The Government can learn a lot from such local knowledge and by using the skills of such champions we can really understand the issues and put in place measures...

(DFES 2002 cited in Slack 2004, 138)

Another way to look upon this transfer or interchange of tacit knowledge is as a form of training. Foucault (1973; 1975) emphasises in the context of hospitals and prisons, how within disciplinary society, subjects are 'trained' to behave according to social norms. Post-disciplinary governance can also be seen as a form of training, but individuals are not only *subject* to power, but are able to wield that power themselves. KM was himself a student at the University of Birmingham along with several other prominent Muslims in Birmingham. He has a history of engagement with government agencies, having sat on an assessment panel responsible for critiquing bids for funding from projects looking to fulfil the aims of the Prevent agenda. Despite not profiting himself from the Prevent agenda, these engagements allowed him privileged access to policy-makers who work at a local level as well as individuals working at more senior and ministerial levels in national government. KM provided a safe channel through which information could be gathered by Police and civil servants about the direction

of the opposition movement. But he was also an actor with the agency and leverage to negotiate concessions from authorities, as was the case at the Spycam Summit.

Once again Taylor's (2006) question about whether these 'community' engagement processes constitute co-operation or co-option can be raised. I would contend that at least *after* Project Champion was disclosed to the public, prior engagement with Muslim representatives and operatives left the police authorities vulnerable in the face of opposition to the scheme, not least because some of the protestors had prominent roles within the Prevent programme, which again imbued them with agency and leverage. The institutional space afforded to Muslim groups had thus transformed into a space of resistance, as Cornwall (2004b) suggested was possible. In fact one such actor who was also working within a Prevent programme, when interviewed for this research angrily remarked:

The fucking pigs. What do they need to send the message that this shit isn't on? Another bomb on a bus?

Fieldwork notes, Prevent practitioner [date removed to protect identity of participant]

Given previous contact with the individual who made the remark, I took it as misplaced anger, and later he appeared more circumspect. However I've included it here to show two things. Firstly that despite the integrated relationships between, on the one hand government departments and authorities, and on the other community and faith organisations, a clandestine scheme such as Project Champion risks breaking down good working relationships into oppositional ones. Secondly it shows how a thin line can exist between the efforts of groups and individuals preventing extremism and actually promoting it or at least making it more likely.

However there is also an alternative discourse of power and powerlessness that we can use to analyse Project Champion's impact. As Mythen et al (2009) note, some young Muslims feel a sense of powerlessness in the face of some of the global conflicts that impact upon Muslims. Wright-Neville and Smith (2009) go further and contend that the emotions of powerlessness and humiliation can contribute to an individual using their agency to advance more radical or extreme methods for

political ends. Evidence collected during this research project suggested that Prevent project workers understood this and attempted to counter such feelings by promoting democratic and peaceful action. However the lack of impact of such action created disillusionment itself:

You know on the PVE programme in some ways we ran out of ideas talking to people about how it's okay to be angry and how we go through processes and march – there's a march organised and another march and then we make prayers and the rest of it and the young people eventually who are switched on say „that didn't work.“ „Well we gotta look to lobby and then...“ „Nah – they don't listen do they.“

So there was a lot of disaffection from kids who say we been on a march – six marches - and yet nothing's happened. They still haven't pulled out of Palestine. For those young people what do you say to them? Cause I don't know what you say to them. Well you could be an MP but you've got Muslim MPs. And the conversations became rather uncomfortable really. Our staff said, „that's a good question – what's the answer to that?“ We ran out of ideas talking to people about how it's OK to be angry.

(Anonymous Prevent Practitioner, Interview)

The impact of Project Champion was to provide a new site of resistance. Counter-terror policies had reached the neighbourhoods to which young Muslims in the city felt a great deal of attachment, and this time the governance structures allowed for a form of resistance that was ultimately successful. The same youth worker noted in the aftermath of Project Champion:

(Project Champion) gave the community a very rare opportunity to have a victory of sorts. So here was an unfair situation and they have gone through a process, got the people responsible around the table and held them accountable and they felt they had an apology and that they had a victory – cameras bagged up [removed]. And what they did was allow them to feel they can make a difference. They felt empowered and less frustrated than they felt about a lot of issues.

(Anonymous Prevent Practitioner, Interview)

Young people also themselves became part of the protest movement, sometimes as a direct result of the work of community organisations. 'Birmingham Citizens' which advertises its ties to the city council and West Midlands police on its website, delivered a session to young people in Lozells around what Project Champion with a view to organising protests against the scheme.

At some point in August however with the Police and Safer Birmingham Partnership braced for criticism from reviews of Champion by the City Council and Thames Valley Police, their seemed to be a shift of policy which veered towards allowing protesting voices to steer the direction of the project. The setting up of the Reference Group of residents, unanimously critical of Project Champion, was created. They advised the Project Champion board and furthermore two members of the Reference group would then sit on the board for Project Champion itself. When the West Midlands Police met the governing Police Authority to decide the future of Project Champion in a public meeting on 25 October 2010, on the face of it at least, the recommendation of this 'Reference Board' held sway over the future of the Project. We can analyse the outcome by referring to the work of Beck (1993) and governmentality theory. At this Police Authority meeting the reference group's advice was taken as 'evidence' from the 'community' about what impact the scheme had on residents. Similarly the West Midlands Police authority, an oversight body requested the Police's guarantee as professionals and 'experts' that decommissioning Project Champion would not put the community at 'risk'.

As Beck (1992; 1997) suggested, such risk is objectively incalculable, but by providing 'expert' opinion both the community and the police's recommendations allow for a veneer of 'scientific process' and rationality to be claimed as evidence in favour of the decommissioning of Project Champion. In reality the Police Authority was likely intending to be free of responsibility if indeed a terrorist attack did take place in the city after the removal of the ANPR system. The process of retrieving the community's impact assessment and expertise however obscured those motives. Furthermore what might be an overtly political decision, to decide the balance between liberty and security, was reduced to a seemingly apolitical bureaucratic process. Project Champion's aftermath can therefore also be linked to the idea of reflexive governance regimes as a response to risk (Dean 1999, 188-189).

Qualitative assessments such as those thought to be provided by the Reference Group to the Project Champion board, seemingly alter the 'evidence' of community risk. The real politics of the governance however lie behind the process itself; it resides within the rationale of securitisation which underpins the very notion of Project Champion as a counter-terror strategy. It also lies in the processes of community engagement which distributes power away from the central state authorities. This multi-polar power structure allows actors outside of state institutions agency to affect the policy, but which in this case when protests arose, also allowed for a degree of institutional (police) control to direct Project Champion towards decommissioning.

7.12 A Perfect Storm

Project Champion represented a perfect storm in the politics of Muslim identity in Birmingham. Its impact was felt on the ground by young Muslims and these impacts are thrown into sharp relief by what we learned in Chapter 4 about the importance of local spaces in shaping the identities of young Muslim men. The rationale of risk and an emphasis on security also bought both urban spaces and the Muslims living within them under the gaze of security apparatus. This left Muslims feeling discriminated against, securitised and 'othered' – and for some gave credence to the narrative of Western agents in unavoidable conflict with Muslims, not just in the UK but globally. Given the severe criticisms of Project Champion both by the Thames Valley Police Force and Birmingham City Council, it might be tempting to look upon the scheme as a severe error, an aberration for which apologies were eventually made. This analysis may even be partially correct: with the motivations of those who created the scheme still shrouded by the public silence of those directly involved in project Champion's creation, and the rationale and business case still only available in redacted form, it is not possible to decipher precisely how and why Project Champion was instigated, beyond acknowledging that the requisite assessments of impact on residents and 'communities' was not

considered thoroughly. However, to simply dismiss Project Champion as a 'blip' would be a mistake in itself, for the following three reasons.

First, Project Champion is the product of a very specific structure, in terms of the power dispersal with regards to counter-terrorism, the lack of democratic involvement and the use of private company. The OSCT and ACPO played a leading role in setting up a fund (APCO TAM) from which the local authority and regional police associations and private companies were all encouraged to cooperate and co-design counter-terror schemes; this de-centralised neo-liberal governance structure is responsible in part for the way in which Project Champion was instigated.

Secondly, Project Champion is relevant to the analysis we have of the government's 'Prevent' programme due the connections between the two schemes both in terms of the government agencies involved and the community representatives (many of whom were involved in both Prevent and in the movement against Project Champion), whose level of engagement with both programmes would strongly influence their success or otherwise. Thirdly, regardless of the role of governance on the creation of Project Champion, the subsequent discovery of the scheme and the protests, publicity and climb-down that followed all had consequences for both the personal and spatial aspects of belonging, key themes in this research project. Those themes are revisited in the final chapter, a reflection of the theoretical themes of this thesis.

Chapter 8:

Concluding Reflections

The aims of this research project were to examine how identities were experienced by young Muslim men in Birmingham on the ground and the treatment of those identities by government institutions, engaging with that demographic as part of counter-terrorism strategy. The key finding of this study is that there is a disconnect between those Muslim identities on the way in which those identities are conceptualised through security policy. This disconnect manifests as a securitisation of both Muslim identity and Muslim space in Birmingham, evidenced by the empirical research of this study. But the governance processes underlying policy towards Muslims also creates a complex set of representational politics around Muslim identity in the city. Furthermore, the processes of identity and security policy are connected and co-produced. Government policy-making towards Muslims in Birmingham is driven by a problematisation of their identity. Yet through the Prevent agenda and Project Champion, that Muslim identity is being reframed, as Muslim representatives are chosen and Muslim spaces marked out.

