Dangerous radicals or symbols of crisis and change: re-theorising the status of Muslim boys as a threat to the social order

Farzana Shain (Keele University, UK)

Shain, F., 2017. Dangerous Radicals or Symbols of Crisis and Change: Re-theorising the Status of Muslim Boys as a Threat to the Social Order. In *Muslim Students, Education and Neoliberalism* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp 17-33.
https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137569202

Introduction

Since the mid-1980s, Muslims in England, especially boys and young men of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin, have come to be regarded as 'folk devils' or what Cohen (2002:2) refers to as 'visible reminders of what we should not be'. Once compared positively with their African-Caribbean counterparts as passive and law-abiding, they have been recast in the public imagination as a threat to the social order. British Muslims are among the most deprived communities in the UK with 46% (1.22 million) of the Muslim population residing in the 10% most deprived local authority districts in England (ONS 2013). Pakistani and Bangladeshi boys and men, are also among the groups that have the lowest educational attainment and highest rates of unemployment (ONS 2014). However, discourses of self-segregation (Cantle 2001; Denham 2002) and global (in)security posed by the 'war on terror' have positioned them simultaneously as the victims of cultural and religious practices and as a threat to the social order.

Public and political anxieties about radicalisation and 'extremism'– in circulation from the late 1980s – intensified to a point of frenzy after the London transport bombings in July 2005 were attributed to 'home-grown' suicide-bombers. Since then, Muslim communities have come under exceptional scrutiny and surveillance at the same time as their loyalty to the British state has been significantly questioned. Concerns about 'Muslim extremism' have also intersected with national and European level discourses of integration. Across several European countries, political and social commentators have made arguments linking the 'Muslimness' of their disadvantaged ethnic groups to

predominant economic and political problems faced within and by European nation-states since the 1970s (see for example, Sarazzin 2010).

Young working class men have often been the focus of adult anxieties and fears, particularly in periods of economic crisis and social change in England (Pearson, 1983; Hebdige, 1979). Mods, Rockers, skinheads, muggers, hoodies, chavs and Asian gangs are among the list of antiheroes cited by Delamont (2000). Pearson (1983) also traces a long history, going back to the seventeenth century, of moral campaigners and political figures, comparing young people today with an apparently more disciplined, idealised youth in the past. Extending this theme, Cohen (2002) applied the concept of folk devil to a group of Mods and Rockers who, in the 1960s and 1970s, became scapegoated as the symbols of society's ills. Through a spiralling sequence of media reports, public letters and public reactions, they came to be represented as a 'threat to the nation'. Cohen drew on the notion of moral panic to explain this spiralling sequence:

> A condition, episode, person or groups of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved (or more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. (Cohen 2002:9)

Cohen's notion of moral panic has been critiqued, evaluated and reassessed by researchers, including Cohen himself, in the light of new concepts and theories (see Garland 2008 for a review). Jefferson (2008) argues that Cohen's original definition answered the *what* and *who* questions but the not the *why*: that is, why moral panics take root around particular folk devils in particular societies at particular moments in history. This is the central concern in this chapter. Drawing on Gramscian concepts I argue that Muslim boys, in particular, have come to be demonized in England, at a time of significant economic, political and cultural global change. Their emergence as folk devils is located in the crisis politics that have gripped the UK since the 1970s but also in the related and interlinked global shifts marked by the end of Cold War politics and

the emergence of Islam as a new, global enemy. The chapter is structured as follows: the first section briefly discusses the theoretical assumptions and concepts that frame my analysis; the second section considers the question of how and why Muslims have come to symbolise a threat to 'the West' since the end of the Cold War. In the third section, I review the English policy and political context that has given rise to the construction of young Muslims as the 'unacceptable other' of 'Western values' of 'freedom' and 'democracy' (Shain 2013).

Theoretical assumptions and framing

A key theoretical assumption underpinning this chapter is that the economic, political and social forces that have given rise to the contemporary status of Muslim young people as a social threat are global and systemic and that the post-Cold War realities and dynamics of US global hegemony form a central backdrop to the current status of Muslims boys as folk devils in England.

