Integration of Muslims in Great Britain

Michaela Helanová

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně

Fakulta humanitních studií

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ABSTRAKT

Práce se zabývá integrací Muslimů v multikulturní a multietnické Británii. První část je zaměřena na měnící se přístup britské vlády k muslimské imigraci. Část práce se zabývá změnami v identitách Muslimů, zejména však druhé generace, jenž se přizpůsobuje standardům chování západní společnosti, avšak stále si zanechává svou náboženskou identitu. Podstatná část práce je věnována elementům, jež komplikují již tak složitý proces Muslimské integrace, a to zejména společensko-ekonomickým podmínkám Muslimů a náboženské diskriminaci.

Klíčová slova: Muslimové, Velká Británie, integrace, multikulturalismus, společnost, etnické komunity, imigrace, identita, náboženství, společensko-ekonomické podmínky.

ABSTRACT

The thesis discusses the integration of Muslims in multicultural and multiethnic Great Britain. First part focuses on changes in British government's attitude towards Muslim immigration. A part of the thesis deals with different Muslim identities, particularly of second generation that are adapting to standard way of western society behavior however, at the same time remain loyal to their religion identity. A substantial part is devoted to the elements that complicate difficult process of Muslim integration, particularly socio-economic conditions of Muslims and religious discrimination.

Keywords: Muslims, Great Britain, integration, multiculturalism, society, ethnic communities, immigration, identity, religion, socio-economic conditions.

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INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of the 20th century, during the time of women emancipation, women wearing trousers has aroused huge resentment among the general public. Women dressed as men symbolized a protest against conventions and were even excluded from the society. One hundred years ago, trousers represent a common way of women dressing. Notwithstanding, not only women suffered from the social prejudice. Homosexuals or black people were facing similar prejudice; however, situation has changed rapidly and it may seem that social prejudice has focused primarily on Muslim communities in the Europe and the United States.

Although it might seem that Muslims are unable to integrate into western societies, Muslims in the United Kingdom nowadays creates an integral part of this country. Nevertheless, integration of such different community requires a lot of empathy and effort. Moreover, Muslims should no longer suffer from such large misunderstanding and prejudice. Even though second and third generation of Muslims are growing up in Britain, it will take a long time until Muslim community will be wholly integrated in British society and Muslims will feel comfortable among British. Two hundred years took until black people were not perceived as slaves and homosexuals as ill. It will take even longer time until Muslim will be not perceived as a kind of threat to modern westernized society. Successful Muslim integration is even more complicated, as terrorist attacks and global events such as war in Afghanistan do not simplify this process.

The aim of this thesis is not to decide or judge whether or how much are Muslims integrated in the United Kingdom. The thesis deals with changing government attitudes towards Muslims, describes Muslim identities and difficulties which Muslims still have to face, namely socio-economic conditions and religious discrimination, and outlines steps to enhance and support the process of Muslim integration.

1   MUSLIMS IN WESTERN STATES

Although that the European continent was gradually colonized for centuries, no immigration has caught such public attention as the Muslim one. Recent debates about Muslims in Europe have concentrated solely on Islam and the consequences of this rapidly growing religion.

France, Germany and the United Kingdom are west European countries with the highest number of Muslim communities. These countries characterized by long tumultuous history with firmly footed Christian background became a new home for nearly 11 of 17 million Muslims in the Western Europe, thought recently there exist no accurate numbers of Muslim population in western countries.[1]

The relationship between Christian Western states and the Muslim world existed for centuries, as the Crusades or Colonialism confirmed. However, the massive wave of Muslim immigrants to Europe came in the late 1950's and during 1960's when the huge lack of workforce threatened this continent. The intention of these first Muslims was to earn money and return home; however, most of them remained in these countries for all their lives. The Turks in Germany, the North Africans in France and particularly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the United Kingdom now constitute the substantial part of society of these western countries.[2]

In spite of similar experiences with Muslims immigration, the attitudes towards Muslims in each western country slightly differ. In 2010, Germany witnessed tumultuous debate over immigration, particularly Muslims one. Yet these were criticized for their unwillingness to adopt the German's way of life, speech and they were even accused "of lowering the intelligence of German society." Furthermore, representatives of Germany government agreed on the failure of Multiculturalism in the country. Similar debates over the failure of multiculturalism are visible also in France or the UK. French attitude towards

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[1] The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, "Muslim Networks and Movements in Western Europe", Pew Research Center, http://features.pewforum.org/muslim/number-of-muslims-in-western-europe.html (accessed May 13, 2011).

[2] The Economist, "Dim drums throbbing in the hills half heard," *The Economist*, August 8,2002 http://www.economist.com/node/1270416?story_id=1270416#abroad_at_home,_by_satellite (accessed February 22, 2011).

Muslims can be partially described in the terms of the passionate debate over wearing niqab, which is nowadays prohibited.[3]

It is obvious, as the recent events indicate that even Muslims nowadays constitute inseparable part of western society their successful integration remains as the big question-mark over the whole continent. The discussion over Muslims in Europe sometimes seems to be more concerned about the failures of this relationship rather than by endeavor to improve this situation.

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[3] Matthew Weaver, "Angela Merkel: German multiculturalism has 'utterly failed'," *Guardian,* October 17, 2010, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/oct/17/angela-merkel-german-multiculturalism-failed (accessed May 13, 2011); Ibid.

2 HISTORY OF MUSLIM IMMIGRATION TO GREAT BRITAIN

Before dealing with the Muslims' immigration itself it is worth to mention that the process of immigration to the United Kingdom is known as far as the country exists. The land was at first gradually colonized by the Celtic and German tribes. However, the beginning of the nineteenth century meant a break-through in the modern mass immigration to Great Britain. Given the leading economic position at that time, it is obvious that Britain attracted a huge number of immigrants primarily from economically suffering Ireland. Irish immigration was subsequently followed by the European Jewish migration. Their settlement was not driven by poor economic conditions; however, Jews were looking mainly for social security ensured by the Queen.[4]

The final and most important wave of immigration is represented by the so called New Commonwealth immigrants. "According to the *Registrar General* of 1966 the term 'New Commonwealth immigrants' embraced all those Commonwealth entrants that did not hail from the 'Old Commonwealth' countries of Canada, Australia and New Zealand." High numbers of these immigrants were represented by Muslims; they were poor, uneducated and mostly unskilled; the typical features of New Commonwealth immigrants. More about this topic will be discussed in the following chapter.[5]

Although the tumultuous discussion about Muslims immigration has come into existence mostly in the recent times, it is worth to pointed out that this phenomenon is known not only for the last few decades but lasted for several centuries. Given the 'age of empire', various political and social contacts were established between Britain and the territories where the most of population were Muslims. First Muslim inhabitants were particularly seamen and those settled mainly in port-cities such as Liverpool. First Muslim communities provided a background for the later post-war immigration. The cooperative relation between Muslims and British took place in the time when no discussion about Muslims, as something strange and even dangerous, appeared. This negative view has risen along with the Muslim mass immigration during the post-war period followed by the immigration restriction policies and nowadays in a large extent nourished by the media.[6]

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[4] Christiana Julios, *Contemporary British Identity: British Language, Migrants and Public Discourse* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 80.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale, *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 4.

Muslims in Britain started to attract attention after the 2nd World War, when masses of immigrants from various countries of Commonwealth were looking for job opportunities in the United Kingdom. "This process is perhaps best characterized in terms of the 'pull' factors which attracted Muslims to Britain, and the 'push' factors which forced them to leave their countries of origin." At the time after the 2nd World War, huge changes in economic and social sector took place in the United Kingdom. Given the economic rise of Britain, most indigenous workers hold a highly qualified position and due to this fact there was an entire lack of unskilled workers to do manual or shift work. On the other hand situation in the South Asian subcontinent, from where most Muslims come from, was disconsolate. High unemployment, poor living conditions and bad education are some of the so called 'push' factors which forced Muslims to find better live in Britain.[7]

Furthermore, the colonial links between Britain and territories mostly inhabited by Muslims served as a bridge and allowed Muslims free access to the United Kingdom. However, this situation dramatically changed with the implementation of the *Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962*. Since that, complicated times have started not only for Muslims in Britain but also for British government, who were obliged to handle with on-coming difficult situation.

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[7] Muhammad Anwar, "Muslims in Western States: The British Experience and the Way Forward," Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, Vol. 28, No. 1 (April 2008) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=105&sid=2675947b-087e-4d57-9bb5-33cc90382397%40sessionmgr112 (accessed October 14, 2010), 129; Ibid.

