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# The Concurrent Rise of Diversity and Islamophobia: A Comparative Study of the UK and France

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The Concurrent Rise of Diversity and Islamophobia: A Comparative Study of the UK and  
France

By

Tugce Arslan

A Major Research Paper  
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
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May 2, 2018

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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## ABSTRACT

This paper assesses the current stance of multiculturalism and diversity in Europe by taking a closer look at the perception of Muslims in the United Kingdom and France. It is a comparative study that analyzes the sentiments of nationalism along with how a series of pivotal events that have impacted the integration process of the Muslim populations. A look at certain key factors such as cultural and identity clashes, increasing instability in the Middle East and the influence of the media, demonstrates a rise in Islamophobia in Europe. By focusing on how the rise in Islamophobia has affected the perception of Muslim immigrants, the current level of acceptance is shown to be lacking. The UK shows how, even with a background in nationalism that is used to accepting diversity, a rise in anti-Muslim sentiment makes it step away from a politics of multiculturalism. Whereas, France's emphasis on secularism and its connection to French culture and nationhood, slows down the acceptance of diversity, while rising Islamophobia makes it even harder for Muslim immigrants to find a place in French society.

## DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to my mom, my dad and my grandfather;

For always supporting me and inspiring me to learn. And for anyone who has been part of a culturally “diverse” society and felt, even if for a moment, that they were excluded from the hegemonic culture of the majority.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
DEDICATION .....	v
CHAPTER 1: Introduction .....	1
Review of the Literature.....	3
Background on the Theory Literature.....	11
Methodology .....	22
CHAPTER 2: Multiculturalism and Identity in the United Kingdom .....	27
History of Britishness.....	30
OPEC Oil Crisis 1973.....	33
Rushdie Affair and the Gulf War .....	38
7/7 London Bombings.....	44
Conclusion .....	48
CHAPTER 3: France, <i>Laïcité</i> and Islam.....	51
<i>Laïcité</i> and Nationalism in France.....	52
The Headscarf Scandals.....	57
2005 Riots.....	62
Conclusion .....	66
CHAPTER 4: Discussion and Conclusion.....	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	74
VITA AUCTORIS .....	82

## CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Europe has been waging an internal battle against a rising tide of nativist nationalism emerging as a challenge to multiculturalism. The rise in nativism is due to a multitude of factors, primarily owing to an increase in security threats and economic concerns, both of which are connected to a concern over the perceived increase in immigrant populations. Most specifically, Islamist terrorism is seen as the highest source of threat;<sup>1</sup> which has contributed to a rise in negative attitudes towards the Muslim populations in Europe. This has raised many questions about the current position of multiculturalism and tolerance.

The direction of global politics has taken a prominent shift; the advance of globalization is decreasing. Islamist terrorism has been linked to many cases such as, the 7/7 attacks in London, the Charlie Hebdo incident and most recently, as a contributing factor to Brexit—all of which indicates a clear message; there has been a rise in anti-Muslim sentiment, more profoundly referred to as Islamophobia, which seems to be rendering attempts at cohesion futile. As many scholars have already stated, if multiculturalism does exist in European countries today, it appears to be a failure.<sup>2</sup> This paper will define multiculturalism as the co-existence of several different ethnic groups within one society, all able to perform their own diversity and live heterogeneously in

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<sup>1</sup> Lorenzo Vidino and James Brandon, "Europe's Experience in Countering Radicalization: Approaches and Challenges," *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism* 7, no. 2 (2012): 163.

<sup>2</sup> Esther Romeyn, "Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Spectropolitics and Immigration," *Theory, Culture and Society* 31, no. 6 (2014): 79.

one country.<sup>3</sup> The concept and definition of Islamophobia will be thoroughly discussed within the methodology section.

Due to the movement of people into Europe over the past several decades, because of economic or safety reasons, it has become an undeniable fact that many European countries are now much more diverse than they have historically been.<sup>4</sup> Although, (before the Syrian refugee crisis) Muslim immigration did not show a paramount increase in comparison to immigration from other religious groups, the perception that they represented much of the increase was persistent.<sup>5</sup> This perception stemmed from the visibility of minority groups, especially those that were frequently linked to violence and war in the media. Moreover, many Muslims, because of their skin colour or particular Islamic dress tended to be more visible, and easier to identify as ‘outsiders’.<sup>6</sup>

Even though the Muslim populations in Europe come from diverse backgrounds they are grouped together under a single identity based on their religion. There is no other group of immigrants in Europe that are categorized primarily for their religious affiliation.<sup>7</sup> Placing all Muslims under one category has served to address them as a whole in public discourse and public policy concerns. It is an indicator of the presence of

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<sup>3</sup> Shireen Mazari, “Multiculturalism and Islam in Europe,” *Policy Perspectives* 7, no. 1 (2010): 91.

<sup>4</sup> Mazari, “Multiculturalism and Islam in Europe,” 91.

<sup>5</sup> Phillip Connor, “Quantifying Immigrant Diversity in Europe,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37, no. 11 (2014): 2066.

<sup>6</sup> Connor, “Quantifying Immigrant Diversity,” 2066.

<sup>7</sup> Jose Casanova, “The Politics of Nativism: Islam in Europe Catholicism in the United States,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 34, no. 4-5 (2012): 489.

anti-Muslim sentiment in European societies. Furthermore, treating Muslims as one group is part of a grand development through which limits and subject positions are made and disputed under the guise of racial politics that creates difference out of both biological and ethnic indicators.<sup>8</sup> The isolation of a minority group, like the Muslims, reflects the issues over the acceptance of diversity in Europe, which will be further analyzed within this paper.

### **Literature Review**

There has been a vast amount of literature looking at the problems of multiculturalism and Islamophobia in Europe. Some of the literature is more general and aims to cover a specific idea within the broader context of Europe,<sup>9</sup> while other literature provides a more focused case study of specific countries<sup>10</sup>. Some of the frameworks through which the literature engages with the topic are through defining diversity and citizenship,<sup>11</sup> by looking at the ideological struggle between nationalism and integration,<sup>12</sup> and as a policy centered analysis over securitization.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> David Tyrer and Salman Sayyid, "Governing Ghosts: Race, Incorporeality and Difference in Post-Political Times," *Current Sociology* 60, no. 3 (2012): 355.

<sup>9</sup> For example look at, Erik Jones, "Identity, Solidarity and Islam in Europe," *The International Spectator* 48, no. 1 (2013): 102-116; Christian Joppke, "The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State: Theory and Policy," *The British Sociological Review* 55, no. 2 (2004): 237-257; Alexander C. Jeffrey, "Struggling Over the Mode of Incorporation: Backlash Against Multiculturalism in Europe," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 4 (2013): 531-556.