The Gramscian concept of hegemony emphasises the way a particular 'world view', comes to secure the domination of a ruling elite or 'ruling bloc' within a state or systems of states. A dominant group, itself, often a coalition of competing interests, may lead by force but this leadership is likely to be short-lived. To achieve longer term success, a ruling bloc needs to secure and maintain the consent of the majority of the subordinate class, though this hegemony is never complete. For Gramsci, the state, which comprises political society (the police and judiciary) and civil society (family, media and education) is the central arena where this consent is manufactured; it is 'hegemony protected by the armour of coercion' (Gramsci 1971:262-3). That is, even in periods of relative consensus, coercion always remains in reserve. It is in the realm of civil society however, that 'the successful mobilisation and reproduction of the active consent of the dominated groups by the ruling class 'takes place' through their exercise of intellectual, moral and political leadership' (Jessop 1982:146).

Some theorists argue that we are now 'post hegemony' in the sense that 'neoliberal regimes construct and rely upon new forms of rule for which ideology no longer plays a part' (Beasley-Murray 2003: 118) but I agree with Johnson (2007) that hegemony has never been a more relevant concept for understanding the post 9/11 world order and

the construction of political Islam as a threat to the social order. The neo-conservative Project for a New American Century (PNAC, 1997) predated 9/11 but its various elements and goals were subsequently brought together and legitimated via the 'war on terror'. These goals included but were not limited to: an emphasis US global leadership as the goal of its foreign policy; a commitment to spreading/exporting US values of (market) freedom and liberal democracy; investment in the military as the foundation of US global power; and a pre-emptive strike doctrine. The 'war on terror', the practical exercise of the PNAC project, enabled a redefinition of the global 'enemy' and the security environment in a post-Cold War environment. As Johnson (2007) argues, the post 9/11 speeches of George Bush and Tony Blair were critical in building consent for subsequent military actions through the linking, ideologically, of many familiar elements including:

> … a hatred of the Other, an absolute and racialized division between good and evil, powerfully emotive constructions of nations, forms of gendered masculine address, the impersonation of national-popular heroes, a wholesale absolution for consumerist ways of life ...and a more than implied civilizational superiority associated with religion. (Johnson 2007)

The speeches were not merely discursive but enabled a geopolitical strategy aimed at the global promotion of US centred neoliberal globalization to be presented as a fight 'for our democratic values and way of life' (White House 2002:31); the core ideas and values promoted by Bush and Blair had material consequences both globally (bombings; military invasions, regime change) and domestically (forced repatriation, new forms of security and surveillance, the general curtailment of civil liberties). Many including, Democrats in the US and Labour party members in the UK, were 'won over' to support the wars in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 and alternative voices were rhetorically and actively silenced, for example, as 'terrorist sympathisers'.

It is also now widely accepted that the military invasions in Afghanistan and Iraq and regime-change in Libya and Syria were centred on promoting US economic interests including the seizure of oil supplies and the privatization of public services in the interest of transnational corporations (Johnson, 2007). This maintenance of US

hegemony and positioning in a post-Cold War era forms an important backdrop for the contemporary construction of Muslims as problems to be contained and managed. However, to understand why specific ethnic groups have been the targets of punitive and coercive state policies within different regional/national contexts, (for example, Arabs and Asians in the US, Lebanese young people in Australia, Turks in Germany and Holland, North Africans in France) we need to take account of the particular colonial histories that have shaped the development of these metropolitan contexts and young people's economic locations and social/cultural experiences within them. Gramsci's concepts of *Historical specificity* and *articulation* are relevant here. Historical specificity refers to the particular economic, political and ideological makeup of a society, at a particular moment in time. By articulation, Gramsci referred to the inter-relationship of economic, political and ideological structures in specific historical periods inferring that economic structures do not simply determine political policies and cultural processes but shape, and in turn can be shaped by them. They become interlinked in specific periods to support particular hegemonic projects.