Concurrently, the conclusions of this chapter explore these findings through identification of four thematic areas. Firstly, using notions of belonging (Antonsich 2010a) this chapter analyses the significance of localised feelings of belonging to the wider debates around Muslim identity. Secondly it reflects upon how the debates around multiculturalism and ethnic identification are informed by the empirical research. Thirdly it suggests how theories of governmentality and social control, in particular those by Dean (1999) and Rose (2000) can illuminate the empirical findings on the governance of Muslims. Finally it asks whether the strategies of governance employed by authorities and explored in this case-study, amounted to a securitisation of Muslim male identity in Birmingham.

8.1 Challenging Stereotypes: Muslim Identity and Belonging in Birmingham

See, a lot of things people say „Muslim-this Muslim-that“ – what’s Muslim got to do with it? If a guy’s a bastard, Muslim aint got nothing to do with it. You know – look at the news, „honour killing“. When a white guy kills his daughter for some reason they don’t say „honour killing“. They don’t say he’s a Christian. Look at the Fritzl case – look what he done – does his religion ever come up in it? Not once. Never. But if he’s a Muslim I guarantee Muslim would be the title.

(Imran, Interview, 18/05/09)

On the subject of identity and belonging one particular frustration was evident from all Muslim participants. Throughout the entire research process from the walked interviews and ethnographic research with young Muslims, to the interviews conducted on the subject of the Prevent agenda and in discussions with Muslim residents over Project Champion – there was evidence of extreme frustration at the stereotyping of Muslims. This frustration was often attached to the viewing of young Muslims through the lens of security by both the media and government institutions. But as the above quote from an interviewee demonstrates, this demonization of Muslim identity was also perceived to have extended into the cultural sphere. Academics investigating issues with implications for Muslim identity have highlighted these presuppositions and stereotypes of Muslims as ‘others’ and as threats (Meer and Modood 2009). This research contributes in the same vein by undercutting the negative stereotypes of young Muslim men and the implication that they may not ‘belong’ in the UK – but it does this principally by uncovering the strong relationships they have with local spaces in everyday life.

Lefebvre (1984) made a distinction between what he considered to be ‘philosophy’ and ‘everyday life’. For Lefebvre, philosophy dealt with reflecting on the overall nature of man in a way that was removed from the workings of man’s daily life. Lefebvre analogised that philosophy was a path overlooking the road of everyday life but separate from it and divided by a mountain range. The

path, he suggested looked down upon the road of everyday life, but from that higher perspective it would be impossible to see the 'thickets, thornbushes and swamps' - those competing and contradictory processes that make up the everyday (Lefebvre 1984, 17). By making this analogy Lefebvre was posing the familiar question about the difficulty of reconciling structure and agency.

This research speaks to that dilemma by asserting that there are connections between micro-processes of everyday life and broader discourses around young Muslims more generally. Structural factors such as migration, industrialisation and deindustrialisation were shown to have produced spaces in inner-city Birmingham where Muslims are now concentrated. This facilitated a particular set of dynamics of everyday life which operate on that small scale – Lefebvre's thickets, thornbushes and swamps. However those dynamics are also responsible for turning spaces into places. As Tedman (2003) points out it is the meaning which we infuse into physical spaces that turn them into 'places'; similarly everyday life in areas such as Sparkhill, Sparkbrook, Alum Rock, Washwood Heath and Aston by residents and neighbours – are responsible for imbuing those spaces with meaning and constructing a specific sense of *place*. Many of the participants in this research expressed feelings of attachment and belonging to their sites of residence, primarily inner-city neighbourhoods – the structural factors that produce space cannot be separated from those emotional attachments which become bound up in their constructions and reconstructions.

De Certeau (1984, 118) similarly wrote about the importance of stories in transitioning space to place. In our case study these stories consisted of residential family history, pleasant memories but also strife, tension and danger. The structures of the city and globalisation create the canvas on which the residents of an area can paint their meanings. These place-making processes give us a telling insight into the 'disconnect' between popular conceptions of young Muslim men and the actual reality of their lives. Through their everyday lives Muslims in Birmingham have constructed what some might perceive as 'Muslim' or 'Asian' places. These places are focal points of belonging for those who engage with them, and they are markers of representations of Muslim 'communities' to both insiders and outsiders. When these places become securitised with surveillance as was the

case with Project Champion, it understandably has a damaging effect on Muslims' feeling of belonging in the city. Moreover the empirical research conducted at times emphasised the sheer ordinariness of young Muslim men in Birmingham. This stood in sharp relief to the security processes young Muslims were becoming entangled with, as well as the cultural and political discourses that have been highlighted throughout this study, that paint Muslims as 'Others' within British society. This disconnect produces a peculiar dynamic in which young Muslim men might feel attached to their neighbourhood, to nominally British spaces, yet they may also be excluded and marked out as different by nationalist groups.

Figure 21 summarises how the feeling of localised belonging was evoked by participants in this study; they cover four out of five components of belonging, as modelled by Antonsich (2010). But just as important as those components are in isolation, it is important to acknowledge how Muslim identities (like any other) can become embedded in the landscape, and thus reproduce those identities. For example, the cultural and economic factors that contribute to feelings of belonging, themselves lead to the creation of social and cultural spaces which are identifiable to outsiders and insiders alike: mosques, community centres and centres of cultural economic activity such as specialised shops and services. Thus the image of the space as 'Muslim space' or Asian space is created and reinforced. From the research conducted with these participants, I would conclude that emotional and experiential components stand out more strongly than legal components or notions of citizenship, in constructing the relationship of those participants to place. Referring back to Chapter 5, I would suggest that whilst the legal notion of citizenship underpins belonging by establishing the rights and responsibilities of citizens, which in turn allows them to feel secure. For our participants however, this could certainly not be expressed with emotion and suggested attachment; citizenship was taken for granted as something separate from feelings of being in-place and at-home.

The place-making processes are also important because they begin to explain how identity becomes bound and politicised. The following from our case study is precisely what Yuval Davis (2006; 204) was referring to when she suggested that the 'politics of belonging' is the dirty work of boundary maintenance. It works as follows: neighbourhoods in Birmingham which have come to acquire a reputation as being 'Asian spaces' can become focal points for belonging of its residents. However, despite the fact that these neighbourhoods are British in that they are produced by British post-war and post-colonial history, an attachment to these spaces is not perceived as embodying any sort of 'Britishness'. This tells us something important about the term 'Britishness' and the very concept of national identity, which is undermined by this observation. As Chapter 5 concluded, Britishness is vague, often banal and always imagined (Billig 1995; Wallwork and Dixon 2004; Robins 1997). Chapter 5 also reveals that national identity can be politically very loaded. When Britishness is evoked we are not so much discussing belonging as we are the 'politics of belonging' – as Yuval Davis (2006) points out, marking out the boundaries between who is included and who is excluded. The practical and everyday experiences of young Muslim men in the city stands in stark contrast to the elusive and imagined national identity. The expression of national identity by the participants of this study seemed to be difficult because it is so intangible. Religious identity is expressed more confidently because, just as localised identities are practiced, religious identities of our participants were also easier to 'perform'.

THE EMOTIONAL COMPONENTS OF 'BELONGING' AS PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE			
Auto-biographical	Relational	Cultural Factors	Economic Embeddedness
<p>Participants talk about their identity through stories; their lives in an area, their upbringing and also their memories and recollections. This corresponds with Antonsich's (2010; 647) citation of auto-biographical factors. Although the presence of family members in the area only goes back a generation for most participants, childhood memories are frequently cited by participants and interpreted to suggest that these are significant in developing feelings of belonging.</p> <p>In addition to Antonsich's framework, this study finds that even whilst expressing the danger of the place in which they belong, participants can demonstrate attachment through a privileged knowledge of place allows them to be safe – and safety is essential to being able to feel 'at home'.</p> <p>(See Chapters 4.4, 4.5.1, 4.5.3)</p>	<p>Antonsich (2010; 647) writes of relational factors as the personal and social ties that exist in a given place. Within this study the significance of these factors was exemplified by the walked interviews in which every participant met more than one neighbour or friend, interrupting the interview with a conversation.</p> <p>This is a place-making process and these encounters go beyond those that indicate merely 'weak ties' with strangers (ibid 2010; 647-8). 'Sense of place' is thus being socially constructed through constant interaction, even as the research is taking place.</p> <p>(See Chapter 4.5.4)</p>	<p>According to Antonsich (2010; 648) cultural factors comprise primarily of the languages and codes that establish a way of communicating, create meaning and that can help an individual feel warm towards a place.</p> <p>Whilst some of these were evident during interviews, the cultural factors explored and found to be significant in this study were related to cultural practices. Food consumption and abstention from alcohol not only shaped physical spaces in the city. But communal spaces also allow for values to be reinforced through gossip and community surveillance; values such as the preference for gender segregation or the discouraging of drug and alcohol consumption.</p> <p>(See Chapter 4.5.2)</p>	<p>Economic factors matter to belonging as they create materially stable conditions for an individual and his/her family (Antonsich 2010; 648). There is an overlap with cultural factors here: economic activities allow cultural practices to take place, catering for specific needs of British-Asians or Muslims in fashion, food and leisure.</p> <p>However this study also suggests that a critical mass of such businesses is influential in creating a racialised place identity of 'Asian space'. These spaces become hubs of similar cultural and economic activity and thereby produce and reproduce these identities. These 'Asian spaces' or 'Muslim spaces' come to embody the economic embeddedness of those particular communities.</p> <p>(See Chapter 4.5.2)</p>

Figure 21: Table demonstrating how a localised sense of belonging was demonstrated in the empirical research – using Antonsich (2010)

This raises the question of what place remains for national-identity and the concept of Britishness for young Muslim men – and what implications this might have for their citizenship. Is this another sign as Castells (2004, 7) suggested, of the dilution of national identity in the age of globalisation? Or can we make a separation between a mythical imagined notion of Britishness, and the more civic idea of national-identity embodied by the word ‘citizenship’?