3   ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRATION

When thinking about The United Kingdom, different people might have various associations. One might think about distinguee gentlemen with a cup of tea in sophisticated conversation, other may mention bad English weather and somebody else might insist that without monarchy and the Queen the United Kingdom would not exist. Although the perception of the United Kingdom may differentiate, few typical features of this country appear. Firstly, it is already mentioned the Queen and monarchy as the most important symbols of the United Kingdom. Secondly, a long tumultuous history along with the Church of England creates the second column of British uniqueness. And thirdly, the position of British Isles separated from the European continent give impression of exceptionality of this country. This separateness forces the United Kingdom to be a good example for the rest of Europe. Not once happened that Europeans turned for the advice to the United Kingdom or European continent was waiting for the British standpoint.

It is obvious from the characteristics above that the waves of immigrants with different identities and behavior brought clouds to the United Kingdom and caused endless debates in British government. The question how to preserve English *status quo* along with the Christian background but at the same time remain tolerant to various immigrants has been main topic of British government agenda for nearly one century. Furthermore, eyes of all Europe turned to British Isles for answers how to deal with the immigrants.

The government attitudes towards various groups of immigrants changed during the time. The discussion started with the question of British citizenship, which was accompanied by various legal acts. The second period of dealing with immigrants is characterized by innumerable amount of education acts. The British Government was convinced that education is a key to better lives of both indigenous and newcomers. However, the third period of British attitude towards immigrants means step back in the successful assimilation of all minorities. On the ground of various conflicts of global and local significance, Britain have changed their attitude toward ethnic minorities and British are coming back to preserve and stress their status quo.

When dealing with the government machinery against immigration, it is important to mention that in the very beginning of the 20th century there was no legislation concerning the immigration. The British government was practically unprepared for the on-coming situation. They did not know how to act correctly, on the one hand there was the role of the United Kingdom as a Mother Country where all people from Commonwealth are

welcomed. On the other hand, there was a perpetual fear of the immigrants and their differentness. As Pellew has put it, "politically, it has nearly always been an emotive issue, where liberal ideals of welcoming strangers have conflicted with a variety of fears about letting them in unrestricted."[8]

Situation has slightly changed when the first modern piece of legislation to regulate immigration into Britain, the *Aliens Act 1905,* was passed. This legislation was concerned mainly with the Jews and Gipsy's immigrants and their restriction. Although these immigrants caused various difficulties, still, they were white and mainly European. They shared same background and similar religion, and so there was not so huge gap as in the case of the New Commonwealth immigrants.[9]

3.1   Laissez-faire; the discourse of preserving English status quo

As it was already mentioned, the post-war Britain suffered from a considerable lack of workforce. Despite this fact, British preferred mainly white immigrants and workers from Europe than non-white New Commonwealth immigrants. The post-war period in Britain is filled with the discussion over citizenship. As Hansen writes, "The story of post-war migration to Britain is 'the story of citizenship'; and the latter was officially defined for the first time by the *British Nationality Act 1948*." This legal act clearly acknowledged the links between Britain as the Mother Country and the members of Commonwealth. On the basis of this legislation every person, who is citizen of any Commonwealth country, have a right to own a status of British citizenship. However, this situation has changed with the growing number of immigrants to the United Kingdom. The huge wave of mostly Muslims immigrants from India and Pakistan in the late 1950s drawn public attention and signified an important shift in British perception of immigration. British had realized that the New Commonwealth immigration "would affect not only the demographic and social landscape of the country but their presence would furthermore affect public perceptions of national identity and citizenship."[10]

Those New Commonwealth immigrants who settled down in the United Kingdom were forced to behave and subsequently become British. According to the already

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[8] Julios, "*Contemporary British Identity*", 81-82.
[9] Ibid. 82.
[10] Ibid, 84-87.

mentioned *British Nationality Act 1948,* "as part of an alien's qualifying criteria for British citizenship, the Act already listed among others, their being 'of good character' and having 'sufficient knowledge of the English language'." In this period of familiarizing with the New Commonwealth immigrants, these aliens were forced to forget where they came from, their culture or religion. They were intensely pushed to become potential British and this process of assimilation was the way how to preserve British status quo.[11]

3.2   The Discourse of Multiculturalism

It was obvious that with the growing number of the New Commonwealth immigrants coming to Britain, there will appear a public discontent and various anti-immigration campaigns. During the 1950s, very little was known about these immigrants and their living conditions. For the reasons of the British behavior towards newcomers and the lack of language, these had closed up and lived in ghettoes in unsuitable conditions. These newcomers began to change the face of Britain and these changes along with their separateness had invoked fear in British minds.

Fear had changed to hostility, when the Conservative government's strongly supported *Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962* was passed. This act was a result of anti-immigration campaign led by Enoch Powell, Conservative Shadow Defence Spokesman, and was created to complicate and disallow immigrant's access to the Mother Country. Powel's campaign was largely aided by the media which created the image of migrants as "a problem, a threat, a category of unprincipled scroungers and muggers, and an object of reasonable fear, hatred and even violence." This anti-immigration campaign was denoted to be racial and ethnic discrimination.[12]

Muslims represented the most disadvantaged community at that time. They constituted the biggest ethnic community in the United Kingdom with the vast number of migrants coming every year to Britain. They were non-white, with utterly different way of life, speech, traditions or customs. Their situation in Britain might be described by Powell's words, that "'Pakis' should be shipped 'back home'." The unflattering term 'Pakis' was

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[11] Julios, "*Contemporary British Identity*", 87.
[12] Ibid., 92-94

used to mark Pakistanis who made a large part of Muslim population in the United Kingdom.[13]

The period of 1960s to 1980s is characteristics on the one hand for government machinery against migrants and the question of British citizenship. One the other hand, many anti-discrimination acts were passed to prevent from racial or ethnic discrimination. However, the way towards multiculturalisms in the United Kingdom assumed shape with the enactment of the *Race Relations Act 1976*. For the first time, the terms direct and indirect discrimination appeared. Along with the government's effort to improve immigrant's situation and position in Britain, various researches concerning immigrant's way of live and conditions of living had taken place. These researches have uncovered the prevailing hostility against non-white immigrants, racial tensions and migrants segregation as a reply to this behavior.[14]

Government has realized that radical change is needed and improvement came with the various education acts. Education was seen as a solution of problems, such as segregation or public misunderstanding. Education and schools should have mediated the extensive change in understanding migrants and ethnic minorities. Thought that knowledge of English language would improve the relationship between indigenous people and newcomers, the large emphasis was placed on education. However, as following years shown, it was necessary not only understood English language but also British way of life vice versa. It is obvious; more will British know about ethnic minorities, more will understand their behavior and the gap between them will reduce.

As the riots had taken place in various places in the United Kingdom during the 1980s, the government was more concerned about the ethnic and racial discrimination and the disadvantage which minorities had to suffer. The solution of these problems was seen particularly in education. As Prime Minister Tony Blair stated in his speech: "I said in opposition that education would be our number one priority, the passion of my government…I believe passionately in education as the key to the success of an individual and of a nation."[15]

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[13] Mustafa Malik, "Muslims Pluralize the West, Resist Assimilation." Middle East Policy, vol. 11 Issue 1 (March 2004) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&hid=104&sid=059bbb78-2005-4ef7-b216-e708aa488532%40sessionmgr113 (accessed October 17, 2010), 70; Ibid.

[14] Julios, "*Contemporary British Identity*", 98.

[15] Ibid., 108.

The aim of the multiculturalists discourse was to bring into the society an understanding between the majority and minorities, where the educational institutions and English language would play the main role. Understanding, supporting different ethnic communities and mainly complying with the different behavior and culture of minorities has been on daily agenda. However, as Cameron argues, "the doctrine of multiculturalism has undermined our nation's sense of cohesion because it emphasizes what divides us rather than what bring us together."[16]

3.3   Integration as a discourse of shared future

"A past built on difference, a future which is shared"[17]

Before dealing with the discourse of integration itself, it is worth to describe two followed terms, namely integration and cohesion. The report *Our Shared Future* from 2007 understands the term integration as "the process that ensures new residents and existing residents adapt to one another" while the cohesion is described as "principally the process that must happen in all communities to ensure different groups of people to get on well together."[18]

The characteristic feature of the multiculturalists' discourse was to respect and support different ethnic communities settled down in the UK. Although government put a lot of effort and finances to facilitate the process of assimilation of various ethnic groups, it was obvious, with the oncoming millennium that this discourse mainly in the case of Muslim communities has to change. Faced sharp critic, multiculturalism was seen as the cultural separatism fostering fragmentation rather than integration and 'Britishness'.[19]

Instead of the mutual understanding, the New Millennium has opened a period full of difficulties as the cities Oldham, Bradford and Burnley witnessed riots between British and

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[16] Julios, *"Contemporary British Identity"*, 150-151.
[17] Commission on Integration and Cohesion, "Our shared Future, 2007," http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Education/documents/2007/06/14/oursharedfuture.pdf (accessed March 1, 2011), 3.
[18] Ibid., 38.
[19] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale, *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 195.