<sup>10</sup> For example look at, Scott Poynting and Victoria Mason, "The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia; Anti-Muslim Racism in the UK and Australia before 11 September 2011," *Journal of Sociology* 43, no 1 (2007): 61-86; Jeremy Gunn, "Religion and Law in France: Secularism, Separation and State Intervention," *Drake Law Review* 57 (2009): 949-984; Maxim Cervulle, "The Use of Universalism. 'Diversity Statistics and the Race Issue in Contemporary France,'" *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 17, no. 2 (2014): 118-133.

<sup>11</sup> See, Steven Vertovec, "Super-diversity and its Implications," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30, no. 6 (2007): 1024-1054; Didier Lassalle, "French Laicite and British Multiculturalism: A convergence in Progress?" *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 32, no. 3 (2011): 229-243; Matthias Koenig, "Incorporating Muslim

## Diversity and Citizenship

Some works focus on immigration to describe diversity and the Muslim experience. Connor expands the study on the theoretical claim of immigrant diversity by quantifying it. He draws from Vertovec's concept of "super-diversity" to explain how the origins of immigrant populations are becoming more and more diverse.<sup>14</sup> His results suggest that although immigrant diversity is high in most European countries, their origins and religious backgrounds remain stable.<sup>15</sup> He further suggests that some immigration trends may encounter a change in the future if older generations go back to their origins,<sup>16</sup> although, this seems to be a dubious assessment.

On the other hand, Vertovec provides a theoretical look at the diversification of diversity by specifically focusing on the case of the United Kingdom. With his paper published in the late 2000s, Vertovec coins the term "super-diversity" in order to draw the attention of policy makers and academics to the ethnic origins and other factors of diversity within immigrant communities that should be taken under account when

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Migrants in Western Nation-States- A Comparison of the United Kingdom, France and Germany," *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 6, no. 2 (2005): 219-234.

<sup>12</sup> See, Chris Allen, "'Down with Multiculturalism, Book-burning and Fatwas': The Discourse of the Death of Multiculturalism," *Culture and Religion* 8, no. 2 (2007): 125-138; Nadia Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences: Young People of North African Origin in France* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Ahmet Kuru, "Secularism, State Policies, and Muslims in Europe: Analyzing French Exceptionalism," *Comparative Politics* (2008): 1-19.

<sup>13</sup> See, Jocelyne Cesari, "Securitization of Islam in Europe," *Die Weltz Islams* 52 (2012): 430-449; Leslie S. Lebl, "Radical Islam in Europe," *Foreign Policy Research Institute* (2010): 46-60.

<sup>14</sup> Connor, "Quantifying Immigrant Diversity," 2056.

<sup>15</sup> Connor, "Quantifying Immigrant Diversity," 2066.

<sup>16</sup> Connor, "Quantifying Immigrant Diversity," 2059.

addressing these groups.<sup>17</sup> His aim is to change the way in which diversity is perceived and studied. Thus, “super-diversity” is defined as a multi-faceted perspective on diversity.<sup>18</sup> Vertovec further highlights that new immigrants have a tendency to settle in the areas where other immigrants of their origin are already established.<sup>19</sup> This could be contributing to why certain immigrant groups have a harder time integrating into mainstream culture.

Lack of assimilation is observed in other literature that attempts to explain why this is the case in Europe. Casanova, places the blame on secular European cultures that have constructed a limit to their level of toleration.<sup>20</sup> He claims that immigrants falling into the Muslim category are from several different ethnic origins, yet referred to with one classification, when other immigrants are not placed under similar restraints.<sup>21</sup> Casanova also mentions that this is a relatively new phenomenon which did not exist a few decades ago. Although, he does not discuss how this could be an indication that Islamophobia has increased or what the corresponding factors may be.

Other works provide a comparative analysis between the UK and France, focusing on their response to diversity. Earlier analyses on these countries point towards their differences in toleration towards diversity. Drawing the conclusion that minority religious groups, such as the Muslims, experienced a great deal of resistance from a highly

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<sup>17</sup> Vertovec, “Super-diversity,” 1025.

<sup>18</sup> Vertovec, “Super-diversity,” 1026.

<sup>19</sup> Vertovec, “Super-diversity,” 1041.

<sup>20</sup> Casanova, “The Politics of Nativism,” 490.

<sup>21</sup> Casanova, “The Politics of Nativism,” 489.

centralized and secular French state, whereas, the UK has shown a more liberal model of toleration.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, this literature notes that a ‘multicultural’ model of citizenship has entered Western Europe, which could lead to more integration of religious groups.<sup>23</sup>

More literature looks at the how diversity has been defined through policy. Lassalle’s article provides further comparison by discussing the policy framework behind the inclusion and incorporation of minority groups. He explains that in order to deal with race inequalities, British policy is developed on the framework of multiculturalism and acceptance of pluralism.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, French policy is drawn up with a focus on the concept of *laïcité* (secularism),<sup>25</sup> which for this issue, looks specifically at citizenship and integration.<sup>26</sup> Lassalle claims that although these countries started out with differing perspectives, in later years their outlooks have converged and their laws are now more similar on a lot of issues regarding access to citizenship and immigration.<sup>27</sup> He displays a positive perspective towards a convergence and acceptance of diversity. Although, these works make a timely comparison of the countries’ stance on diversity from the mid-2000s to the end of 2010, more recent occurrences in politics and policies (which will be expanded on within this paper) in these countries begs to question if the positive attitude towards a ‘unity in diversity’ is still present in the UK and France of today.

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<sup>22</sup> Koenig, “Incorporating Muslim Migrants,” 227.

<sup>23</sup> Koenig, “Incorporating Muslim Migrants,” 230.

<sup>24</sup> Lassalle, “French Laicite and British Multiculturalism,” 230.

<sup>25</sup> This term will be defined further in the third chapter.

<sup>26</sup> Lassalle, “French Laicite and British Multiculturalism,” 230.

<sup>27</sup> Lassalle, “French Laicite and British Multiculturalism,” 240.

Some scholars have linked the conceptualization of modern French citizenship to the post-1980s immigration discussions.<sup>28</sup> Ideas of French nationhood have been tied to ‘homogeneity’ and ‘continuity’.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, many scholars have depended on the ideas of Charles Taylor to expand on the idea of nationalism and secularism in France. These ideas are rooted in the French revolution of 1789, which is also where Gunn argues that *laïcité* has come from. He also compares the laws on secularism between France and the US, drawing parallels on a similar conception of secularism and separation between the state and the church.

### Nationalism and Integration

As immigration and diversity within previously homogenous European societies has increased there has been a backlash in the form of nationalist tendencies. The literature on this topic highlights the concerns of economic and cultural capital, as well as the perceivably increasing amount of terrorist activity arising from Islamic groups.<sup>30</sup> Thus, Islamophobia is considered as a leading variable in the surge of nationalism. In a similar light, Allen argues that nationalistic debates over tolerance, liberalism and secularism are imbued with disguised anti-Muslim sentiments.<sup>31</sup> His analysis agrees with the vast amount of literature that claims there are limits in the European landscape when it comes to acceptance.