To answer this question we must turn to the debates around ‘civic nationalism’ which its advocates argue can provide us with modern and progressive methods of infusing citizens of a nation with national identity, without being exclusionary. Unfortunately the idea that civic nationalism and citizenship represents a safe non-exclusionary basis for a shared sense of belonging is also flawed. As Shulman suggests though his analysis of types of nationalism, true non-discriminatory civic nationalism promotes no culture, does not encourage assimilation and allows open immigration (2002, 561). On the contrary when ‘Britishness’ is spoken of by politicians such as the Prime Minister David Cameron’s speech in Munich (Cameron 2011), assimilation is seen as a goal of cultural policy. Shulman (2002) would describe this aspiration as ‘cultural nationalism’ whereby the culture of the dominant ethnic group is promoted and assimilation encouraged; in those terms it is not as easily distinguishable from ethnic nationalism. Kymlicka (1999, 134) also proposes that civic nationalists during times of conflict end up adopting assimilatory policies towards ethnic minorities. Similarly Brubaker (1999) rejects entirely any separation between ethnic and civic nationalism, emphasising a continuum between the two and suggesting that it is the persisting idea of a national ‘culture’ that makes any distinction between the two inherently problematic.

De-mystifying the notion of ‘neutralised’ nationalism is important to this study. The empirical data which saw respondents struggle to define and relate emotionally to British identity, coupled with the analysis which explained the essentially banal nature of British nationalism suggest that the cynicism towards civic nationalism is well-founded. Unlike local identities to which an emotional attachment and feelings of belonging are felt strongly, national identity is formed principally around the politics of belonging. This raises a question of whether it is necessary at all for a group-identity to be

encouraged in a nation-state. It can be argued that with the messy nature of globalisation and the resilience of boundaries of identity and belonging continually 're-territorialising', the redrawing of values such as Britishness might not only be exclusionary but impossible. This brings us to the reality of identity in that it is multifaceted and complex; it exists on a variety of scales from the local through to the global at different points. This is precisely the emphasis of those who argue that identities formed by colonial processes are not fixed but interact with other cultures and constantly interact and reboot based on cross-cultural relationships and connections; Bhaba (1994) described this as cultural hybridity while Hall (1996b) made a similar proposition in his treatise on 'new ethnicities'. This research demonstrates clearly the disconnect between those complex, hybrid identities and the risk and security-based approaches to Muslims and their identities which form a guiding principle of the Prevent programme.

8.2 Community, Essentialism and a Postmodern Conundrum

The themes of group representation and community have recurred throughout this thesis. There are twin forces at work which are providing significant challenges of representation for policy-makers and 'communities'. The first is that Muslim-representation holds special relevance and interest due to the perceived threat of terrorism. To counter this, the government has launched counter-terrorism policies, the success of which depends upon some form of engagement with Muslim communities. Concurrently there is another force, a movement towards the utilisation of 'communities' in governance more broadly, to provide a new, theoretically more focussed domain of policy action (Rose 1996; Rose 2000b). In doing so those governance processes help reshape British Muslim identities, as governing agents are allowed the agency and some power to shape representation of Muslim 'communities'. Together, both these processes provide dilemmas of representation: the post-modern conundrum of reconciling hybridity and fluidity of identities with the demands of policies based on community-engagement.

As the literature review demonstrated, Muslim representative groups became significantly more established when due to the Rushdie affair, the British government wanted to find partners for the Muslim 'community'; these organisations would be used to gather and gauge 'Muslim' opinion and then would potentially act as gateways for policy implementation. This model of engagement reflected the history of British Multiculturalism or what in political circles has become referred to as state-multiculturalism (Sparrow 2008; Walford 2012). It involved first the identification of distinct non-white groups and secondly, the recruitment of community leaders and advocates who would represent those sections of society and potentially act as conduits for state funding. As Modood (1998; 2005) has written about extensively, this 'state' aspect of multiculturalism was part of a wider diversity agenda which emphasised that immigrants and minority groups could retain their heritage whilst absorbing new British identities: 'hyphenated identities' as Modood (2005, 3) described them. In theory these would provide spaces where minority cultures would be given due respect and not seen as oppositional to Britishness. However this approach to dealing with the dilemmas of

immigration, integration and representation, also has its weaknesses. This is because such broad identification of communities strays close to essentialising entire ethnic or in this case religious populations. Making matters more complex still is the movement towards the construction of communities as territories of government. Both these movements run counter to the increasingly liberal and individualist ideals shaping British politics (Parekh 1999, 29). This makes the idea of labelling rigid group identities seem relatively dated.

Nonetheless, Chapter 6 described how, particularly after the 7/7 bombings, the need for a programme to tackle the 'radicalisation' process and reduce terrorism was established, and it was taken for granted that this programme would be targeted at British Muslims. Interviews with policy-makers demonstrated that whilst representing Muslims in their broad diversity accurately in the policy-making process was an ideal, it was also a utopia. There was recognition that such representation would ultimately be unrealistic if not outright impossible. Not only did the police and local authority services not have the necessary resources to make such judgements on who should be involved, but they also recognised, unofficially of course, that the idea of Muslims operating as a singular 'community' was a myth.

In policy documents and conversations with key decision-makers, the word 'community' consistently arose, and it was suggested that Muslim 'communities' were key to counter-terrorism efforts. The obvious retort to this suggestion is simply to ask which Muslim 'community' should be targeted; after all many academics within a variety of contexts have emphasised the heterogeneous nature of Britain's Muslim communities (examples include Dwyer 1995; Spalek 2007; Werbner 2009). Nonetheless at a national policy level it still seems to be acceptable to use the notion of a coherent Muslim community when a social problem arises that involves a significant number of Muslims, such as the riots in Northern England (Cantle cited in Webster 2003, 100-1). However in itself such a trend does not validate the idea that a contained and cohesive 'community' exists which has the power to regulate its members and therefore tackle 'Muslim' problems. The interviews with young Muslims in this study did not demonstrate evidence of any easily-identified Muslim community emerging. A

strong sense of having a Muslim identity does not automatically translate into the emergence of a 'community'.

This nuance was understood by those locally administering the Prevent programme as illustrated in Chapter 6. Yet in the face of lacking the resource to tackle the issue a practical decision was made that those who might be able to 'shout the loudest' would be heard, and that this would be adequate to involve the Muslim 'community'. Rather than representing communities, this would risk privileging individuals – just as Taylor (2006, 310) suggested was possible within community engagement regimes. The Prevent programme's own weaknesses of having little in the way of any profile of those it wished to target beyond them being Muslim added to the problem of representation. One might argue at this point that the very notion of Prevent being representative was a fallacy; surely the idea is to target those Muslim 'communities' who are vulnerable, or at least those who are able to claim to offer effective solutions to the problem of extremism. Yet with no targeting possible due to a lack of advanced profiling, to institutions at least, those within the Prevent programme were becoming the de-facto representatives of Muslims in Birmingham. This was starkly illustrated when Project Champion became disclosed in 2010; individuals connected with the Prevent agenda were then identified by governing bodies as key contacts and potential partners in creating a solution that would be acceptable to Muslims more widely.

By those on opposing sides of debates of group membership, this case study can be viewed as either positive or negative. One narrative suggests that Project Champion might also demonstrate how group membership can become a useful (and positive) tool of social action and empowerment, making active citizens (Dean 1999, 167). The protest movement was an informal partnership between a number of actors from three broad platforms: from civil-liberties groups, left-wing political groups and Muslim activists. Muslim activists overall however comprised of a key constituency of the protest movement with the prominent politician Salma Yaqoob becoming a figurehead of the protests against the camera installations, and other key figures who had gained

experience through liaising with government on the Prevent programme, having the tacit knowledge to stage a successful protest movement.

Yet this narrative of Muslim identity being used as tool of social action can also be undermined. By having resources to give to Muslim organisations the Prevent agenda's policy-makers at local level retained a level of leverage over those groups and individuals who they were sustaining. It was perhaps inevitable that should authorities be seeking 'Muslim voices' for engagement or negotiation, they would arrive at the same individuals who have worked closely with public bodies on common agendas. Seen this way, Muslim identity was not an organic tool for social action; rather it was partly constructed by authorities and was also a tool that *authorities* used to obtain public Muslim approval for their decisions and to keep the wider counter-extremism programme functioning without dissent. One might ask which of these competing narratives are the most accurate. I suggest that the truth lies in-between as there is an inter-dependency between both the agency of Muslim representatives and the institutions with which they engage. Muslim representatives and organisations in dealing with the state eventually reached a symbiotic relationship where power, influence and credibility for both parties relies ultimately upon a mutually agreeable relationship.

The construction of 'Muslim community' is a one that is not only socially-constructed but also institutionally-directed. This brings us to a broader point about governing communities that has been flagged up by governmentality theorists such as Nikolas Rose. Rose (1996) sees a direction in policy using the word 'community' as being more than an extension of the debates around essentialism and representation. He suggests that the very notion of the state is in the process of being reconfigured and that in many policy areas we have seen a retreat from conceptualising the 'social' (see also Dean 1999, 177) in favour of discourses around community (Rose 1996, 327-328). As part of advanced liberal democracies the 'social' has been replaced by a number of new territories of government in an effort to privatise and market-ise public services. This approach emphasises personal responsibility over collective welfare (ibid, 327). But this movement requires the development or at least the conceptualisation of new territories of government. Enter 'community' as an integral and as

Rose suggests, an imaginary territory for advanced liberalism; Rose cites the existence of communities both located and virtual, from 'mental-health' communities, Asian communities, religious (moral) communities, to gay communities (ibid; 333). These communities are supported by a variety of institutional officers responsible for these territories, including community support officers, community development officers and so forth. The 'Muslim community' is one of these new communities; partly located in the physical spaces of inner-city Birmingham, partly virtual, yet its configuration, drawing on Rose (1996) can be read as being part of a wider project to reconfigure the territories of government.