Muslim youth. "These three multi-ethnic localities have thus come to epitomize what are seen to be the failings of multiculturalism in the public imaginary." Living in inner-city areas with high rate of unemployment and educational underachievement signed separateness rather than cooperativeness. Furthermore, terrorist attacks on World Trade Center in September 2001 followed by London bombing four years later have aroused huge resentment and confirmed failure of multiculturalism. The world's attention has focused on British Muslims when the further investigation marked the UK' Muslims as a main culprits of the terrorist attacks in the New York City. In addition, London attacks were said to be committed by the UK-born radical Muslims growing up in the multiculturalists' environment.[20]

These events altogether with unceasing growing number of approved asylum applications, particularly for Muslims, forced British to leave behind the discourse of multiculturalism and come back to the awareness of their status quo. This U-turn back to common British values was conspicuous even in the government. Prime Minister Tony Blair in December 2006 stated in his speech:

> "When it comes to our essential values – belief in democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, equal treatment of all, respect for this country and its shared heritage – then that is where we come together, it is what we hold in common; it is what gives us the right to call ourselves British. At that point, no distinctive culture or religion supersedes our duty to be part of an integrated United Kingdom (Blair 2006)."[21]

Recently, Blair's words were used by his follower David Cameron when talking about multiculturalism as a failure. Cameron in his speech about radicalization and Islamic extremism has emphasized British identity and pointed out that "a genuinely liberal country believes in certain values and actively promotes them… Freedom of speech. Freedom of worship. Democracy. The rule of law. Equal rights, regardless of race, sex or sexuality. This is what defines us as a society. To belong here is to believe these things." It seems that the discussion over ethnic communities in the UK has limited to the debates

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[20] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale, *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 25.

[21] Julios, "*Contemporary British Identity*", 161.

around national identity, shared values and Islamic extremism as a counterpart of these features. And Muslim communities are in the spotlight of these discussions.[22]

However, it is worth to mention that the process of Muslim immigration still continues through the asylum applicants. As "the UK has a proud tradition of providing a place of safety for genuine refugees", hundreds of them are coming every year to Britain to find new safety home without persecution, war or natural disasters. After five years of permanent residence in the UK, these can apply for a status of British citizenship. Nevertheless, according to *Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002*, the following prerequisites are required to meet: "firstly, 'sufficient knowledge of a language for the purpose of naturalization'; secondly, 'sufficient knowledge of life in the United Kingdom'; and thirdly taking up a Citizenship Oath and a Pledge at a civil ceremony."[23]

3.3.1   Are shared values enough for the Muslim integration?

It is important to points out that although the UK have quite problematic attitude towards Muslims, due to the increasing Islamic extremism and other factors, other communities such as Jews or Irish are integrating successfully into the British society. Due to the fact that the United Kingdom in the last century passed through radical changes, the white Anglo-Saxon model as the only existing model in the UK is not more valid. The United Kingdom is a country and living organism with various ethnic minorities and cultures, with their customs, religion and food. Instead of traditional roast beef, more often Chinese noodles or Chicken tikka appear as a typical British 'tea'.

Nobody is nowadays disenchanted with wearing the Jewish's yarmulke or celebrating Saint Patrick's Day. It is obvious that these communities were successfully integrated into the British mainstream due to the fact that in the time of their immigration into the UK they have already shared some of the common or similar values and behavior. These immigrants have partially originated from the same European background, share similar rule of law, and understand the human equal rights. As Mustafa Malik pointed out, "For over time, the offspring of European Catholic and Jewish immigrants have largely assimilated into host-country, Muslims are unlikely to do so."[24]

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[22] Laura Kuenssberg, "State Multiculturalism has failed, says David Cameron," *BBC.co.uk*, February 5, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-12371994 (accessed February 9, 2011).

[23] Homme Office, UK Border Agency, "Asylum," http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/asylum/# (accessed March 28, 2011); Julios, *"Contemporary British Identity,"* 121.

[24] Mustafa Malik, "Muslims Pluralize the West, Resist Assimilation.", 74.

Are Muslims able to wholly integrate wholly into the British mainstream? Why are British Muslims sometimes seen by the government and general public as partially incompatible with the British society, their culture and values? Firstly, the most visible factors of Muslims inability to wholly integrate are the rising terrorist's atrocities and the UK-born extremists. The Islamophobia is nowadays very often inflected term and this fear of Islam seems to continue. Secondly, the housing segregation, community ghettoes and parallel lives are the by-products of multiculturalism. This situation is most visible in northern cities such as Oldham, Bradford or Blackburn, where the urban riots in 2001 took place. Thirdly, media are playing one of the key roles in supporting the anti-Muslim sentiment. With their shouting headlines about terrorism, extremism and radicalism, the general public is learned mainly about the negative side of Muslim's communities.

Other phenomenon obstructing to the successful integration is the socio-economic status of Muslims communities. Due to the lack of English knowledge and poor education, Muslims are nowadays minority with the highest rate of unemployment. Unemployed Muslims youths with no expectation for better future are more predisposed to seek help in extremism or radicalism. Furthermore, British government seems to be more confused about the question of Muslims integration than ever before.

4 MUSLIM POPULATION AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

Before the Census 2001, there was no exact information about the number of Muslim population in the UK. The question about religion used for the first time in 2001 British Census revealed not only the number of Muslim population but also showed the situation over unemployment, housing conditions, education and many more. The total number of Muslims living in 2001 in the United Kingdom was according to the Census 1,588,890, confirming Muslims to be the second largest religion group after Christian in the UK. Half of the Muslims nowadays living in the UK are British born and most of them own British citizenship.

According to the Census, Muslims represent the youngest and fastest growing ethnic group in the UK and as the only religious group; the number of men population is higher than of women. Although there is no evidence about Muslims emigration to the country of their origin, it is obvious, as the growing tendency of the number of citizenship acquisition indicates that Muslims will stay in the UK for longer time. Given the high rate of childbirth and growing number of asylum applications, the number of Muslims in the UK is anticipated to double sized in 2011. The oncoming Census which takes place in March 2011 will show more.[25]

Although majority of Muslims living in the UK are of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian origin, it is important to points out, as the figure 1 illustrates that Muslims in the UK represent the most diverse minority group. "They come from different countries, belong to different ethnic groups, speak different languages and have diverse views on various current issues." Moreover, what is worth to mention, the degree of their integration to the UK varies notably. When comparing Pakistani and Turkish or Egyptian Muslims communities, the later are more likely to integrate successfully to the UK. Regrettably, most researches dealing with Muslims in the UK are nowadays concerned mainly with these three ethnic groups of Muslims and so there are no accurate data about other Muslim ethnic groups. The trend of homogenization of Muslims in the UK seems to be firmly footed and Muslims are generalized at all levels of their everyday life.[26]

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[25] Communities and Local Government, "Summary Report: Understanding Muslim Ethnic Communities, 2009," http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1203896.pdf (accessed October 14, 2010).