In the case of England, two major interlinked developments have been important in shaping the course of social policy in the last 50 years and are pertinent to making sense of why and how Muslims, predominantly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have come to be regarded as a 'problem'; the first is the significant economic decline that followed on from the end of the initial boom of the post-World War II period. This decline is associated with the economic restructuring that involved a shift in the economic base from a manufacturing to a service and financial sector. Beginning in the 1960s and developing as a result of increased competition from national economies such as Germany in the 1970s and China and India in the 1980s, this entailed significant costs in terms of unemployment and job insecurity that have had a lasting legacy in inner city areas in England.

The second development is the loss of Britain's colonies at the end of World War II, which was largely followed by the active recruitment of workers from the former colonies to fill labour shortages created in the immediate aftermath of the war. However, the loss of its colonies did not necessarily lead to a post-colonial state identity and culture for the British state in the initial decades. As Gilroy (2004) has argued, a

post-colonial melancholia – the repeated failure to let of its imperial past – has shaped British state relations and policy in relation to its ethnic minorities. Imperial and colonial notions of a 'superior British way of life' and the racialised inferiority or difference of minority groups have been re-articulated through modern constructions of minorities as 'backward', 'untrustworthy', ' hypersexualised' (CCCS 1982; Layton Henry 1992; Gilroy 2004) and more recently as ' terrorist suspects' and 'extremists' . Notions of a superior 'British way of life' are also embedded in social policies of integration and cohesion, and the 'British values' that are promoted through the education system. Through these soft forms of control, combined with the coercive and punitive measures justified by the British 'war on terror', marginalized young people have come to symbolise the Other of Britishness. Muslims girls and women especially, those who wear their religion politically, through the *niqab*, *hijab* or *jilbab* have become the most visible symbols of crisis and decline at a time of intense economic uncertainty. This argument is developed in the following sections.

From Cold War politics to the re-articulation of Islamic threat: US global hegemony

Current constructions of Islam as 'evil' and 'dangerous' are not new, of course, but have a long history going back to the period of the Crusades (11th – 13th century) when Islam was described as 'evil incarnate' and Turkish converts to Islam as a 'vile race' by Pope Urban II who led the first Crusade. Notions of Islam as monolithic, violent and uniquely sexist (Said, 1978) have been reproduced in historically contingent ways since the Crusades. For example, they were rearticulated and reworked during the 19th and 20th century to justify British and European colonialist projects and continue to underpin contemporary understandings of Muslims as 'suspect'.

However, there have also been periods when Muslims were differently constructed for example, during the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979 – 1989) the Mujahidin, backed and trained by the US (later regarded as terrorists), were referred to by US President Reagan in the 1980s as 'freedom fighters' (Ahmad 2006). This

construction of Muslim political activists as 'our friends', occurred during the Cold War period (1945-1991) when the Soviets were the prime competitor of the USA.

The collapse of state socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1991 radically transformed the geopolitical and geoeconomic contexts of world politics ending the bipolar structure of world politics with the United States now acknowledged as the only superpower – militarily, especially (Wallace 2002; Harvey 2003). Post-Cold War wars and campaigns have been centred on the manoeuvres of the USA, and its allies in Europe, over the division of resources and political/military control of Afro-Eurasia. These interventions have enabled the USA to gain a strong foothold in the lands between Western Europe to the west, Russian Federation to the north, China to the east and sub-Saharan Africa to the south, and turn this energy rich strategic region increasingly into an American 'sphere of influence'.

The strengthening of US global control has relied as much on politics and ideology as on economic and military power. As Wallace (2002:109) summarises, this 'hegemony rests upon a range of resources, of hard military power, economic weight, financial commitments, and the soft currency of hegemonic values, cultural influence and prestige.' US hegemony, since 1945, has been built on the ability to homogenise the political cultures of its allies around sets of ideological values and cultural perceptions constructed to serve US interests. This has largely been achieved via symbolic constructions, loosely connected to the Second World War experience and a Western-centric interpretation of the so-called 'clash of civilisations'.