This case study is relevant to Rose's critique as it presents a single detailed example of how 'community' was configured in this instance as a tool to direct policy. It is important to state that though the 'Muslim' community might be part virtual and part imaginary, this does not imply that any Muslim community does not exist in reality. Returning to the analysis of Chapters 4, there is evidence that Muslims feel a sense of attachment with specific places which hold meaning to them. They also have social and personal attachments to other people within those spaces. However, these feelings of attachment are often extrapolated to infer a simplistic notion of singular 'community' (and the assumptions of deep physical social connections that go with it) without the empirical evidence to support such a claim. This recalls some of the criticisms of multiculturalism, such as that by Kenan Malik (2005) who argues that multiculturalism itself causes division and conflict between 'communities'. In a more measured but equally sceptical critique, Joppke (2004) questions the 'politics of 'difference' which he sees as being at odds with liberal, non-discriminatory practices. As May (2004, 12), notes, these criticisms at their most virulent assert multiculturalism can result in 'Balkanisation', a process through which previously harmonious nation-states become violently divided.

But Miller and Rose's (2008) wider critique suggests that the dilemmas of identity and securing representation are also being driven by larger forces including movements towards a smaller state. In essence this reflects a familiar post-modern conundrum: by breaking down group identities and

demonstrating their subjected, hybrid and imagined nature there is a dilemma around how to go about governing, when one broad group needs to be targeted. This brings us to the next section of the analysis; how our case study reflects on the governance of communities that are perceived to be *a risk*, or *at risk*.

8.3 Governing Muslims as 'Tainted Citizens'

What the Chapters 6 and 7 in particular demonstrate is that policies were being established in Birmingham to watch and govern Muslims in the city. This governance was based upon a perceived risk; that of extremism which would lead to terrorism. As the literature review suggested, human technological development and advancement has led to the creation of new acute hazards (Beck 1992, 20), often of low probability and high impact (Ekberg 2007). The conceptualising and management of risk produces a form of governance which is inherently reactive and reflexive, as it seeks to turn incalculable hazards into supposedly more calculable 'risks' (Elliot 2002, 295; Beck 1997, 30). However, Prevent and Project Champion both to some extent show how strategies and technologies of risk management can end up creating new risks – in this case by losing community trust and contributing to identity conflicts by stigmatising and targeting some groups over others. Beck (2002) himself has noted that the angst inherent in world 'risk society' allows for 'othering to take place.

Some of the techniques of community-management and social control evident in this case study can be critiqued using theories of risk, governmentality and neo-liberalism, all three of which are elements of the modern advanced liberal democracies (Dean 1999; Miller and Rose 2008). From a distance one might suggest that Project Champion's surveillance scheme lends itself to a Foucauldian critique emphasising the disciplinary nature of surveillance technology. Although the treatise contained in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1975) offers an insight into panoptic society it is not as relevant for this case study for two reasons. Firstly, Disciplinary society relies upon subjects being aware that they are being watched; the visibility of surveillance architecture is crucial to make subjects and citizens discipline themselves. This point is emphasised by Yar (2003, 262) in his discussion piece on the relevance of disciplinary discourses in analyses of CCTV infrastructure. Yar however does suggest that being 'aware' of surveillance infrastructure can be interpreted in a number of ways and that awareness does not equate necessarily to outright visibility (ibid, 263). The second problem with the analysis is that it has a relatively linear view of power relations between a

powerful object of state-power and helpless subjects, which does not reflect contemporary surveillance systems or Project Champion. Yar argues a slightly different point along similar lines, that Foucault's disciplinary vision paints the State as the object of surveillance as being necessarily malevolent (ibid, 264).

Instead in the advanced liberal state, complex governance structures demonstrate that power resides and is distributed among multiple actors, and it is by examining the nature of the relationships between those actors that one can seek to understand real policy impact. This sort of analysis lends itself towards a conception of post-disciplinary power techniques – as Rose summarises,

A whole range of new “technologies of freedom” have been invented that seek to govern „at a distance“...Hence, as far as organisations are concerned, privatisation, marketisation, consumerisation have been accompanied by the increased use of techniques of accountability such as centrally set but locally managed budgets, and the practices of evaluation and auditing.

(Rose 2000, 324)

It is important to note that this analysis ties in directly with the ideas of the death of the ‘social’ and the new territories of government being created, as was discussed in the previous section (8.2). We can apply some of these ideas to analyse the governance of Muslims as part of security policy in Birmingham by reflecting upon the governance structures of both Project Champion and the Prevent Programme (Figure 22).

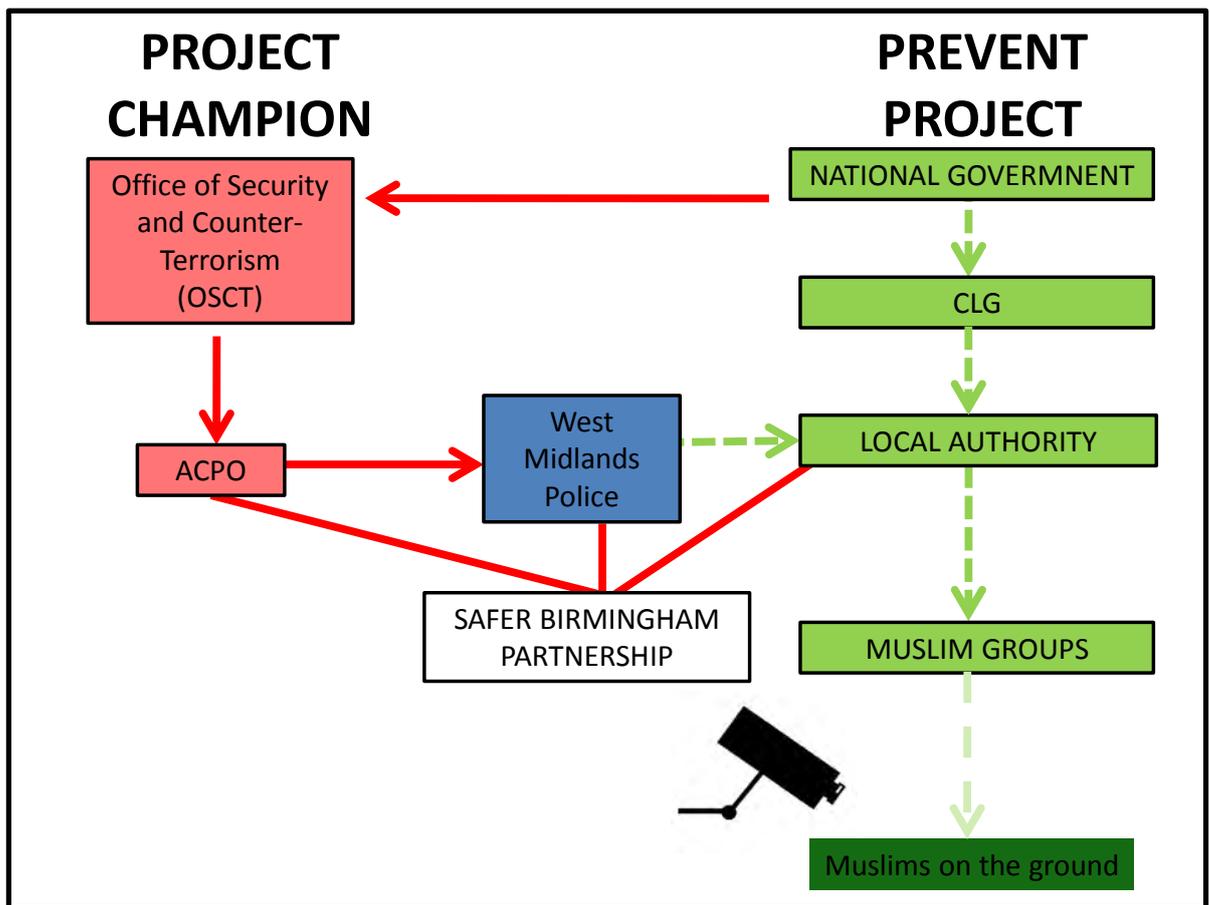


Figure 22: A representation of the governance structures of both Project Champion and Prevent Programme

The Prevent programme was relatively linear in the way it was rolled out (indicated by the green lines and boxes). Policy including funding flowed from national government to the local authority via the CLG department which assumed oversight of the policy. In theory, the distribution of the policy would not impede its consistency in aims and objectives as it reaches Muslims on the ground. But as Chapter 6 demonstrated, between each level of governance was a disconnect. This was particularly evident in the fact that local authorities were not necessarily supportive of the Prevent programme’s agenda or sure of how policy could be translated into workable programmes on the ground. Furthermore as the policy reached Muslim organisations who would be delivery-agents for Prevent, they encountered a resistance of sorts to the stigmatisation effect the policy might have had on Muslim communities. Their eventual engagement was not necessarily to meet the goals set by the local authority, CLG or national government, but often to provide a level of social benefit to its

Muslim participants in the guise of counter-terror policy. The Prevent programme purported to be inclusive and the involvement of Muslim practitioners and community members was trumpeted as a key part of the process. As Figure 22 demonstrates, Project Champion (whose governance structure is indicated by the red lines), a surveillance scheme which was deliberately covert in nature was being implemented at the very same time. Project Champion derives from an Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism funding scheme, part of which is given to the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) which in turn runs the Terrorism and Allied Matters fund. It is from this stream that the Safer Birmingham Partnerships derived its funding. The Safer Birmingham Partnership itself is a quango, consisting of representatives from the West Midlands Police and City Council. But even before Project Champion could become active, a private security firm (the Olive Group) had to design the surveillance architecture, chooses the precise location of the cameras and establish equipment and networks to collect the corresponding data. Muslim groups and even democratic overseers (local councillors) were not given the full facts of the nature of the scheme.