Figure 1: Muslim ethnic communities in Great Britain, 2001
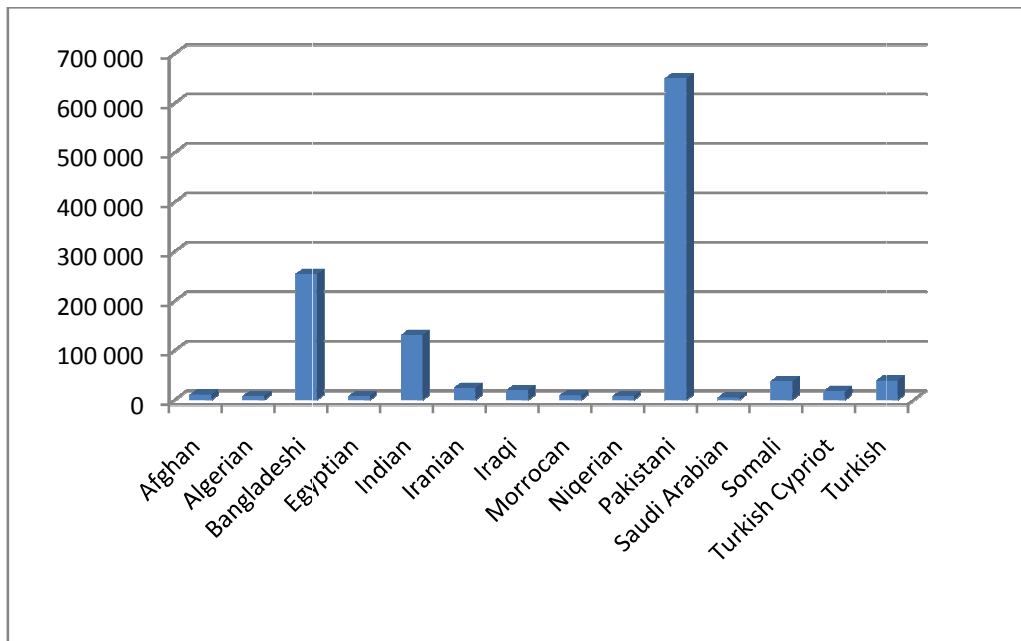
Source: Data adapted from Communities and Local Government, "Summary Report: Understanding Muslim Ethnic Communities, 2009," http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1203896.pdf (accessed October 14, 2010).

In terms of geographical distribution of Muslims in the UK, Census has revealed that majority of Muslims live in predominantly urban areas in England. As other minorities, substantial part of Muslims settled down in London. In principle, Muslim population is centred into fifteen cities all around the UK, involving the capital cities London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and port-cities firstly inhabited by Muslims during the imperial period. However, the three cities- namely London, Birmingham and Bradford-are inhabited by over half of whole Muslim population in the UK.[27]

4.1   Geographical segregation as a result of Multiculturalism?

As it would be discussed further in the next chapter, Muslims as the largest minority in the UK possess the most developed sense of unity. The role of community is even more

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[26] Muhammad Anwar, "Muslims in Western States: The British Experience and the Way Forward," Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, Vol. 28, No. 1 (April 2008) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=105&sid=2675947b-087e-4d57-9bb5-33cc90382397%40sessionmgr112 (accessed October 14, 2010), 130.

[27] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale ed., *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 7.

important as it serves as a place of safeness and supports the 'we' feeling among them. Despite of government effort to wholly integrate Muslims to the British society, the Muslims unity partially causes to perceive Muslims as a 'they' or 'others'.[28]

As it was already mentioned, majority of Muslims living in the UK comes from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh and these creates the longest established communities. It is not by chance that these Muslims, even living long time in Britain, are less integrated than the newcomers. Preserving their culture and way of life, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are unintentionally building ghettoes and walking rather to segregation than integration. The community ghettoes were largely criticised by Trevor Phillips who stated "that Britain is 'sleepwalking to segregation'." In his speech from 2005 he pointed out that these unconsciously created ghettoes are a by-product of multiculturalisms and hence should be replaced by integrationist's sharing common values.[29]

Evidence of Muslims 'ghettoization' can be find either in 1991 Census which stated that "nearly half of these [Muslims living in London] (43 percent) were resident in just one borough, Tower Hamlets" or in riots taking place in 2001 in several English northern cities. The term 'parallel society' for the first time appeared in an official report concerning the riots in Oldham, city, in which majority of Muslims are Pakistanis from one region, Mirpur. Instead of living together, parallel lives of British and Muslims are a result of the multiculturalists' effort to support differentness and uniqueness of ethnic communities. Although these disturbances caused many difficulties, it was realized that Muslim communities and generally their segregationist behaviour is caused by the discourse of multiculturalisms and by misunderstanding and the only solution to this phenomenon is to involve Muslims to the British society and try to rebuild their communities; to pull down the wall between Muslims and the rest of the society.[30]

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[28] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale ed., *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 194.

[29] Ibid, 77.

[30] Humayun Ansari, *Muslims in Britain*. (Minority Rights Group International, London 2002) http://www.mywf.org.uk/uploads/projects/borderlines/Archive/2007/muslimsinbritain.pdf (accessed October 14, 2010), 7; The Economist, "Dim drums throbbing in the hills half heard," *The Economist*, August 8,2002 http://www.economist.com/node/1270416?story_id=1270416#abroad_at_home,_by_satellite (accessed March 21, 2011).

5 BRITISH MUSLIM IDENTITIES

The concept of identity, and in particular national identity, became at the centre of public interest in the recent times. In today's globalized world is even more important for people to know who they are and where they belong. "To 'know thyself' as Socrates put it, is both a fundamental human urge and a basic question in philosophy."[31]

British identity or so called 'Britishness' characterizes the belonging of British to the United Kingdom, their loyalty to the Monarchy and the Queen. This concept of national awareness has been created for centuries and Britishness seems to be one of the strongest identities in Europe. However, as the concept of identities in individual states around the world is changing rapidly, so the United Kingdom passing through massive changes. In one of her speeches, The Queen pointed out the remarkable shift from the English uniformity to multicultural Britain which she has witnessed during her reign.[32]

5.1 Being Muslim in Great Britain

The perception of Muslims in the United Kingdom differs variously vice versa Muslims in the UK perceive themselves differently. Obviously, this perception is mainly based on experience and as the general experience of Muslims in the UK is rather complicated, due to the prevalent religious discrimination, Muslims are more susceptible and sensitive over their identity.

The discussion over the Muslim identities in the UK seems to be more complicated as Muslims are the most diverse and fragmented group of immigrants in the UK. They came from different parts of South Asian subcontinent and Africa and settled in various parts of the UK. Although the prevailing number of Muslims belongs to working class, there appear also groups of high qualified and upper-class Muslims. These Muslims know very little about the Muslims in suburb areas living in bad conditions and experiencing ethnic or religious discrimination. These rich and westernized Muslims create a mistaken image of the complete and successful integration of all Muslims in the UK.[33]

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[31] Mohammad Siddique Seddon, Dilwar Hussain and Nadeem Malik, ed., *British Muslims: Loyalty and Belonging* (Wiltshire: The Islamic Foundation, 2003), 42.

[32] Ibid., 42-43.

[33] John Rex, "The Integration of Muslim Immigrants in Britain." *Innovation in Social Sciences Research,* Vol. 5 Issue 3 (1992). http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=6&hid=104&sid=ef361e5b-9a05-423e-998c-5e2301c02ecd%40sessionmgr114&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=a9h&AN=9707172042 (accessed October 18, 2010).

The general definition of the term 'Muslim' "has been applied to those for whom Islam is considered to have some significance in the ordering of their daily lives." Due to this explanation, the prevailing factor of defining Muslims identity seems to be religion. However, as the complex of Muslims in Britain is not unified, so the Islam is not the only part of Muslim identity. Ethnicity, class, education, gender and many other factors altogether with religion constitute the complex Muslim identity. Nevertheless, religion nowadays creates significant part in shaping Muslims youth identities. Furthermore, as "the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey indicated, religion was after family the most important factor in self-description for Muslims."[34]

5.2   Young British Muslim identities

For majority of British inhabitants the need to identify themselves or searching for their own identity is not as urgent as in the case of minorities, particularly Muslims. The question over identity is even more vital for young Muslims born in the UK. Despite speaking good English, wearing modern clothes, listening western modern music, Muslim youth are still more or less facing discrimination, ethnic or religious. Due to the fact that Muslims are still sometimes seen as the 'others', they started to ask themselves who they are and where they belong if not into Britain.

It seems that some of young Muslims found answers on these questions in their religion, Islam. "The 'return' to religion is a partial resolution of an internally 'felt' paradox of both 'being' British and the externally imposed 'threat' to be British." The situation over Muslims religion identity might be described in relation to the situation of minorities in America. Several researches had shown that even the 2nd and 3rd generation of immigrants in America had fully assimilated into the mainstream, these had also returned back to the religion of their parents to search for their own identity.[35]

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[34] Humayun Ansari, *Muslims in Britain*. (Minority Rights Group International, London 2002) http://www.mywf.org.uk/uploads/projects/borderlines/Archive/2007/muslimsinbritain.pdf (accessed October 14, 2010), 12; Communities and Local Government, "Understanding Muslim Ethnic Communities, 2009," http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1203896.pdf (accessed October 14, 2010), 33.

[35] Kaye Haw, "From hijab to jilbab and the 'myth' of British identity: being Muslim in contemporary Britain a half-generation on." *Race, Ethnicity & Education,* Vol. 12 Issue 3 (September 2009), http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=8&hid=104&sid=059bbb78-2005-4ef7-b216-e708aa488532%40sessionmgr113 (accessed October 15, 2010), 374; Mustafa Malik, "Muslims Pluralize the West, Resist Assimilation.", 73.