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<sup>28</sup> Maxim Silverman, “Citizenship and the Nation-State in France,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 14, no. 3 (1991): 333.

<sup>29</sup> Silverman, “Citizenship and the Nation-State in France,” 336.

<sup>30</sup> Yunis Alam and Charles Husband, “Islamophobia, Community Cohesion and Counter-Terrorism Policies in Britain,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 47, no. 3 (2013): 235-252.

<sup>31</sup> Allen, “Down with Multiculturalism,” 127.

Subsequently, many scholars point to a deeper problem in European multiculturalism; which is the struggle over identity. This draws back on even older debates concerning the European Union and its reluctance to accept Turkey. This is due to Turkey's Muslim culture not being seen as European.<sup>32</sup> Jones argues that politics of a nation-state naturally depend on the creation of an imagined community.<sup>33</sup> Therefore implying that nationalism is part of the equation that keeps European states cohesive. However, he presents a constructive argument aiming to reconcile the problems associated with integration of minorities in Europe. Jones is positive that a re-construction of the European identity to be inclusive of diversity is the solution to the problem, for which end he offers several suggestions.

There has been a multitude of academic discussion on the multicultural nature of the UK, especially with a focus on the British Muslim experience. Some of the top scholars on this topic, such as Tariq Modood and Amir Saeed, have been examining the meaning of British nationalism and belonging in the UK since the early 1990s. Some of the literature argues that multiculturalism in a society comes as a celebration and addition to national identity as opposed to a threat. From this perspective, multiculturalism is a form of globalization and acceptance towards diversity. Modood notes that the idea of the British "gentleman" is not too dissimilar to the model of a good Muslim.<sup>34</sup> He addresses the core of the identity problem as being exclusionary towards religions that are not Euro-

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<sup>32</sup> Jones, "Identity, Solidarity and Islam in Europe," 103.

<sup>33</sup> Jones, "Identity, Solidarity and Islam in Europe," 104.

<sup>34</sup> Tariq Modood, *Not Easy Being British: Colour, Culture and Citizenship* (London: Trentham Books Limited, 1992), 3.

centric and Christian-centric, which automatically excludes Islam.<sup>35</sup> Modood further points out that the problem is multifaceted, as minority groups tend to cling onto group identities, and as a result, not place enough emphasis on commonalities that come with a common nationality.<sup>36</sup>

Similarly, Saeed argues that Muslims are seen as ‘un-British,’ as is exacerbated because of the influence of the media and the general research in the UK that points to non-whites being separate from British identity.<sup>37</sup> This is because of what Modood clarifies to be “cultural racism,” which in the European context is explained to be hostility directed to a “racialized” or “racially marked group” because their culture is seen as alien to the norm of the country.<sup>38</sup> These have led to the modern crisis of identity, which Poole blames on the media.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, she argues that the media has played a large role in destabilizing the multiculturalism in the UK.<sup>40</sup> She’s not the only scholar who thinks that British multiculturalism might be experiencing a downfall, as Joppke also argues that multicultural policies have been retreating and being replaced by centrist policies.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Modood, *Not Easy Being British*, 4.

<sup>36</sup> Modood, *Not Easy Being British*, 4-5.

<sup>37</sup> Amir Saeed, “Media, Racism and Islamophobia: The Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Media,” *Sociology Compass* 1 (2007): 444.

<sup>38</sup> Tariq Modood, *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity, and Muslims in Britain* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 11.

<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth Poole, “The Case of Geert Wilders: Multiculturalism, Islam and Identity in the UK,” *Journal of Religion in Europe* 5 (2012): 162.

<sup>40</sup> Poole, “The Case of Geert Wilders,” 162.

<sup>41</sup> Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State,” 243.

Other works focus on the study of nationalism in France by painting a more comprehensive picture of the different political parties' stances on the main topics of dispute within the public sphere.<sup>42</sup> Kiwan shows that the moderate left has been influenced by the political discourse of the right, especially on topics relating to the integration of minority groups. However, Kiwan does not provide a focused analysis on the experiences of the Muslim population. This is covered by many other scholars, some of which place an emphasis on the institutional discrimination of the Muslim communities in France.<sup>43</sup> Whilst also drawing a comparison between the French and British reactions to Muslims, arguing that Britain has been the most accommodating to their Muslim populations.<sup>44</sup> Subsequently, other scholars have argued that 'race issues' were commonly avoided in France; with the word 'diversity' only entering the public discourse in the 2000s.<sup>45</sup>

### Securitization and Policy

To provide an explanation for Islamophobia and the counter-terrorist measures which have escalated in the European states, some scholars have addressed the concept of "securitization"<sup>46</sup> Cesari adds to the literature on securitization by expanding the concept to mean more than just speech acts.<sup>47</sup> She argues that securitization happens in subtle

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<sup>42</sup> Kiwan, *Identity, Discourse and Experience*.

<sup>43</sup> Kuru, "Secularism, State Policies and Muslim Experiences in Europe".

<sup>44</sup> Kuru, "Secularism, State Policies and Muslim Experiences in Europe," 3.

<sup>45</sup> Cervulle, "The Use of Universalism," 118.

<sup>46</sup> Cesari, "Securitization of Islam," 430-449.

<sup>47</sup> Cesari, "Securitization of Islam," 433.

ways through policy making and institutions.<sup>48</sup> This demonstrates the general anti-Islamic sentiment in Europe and regularly impedes on their religious freedoms and civil liberties, in an otherwise, liberal Western Europe. This framework illustrates that Islamophobia has created a link between Islam and violence; and clearly blames Europe for accepting this mindset.

Other literature further blames European governments for the lack of Muslim integration in Western societies.<sup>49</sup> Lebl argues that it is because some European governments allow the cultivation of ‘radical Islam’.<sup>50</sup> This is done through a lack of governing policy in certain neighbourhoods with high concentrations of immigrants. This results in the perpetuation of their own Islamic values over “European values,” which impedes their ability to assimilate properly.<sup>51</sup> This view draws a large stroke over the diversity in Muslim cultures and appears to equate radical Islam with ‘normal’ Islam.

### **Background on the Theory Literature**

The theory that will be used to explain my analysis is based on identity politics. This theory draws heavily from its philosophical roots, and has diverged in more contemporary times towards different areas of study including: political science, history, sociology and humanities. Within these areas of study there are further classifications that fall under the theory of identity formation such as: gender, class, sexuality, and race. Most literature classifies that identity politics has arisen under the liberal democratic

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<sup>48</sup> Cesari, “Securitization of Islam,” 433.

<sup>49</sup> Lebl, “Radical Islam,” 46-60.