Nikolas Rose's (2000) thesis on governmental control can be used to evaluate these two schemes. Rose's (ibid) categorises strategies of control and circuits of security as broadly being either inclusionary or exclusionary. He (ibid, 324-325) suggests that inclusive control practices or 'circuits of security' affiliate subjects into practices, meshing them into circuits that seek to regulate behaviour. On the other hand exclusionary strategies, 'circuits of insecurity', are defined by Rose as being cast out; they are dangerous classes of individuals who are beyond the pale, unable to be rehabilitated and bought back within inclusive control strategies. In part they aim to detain these incorrigible individuals preventatively (ibid; 330). With reference to this case study, we can ask whether or not the Prevent programme and Project Champion fit into these categories of control strategies.

The Prevent programme at first glance seems to be the very definition of an inclusionary control strategy; Prevent involves individuals being embedded in policy-making and delivery networks which seek to govern the way Muslim identities are understood and practiced. Similarly one might also argue that Project Champion is an inclusionary strategy as Rose's own description of inclusionary

security circuits involves a level of surveillance built into the architecture of everyday life (ibid, 327). However both these strategies seem to go beyond mundane, everyday control strategies - and once again it is the targeting of 'community' which is central to this observation. According to Rose those who are to be excluded from circuits of security are first problematised as a social group. Rose describes these as:

non-citizens, failed citizens, anti-citizens, comprised of those who are unable or unwilling to enterprize their lives or manage their own risk, incapable of exercising responsible self-government, either attached to no moral community or to a community of anti-morality.

(Rose 2000, 331).

The Prevent programme was supposed to allow authorities to identify risky individuals just as Project Champion was designed to capture data which would eventually lead to the detection of these 'anti-citizens'. Once identified, the risky group can then be subjected to risk management techniques. The Prevent programme was designed to be able to influence young Muslim men by providing resilience against extremism and if necessary, they would be integrated into the Channel programme to undergo mentoring as a therapy for de-radicalisation. Similarly Project Champion would be able to track particular vehicles or convoys moving the securitised zone. Dean (1999; 167) from his work may define these actions as demarking the 'targeted populations' from the larger body of 'active citizens' who are capable of self-governing, without the need for these specific security structures.

Another element emphasised in governmentality critiques of risk-based governance is the reflexive nature of such governance structures. Although Beck's reflections on risk society tended towards examples of technological policy, his assertions about reflexivity of such policies can be extended to the social and security policy arenas. This reflexivity hinges on the notion that risks can be rationally calculated, and these calculations in turn depend upon the use of experts to give accurate assessments of those risks (Beck 1992, 54-57). The expertise in Prevent included those individuals consulting local authorities on how to spend their Prevent funding effectively as well as those administering the de-radicalisation programmes within the interventionist Channel project. The

expertise available to Project Champion came in the form of the Olive Group and ACPO calculating risk and subsequently deciding which spatial boundaries required the gaze of CCTV and ANPR cameras.

Beck's notion of reflexive governance is that it 'steers' in such a fashion as to effect and sometimes even undermine the governing actor itself (Voß and Kemp 2006, 4-5). Reflexivity within the governance system becomes evident when Project Champion becomes uncovered to the public and the response of authorities is to create a 'Reference Group' (which was also referred to as an 'Advisory Group') to help advise on the future of the scheme. As Chapter 7 described, this Reference Group consisted of opponents of the scheme and they were asked to report to the Project Board which was leading the project. Inevitably the Reference Group recommended the Board to disband the scheme but before this could be done, the West Midlands Police Authority also had to grant approval as an oversight body. As Chapter 7 demonstrated the Reference Group's demand were presented as new evidence from a previously unheard constituency. Similarly the Police Authority pressed the West Midlands Police's Chief Constable to have the body's 'expert opinion' of before the approval, as a guarantee that dismantling the scheme would not raise the risk of terrorism.

Another aspect of advanced liberalism evident in the case study is the economic neo-liberal distribution of powers and resources. Neo-liberal doctrine favours the governing of individuals over the collective, and therefore an emphasis is placed upon new territories of governance beyond the traditional centralised 'state' (Rose and Miller 2010). One of these territories is 'community' as discussed earlier, but another is that of private and 'third-sector' organisations. Neo-liberal doctrine sees private actors within a market as being more efficient, predictable and manageable in the delivery of what might otherwise be 'state provision'. This mentality of government has led to the increased use of out-sourcing of public services, and the introduction of contract-based programmes involving private actors acting within what used to be the bounds of the welfare states (Morison 2000; Clarke 2005). The case studies of Project Champion and Prevent show that this 'governmentality' has also been broadened to include the security arena. The Prevent programme

contracted individuals as consultants or within new third sector organisations and as Chapter 6 demonstrated, the relationships between the state institutions and these private and third sector institutions was one of inter-dependency. However not only were Muslim community actors becoming active citizens in terms of engagement with governance, they were also becoming active within the market, by entering into contracts with government to provide Prevent programmes (Clarke 2005, 453). In the case of Project Champion the private company represented another point of 'expertise' and were shielded from scrutiny that focussed on the state-led institutions when the Project became discovered.

A final important note on governance from this case study is to dispel the notion that complex post-disciplinary governance regimes are necessarily either more sophisticated *by design* or that they are more effective. Instead the contractual nature of relationships between public and other organisations (itself the sign of a shrinking and more reflexive state), necessitates complex, and sometimes disorganised sets of relationships. As both the Prevent agenda and Project Champion demonstrated, resulting policies are not necessarily effective in delivering their original aims. The policy-making power of the state was in both instances counter-balanced by different, sometimes oppositional forces at the local spatial scales where the policies would inevitably be implemented. But in the case of Prevent in particular, the balance of power itself resisted attempts to control the policy from any single point in the governance structure; As Fred Hirsch (1977 cited in Plant 2010, 268) might have argued, the disjointed, dispersed and neo-liberal structure without effective oversight led to the policy falling victim to a 'tyranny of small decisions'.

8.4 The Securitisation of Tainted 'Others'

The research into young Muslim men in Birmingham and the governance structures built around their presence demonstrate a severe disconnect between the actualities of identities played out of the ground and the institutional focus upon Muslim 'communities'. Chapters 6 and 7 in particular

drew out the lens of security through which Muslim identities have been viewed in the city. But does this amount to what some theorists such as Archer (2009), Caesari (2009) and Brown (2010) referred to as a securitisation of Muslim identities in Birmingham?

The literature review reflected on the use of the concept of securitisation as part of post-structural approaches in International Relations (IR) studies. Within IR, securitisation constitutes an act in which it is suggested that the state faces an existential threat, and a subject (an 'other') is identified and subjected to action in order to supposedly provide protection from the existential threat. Van Munster (2008) helped to differentiate between securitisation and risk management (Figure 23) and suggested that securitisation was a more polarised and extreme approach than the risk management approach. Embracing this definition of securitisation and using it to analyse the *tactics* of Project Champion and Prevent through is revealing. Referring to Figure 23, in the representation of the threat, firstly one must point out that within the Prevent agenda, although there are concerns about the stigmatisation of the whole Muslim 'community', the engagement of community representatives and 'leaders' with institutional officers shows that there is a continuum between personification of 'friends' and 'enemies'; between those that can and cannot be 'treated' to make them more resilient to radicalisation. Project Champion on the other hand sets up a boundary between safe and dangerous spaces, and by extension, safe and dangerous populations. Project Champion's reluctance to involve Muslim representatives including elected councillors to plan the project suggests an approach inclined towards securitisation rather than risk management.

	Securitisation	Risk Management
Representation of threat	Friend/Enemy opposition and personification of the enemy.	Friend/Enemy Continuum and impersonal correlation of factors liable to produce risk.
Measures/ strategy	Exceptional measures that bypass normal political procedures; measures counteract existential threat.	Normal measures such as surveillance and risk profiling; measures contribute to the social control of large populations.
Objective	Elimination of threat; the elimination of a threat secures the collective survival of a socio-political order.	Management of risks against the background of uncertainty and contingency; risk management seeks to prevent risks from developing into existential threats.

Fig. 23: Differences Between Securitisation and Risk Management Securitisation (van Munster 2008, 8)

Similarly, the Prevent Programme's tactics veer towards risk profiling whereas Project Champion's instigators saw fit to bypass normal political procedures and legal requirements to get the scheme started. In terms of their objectives however both Prevent and Project Champion are skewed towards managing and providing contingency, rather than the securitisation approach which entails threat-elimination. If we think about the space between risk management and securitisation as continuous, the Prevent programme in its aims, practices and objectives can be construed as a risk management-based exercise. Yet Project Champion by virtue of its particularly exclusionary approach to security, went beyond risk management at times, and towards securitisation.