However, in the case of Muslims, the religion identification seems to be more problematic as the general attitude to Islam became rather questionable after the terrorist attacks such as London bombing in 2007. However, the opinion of young Muslims on Islam differs considerably. As for some Muslims the return to religion values is vital, for many others religion identity is not important at all. For majority of Muslims, particularly young, are nowadays typical multiple or hybrid identities. It means that they feel to be part of British society and have already adopted the British way of life, yet they are still aware of the country of their origin, its customs and faith. This phenomenon is recognizable in all communities in Britain. As the data from 2001 Census indicate, the place of birth influence national identity notably. 91 percent of Muslims born in the UK identify themselves as British in contrast to Muslims born outside the UK. Researchers often point out that the identification and awareness of young Muslims play key role in the process of integration. Knowing who they are and where they belong and so understand themselves help young Muslims better integrate to the UK.[36]

5.2.1 Muslim boys' masculine identity

As some Muslims are using Islam and religion identity as a defence against discrimination and negative attitude, some of them regrettably use their physical power. Since the Rushdie Affair in 1989, the perception of youth Muslims men and subsequently whole Muslim community became especially in media rather problematic. It is not unusual that Muslims men are even compared to the Nazi as in the case of burning *Satanic Verses* in the streets. The 'demonization' of Muslims men increased rapidly after the terrorist attacks in New York and London.

Although the situation over racial or ethnic discrimination in the UK has improved, young Muslims still have to face verbal or physical aggression from their British schoolmates. Muslims have always been very sensitive over the religion issues and Muslim boys are not exception. The research concerning the Muslim boys' behaviour against discrimination confirmed that "the boys aligned themselves with a discourse of hegemonic masculinity that positions the only 'manly' way to engage with racism as to 'fight back'."

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[36] UK Office for National Statistics, "Country of Birth and National Identity," under "Focus on Religion,", http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=958 (accessed February 26, 2011).

Moreover, these boys were in the global context inspired by the black masculinity in America; by the ghettoes, black music and violent gangs.[37]

It is obvious that Muslim fundamentalists and culprits of the atrocities such as 9/11 have badly influenced the general perception of Muslims in the UK. However, it is important to points out that even Muslim boys are likely to be stylized to the role of strong 'masculinity' they are not going to be terrorists in the future. It is essential to separate out the group of fundamentalists and extremists and the majority of Muslims population in the UK. Muslim boys' masculinity is not the violence and aggressiveness, it is the way how to solve their everyday problems, the clue to better understand themselves and their position in British society and subsequently better integrate in the UK.

5.3   The Umma-Muslims global identity

When dealing with the Muslims identity it is worth to discuss further the term 'umma' and its implication to the general perception of Muslims. The definition of the umma, as some scholars described, is 'imagined community' which might be compared to a nation. Muslims in Britain might perceive themselves as British or Scottish, however, as the concept of the umma evokes a 'we' feeling among all Muslims communities, Muslims are aware of being part of global community. Moreover, this 'we' feeling and loyalty to Muslims global identity is by some people criticized to create impediment to successful integration to the UK.[38]

Pilgrimage to Mecca, which every Muslim is obliged to undertake at least once in life, is the visible proof of persisting concept of the umma. "With more than 2.5 million pilgrims annually, the Hajj [pilgrimage to Mecca] is now the largest and most culturally diverse assembly of humanity to gather in one place at one time." Muslims from all around the world, from different background or different class, meeting up in Mecca to reinforce their faith and meantime they are rebuilding their global identity. As pilgrims have confirmed, this occasion besides purifying them from all sins and bringing them near to Allah, is also reinforcing their feeling of being part of global identity.[39]

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[37] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale ed., *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 80.
[38] Mustafa Malik, "Muslims Pluralize the West, Resist Assimilation.", 71; Ibid.
[39] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale ed., *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 133; Ibid., 144.

However, the perception of the umma is sometimes seen by media or some politics as rather problematic on the ground of present conflict situation in the South Asia and Africa. Media and some researchers point out that due to the umma concept global events such as recent conflict in Libya have direct impact on local identities of Muslims, their shaping and political actions such as protesting in marches. However, as some British scientists pointed out, British Muslims are very often generalized; Muslims are homogenized and sometimes seen as the potential terrorists. It is important to points out, that for majority of Muslims the concept of the umma is rather more symbolic than everyday practice. In spite of being aware of this concept, the umma do not influence their daily life in the UK. The umma should not be seen as a threat or some barrier to successful integration, this concept lasts for centuries and the main aim of the global identity is to help Muslims cope with new life in the UK giving them feeling that they are not alone.[40]

5.4   Muslim women identities and experiences

The position and general perception of Muslim women seem to be rather problematic since these women are perceived to be mostly submissive and oppressed in the male-dominated minority. On the other hand, Muslim women wearing veil or headscarf are the most emblematic and visible symbols of Islam. The passionate debates about wearing veil ended up in France by banning their wearing at school and recently wearing hijab is prohibited in all public places in France. Although wearing 'hijab' in British schools is allowed, negative attitudes towards these traditional clothes are not rare. As Labour MP Jack Straw in 2006 pointed out, talking with Muslims women covered by headscarf is unpleasant and wearing veil instigates Muslims separateness rather than integration. Hijab is by many people perceived as a "physical barrier to integration." According to Herbert, "the 'veil' is now a mark of separation, segregation and defiance against mainstream British culture."[41]

Community, family and children epitomize the most important aspects of Muslim lives. Women are in the centre of Muslim community and their role is to transfer cultural and religions values and care about children and husband. Although many Muslim women are identifying with this role, living in the community separated from the world outside,

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[40] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale ed., *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 182.

[41] Ibid., 95; Kaye Haw, "From hijab to jilbab and the 'myth' of British identity: being Muslim in contemporary Britain a half-generation on." *Race, Ethnicity & Education,* Vol. 12 Issue 3 (September 2009), http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=8&hid=104&sid=059bbb78-2005-4ef7-b216-e708aa488532%40sessionmgr113 (accessed October 15, 2010), 366.

mostly unemployed and so wholly depended on their husbands; some of young Muslim women have chosen different way of life. Although the general tendency of Muslim women is to get married as soon as possible and settle down with husband and his parents, there is rising number of young women who stand up to this image.

As some researches point out, there is rising number of girls who are participating in higher education, and even study at university in contrast to Muslim boys as their achieved educational level is rather low. Although for these women family remains important, education enable them to become more self-confident and independent and creates their new identity. As Dwyer in his study points out, "educational success was a vehicle by which young Pakistani Muslim women could win respect and approbation from their parents, particularly their fathers." This new identity of educated Muslim women unconsciously serves as another way of Muslim integration to the United Kingdom.[42]

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[42] Peter Hopkins and Richard Gale ed., *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 69; Ibid., 62.

6 MUSLIM YOUTH AND INTERGENERATIONAL ISSUES

As it was already mentioned, Muslim population in the UK represents the youngest minority with one third of Muslims less than 16 years of age. Generally, young people from all over the world are more sensitive and more confused about their identity, likely to incline to some groups or movements, and in fact they often remonstrate against everything and everybody. Muslim youth are no exception, more to the contrary their position among British youth majority is even more complicated. Muslim youth are sometimes criticized "for becoming either 'too westernized' or alternatively 'too religious'." Although they are born in the UK, it is not by chance that some of Muslim youth incline to extremism or aggressiveness, as in the case of 2005 riots, or they demonstrate against prevailing situation through music remarkably similar to typical black music.[43]

Growing up in an environment utterly different from the country of their origin, young Muslims are facing new difficulties and challenges, as for example drinking alcohol, which is in Islam strictly prohibited. Different cultural environment causes wider confusion as for some young Muslims British culture seems to be incompatible with Islam and its values. On the contrary, some other Muslim youth are criticized for "absorbing what are perceived to be the worst cultural traits of mainstream 'British' society including strong individualism and indifference to collective and extended family welfare."[44]

There is another appreciable difference between first and second generation of Muslims in the UK which needs to be discussed further. First Muslim generation who came to Britain was passive, with poor knowledge of English language and qualification and with respect to civilized British majority. Furthermore, their intention was to earn some money and came back home, so there appear no such questions about their identity or integration to the UK. However, second generation growing up in Britain is more educated, able to speak English and without any fear to show that they are Muslims and they are proud of it. Moreover, this fearless behavior is partially a result of multiculturalism discourse supporting difference rather than similarity and unity. In addition, young Muslims are more likely to stand against their parents, as in the case of young Muslim

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[43] UK Office for National Statistics, "Religious population, 2001," under "Focus on Religion," http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=954 (accessed March 3, 2011); Communities and Local Government, "Understanding Muslim Ethnic Communities, 2009," http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1203896.pdf (accessed October 14, 2010), 38.