During the Cold War period, the Soviet Union and Communist ideology were portrayed throughout the capitalist West, as the evil force that threatened 'western freedoms' and 'free enterprise'. However, since 1979, a key historical turning point in the West's relationship to Islam, a number of factors coalesced to replace the communist threat with political Islam. This included the onset of the Iranian revolution, in 1979, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan after which western trained Islamic militants began to pose a sporadic threat to US global hegemony. With the demonization of political Islam from the late 1980s onwards, Islam and fundamentalism became linked and 'Islamic fundamentalism' and 'Islamic terror' were progressed into dominant hate themes

(Ahmad, 2006). This value structure has been effectively embedded within Western political cultures since then, re-shaping national security agendas, through repeated international polarisations, the reporting and state handling of terrorist incidents and corresponding heavy-handed interventions since the end of the Cold War, from the military campaigns in the Gulf and Afghanistan to regime-change operations in Libya and Syria.

Under the Clinton administration and its hegemonic project of neoliberal globalization, there was war in Serbia but US interests were pushed primarily through a strategy of financialisation (Gowan 2009). It has been since the late 1990s, the latest period of US imperialism, that anti-Islamic terrorism has replaced anti-communism as the new millennium's all-purpose rationale for providing global US military/political and economic expansion. Whether the post 9/11 military focused strategy of the US represents the politics of a declining superpower in economic terms – manufacturing declined since the early 1970s; the neo-financialisation project collapsed in the mid-2000s, leaving military power (Harvey 2003; Arrighi 2005; Gowan 2009); or a still dominant power (Panitch and Gindin 2005; Kiely 2010) there is broad agreement that the 'war on terror', has been critical for managing and convincing domestic populations of the US led military advances of the 21st century.

Under the Obama leadership in the US and since the Brown premiership in the UK, the language of 'war on terror' dissipated somewhat. There are few, if any references to the 'war on terror' in the 2015 US National Security Strategy which declares that 'we have moved beyond the large ground wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that defined so much of American foreign policy over the past decade.' But the goal of US primacy remains that 'America must lead' and that '[s]ustaining our leadership depends on shaping an emerging global economic order that continues to reflect our interests and values' (White House 2015). All of this forms an important backdrop against which the current 'Islamist threat' has come to fruition. How this changing global landscape has played out in the context of developments in England and Great Britain, the 'closest ally' of the US in the 'new American century', is explored below.

From the numbers game to terrorist suspects – the changing status of young Muslims in England.

Since the 1950s, Muslim communities have consistently been characterised as policy problems in England. In the 1950s and 1960s, this was as 'black' migrant workers in economic competition for jobs and services. From the 1970s, themes of 'cultural deficit/ clash/alienation' were applied to read the children of migrant workers and British-born minority youth as social problems. In the 1970s and 1980s African-Caribbean young people were the main (but not the only) targets of the state's containment policies – both soft and coercive; however, since the mid-1980s as the discourse shifted from race to faith, Asian Muslims and Asylum seekers have become the most visible symbols of crisis and change in the UK. While the targets of containment policies have changed since the 1950s, there have been repeated calls, through state policies, on minorities to assimilate into a (superior) 'British way of life' (Grosvenor 1997) and these calls have been more pronounced in periods of economic uncertainty and geopolitical dislocations (Gilroy 2004).