Going back to the definition of securitisation I would make a distinction between tactics and strategy. The tactics behind Project Champion and Prevent were varied, and in the case of the former, those tactics evolved over time between isolating Muslim 'communities' and engaging them. However the underlying strategy; of profiling and targeting a risky community for security measures was constant. The securitisation of groups of people involves a set of assumptions about who constitutes potential 'enemies' of the state. Archer (2009) described the use of these set of assumptions as a 'politics of unease'. The existential threat that is claimed to be posed by the subject of securitisation facilitates

extra-legal security action, such as Project Champion. As Ohana (2007) points out, what this leads to is a dangerous 'othering' of, in this case, Muslims in Birmingham.

Furthermore securitisation can take issues which are not related to security, and turn them into issues of security by citing that existential threat – something securitisation theorists such as Wæver and Buzan et al (1998, 26) labelled as 'Speech Acts'. This was evident in the case of the Prevent agenda in particular. Notions of a radicalisation process were cited in Chapter 6 which were used to drive forward the Prevent programme. These models claimed that general vulnerabilities would also make individuals vulnerable to being radicalised, but scant evidence was found that for these claims. Some of the resulting Prevent programmes helped young Muslims in what was essentially social-work and youth-work. But these social programmes were effectively being securitised by the rationale of de-radicalisation. A similar securitisation can be evidenced in a speech (act) by David Cameron (2011) who merged and conflated the issues of social cohesion with extremism, claiming that a lack of cohesion created the conditions for someone to be radicalised. Despite once more, having scant evidence to back up the claim, at a stroke, this speech allowed for issues of community-cohesion, ethnic relations (Meer and Modood 2009, 481-482) and immigration (see Huysmans and Buonfino 2008) to be securitised.

To conclude, within this case study we can find examples of how securitisation based on a logic of risk is helping to drive a process of othering of young Muslims in Birmingham. This process in its execution is driven by the models of community engagement derived from British multiculturalism and an evolving political landscape that sees the utilisation of 'communities' as an important territory of governance. The net result of these movements is a narrative of opposition between the dangerous, threatening elements of society on the one hand, and those that require protecting on the other. The construction of this narrative can involve serious damage to relationships between those who seek to represent Muslims and those democratic institutions which they look to for their own security. For Muslim identities, the stigma or taint is palpable to many of the young men involved in this study and this stigmatisation contributes towards the questioning of their

'Britishness' and their very legitimacy as citizens. It might be the case that Muslims in the UK can be considered in the same vein as other risk groups whose identities become a focus for instruments of state security.

The research conducted in this study suggests that 'Muslims' can be added to Nikolas Rose's list of risky groups, whose management has seen them become society's tainted citizens:

...Risk agencies focus upon the usual suspects, the poor, the welfare recipients, the petty criminals, discharged psychiatric patients, street people. The logics of risk inescapably locate the careers and identities of such tainted citizens within a regime of surveillance that constitutes them all as actually or potentially „risky“ individuals.

(Rose 2000, 333)

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Appendix

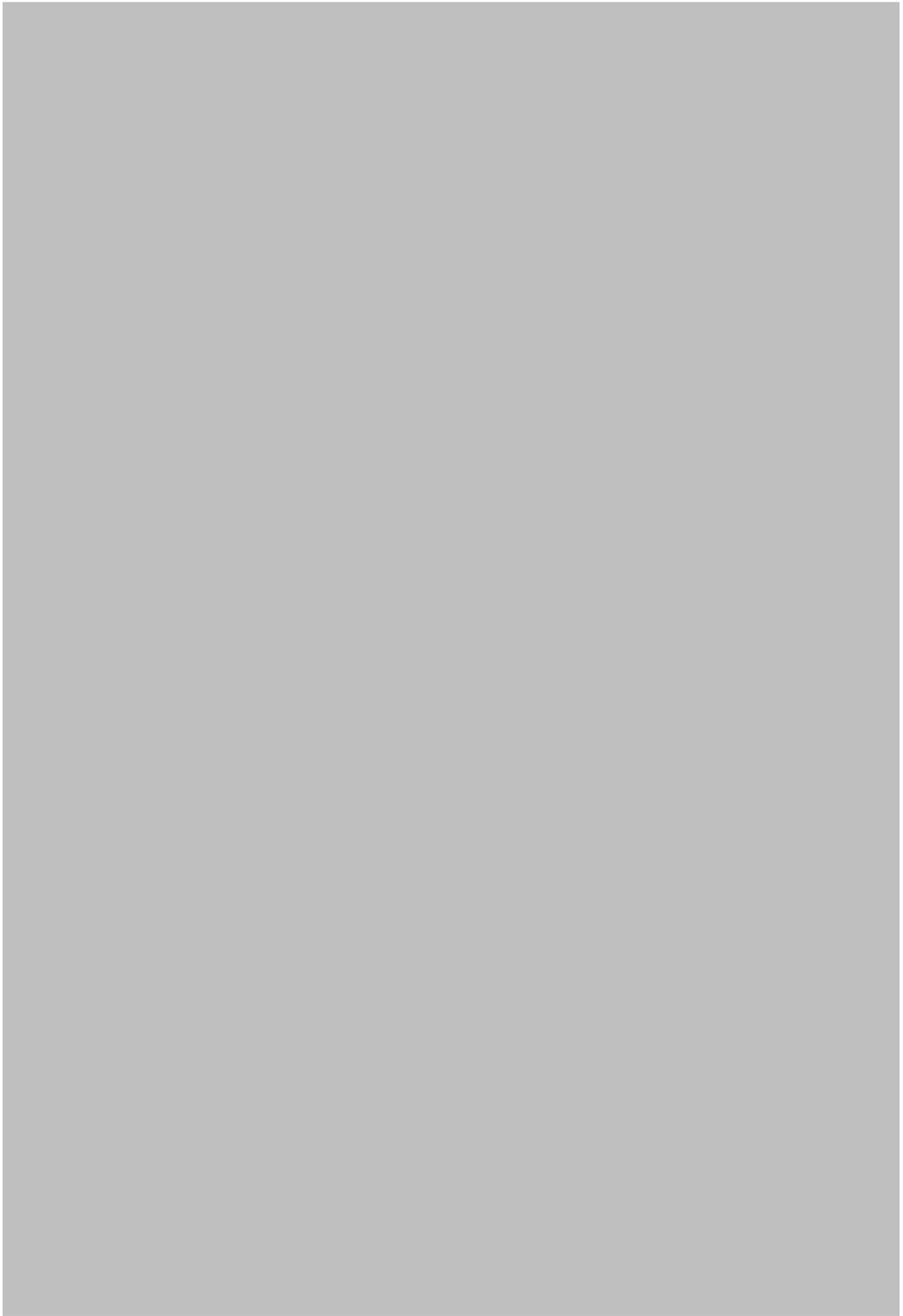
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Appendix A – Project Champion Business Case (Redacted)