[44] Ibid., 32-38.

women who are likely to choose education as a way out from the general perception of Muslim women and their given role of mother and wife.[45]

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[45] Kaye Haw, "From hijab to jilbab and the 'myth' of British identity: being Muslim in contemporary Britain a half-generation on." *Race, Ethnicity & Education,* Vol. 12 Issue 3 (September 2009) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=8&hid=104&sid=059bbb78-2005-4ef7-b216-e708aa488532%40sessionmgr113 (accessed October 15, 2010), 371-372.

7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AMONG MUSLIMS

Although Muslims in the UK belong to the most diverse community with different classes, places and conditions of living, most of researches along with Census 2001 and British government have agreed on one common feature – the socio economic level of Muslims in the UK is deeply bellow the average. Muslims belong to the most disadvantaged ethnic/religious group in the UK and along with the rising negative attitude towards Islam and religious discrimination; their life in Britain seems to be more problematic than for the rest of population. Moreover, there seem to be direct proportions between socio economic conditions and segregation, worse conditions obviously mean a stronger feeling of segregation rather than integration.[46]

Despite of government effort to improve ongoing disconsolate situation, as for instance by vast number of various educational acts and improvements, insufficient communication and responsibilities of local governments and organizations towards Muslim communities are even more visible. The socio economic situation among Muslims was described by one local officer:

"I am not convinced that local government is meeting the needs of the community: for all that there is so much talk about it. I would see good housing, good education, especially language skills, good job opportunities, more positive empathetic and insightful media coverage, as essential, and as not being delivered adequately."[47]

7.1 Employment

As it was already mentioned, the reason of Muslim mass immigration to the UK during the 1950s was predominantly to find better job opportunities and improve economic situation of both Muslims and in general British economy. First generation of Muslim immigrants worked mainly manually in manufacturing industry, despite of the fact that some of them owned university titles and held high-qualified position in the country of their origin.

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[46] Hopkins, Gale ed., "*Muslims in Britain: Race, Place and Identities,*" 7.
[47] Communities and Local Government, "Understanding Muslim Ethnic Communities, 2009," http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1203896.pdf (accessed October 14, 2010), 25.

Although high number of Muslims still works as blue-collar workers, most previous jobs of first generation are gone[48].

Data provided by Office for National Statistics offer detailed information about Muslim employment rates. According to these data, Muslim population creates the most economically inactive community with the highest rate of unemployment; 13 per cent of Muslim men and almost 18 per cent of Muslim women were unemployed in 2004. Among the young aged 16-24 years, Muslims have also the highest unemployment rate. This fact is even more worrying, as the young Muslims create the majority of Muslim communities. When considering employment patterns of Muslims, research provides interesting data. It is said that large number of Pakistani men are taxi drivers, Bangladeshi are more likely to work in restaurant industry and Indian men are employed in hospital facilities. Only a few of Muslim men hold a managerial position. Although the rate of employed Muslim women is slowly rising, most of them are still mainly unemployed.[49]

When discussing employment patterns of Muslim community, it is worth to mention also something about discrimination in employment. As the term 'ethnic penalty' is used to describe employment discrimination among the ethnic minorities; in connection to Muslims appear another term, namely 'Islamic penalty.' Muslims, particularly Pakistanis, are underprivileged not only on the basis of their ethnic origin, but moreover due to their religion practices, viewed as not compatible with employment.[50]

7.2   Housing

Due to the high level of unemployment, large numbers of Muslims in the UK are obliged to live in the poverty in mostly obsolete terraced houses. Majority of Muslims are living in overcrowded communities in urban areas. The data concerning Muslim housing conditions are even more alarming; according to Census from 2001, 32 per cent of Muslims live in

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[48] Muhammad Anwar, "Muslims in Western States: The British Experience and the Way Forward," Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, Vol. 28, No. 1 (April 2008) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=105&sid=2675947b-087e-4d57-9bb5-33cc90382397%40sessionmgr112 (accessed October 14, 2010)131;The Economist, "Dim drums throbbing in the hills half heard,", *The Economist*, August 8,2002 http://www.economist.com/node/1270416?story_id=1270416#abroad_at_home,_by_satellite (accessed March 13, 2011).

[49] UK Office for National Statistics, "Labour Market, 2001," under "Focus on Religion," http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=954 (accessed March 3, 2011); Ibid.

[50] Hopkins, Gale ed., *"Muslims in Britain: Race, Place and Identities,"* 38-39.

overcrowded households, 12 per cent suffer from the lack of central heating and some of Muslims households are even missing bathroom facilities.[51]

So these are the conditions, in which some of Muslims are obliged to live, where young Muslims are growing up. Although there is probably no research done yet, from my personal experience I have to points out, that refugee and asylum seekers, who recently came to the UK, suffer from the worst living and housing conditions among Muslims. These mainly young men with lack of English language are obliged to live together (4, 5 and sometimes even 15 or 20 men in separate rooms in one house) in inconvenient conditions. The fact is that local government and organizations which are authorized to take care about these Muslims either do not know about these conditions or are mostly inactive to somehow improve persistent situation. In addition, poor housing conditions negatively influence the mental and physical health of Muslims, and as there is a considerable lack of health services among Muslim communities, this may cause wider problems in the future.

7.3   Education

Since the discussion over integrationist discourse in the UK has begun, the importance of education gained the government attention. British government has realized that successful integration of ethnic minorities might be achieved through education and basically good knowledge of English language. Since 1985, when the *Education for All Report* was published, various education acts were passed to enable better integration.[52]

Although British government made a lot of effort to improve education in the UK and strengthened knowledge of English among minorities, the data of Muslim educational level show something different. According to Office for National Statistics, "in 2004 a third (33 percent) of Muslims of working age in Great Britain had no qualifications – the highest proportion for any religious group. They were also the least likely to have degrees or equivalent qualifications (12 per cent)."[53]

It is important to points out that gender, social class, places of living and other factors more or less influence achieved education level of Muslim population in the UK. It is

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[51] UK Office for National Statistics, "Housing," under "Focus on Religion," http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=954 (accessed March 3, 2011).
[52] Julios, "*Contemporary British Identity*", 104.
[53] UK Office for National Statistics, "Education," under "Focus on Religion," http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=954 (accessed March 10, 2011).

obvious that Muslims with higher education or qualification are more likely to work among British, their jobs are well-paid and due to this fact they can live in better houses outside community. These all contribute to their successful integration. Moreover, well educated Muslims are more likely to better understand their religion, Islam, and so transfer it to next generation of Muslims in the UK[54].

When discussing Muslim education, there is one more point to touch on and this is the religious education both in Muslim schools and mosques. In 2008, teachers in 100 hundred Muslim schools were teaching Muslim pupils in the UK. In comparison to 7000 Catholic and Jewish schools funded by state, only seven Muslim schools were receiving state funds. In addition, there is very little know about what are young Muslims taught by Imams and Muslim teachers in these schools, since these are receiving money from the government of Muslim countries. In recent times appear an opinion that in the UK are still a few Imams "who project Islam as an ideology that is absolutely right, holy and totally good, and see everything else as an imminent danger to the community."[55]

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[54] Hopkins, Gale ed., "*Muslims in Britain: Race, Place and Identities,*" 69.

[55] Muhammad Anwar, "Muslims in Western States: The British Experience and the Way Forward," Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, Vol. 28, No. 1 (April 2008) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=105&sid=2675947b-087e-4d57-9bb5-33cc90382397%40sessionmgr112 (accessed October 14, 2010), 131; The Economist, "Islam is now firmly established in Western Europe. Don't be afraid of it", *The Economist,* http://www.economist.com/node/1270621 (accessed February 16, 2011); Ziauddin Sardar, "Can British Islam Change?" *New Statesman*, Vol. 135 Issue 4799 (March 2006) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&hid=104&sid=ef361e5b-9a05-423e-998c-5e2301c02ecd%40sessionmgr114 (accessed October 18, 2010).