The numbers game

Ethnic minorities made up 14% of the population in 2011, (ONS 2013), but this figure looks set to rise to 20% by 2051 (Tran 2010). In 2011, 2.7 million identified as Muslim (ONS 2014) up from 1.8 million in 2001. Britain's long history of black immigration goes back 500 years (Fryer 1984) but it was in the post-Second World War period that large numbers of black workers were actively recruited by the British state to fill labour shortages following the economic boom of this period (Anwar 1986; Layton-Henry 1992). In the 1950s and 1960s, African-Caribbeans, Indians and Pakistanis (and later Bangladeshis) arrived to take up jobs – a small minority in professions as doctors and teachers but the majority in unskilled labouring work such as manufacturing and textiles. These were often the jobs the indigenous workers were not prepared to do, and involved immigrants working unsocial hours often for less pay (Solomos 1992). As the migrants were motivated by the need to find work, they tended to settle in urban areas where jobs and housing were readily available; these areas have subsequently suffered most from the decline in manufacturing since the 1970s with the long term

impacts including widespread unemployment and accompanying disadvantage in educational and labour markets for the later generations.

As is now well documented, black commonwealth immigrants arriving in Britain to help re-build the economy after the Second World War, received a warm welcome but were soon treated with suspicion and hostility as competition for jobs and services grew. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, public and private debates began to focus on the extent of black immigration and its supposed impact on housing, the welfare state, crime and social problems. This racialisation of immigration was not a simple reworking of old colonial racism but actively produced by the state (Solomos 1992) as the signs of economic and political decline began to emerge.

Whether identified as Keynesian (following the principles of economist John Maynard Keynes) or 'embedded liberalism' (e.g. Harvey 2009), the set of policies, pursued by both Labour and Conservative governments from 1945 until the 1960s had been the result of high rates of economic growth which, accompanied by period of political and ideological consensus, lasted until the end of the 1960s when the growth slowed down and economic crises ensued.

Hall et al (1978) argue that the end of the post-war liberal consensus created space for a new form of political leadership that required a more coercive state approach to manage the economic and political crisis caused by the decline of Britain's manufacturing base in the global economy. The conservative 'New Right' government led by Margaret Thatcher took up that space in 1979, setting out to find a radical solution to the economic decline and accompanying social and political problems. The policies of the Thatcher administration played a leading role in creating consent for what later came to be known as a 'neoliberal' and 'post-welfarist' agenda which set out to free capital from the constraints of state ownership and investment, and interference by unions. What followed was a radical restructuring of workers' rights and real wages in order to keep investments profitable for the capitalist economy. Similar policies were introduced in the US and other leading capitalist economies in order to halt the declining rate of profit and to make investment profitable enough for capitalists. The Keynesian phase had emphasised state planning and in some instances state ownership

of key sectors but these new neo-liberal measures were underpinned by a global monetarism that was promoted by neoliberal economists such as Friedman. The neoliberal project set out to disembed capital from these constraints (Harvey, 2009) and was put into practice by now right-wing political elite to enforce neoliberal restructuring on workers.

Race was a central political symbol in the New Right's manufacture of consent for its project of 'rolling back the state'. Moral panics about black 'criminals and muggers' helped to legitimate coercive state measures aimed at the population in general, but particularly targeted disadvantaged groups that were also the most severely affected by the rising unemployment. The increased surveillance of the population was achieved through measures such as 'stop and search', but these disproportionately targeted African-Caribbean men, and as a consequence led to further unrest in towns and cities in the 1980s. By the mid-1980s, African-Caribbean youth were being characterised in policy and media discourse as a ticking time bomb (Solomos and Back 1996) and a threat, along with trade union power and (Irish Republican) terrorism, to the 'British way of life'.

From black to Muslim folk devils

Thatcherite constructions divided Britain into a privileged nation of 'good', 'hardworking' citizens and a contained and subordinated nation which included ethnic minorities and much of the unskilled white working class outside the South East (Jessop 2003). Through repeated references to criminality and deviance, young black men came to be the prime visible symbols crisis and change. However, from the 1980s, the British discourse on minorities began to shift from ethnicity towards religion. Young Muslim men are still sometimes regarded and passive and studious, but overwhelmingly constructed as dangerous. This re-racialisation of working class youth as a 'problem' needs to be read in the context of the above mentioned 'religious turn' which emerged in the space created by the end of Cold War politics and the demise of the former Soviet Eastern bloc in 1991. In England, the 'Rushdie affair' (the public protests in response to the publication of Salman Rushdie's 1988 novel, *The Satanic Verses*) was a major catalyst in the politicisation of Muslim identities. Groups previously

identifying as Pakistani, Mirpuri or Bangladeshi were now defined and some defined themselves as Muslims (Saghal and Yuval-Davis, 1992).