<sup>50</sup> Lebl, “Radical Islam,” 47.

<sup>51</sup> Lebl, “Radical Islam,” 47.

system and is affected by the underpinnings of liberal ideology. Visible social identity is used to divide and suppress groups of people.<sup>52</sup> More recently, identity politics has become an essential part of political discourse and poses definitive implications on political inclusivity, definitions of self-identity and the potential for national unity and resistance.

The formation of identity is affected by a multitude of intersectional variables including; gender, racial and ethnic background, religious and political beliefs, sexuality, class et cetera. Intersectionality looks at the multilayered and complex nature of people's multiple identities and how they experience discrimination.<sup>53</sup> However, the focus of my paper will be on racial and cultural discrimination (which, in the case of Islamophobia, is linked to religion as well). This is because, the emphasis of my paper is on discrimination based on religion, thus although the effects of self-identification from various other sources cannot be ignored, racial and cultural classification is the most relevant category when studying diversity and multiculturalism in a society. Moreover, the scope of my paper does not permit me to look at all the variables of identity.

This look at the literature will provide a historical preview of the relevant works in racial and ethnic identity theories, divided by the focus of the research. A vast amount of the research that initiated the academic discussion on identity politics, particularly with regards to race, has originated in the United States. The US has provided a fertile ground for the study and analysis of race dynamics because it has a well-known history of racism

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<sup>52</sup> Linda Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender and the Self* (Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2005), 6.

<sup>53</sup> Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour," *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1242-1243.

in slavery and amongst large immigrant populations, such as the Latin Americans. Intersectionality of identity with regards to race usually comes with gender as well, for this reason my review will also cover some of the more important works in this field.

### Identity Theory and Philosophy

This review will cover the works in the field of identity politics by starting with the general category of identity formations with a focus on race and ethnicity. The study of racial identity theory is generally linked to notions of nationalism and how they work together. The earlier works in this literature owe a lot to philosophy. Especially to philosophers such as Frantz Fanon and Michel Foucault who have, respectively, written about race and sexuality.<sup>54</sup>

Fanon's writing on the black struggle to define their identity within postcolonial France in the 1950s sets the precedent for understanding "dislocation" and "separation" of one's own racial identity.<sup>55</sup> Fanon blames French colonialism in Africa for the disconnection between the French identity and African- French identity.<sup>56</sup> He further highlights the importance of language, and a culture cultivated around that language; which creates barriers for integration and diversity for those who struggle to speak the language.<sup>57</sup> Fanon argues that acceptance of one culture—more specifically, the way of speaking one language—is, in essence, the rejection of the other culture.<sup>58</sup> As he says

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<sup>54</sup> See, Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press 1967) and Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality; Volume I: An Introduction*, Trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

<sup>55</sup> Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 25.

<sup>56</sup> Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 18.

<sup>57</sup> Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 28.

about the colonized black man leaving his “mother country” and moving to more “civilized” France; “He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness,”<sup>59</sup>

Similarly, Foucault’s writing places an emphasis on language and its effect on the formation of identity. However, Foucault focuses on sex and how it has historically been a repressed subject, which has resulted in the repression of the people and their identity. He links sexual repression to a Marxist view of class struggle. In this way, Foucault outlines how the empowerment of sexual expression and identity is linked to politics and power. His work, *The History of Sexuality*, is also seen as one of the originators in the thought that sexual identity, especially homosexuality, is a product of genealogy.<sup>60</sup>

### Racial Theory

The theory on the formation of race as a part of identity is explained through philosophical and sociological frameworks, with some scholars also explaining the particular situation and disadvantage of certain groups. Some scholars aim to portray a general understanding of race as a group identity.<sup>61</sup> Blumer describes race as a collective group.<sup>62</sup> His theory goes further into how prejudice occurs and accelerates within a collective group mentality. This theory links the formation of racial identity to notions of nationalism, similar to Fanon’s theory. One race is made to feel superior and distinctive

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<sup>58</sup> Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 18

<sup>59</sup> Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 18.

<sup>60</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 43.

<sup>61</sup> Herbert Blumer, “Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position” *The Pacific Sociological Review* 1, no. 1 (1958), 3-7.

<sup>62</sup> Blumer, “Race Prejudice,” 4.

in comparison to the others and this leads to an isolated definition of self, which is based on differences.<sup>63</sup> Thus contributing to understanding how nationalism can rise alongside discrimination and segregation.

Nationalist notions are a vast part of what defines racial identity politics, most especially in the US. Identity politics in the US initially provides an analysis of African American racial and national identity. Prominent scholars, such as Omi and Winant, identify the white settlers and slave owners as systematically placing the concept of “race” in America.<sup>64</sup> Thus, the concept of “race” forms based on oppression and violence, and evolves in a trajectory leading to segregation. Race ideology comes with a set of “racial beliefs” and “racial etiquette” often based on a number of stereotypes.<sup>65</sup> This ideology advances the thought of race as a natural and almost “scientific” division of people.<sup>66</sup> “Racial formations” are then used as political tools to suppress. This view on identity looks at the sociological creation of race and its political implications.

The discussion of race and identity is further contextualized by Alcoff, who brings in the importance of class and sex, to the question of race. Alcoff argues that the mere visibility of certain physical qualities automatically classifies one’s identity in society and therefore their privilege or lack thereof. She further states that capitalism perpetuates a racial system of wealth and a materialistic society that can only see what is

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<sup>63</sup> Blumer, “Race Prejudice,” 4.

<sup>64</sup> Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formations in the United States: From 1960s to 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

<sup>65</sup> Omi and Winant, *Racial Formations*, 6.

<sup>66</sup> Omi and Winant, *Racial Formations*, 6.

“visible” as the truth.<sup>67</sup> This perspective puts an emphasis on physical appearance, as an identifier of race and ethnicity. It also brings forth the notion of second-hand racism and the ability to “pass” as a different race or ethnicity. Alcoff’s discussion is rooted in the Hispanic experience of racism in the US.

But visibility as a criterion of discrimination has another side; invisibility in the race, one feels as though, they belong. “Passing” is then another form of racial segregation.<sup>68</sup> For instance, passing for white, which could come as a privilege in some cases, actually leads to a deeper form of isolation.<sup>69</sup> This is because the person that passes as a race outside of their own is then excluded from both races. Piper explains her own experience in this regard; perceived as white from the black community and seen as white from the white community *until* they became aware of her roots.<sup>70</sup> In cases similar to this one, the sense of belonging one is told they must feel towards a particular race (and group) is skewed and identity formation is fractured.

“Whiteness” as a privilege is further elaborated in other works that emphasize its value in society.<sup>71</sup> “White power” and “white supremacy” as a socially constructed concept that both, those passing as white, and those not passing as white partake in.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Alcoff, *Visible Identities*, 6.