8 ISLAM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON MUSLIM INTEGRATION

"When ye meet the Unbelievers [in fight], smite at their necks; At length, when ye have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly [on them]." (Surah 47:4)[56]

During the last years and particularly after the terrorist attacks in 2001, nothing exasperated the perception of Muslims as much as their religion, Islam. This term is constantly inflected in media or government sessions, and although George Bush in one of his speeches mentioned that "Islam, as practiced by the vast majority of people, is a *peaceful* religion, a religion that *respects* others", there is a prevailing tendency to 'demonize' this religion. As 2005 and 2007 Pew Surveys indicate, over 60 percent of respondents have denoted Muslim religion as the most violent in the UK.[57]

Despite of the effort to fully integrate Muslims to the British society, Islam for many people seems to be a large obstruction on the way to the successful integration. For majority of Muslims, religion is firmly footed and connected to their everyday life while the secularized British society makes a distinction between their private and public life. According to British National Party, Muslims in Britain may only become British if they will change their perception of Islam and forget about their umma, religion identity. In other words, British Muslims should abandon their religion due to the incompatibility with secularized and westernized Britain.[58]

Muslims religion suffer from a large misunderstanding, either it is perceived as a threat to British society or something very strange, different and difficult to understand. As it was already mentioned, Muslims represent the most diverse ethnic minority in the UK and also their perception of Islam varies. Majority of Muslims in the UK are Sunnis, however, there are another religion groups or sects as Deobandi or Barelwis, and as it is

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[56] Qur'an, Surah 47:4

[57] Muslim Republicans, "In his own words; Bush on Islam," Muslim Republicans, http://www.muslimrepublicans.net/Article.asp?ID=164 (accessed April 2, 2011); Erich Bleich, "Where do Muslims stand on ethno-racial hierarchies in Britain and France? Evidence from public opinion surveys, 1988-2008," *Patterns of Prejudice,* Vol. 43 Issue 3/4 (July 2009) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=7&hid=104&sid=059bbb78-2005-4ef7-b216-e708aa488532%40sessionmgr113 (accessed October 18, 2010), 392.

[58] Mohammad Siddique Seddon, Dilwar Hussain and Nadeem Malik, ed., *British Muslims: Loyalty and Belonging* (Wiltshire: The Islamic Foundation, 2003), 92.

suggested, some of these groups may incline to radicalism or extremism. Due to this fact Islam seems to be more incomprehensible and difficult to understand.[59]

This chapter begins with a short excerpt from the Qur'an that killing unbelievers is not a sin, showing how differently might be Islam understood. Muslims are sometimes criticized for the exact reading and understanding of their holy book, the Qur'an, and as the sentence above exposes, Muslims can always find justification of their behavior in this book, if they want. So the radical Muslims can find defense of their terrorist attacks in the sentence above. This perception and explanation of the Qur'an is used by many anti-Islam organizations as a proof of Muslims incapability to integrate into western societies.

Religion discrimination and basically religion itself is a sensitive topic; for Muslims Islam epitomizes the heart of society, their identity and many of them would do not hesitate to fight to vindicate their religion as in the case of Salman Rushdie affair. After his controversial book attacking Muhammad *The Satanic Verses* was published in 1988, the disturbance all over the world broken out and Rushdie was immediately sentenced to a death for blasphemy of Islam religion. Even though these 'religion terrorists' constitute a threat for western society, it is necessary to distinguish between those individuals and perceive them as tip of an iceberg and the majority of Muslims. Although religion creates essential part of Muslim lives this does not necessarily mean that they are extremists or incompatible with western secularized society.

Despite British governments' effort to improve ongoing misunderstanding and reduce number of extremists in the country, situation is changing very slowly. Large amount of money is invested every year to various organizations working on the improvement, however, the only and most visible factor of the religious misunderstanding is insufficient communication and fear from differentness. In the end of this chapter is worth to mention that "Islam and Christianity share a history in common; they do not come from alien cultural worlds – they are in a sense part of one story."[60]

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[59] John Rex, "The Integration of Muslim Immigrants in Britain." *Innovation in Social Sciences Research,* Vol. 5 Issue 3 (1992). http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=6&hid=104&sid=ef361e5b-9a05-423e-998c-5e2301c02ecd%40sessionmgr114&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=a9h&AN=9707172042 (accessed October 18, 2010).

[60] Rowan Williams, "Muslims-Christian Dialogue in Britain and Beyond," *Islam and Christian – Muslim Relations*, Vol. 19, No.3, 333-338, (July 2008) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=105&sid=2675947b-087e-4d57-9bb5-33cc90382397%40sessionmgr112 (accessed October 14, 2010), 333.

8.1 Religious discrimination

Islam takes essential part in Muslim lives and it is mainly religion what helps Muslims to identify them and cope with their everyday life. As other ethnic minorities in the UK, also Muslims witnessed ethnic or racial discrimination, however, it is mostly Muslim community which suffers from religious discrimination due to the rising islamophobia. In the Home Office report, *Religious Discrimination in England and Wales* (2001), religious discrimination that Muslims has to faced, can be found mostly in education, employment and media.[61]

In the sphere of education, young Muslims have to witness religion discrimination from their schoolmates and even from their teachers, however, this kind of discrimination is more visible and problematic in employment, though it is nowadays prohibited. Religion practices, eating 'halal' food or taking time off for religion holidays cause wide misunderstanding and sometimes even lead to lose job. Religion discrimination in employment is even more apparent in the case of Muslim women, since these "are often perceived by employers as 'not fitting in' with corporate identities in terms of dress, appearance and styles of communication."[62]

The 2005 and 2007 British Citizenship surveys indicate that from the religious groups in the UK, Muslims had to face religion prejudice mostly, as 90 per cent of respondents confirmed. Religious discrimination is even more sensitive topic as it attacks the essential part of Muslim lives. Moreover, the policy against religious discrimination, beyond already mentioned *Race Relations Act 1976,* covers only employment sphere, as the 2003 European Employment Directive confirms.[63]

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[61] Humayun Ansari, *Muslims in Britain*. (Minority Rights Group International, London 2002) http://www.mywf.org.uk/uploads/projects/borderlines/Archive/2007/muslimsinbritain.pdf (accessed October 14, 2010), 17.

[62] Hopkins, Gale ed., *"Muslims in Britain: Race, Place and Identities,"* 46.

[63] Erich Bleich, "Where do Muslims stand on ethno-racial hierarchies in Britain and France? Evidence from public opinion surveys, 1988-2008," *Patterns of Prejudice,* Vol. 43 Issue 3/4 (July 2009) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=7&hid=104&sid=059bbb78-2005-4ef7-b216-e708aa488532%40sessionmgr113 (accessed October 18, 2010), 391; Muhammad Anwar, "Muslims in Western States: The British Experience and the Way Forward," Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, Vol. 28, No. 1 (April 2008) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=105&sid=2675947b-087e-4d57-9bb5-33cc90382397%40sessionmgr112 (accessed October 14, 2010), 133.

9 MEDIA AND ISLAMOPHOBIA

Media play one of the key roles in the process of Muslim integration to the British society, however, as researches signify, this role inclines to demonize the picture of British Muslims rather than simplifies Muslim integration. Negative perception of Muslims in the UK nourished by the media goes hand in hand with growing threat of Muslims, and particularly their religion, so called Islamophobia. Typical feature of portraying Muslims in media is their homogenization, Muslims are often described only as Muslims, not by their names or profession.[64]

A 2008 survey concerning portrayal of Muslims in British media has revealed the tendency to focus rather on Muslim differentness as in the case of their religion or culture. The main topics concerning Muslims were dealing with extremism, terrorism and these were followed with religion and culture. Moreover, the most frequent words used when discussing Muslims were *extremist, suicide bomber, radical* or *fanatical* with very few positive words.[65]

The impact of media on Muslims and their communities in Britain is often disregarded. However, prevailing negative attitude nourished by the media affecting Muslims, as they are more aware of their differentness and their position of outsiders in British society. As the media portray mainly negative sides of Muslim community, emphasize radical or extremists individuals rather than effort of majority to integrate, there is not by chance that Muslims in the UK often feel to be insecure and viewed as disloyal to Britain.[66]

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[64] Kerry Moore, Paul Mason and Justin Lewis, "Images of Islam in the UK: The Representation of British Muslims in the National Print News Media 2000-2008," (Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, July 7, 2008), http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/jomec/resources/08channel4-dispatches.pdf (accessed March 3, 2011), 4.

[65] Ibid., 3.

[66] Muhammad Anwar, "Muslims in Western States: The British Experience and the Way Forward," Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, Vol. 28, No. 1 (April 2008) http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=105&sid=2675947b-087e-4d57-9bb5-33cc90382397%40sessionmgr112 (accessed October 14, 2010), 133.