The Rushdie affair served as a pivot for public and political debates about preserving a (white) British 'way of life', protecting western values of freedom and liberalism against alien, uncivilised, uncultured and misogynistic Muslims. The debates drew on and revived colonial ideas of the 'backwardness' of Muslims which helped to refuel debates about the threat posed by unrestricted immigration. Followed by the Gulf War in 1991, the Bradford riots in 1995, this was a important turning point for British Muslims.

By the time the New Labour government was elected in 1997, concerns were being expressed about the growing inequalities resulting from the neoliberal reforms pursued by three successive Conservative governments. With an expressed commitment to tackling social exclusion and race inequality, the Blairite 'Third Way' between neoliberalism and social democracy looked set to deliver on the promise of 'equality for all'. However, as a number of analyses have shown, New Labour's policies did much to slow down the onset of the 2008 crisis but did not alter the broad patterns of structural inequality. New Labour governments also, especially from 2001, posed multiculturalism and ethnic identification as a threat to 'the nation', and introduced some of the most draconian anti-immigration and anti-terror legislation that the country has ever seen. The ambitious project of redefining Britishness around notions of 'active citizenship', 'rights and responsibilities' and paid work (Worley 2005) positioned some groups, notably Muslims, asylum-seekers and generally those not in paid employment, as outside the nation and its interests.

New Labour's approach to dealing with 'race' and minorities in its second term (2001 to 2005) has been described variously as 'the new assimilationism' (Back et al 2002, 452) and as naïve multiculturalism (Gillborn 2001 19). Flirtations with multicultural democracy were combined with melancholic appeals to imperial grandness to produce a contradictory vision of 'the British nation'. Renewed calls on minorities to integrate into a 'British way of life' following the 'riots' in 2001, were given further fuel after the 9/11 terrorist attacks were officially connected to Islamist terrorism and the USA and Britain officially declared a 'war on terror'. The project of redefining British citizenship

around notions of cohesion and integration and 'British values' was largely conceptualised and pursued through policies on immigration (Home Office 2002). However, the meaning of New Labour's Britishness was hard to pin down, shifting from 'fair play and tolerance' to 'hard work, effort and enterprise' (Brown, 2006) and sometimes, the Other of genital mutilation or forced marriages.

Gillborn describes new Labour's final term (2005–2010) as an era of 'aggressive majoritarianism', when 'the rights and perspectives of a white majority were asserted' and, in the context of the 'war on terror' and its securitisation of everyday life, they now felt able to freely voice these prejudices in the name of 'integration' or 'security' (2008, 81). The 7/7 bombings, Britain's own 'war on terror', were a critical factor in shaping the intense and unprecedented focus on young Muslims as the 'enemy within'. Islamic modes of dress, forced marriage and genital mutilation, already questioned, became the subjects of increasing and detailed debate, not only in Britain but across Europe. While Britain has not quite taken the steps that France has in banning the *niqab*, evidence of the horrific mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners in what has been called Britain's "Abu Ghraib" (Cobain 2010) was revealing of the state's coercive power. This judicial abuse, torture and war crime, alongside 'home' measures, including forced repatriation and detention without trial, maintained the threat of state violence alongside a series of 'soft' or consensual measures to manage and contain 'problem' populations.

The 2008 economic and financial crisis was the platform for the election of the new Coalition government in May 2010. With the mantra of 'clearing up the mess inherited from the previous government', the Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition pursued austerity measures with the assumption that the private sector will step in to provide jobs for the large numbers of unemployed as a result. But the real priority for the Coalition and subsequent Conservative government, elected in 2015, has been to satisfy the financial elite, bond markets and financial assessors. The British government's policies reflect a renewal and deepening of neoliberalisation in the context of the current financial crisis and persistent economic recession (Hall 2011). This intensification of neoliberal policy measures, based on punitive conditionality and economic rationality, has been portrayed by tehse governments as necessary to restore

Britain's economic competitiveness. However, the large scale public spending cuts have disproportionately affected poorer communities the most.