<sup>68</sup> Adrian Piper, “Passing for White, Passing for Black (1991)” in *Out of Order, Out of Sight, Volume I: Selected Essays in Meta-Art 1968-1992* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).

<sup>69</sup> Piper, “Passing for White,” 9.

<sup>70</sup> Piper, “Passing for White,” 3.

<sup>71</sup> George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Benefit From Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 2006).

<sup>72</sup> Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*, vii.

Thus, categorizing race in culture besets structural consequences for different groups.<sup>73</sup> This argument brings to light the significance of not only “race” but also “space”. From Lipsitz analysis the US is especially prone to an investment in whiteness because of its racialized history.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the “space,” which in this case is America, is central to her argument, though the core of her argument could also be applied to different locations. This argument is similar to Fanon’s discussion of colonized cultures and how they create a future of racial classification that excludes and discriminates.<sup>75</sup>

However, “race” fails to have a biological explanation. As Noel Ignatiev says, “the only race is the human race.”<sup>76</sup> Thus as a social concept whiteness can be redefined in any way to exclude or include anyone, regardless of actual skin colour, as was seen in the case of the early Irish immigrants to the US. Thus, through his analysis Ignatiev’s discussion links racial identification to class position in society, while emphasizing the connection between class and race in identity theory.

### Identity of Race and Sex

The discussion of identity theory would be incomplete without the brief mention of its intersectional connectedness to gender and class. Class features as a prominent background explanation in the literature on racial theory. Gender (or sex) on the other hand, is often interconnected to the struggle of internal identity. In the case of racial

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<sup>73</sup> Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*, 2.

<sup>74</sup> Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*, 7.

<sup>75</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963).

<sup>76</sup> Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge 1995), 1.

minorities, sex is usually ignored, and leads to an identity that is even further disadvantaged in society.

An example of this struggle can be seen in the literature explaining the phenomenon that excludes black women from the discourse on racial identity, and from the discussion on feminism.<sup>77</sup> The main scholars in this field have argued that there is multidimensionality to the experience of a black woman (as opposed to a black man), which has been ignored by both society and academia for some time.<sup>78</sup> The focus in the literature draws attention to the most privileged of the races, classes or sexes, and thus further disadvantages those who are “multi-burdened”.<sup>79</sup> This concept is further discussed by Julie Bettie,<sup>80</sup> who argues that schools routinely exclude certain cultures and languages which discriminate against girls of colour.

William Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*

The theory I will be working with in my paper will mainly come from William Connolly’s, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*.<sup>81</sup> Connolly’s book is an important addition to the theory on identity politics and is well cited by many scholars. In this book Connolly provides a qualitative study with an

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<sup>77</sup> Kimberle Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: a Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Anti-Racist Politics,” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. 1 (1989): 139-167.

<sup>78</sup> Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex,” 140.

<sup>79</sup> Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex,” 140.

<sup>80</sup> Julie Bettie, *Women Without Class: Girls, Race and Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

<sup>81</sup> William E. Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (London: Cornell University Press, 1991).

interpretive framework in order to present a comprehensive theory on the formation of identity. He addresses that this is not a creation of a completely new theory; instead it is to provide an understanding of what Connolly observes to be a paradox in identity politics.<sup>82</sup> He uses an interpretative approach to analyze how philosophy can be used to explain this paradox. In essence, it is still a theory generating methodology because Connolly attempts to answer why identity is formed from differences and contemplates the resulting political ramifications.

Although the book is heavily saturated in liberal political thought and argues that modern identity politics is driven from liberalism, it also raises theological and ethical concerns with the problem of identity and difference. More specifically, Connolly wants to address how entrenched identities use ‘difference’ in order to supersede their ethical concerns. He then reflects on how identity is formed from this contradiction and the political implications of it.

Connolly divides his arguments into seven chapters. He starts by posing the theological question of evil; ‘the problem of evil’ as he describes it, is the inescapable injustices of life.<sup>83</sup> Connolly positions this problem within the concepts of freedom and responsibility and proceeds to expand its implications with regards to the individual, personally and collectively. His argument then moves towards the political realm, more specifically, to take a deeper look at international politics.

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<sup>82</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 15.

<sup>83</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 1.

He explores how the concept of “otherness” entered the political discourse by referring to Tzvetan Todorov’s, *The Conquest of America*. The ethical dilemma centered in Todorov’s philosophy allows Connolly to create a bridge between the theological dilemma raised in the first chapter and the political implications discussed in the second chapter and onwards. By providing an analysis of Todorov’s conclusions Connolly is able to delve deeper into the theory of identity and pose questions on how the conception of identity has formed and functioned in political literature. He expands on how identity of Western (Christian) society in general was formed through invasions and conversions.<sup>84</sup> Highlighting that identity is linked to tolerance and the community, which under further analysis means, it comes with its own self-interests.<sup>85</sup> Thus, within international political strife, every country (community) is bound to fall back on its own self-interests, which makes international conflict resolution difficult.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, ‘identity’ is central to the study of international relations. Connolly then examines how the formation of collective identity superimposes a normalization of differences and concedes to neutralization of them in national discourse.

The discussion on how global political discourse developed leads to Connolly’s main argument, which this paper will use as a basis and expand further on. Connolly provides a phenomenology on how personal identity is established and how it functions within the collective. In essence, Connolly argues that identity is constructed through a

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<sup>84</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 48.

<sup>85</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 48.

<sup>86</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 48.

collection of socially normalized differences.<sup>87</sup> Thus, identity requires difference in order to exist and thrive.<sup>88</sup> However, in liberal societies a dual contradiction exists. This is the difference between liberal individualism and liberal individuality. Connolly argues that liberalism in society aims to establish a ‘normal’ individual; this individual is created using a series of conventions and norms.<sup>89</sup> In contrast to this, individuality espouses to create an identity in protest against the ‘normal’ identity.<sup>90</sup> Thus, there is a ‘hegemony of identity’ which is normalized, and naturally, excludes diversity and anything that which is outside of its norm.<sup>91</sup> Connolly further argues that humans are unable to escape the need to be a part of a collective, which will always come with its set of common rules and customs.<sup>92</sup>

In later chapters, Connolly returns to the ethical concerns with which he started his arguments and addresses how ethical concerns are central to identity politics. He argues that in the creation of standards for the “true” shared identity within a political bloc, one must include responsibility. That is to say, the problem of normalized identities comes from their lack of responsibility and apathy towards the evils that result from the acceptance of one identity. Therefore, the solution is to insert a sense of responsibility towards what may not be accepted or whatever evil may come from having one standard identity in a society.

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<sup>87</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 64.

<sup>88</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 64.

<sup>89</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 74.

<sup>90</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 73-75.

<sup>91</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 86.

<sup>92</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 94.