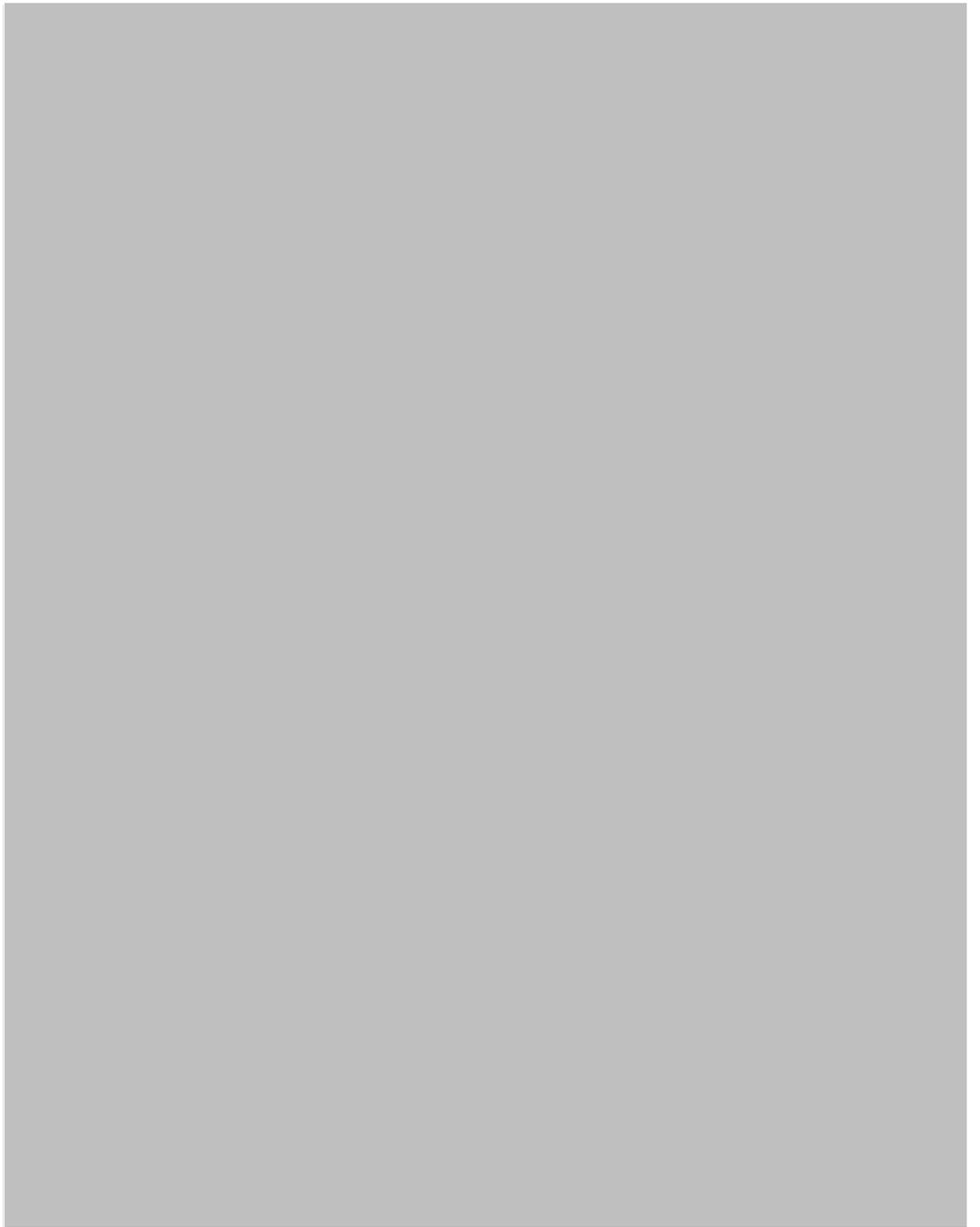




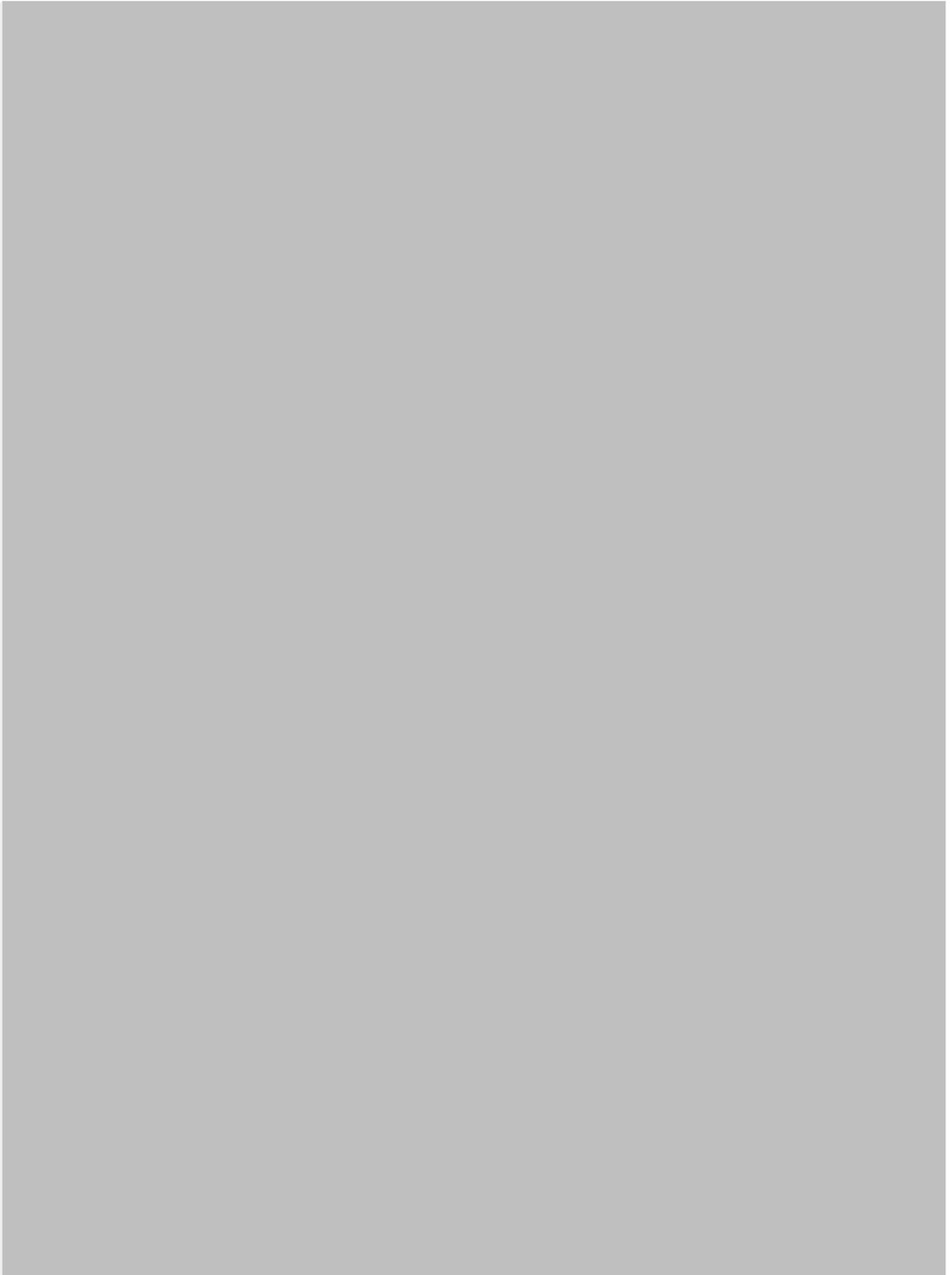








Appendix B: Project Champion Meeting, 16th June 2010 (Minutes)



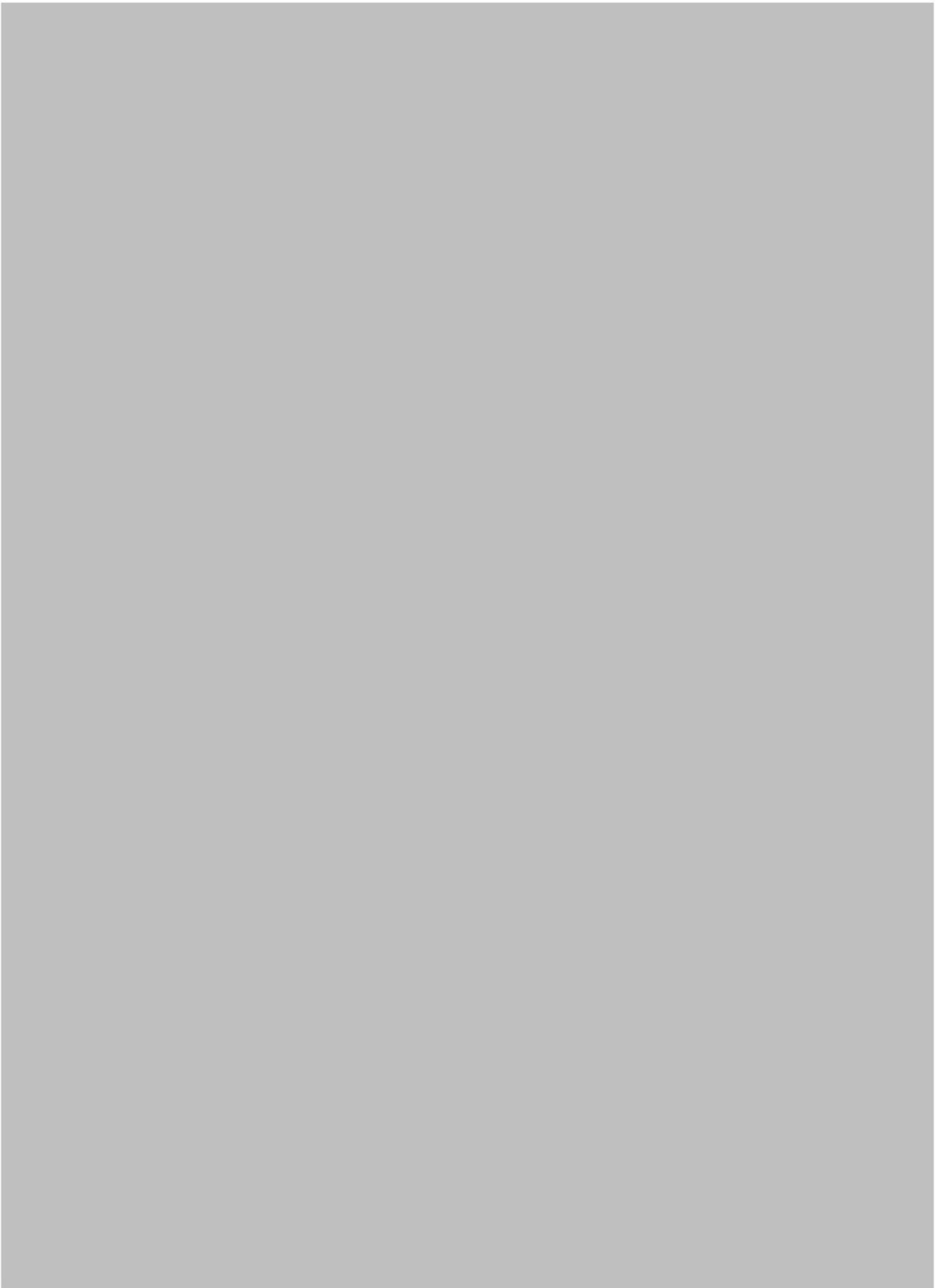
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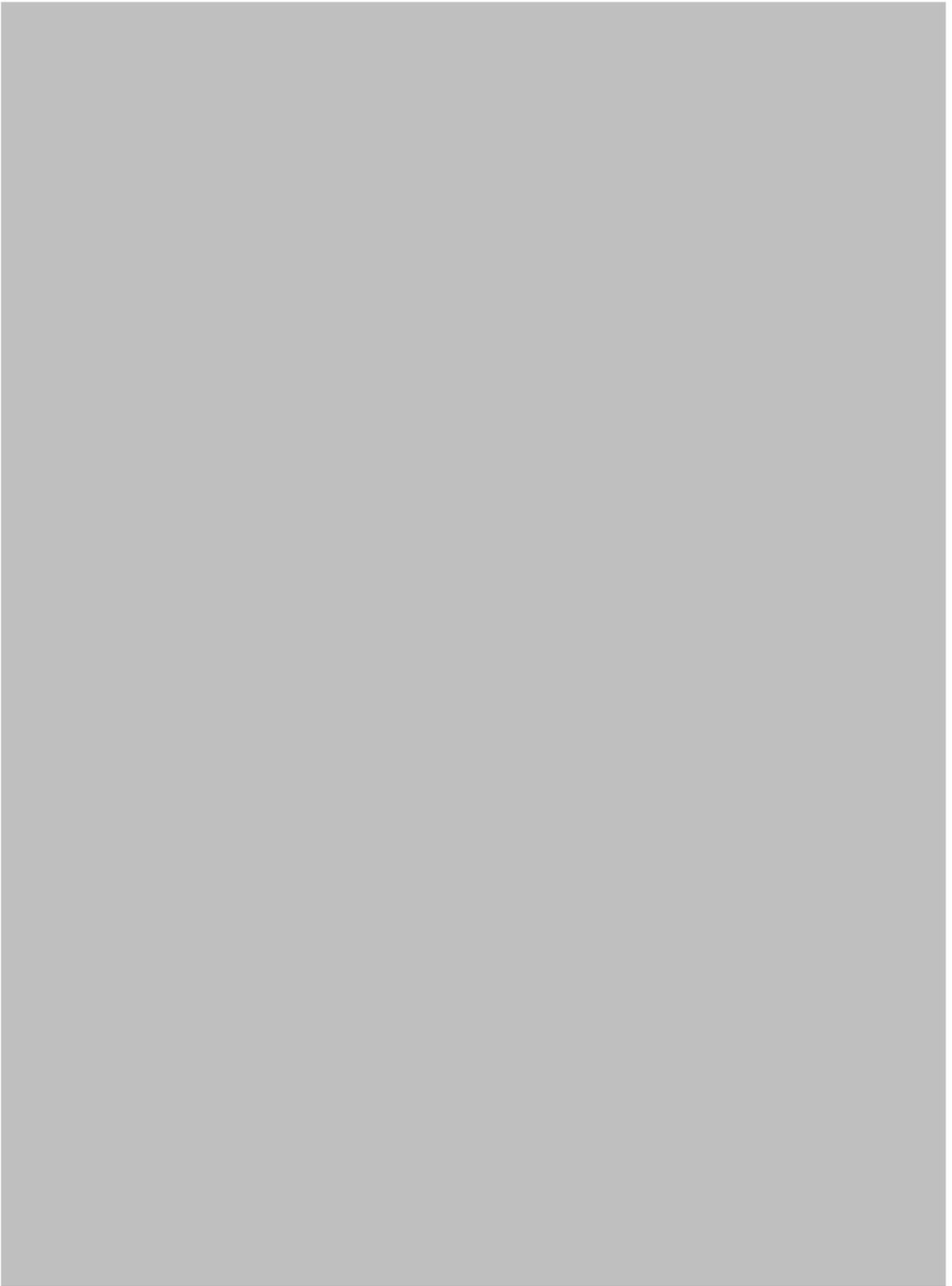