Race has not been mentioned overtly by the Coalition and Conservative governments, but the continuation of debates about forced marriages, 'extremism' and immigration, against the backloth of US led regime-change operations in the middle East, have targeted racialised groups, namely Muslims and asylum-seekers. At the same time, the targeted cutting of public services, has and will, disproportionately affect all disadvantaged groups but especially poorer ethnic minorities because of their reliance on public services. Unemployment has risen for all groups since 2010 but more sharply for ethnic minorities. Prisons, seem to be getting younger, blacker and more Muslim (Shaw 2015). There is a growing income gap between rich and poor in the UK. All these are indicators of deepening economic recession and decline. Surveillance and control measures have become widespread and the battle against 'extremism' has been the justification for embedding ever tightening control measures that target the very communities that are at the sharp end of economic decline.

Conclusion

Muslim boys represent a social threat at a time of significant economic, political and cultural global change. Their emergence as folk devils is located in the global shifts marked by the end of Cold War politics and the emergence of Islamism as a new, global enemy. In Britain, the manufacturing base that attracted immigrant workers in the 1960s to settle in industrial towns and cities declined significantly, causing widespread unemployment and accompanying disadvantage in educational and labour markets for the later generations.

The 'war on terror', the ideological justification for the US neo-conservative Project for a New American century (Harvey 2003), has had profound implications for Muslims. In Britain, the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities – already among the most disadvantaged of ethnic minority communities –have been subject to intense scrutiny and surveillance in debates about 'extremism' and the limits of multiculturalism. These debates have been particularly heated since the inner city disturbances in 2001 and the London transport bombings in 2005. Muslim boys have emerged as symbols of crisis

and change against this backdrop, and arguments about their supposed underachievement in the educational and labour market have been used to underscore dominant discourses of dangerous and violent masculinity.

While global enemies have changed and the targets containment and control policies have shifted over the course of the last 50 years in the UK, there has been through British state policy pronouncements, a persistent desire to reconnect with Britain's imperial past. Against the background of rising unemployment and growing economic uncertainty, repeated appeals to Britishness come at a time when Britain's imperial power and status as a leading Western economy is being challenged by strong competition from countries such as China and India and other emerging economies (Gowan 2009, Gokay 2009). The forging of a renewed British identity can be read in this context as melancholic (Gilroy 2004) and as an ideological mechanism to deflect attention from a British economy in decline. Patriotic appeals to a mythic Britishness can be seen to support the illusion of a cohesive society at a time when disadvantage and class inequalities threaten to become stark as a result of savage cuts to public funding in the context of significant economic decline. Young Muslims are visible symbols of this crisis and decline.

References

Ahmad, E., 2011. *Terrorism: theirs & ours*. New York: Seven Stories Press.

Anwar, M. 1986. *Race and Politics: Ethnic Minorities and the British Political System.* London, Tavistock Publications.

Arrighi, G. 2005. Hegemony unravelling. *New Left Review*, *32*:23-80.

Brown, G. 2006. Britishness speech given to the Commonwealth Club, London http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2007/feb/27/immigrationpolicy.race accessed July 2015.

Cantle, T. 2001. *Community Cohesion*. London: Home Office.

CCCS (Centre for Contemporary cultural Studies). 1982. *The Empire Strikes Back*, London: Hutchinson.

Cohen, S., 2002. *Folk devils and moral panics: The creation of the mods and rockers*. London: Routledge.

Delamont, S. 2000. The anomalous beasts: hooligans and the history of sociology of education. *Sociology* 34(1):95-111

Denham, J. 2002. *Building Cohesive Communities: A Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion*. London: Home Office.