Connolly then further reviews how identity functions in a democracy and how territorial claims have alienating effects. This is because democracy works best within a state that has clear territorial boundaries and every state endorses a collective identity. Subsequently, a collective identity is inherently exclusionary.<sup>93</sup> Thus, the state is responsible for the creation of its own marginalized, perhaps criminalized, groups. Connolly concludes by providing possible political solutions to the problems of identity he addresses throughout his book.

*Identity/Difference* provides a theoretical analysis that can be used to demonstrate how identity politics can explain the problems arising from diversity within a state. This paper will use Connolly's theories as a stable to analyze the particular situation within each of the case studies.

### **Methodology**

This paper will answer the research questions;

- a) *How* have European countries responded to the rise of diversity, arising from an increase of the Muslim populations within their borders?
- b) *Why* is the rise of Islamophobia concurrent to the rise of diversity?

In order to provide an answer to these questions a comparative historical analysis will be conducted with a focus on two case studies; the United Kingdom and France. The time frame for this analysis will be from World War Two to the present. There will be a specific focus on this time period because immigration experienced a large spike after WWII due to a higher need for workers in these countries, as well as elsewhere in

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<sup>93</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 199.

Europe.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, the more homogenous European populations started to truly become ‘diverse’ after this period, making it ideal to study the evolution of diversity from WWII onwards.

The research questions will be analyzed in the following ways;

- a) *How* Europe has responded will be studied by looking at pivotal historical events and how they inspired a changed in the perception of the Muslims within these states.
- b) *Why* Islamophobia has arisen along with diversity will be analyzed by looking at the three reasons;
  1. Cultural and identity clashes between European cultures and Muslim culture
  2. Increasing rise of instability in the Middle East and wars
  3. The role of the media in elevating these two issues

My hypothesis for this research question is that a clash of cultures and identities between the Muslim population and, historically Christian, and secular Europeans has led to a rise in identity politics; hence a lack of acceptance towards diversity.

The following key terms are central to the analysis which will be conducted in this paper and they will be further defined. ‘Diversity’, or ‘super-diversity’ (a term coined by Vertovec),<sup>95</sup> is understood to encompass many different forms of diversity including,

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<sup>94</sup> Lauren McLaren, “Immigration and Political Trust in the UK,” *Political Insight* 4, no 3 (2013): 14.

<sup>95</sup> Vertovec, “Super-diversity,” 1024.

religion, gender, age, origin, language, skill set and immigration status.<sup>96</sup> However, this paper will look at immigrant origins with a particular focus on religious diversity as the most significant diversifying point. The manifestation of the diversity defined here, with regards to each case study, will be further assessed in the later chapters.

It is important to distinctly define the forms of racism and discrimination that this paper will examine. It is argued that the conceptualization of race and racism, along with racial inequality has historically been defined in limited terms.<sup>97</sup> It is too dependent on the black-white relationship which is based on the, “Atlantic slavery triangle of Western Europe-West Africa- America.”<sup>98</sup> Although, this dualist view of racism has progressed, it is still the classical view and remains resilient within the literature. Modood refers to this dualist perspective on racism as ‘colour racism’ and explains how it does not work for Asian immigrants in Europe.<sup>99</sup>

Drawing on Modood’s perspective, I will expand the definition to include Muslim immigrants in Europe, and how this dualist view is inadequate for them as well. Modood describes, ‘cultural racism’, defined as a “racialized image” that “appeals to cultural motifs such as language, religion, family structure, exotic dress, cuisine and art forms.”<sup>100</sup> Thus, under this framework ethnic groups are treated as ‘alien’ and undesirable, with these motifs used to discriminate and harass them as a group and to justify treating them

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<sup>96</sup> Connor, “Quantifying Immigrant Diversity in Europe,” 2056.

<sup>97</sup> Modood, *Multicultural Politics*, 6.

<sup>98</sup> Modood, *Multicultural Politics*, 6.

<sup>99</sup> Modood, *Multicultural Politics*, 7.

<sup>100</sup> Modood, *Multicultural Politics*, 7.

negatively.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, it is important to note that the Muslim populations within Europe are a diverse group of people from different countries and cultures. As a diverse group, Muslims experience both, a 'colour racism' and 'cultural racism'. Thus, their experiences are nuanced and Islamophobia is one umbrella under which discrimination against them can be studied. It should be noted that Islamophobia is a slightly controversial term, defined differently by various scholars. As a loaded term it is argued that it can be used in problematic ways.<sup>102</sup> However, this does not justify the denial of the existence of the term.<sup>103</sup> Given the rise of anti-immigration sentiments and policies directly targeting Muslims, along with the historical discrimination and disadvantages experienced by Muslims in the West, it is undeniable that there is racism directed at all those who are (perceived to be) Muslim. Thus, Islamophobia is an efficient and profound way in which to explain the condition and perception of Islam and Muslims in the West.

Although the term has existed since before the terrorist attacks on the twin towers in 2001, it has gained more visibility and legitimacy in the post- 9/11 world.<sup>104</sup> Many scholars have defined it broadly as racism against Muslims,<sup>105</sup> with a view of Islam as violent and hostile. This paper will agree with this definition and further define Islamophobia as Islam being perceived as a uniform bloc that is separate from other cultures, inferior to the West, a violent political ideology, engaged and justified in its

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<sup>101</sup> Modood, *Multicultural Politics*, 7.

<sup>102</sup> Sabine Schiffer and Constantin Wagner, "Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia- New Enemies, Old Patterns," *Race and Class* 52, no.3 (2011): 79.

<sup>103</sup> Schiffer and Wagner, "Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia," 79.

<sup>104</sup> Alam and Husband, "Islamophobia," 237.

<sup>105</sup> Schiffer and Wagner, "Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia," 79.

discrimination and exclusion of Muslims from society, and its normalization of these hostile thoughts and behaviours.<sup>106</sup>

The comparative analysis I will undergo will be based on two case studies, the United Kingdom and France. My reasons for choosing these two countries to compare is due to their geographic proximity, which presents a unique situation where they are both influenced by events that happen in the other country yet they have developed through separate histories and have thus created different frameworks for handling diversity. More specifically, they hold some of the largest Muslim populations in Europe.<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, these are two of the most powerful countries in Europe and a desired location for many present and future immigrants and refugees, meaning their diversity (especially with regards to Muslims) could increase significantly.

With a rise in extreme Islamic terrorism and ongoing conflict in Syria, this study hopes to situate the position of diversity in the UK and France. It is a timely project that aims to shed light on the perception of Muslims and their level of belonging in these countries, with the hopes of furthering and enhancing the discourse on diversity in Europe. Although, there are limits to this study, as it is based solely on secondary literature I am limited to what is already available. The abundance on literature on these topics means there is a struggle over deconstructing different frameworks in order to reconstruct them within my paper in a coherent manner. Moreover, there must be caution exercised over the biases which are present within every scholars work.

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<sup>106</sup> Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* (London: Runnymede Trust, 1997), 5.