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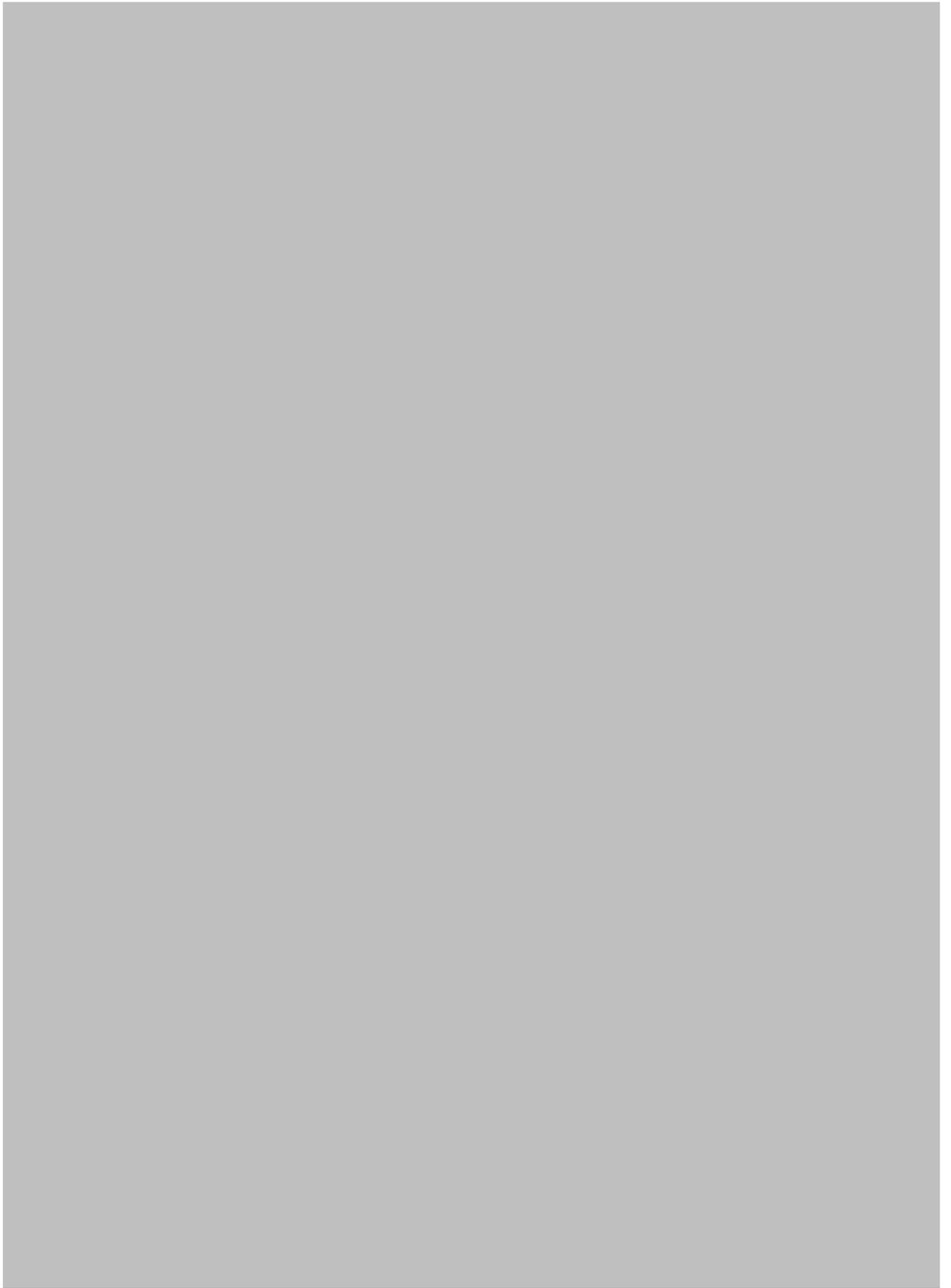


Appendix Item C – Project Champion Briefing Session 29/04/2009 (Minutes)









Appendix D: Map of Birmingham, by electoral wards



Appendix E: Interviewee Profiles for Walked Interviews

Name (Pseudonym)	Age	Residential Location	Length of residence in Birmingham	Employment at time of interview
Ahmad	26	Alum Rock	Since age of 10	Trainee Accountant
Ihtesham	29	Alum Rock	Whole life	Investment banker
Imran	25	Aston	Since the age of 3	Retail assistant
Mahmood	27	Aston	Whole Life	Doctoral Researcher
Adam	18	Balsall Heath	Whole life nr. Balsall Heath	Unemployed
Reyhan	27	Castle Vale	Whole life	Primary school teacher
Liaqat	19	Handsworth	Since age of 8	University Student
Danyal	18	Handsworth	Since age of 9	University student
Bilal	24	Handsworth Wood	Since age of 8	Part-time assistant at local mosque
Sadiq	23	Lozells	Whole life	Taxi Driver and security guard
Zaahid	22	Lozells	Whole life	Part-time youth worker
Abuzar	21	Lozells	Whole life	Unemployed
Azim	20	Lozells	Whole life	Delivery driver for take-away
Naheed	30	Perry Barr	Whole life nr. Perry Barr	Community Worker
Osman	24	Small Heath	Whole life	Unemployed
Anwar	20	Small Heath	Whole life	College Student
Ilyas	19	Small Heath	Whole life	Unemployed
Mohammed	19	Sparkbrook	Since the age of 10	Unemployed
Samir	25	Sparkhill	Whole life	Insurance broker
Ibrahim	19	Yardley Wood	Since age of 13	Student at FE College

Appendix F: Topic Guide for Walked Interviews

Note: the following is a loose guide to the questions asked during interviews. The four general topic areas were covered in all interviews but the interviewee's responses would usually shape, not only the order of the questions but the very nature of the discussions that would take place during the interview.

A.) General Profile Questions

- i. General background questions – age, length of residence in neighbourhood and city
- ii. Residential history and family history
- iii. Questions on educational history and employment
- iv. Why has the respondent chosen to do the interview in the given location

B.) Question about Identity and Belonging

- i. Question around which places the respondent feels they belong within
- ii. Specific questions about identity and attachment at neighbourhood, city, and national level – and the reasons they may feel attachment to those places and spaces
- iii. Question around community – whether the respondent feels he belongs to one and how he would define that community

C.) Everyday Life and Space

- i. Respondent is asked to describe their typical daily routines, and the spaces in the city they use or move through.
- ii. Respondent asked about which spaces facilitate everyday life

D.) Muslim Identity

- i. Question around the significance of respondent's faith to their lives and their identity
- ii. Question around how faith might influence their feelings of community and belonging
- iii. A question about whether or not the respondent felt any conflict between 'Britishness' and their Muslim identity.