Fryer, P. 1984. *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain*, London: Pluto.

Fryer, P. 1988.*Black People in the British Empire: An Introduction*, London: Pluto.

Garland, D. 2008. On the Concept of Moral Panic. *Crime Media Culture* 4:9-30.

Gillborn, D. 2008. *Racism and Education: coincidence or conspiracy*. London: Routledge.

Gilroy, P 2004. *After Empire: Multiculture or Postcolonial Melancholia*, London: Routledge.

Gokay, B. (2009) Tectonic shifts and systemic faultlines: a global perspective to understand the 2008-9 world economic crisis, *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 8(1) 29-35.

Gowan, P. 2009. Crisis in the heartland, consequences of the new Wall Street system, *New Left Review*, 55:5-29

Gramsci, A (1971) *The Prison Notebooks.* London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Grosvenor, I. 1997. *Assimilating Identities: racism and educational policy in post 1945 Britain.* London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Hall, S. 2011. The neoliberal revolution, Cultural Studies,25(6):705-728.

Hall, S., Critcher, C., Jefferson, T., Clark, J. and Roberts, B. 1978. *Policing the Crisis:Mugging, the State and Law and Order*. London: Macmillan.

Harvey, D. 2003. *The New Imperialism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hebdige, D. 1979. *Subculture: the meaning of style*. New accents.

Home Office 2002. *Secure Borders: Safe Have*n, London: The Stationary Office.

Jefferson, T., 2008. Policing the crisis revisited: The state, masculinity, fear of crime and racism. Crime, Media, Culture, 4(1), pp.113-121.

Jessop, B., 1982. The capitalist state: Marxist theories and methods (p. 221). Oxford: Martin Robertson

Jessop, B. 2003. 'From Thatcherism to New Labour: neo-liberalism, workfarism and labour market regulation' in H Overbeek, (Ed) *The Political Economy of European*

Unemployment: European integration and the transnationalization of the employment question. London: Routledge.

Johnson, R. 2007. Post-hegemony? I don't think so. Theory, culture & society, 24(3): 95-110.

Kiely, R., 2010. *Rethinking imperialism*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Layton-Henry, Z. 1992. *The Politics of Immigration: Immigration, Race and Race Relations in Post-War Britain,* Blackwell Publishers.

ONS. 2014. Office for National Statsitics. 2011 Census: Key Statistics for England and Wales, March 2011

Panitch, L. and Gindin, S., 2009. Global capitalism and American empire.*Socialist register*, *40*(40).

Pearson, G. 1983. *Hooligan: a history of respectable fears.* Basingstoke: Macmillan

Saghal, G. and Yuval-Davis, N. 1992. *Refusing Holy Orders*. London: Virago

Said, E., 1979. Orientalism. 1978. *New York: Vintage*, *1994*.

Sarazzin, T 2010. *Deutschland schafft sich ab: Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen*, *Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt*

Shain, F. 2013. Race, Nation and Education. *Education Inquiry Vol. 4, No. 1, March 2013, pp. 701–724.*

Shaw, D. 2015. Why the surge in Muslim prisoners? *BBCNews* 11 March 2015.

Solomos, J. 1992. The politics of immigration since 1945, in P Braham, A Rattansi, and R Skellington (Eds). *Racism and Anti Racism*. London: Open University in association with Sage.

Solomos, J. and Back, L. (1994) Conceptualising racisms: social theory, politics and research. *Sociology* 28(1):143-161.

Tran, M. 2010. Ethnic minorities to make up 20% of UK population by 2051, *Guardian*, 13 July available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jul/13/uk-population-growth-ethnic-minorities accessed July 2015.

Wallace, W. 2002. American Hegemony: European Dilemmas. *The Political Quarterly* 73.s1 105-118.

White House. 2002. United States National Security Strategy, Washington.

White House. 2015. United Stated National Security Strategy, Washington.

Worley, C. 2005. 'It's not about race. It's about the community': New Labour and community cohesion. *Critical Social Policy* 25(4): 483.