<sup>107</sup> France has the largest Muslim population (5.7 million), followed by Germany (4.9 million) then the UK (4.1 million). Found in Pew Research Statistics 2016.

## CHAPTER 2:

### Multiculturalism and Identity in the United Kingdom

“Take back control,” was the infamous slogan of the Leave campaign, and following its advice Britain took an exit from the EU. Brexit could represent the symbolic start to the end of globalization discussions. The era of supranational identities and celebrating diversity seems to be ending, while right wing nationalism is on the rise—in Europe and other countries all over the world. The case of the United Kingdom demonstrates how, after years of growth in immigration and diversity, instead of moving towards a better model of acceptance and inclusivity, there has been a push in the opposite direction.

Brexit became successful regardless of Scotland voting to ‘remain.’ This along with the larger “population” concerns show how Britain is moving towards disunity. One of the main issues in the campaign to leave the European Union was on the role of demography.<sup>108</sup> Along with the movement of peoples to and from the UK, were also socio-economic interests. These concerns were driven by the ‘free movement of workers’ within the EU, and the perception that jobs and money were being lost to non-UK born workers.<sup>109</sup> Although economic issues played a role, it has been argued that the core of the problem went much deeper. “Take back control” was aimed at the topic where the public felt the most unease—immigration. Concerns about borders and incoming refugees and immigrants bred an atmosphere of fear, fueled by the crisis in the Middle

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<sup>108</sup> Stuart Gietel-Basten, “Why Brexit? The Toxic Mix of Immigration and Austerity,” *Population and Development Review* 42, no. 4 (Spring 2016): 673.

<sup>109</sup> Jonathan Portes, “Immigration after Brexit,” *National Institute Economic Review* 238, no. 1 (2016): 13.

East and the potential ‘threat’ of Turkey joining the EU.<sup>110</sup> Issues such as the strife in Syria were presented as a security and demographic menace in the Leave campaign.<sup>111</sup> The concern that Turkey would suddenly enter the EU exacerbated the dangers from the Middle East, as well as creating further questions on the identity of Europe. From the perspective of the Leave campaigners, the ideal future of Europe was at risk.<sup>112</sup> As Kauffman argues, at its core, Brexit was motivated by identity politics.<sup>113</sup>

At a Security Conference in Munich in February of 2011, Prime Minister, David Cameron, delivered a speech that addressed the failure of diversity in Britain; “Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream. We’ve failed to provide a society to which they feel they want to belong.”<sup>114</sup> These few lines highlight the lack of acceptance of multicultural communities in the UK. Moreover, the fact that this was a speech given at a conference on security issues, demonstrates that there is a perceived threat arising from multiculturalism, and in particular from Muslims.

The history of the rise of diversity in Britain is fraught with a similar malaise. This chapter will analyze the current status of multiculturalism in the UK by focusing on the acceptance of its Muslim population. This will be done by identifying and analyzing

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<sup>110</sup> Gietel-Basten, “Why Brexit?” 676.

<sup>111</sup> Gietel-Basten, “Why Brexit?” 676.

<sup>112</sup> Gietel-Basten, “Why Brexit?” 676.

<sup>113</sup> Eric Kauffman, “It’s not the Economy Stupid: Brexit as a Story of Personal Values,” *The London School of Economics and Political Science*, July, 7, 2016, <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/personal-values-brexit-vote/>

<sup>114</sup> David Cameron, “PM’s speech at Munich Security Conference,” UK Government, published February 5, 2011. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference>.

certain key moments in history that have had large impacts on the perception of Muslims in British culture and life. Firstly, in order to analyze how a nation, such as the UK, can be multicultural while maintaining its diversity under a single national identity, it is essential to understand the historical roots of the concept of Britishness and how its past affects its current form. Followed by the breakdown of the pivotal events that have occurred throughout the decades following the rise of immigration. These specific events were chosen because they show a clear transformation in the opinion of the society and provide markers for understanding how Islamophobia has revealed itself in the UK today. The manifestation of Islamophobia in the UK will be viewed under the British political context, which places an importance on immigration and border control, the local issues over limited resources which appear on the local and national news, and are then abused by nationalist politics.<sup>115</sup> “Ethnicization of Islam is actually part of a wider process through which boundaries and subject positions are ascribed and contested within the context of a racial politics that circumscribes appeals to both biological and cultural (ethnic) registers for expressing difference.”<sup>116</sup>

The events that created a change in the British opinion will be identified as the following; firstly, the OPEC oil embargo of 1973. This event illustrates how the British awareness of Muslim immigrants shifted from seeing them merely as different peoples to disliked peoples. Secondly, the Rushdie affair of 1989 further transforms the image of Muslims into hostile people that are threatening to society. The influence and importance of the media in the rise of Islamophobia can also be observed in this early case.

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<sup>115</sup> Alam and Husband, “Islamophobia,” 238.

<sup>116</sup> Tyrer and Sayyid, “Governing Ghosts,” 355.

Subsequently, the Gulf-War of 1990, coming in the wake of the Rushdie affair, expedites the antagonizing and alienation of the Muslim settlers. Lastly, the 7/7 London bombings and the continual escalation of Islamic violence demonstrates the failing nature in the acceptance of Britain's Muslim population. Thus, this chapter will argue that, although, the UK has attempted to embrace its diversity, their ventures have been progressive, but nevertheless, unreliable and deficient.

### **History of “Britishness”**

The concept of “Britishness” has many different and contradictory aspects. It is rooted in the idea of a nation-state, which naturally creates an “imagined community” of people.<sup>117</sup> Moreover, nation-states have many different elements such as, geography, politics, history, culture and economy that come together through a process to create a single nation.<sup>118</sup> A history of conquest and shifting borders also complicates the relationship of nationality. This is especially true for the case of Britain. British identity and citizenship has historically come with confusion about its boundaries.<sup>119</sup> Thus, understanding the idea of “Britishness” is central to the concepts of citizenship and belonging.

The concept of a ‘nation-state’ has inherent contradictions; a *state* holds power within geographic boundaries and provides its citizens with certain universal rights,

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<sup>117</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities; Reflections on the Origin and the Spread of Nationalism* (London; Verso, 1983).

<sup>118</sup> Rosemary Sales, “Britain and Britishness; Place, Belonging and Exclusion,” in *Muslims in Britain; Making Social and Political Space*, ed. Waqar I. U. Ahmad and Ziauddin Sardar (New York: Routledge, 2012), 33.