10 MUSLIM POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Muslim political participation in British government is important part of their integrationist process. Although the sphere of political participation has been largely underestimated, there is a growing political awareness particularly among young Muslims. As Shamim Miah, an experienced youth worker, pointed out, "the average Muslim youth on the street, even if unemployed and with no qualifications, will quite easily give a sophisticated deconstruction of media bias, foreign policy, war on terror and policing." Furthermore, almost all British Muslims have a right to vote in contrast to Muslims in France or Germany.[67]

Participation of Muslims in British government varies, from lobbying or their own political party to the participation in British political parties. In 2000, "over 200 Councilors, two Members of the House of Commons, four Members of the House of Lords and one Member of the European Parliament" were part of British political system. However, the Islamic Party of Britain has been the only Muslim political party since 1989. Although the Muslim political participation seems to grow slowly, there is prevailing tendency to criticize British Government for representation of the whole Muslim community only by a few members with different opinions and attitudes. As the Muslim community is not homogenized one, there need to be a wider range of Muslim voices constituting different opinions and political views.[68]

Concerning Muslim political participation in Britain, there remains one topic which needs to be discussed further, namely Muslim attitude towards democracy. Among Muslims two different attitudes towards this problematic appear. The opposition argues that Islam is not compatible with democratic and secularist model of western states and in essence is ideal in itself. However, democracy should not be understand same as secularism, argue others. Democratic values are not alien to Muslim world and Islam is in

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[67] Ziauddin Sardar, "Can British Islam Change?" *New Statesman*, Vol. 135 Issue 4799 (March 2006). http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&hid=104&sid=ef361e5b-9a05-423e-998c-5e2301c02ecd%40sessionmgr114 (accessed October 18, 2010).

[68] Dilwar Hussain, Muslim Political Participation in Britain and 'Europeanisation' of Fiqh." *Welt des Islams*, Vol. 44, Issue 3 (2004). http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=5&hid=104&sid=059bbb78-2005-4ef7-b216-e708aa488532%40sessionmgr113&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=a9h&AN=15226304 (accessed October 18, 2010), 389-390; Hopkins, Gale ed., *Muslims in Britain: Race, Place and Identities,* 96.

its essence democratic. Moreover, when taking up a Citizenship Pledge that is required for approving the British Citizenship, Muslims are swearing loyalty to democratic values and British law:[69]

"I will give my loyalty to the United Kingdom and respect its rights and freedoms. I will uphold its democratic values. I will observe its laws faithfully and fulfill my duties and obligations as a British citizen." (*Nationality Act 2002*) [70]

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[69] Dilwar Hussain, Muslim Political Participation in Britain and 'Europeanisation' of Fiqh." *Welt des Islams*, Vol. 44, Issue 3 (2004). http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=5&hid=104&sid=059bbb78-2005-4ef7-b216-e708aa488532%40sessionmgr113&bdata=Jmxhbmc9Y3Mmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZl#db=a9h&AN=15226304 (accessed October 18, 2010), 380-381; Julios, "*Contemporary British Identity*", 121.

[70] Julios, "*Contemporary British Identity*", 121.

11 FUTURE PROSPECTS

Since the 1960's, Muslims in the UK has established their new homes and families and second and third generation of Muslims are already growing up in Britain, owning British citizenship, speaking English and behaving as British mainstream. Although it may seems that Muslims are nowadays fully integrated into British society, when concentrating more deeply into this problematic, more hidden difficulties and obstructions can be found. The aim of this chapter is to briefly summarize main difficulties and challenges that Muslims in the UK still has to face; nearly 60 years after the first massive wave of Pakistanis has arrived to the UK; and outline possible steps to enhance Muslim integration to the UK.

According to Samuel P. Huntington, "the interaction between Islam and the West is seen as a clash of civilizations". In his theory *The Clash of Civilizations* has Huntington mentioned the tumultuous relationship of Western and Islamic world which has lasted for nearly 1,300 years and assumed that Western countries might be attacked by Muslim world. These thoughts are used by media or anti-Muslim organizations in relation to the Muslim extremists, terrorist attacks or persisting global events. Although the idea that Muslims are or going to be in the 'holy war' with West is nourished by the extremists, this is the largest prejudice which Muslims in the UK have to suffer. As I supposed, in the 21st century there is no space for such preconceptions.[71]

As it was many times mentioned, religion plays a key role in the Muslim lives. Islam contributes to the shaping of Muslim identities, helps them to cope with their everyday life. As for some young Muslims the religion is not such important aspect of their life, for many of them Islam plays a key role, giving them a sense of security and unity, same as their religious identity umma, in the world where are seen as the 'others', even they are mostly born in the UK. As Islam is perceived by many people as a threat, this altogether with religious discrimination against Muslims and their religion awareness creates a circle in which seems to be no way out.

Regarding socio-economic status of the Muslim community in the UK, Muslims are according 2001 Census and other surveys the most disadvantaged ethnic community in the UK. Concerning education, young Muslims still have to face discrimination from their schoolmates and mainly teachers. Muslim boys are considered to be too aggressive and

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[71] Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 72, No.3 (Summer 1993) http://academics.eckerd.edu/moodle_support/ecUser/EPFiles.php/moodle_20101/649/Huntington__The_Clash_of_Civilizations.pdf (accessed March 19, 2011).

problematic, as it is discussed in the chapter concerning their masculine identity, and Muslim girls are seen to be on the other hand too passive and submissive. Similar situation can be found in the sphere of Muslim employment. Although Muslim women are nowadays achieving higher education, there are still only few women in managerial posts due to their nonstandard clothing and prevailing prejudice of their role of submissive mothers rather than capable manageresses. However, the most alarming situation is in the sphere of housing conditions and Muslim tendency to live in communities strikingly similar to ghettoes. Even more shocking is the fact, that the longest established communities of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are the most segregated communities in the UK reminding the scheme of country within country.

To summarize this chapter and outline steps which should be undertaken to enhance the process of integration, it is important to points out that:

o   Efficient communication between Muslim communities and British government, local organizations and general public is needed.

o   Government should focus on what are young Muslims taught by their Imams.

o   Muslims, not only youth, should be more involved in political life; however, their religion should not be politicized.

o   British government should show more effort and focus on mainly young people, as these constitute the future of Muslim integration, and also on refugees, as these represent the weakest part of the process of integration.

o   The religion discrimination should be prohibited in all spheres of Muslim lives, not only in employment.

o   The socio economic status of Muslims should improve. There is no space for housing segregation or Islamic penalty in employment.

o   Muslims should not be homogenized and the strong distinction between extremists and the majority of Muslims should be made.

o   Media should show more empathy and the focus should not be centered only on the less-well integrated groups of Muslims.

o   Finally, Muslims should not be seen as disloyal to Britain and their values. According to *Home Office Citizenship Survey, 2005*, on the question 'How

strongly do you belong to Britain?' 85 per cent of Muslims answered that they belong very or fairly strongly.[72]

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[72] Hopkins, Gale ed., "*Muslims in Britain: Race, Place and Identities,*" 12.

CONCLUSION

 The aim of this thesis was to describe the process of Muslim integration in Great Britain. The purpose was not to decide whether or how much are Muslims integrated, however, the thesis dealt with changing British government attitude towards Muslims within the last one hundred years, discussed Muslims identities and pointed out elements that complicate the process of successful but above all complete integration.

Firstly, the government attitude towards Muslims, as based on the research, meant dramatic shift from preserving British laissez-faire, negative Enoch Powell's propaganda in 1970s to the effort to achieve social cohesion and integration. Although British government put a lot of endeavor and financial resources to enhance and support the successful Muslim integration, there still remain topics that were no discussed yet and difficulties that need to be solved in order for Muslim successful integration. When scrutinized in detail, the problem lies primarily in the insufficient communication between British government, local officers and Muslim communities. Due to this gap in communication, government has no exact information about what are young Muslims taught by their Imams in mosques, about housing conditions, or religious discrimination that Muslims still have to face.

Furthermore, British government has to cope with the by-product of multiculturalism-segregated communities, as this discourse was supporting social and cultural diversity rather than integrity. The scheme of country within country is apparent all over the Great Britain and I am not convinced that British government is trying its best to manage and improve this voluntary segregation. It might seem that Muslim communities with their own shops, school and mosque are for British government simpler way of handling with Muslim existence in the country.

Although Muslims in the Great Britain nowadays create an integral part of this country, it will take a long time until Muslims will feel, moreover will feel comfortable, and will be perceived as British. Hopefully, the process of Muslim integration would be similar to the case of women wearing trousers in the beginning of the 20th century. Aroused huge resentment and suffered from prejudice, trousers nowadays belong to the common way of women dressing.

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