<sup>119</sup> Robin Cohen, “Fuzzy Frontiers of Identity: The British Case,” *Social Identities* 1 (November 1995): 36.

whereas, a *nation*, is the coming together of peoples who have some shared history and culture.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, citizenship is meant to hold universal rights above cultural differences; however, it only exists within the boundaries of a nation-state which is based on cultural specificity.<sup>121</sup> When a nation-state is being constructed there is spatial extension, which involves taking in different ethnic and linguistic groups.<sup>122</sup> These new groups are later subjected to the national story of the dominant group. Similarly, the United Kingdom was constructed through the conquest of England over the other nations which are now part of its territory.<sup>123</sup> Thus, British national identity, which is arguably a relatively new construct, was superimposed on the previously separate identities of the English, Welsh, Irish and Scottish.<sup>124</sup> Yet, the dominance of the English over the rest of the ethnic groups is apparent in the name of the national language, supremacy of London, name of the country and the conditions some groups are held to before they can receive national belonging.

More specifically, the national language is called English, not British.<sup>125</sup> There have been many attempts to curb other national languages such as Welsh, Gaelic and Irish.<sup>126</sup> The power of England can also be seen in the economic and political dominion

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<sup>120</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 34.

<sup>121</sup> Stephen Castles, *Ethnicity and Globalization; From Migrant Worker to Transnational Citizen* (London; Sage, 2000) 188.

<sup>122</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 34.

<sup>123</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 35.

<sup>124</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 35.

<sup>125</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 35.

<sup>126</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 35.

of London.<sup>127</sup> Moreover, Sales argues that, there is a prevalence in the interchangeable use of ‘Britain’ and ‘England,’ and some general confusion over the actual name of the country.<sup>128</sup> Along with the common practice of a Scottish or Welsh person being referred to as British when they are successful, yet remaining Scottish or Welsh if they are not.<sup>129</sup> As Connolly argues, trying to establish an identity over an already established identity does not work.<sup>130</sup> This is because the first identity already holds a certain social space within the national frame. The troubles of trying to establish a new identity on top of an existing identity can be further seen in the later attempts to integrate ethnic minorities into British society.

With regards to the Irish, they have historically held an unclear position within the British nation. Having been partitioned in 1920, Ireland is Britain’s oldest colony. The divide between Northern and Southern Ireland, especially with regards to being part of the union, was never fairly resolved. This divide was in part due to the religious differences; the south was Protestant and preferred to be a part of the predominantly Protestant United Kingdom. This led to the construction of the borders of Northern Ireland with strategic and manipulative tactics.<sup>131</sup> The troubling history of acquisition has bled into the ambiguous nature of the Irish in Britain. Although Irish citizens face much

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<sup>127</sup> Sales, “Britain and Britishness,” 35.

<sup>128</sup> Sales, “Britain and Britishness,” 35.

<sup>129</sup> Sales, “Britain and Britishness,” 35.

<sup>130</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 160.

<sup>131</sup> Sales, “Britain and Britishness,” 35.

economic and social discrimination, they are given full citizenship within Britain, which has strategic reasons.<sup>132</sup>

Not only was the British state constructed through England's domination over the other nations, it was also created whilst England was colonizing in Africa, the Indian subcontinent, America and elsewhere. Thus, British identity was constructed through conquest and supremacy; an empire in which the sun never set.<sup>133</sup> The subsequent process of decolonization has led to the ambiguities within national identity and citizenship.<sup>134</sup>

Decolonization and the formation of the Commonwealth afforded the previous colonials entry rights into Britain. This was a symbolic, universal equality bestowed because Britain felt responsible as the 'parent' of the colonized nations.<sup>135</sup> However, when Commonwealth citizens tried to use their rights inside of Britain, they faced discrimination and animosity.<sup>136</sup> The following decades have seen the struggles of ethnic minorities for full inclusion in the UK.<sup>137</sup> As Sales argues, "tensions remain between the notion of Britain as a place and the concept of 'British people,' which is often seen in more exclusive ethnic terms."<sup>138</sup>

### **OPEC Oil Crisis 1973**

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<sup>132</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 35.

<sup>133</sup> Cohen, "Fuzzy Frontiers of Identity," 48.

<sup>134</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 35.

<sup>135</sup> Kathleen Paul, *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 12.

<sup>136</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 36.

<sup>137</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 36.

<sup>138</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 36.

The issues over Britishness and belonging have only exacerbated as immigration, and thus diversity within the UK has grown. This section will analyze the social and economic immigration patterns and economic concerns, which affected immigration and the perception of the incoming ethnic groups. Furthermore, the OPEC Oil Embargo of 1973, and the resulting change in the perception of Muslim minorities will be examined, with a focus on how perceived identity clashes as well as, instability in the Middle East slowly begets Islamophobia in the UK.

After the Second World War, the UK, as well as many other European countries, experienced labour shortages, which resulted in seeking external labour. Some of the incoming migrants were from other European countries, but majority came from former colonies, such as India, Pakistan and Jamaica, which had become part of the New Commonwealth.<sup>139</sup> Legislation in 1948 allowed people who were formerly regarded as subjects of the British Empire, to become citizens of the Commonwealth, which gave them full rights to reside in Britain.<sup>140</sup> It is noteworthy that the arrival of *Empire Windrush* in 1948 marked a clear cultural change. This boat brought 492 Jamaican migrants and symbolized the initiation of two immensely significant factors;<sup>141</sup> the mass postwar immigration into the UK and the influx of visibly different populations.

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<sup>139</sup> Lauren McLaren, "Immigration and Political Trust in the UK," *Political Insight* 4, no 3 (2013): 14.

<sup>140</sup> Gilles Kepel, *Allah in the West: Islamic Movements in America and Europe*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 99.

<sup>141</sup> Matthew Mead, "Empire Windrush: The Cultural Memory of an Imaginary Arrival," *Journal of Post-Colonial Writing* 45, no. 2 (2009): 137.

By 1951, there was an estimated 218, 000 people of Commonwealth origin in the UK, this number increased to 541, 000 in ten years.<sup>142</sup> Between the years of 1945-1961, as immigration from the New Commonwealth countries grew, although no legislation had yet to be established to stop this influx, there was an inauguration in the reconstruction of Britishness around race.<sup>143</sup> Non-white people were seen as ‘alien races’, whose establishment within the UK threatening the ‘British way of life’.<sup>144</sup> Similar to the other immigrants, Muslims were generalized under the labels, ‘blacks,’ ‘Asians’ and ‘Indians,’ without holding particular attention in the sea of ‘others’.<sup>145</sup> Thus, during the early 1950s and 1960s, it is argued that Muslims were seen as “law-abiding, docile folks” with only their “colour and ethnicity” as the “problem”.<sup>146</sup>

As economic stagnation of the 1960s worsened, Commonwealth Immigration Bill of 1962 was introduced.<sup>147</sup> This bill significantly restricted the entry of workers from the New Commonwealth countries, even though, family reunification continued.<sup>148</sup> The growth in diversity from populations that could visibly be marked as ‘ethnic others,’ along with the economic struggles of the 1960s led to the primary displays of xenophobic reactions in the UK. This can be seen in the “Rivers of Blood” speech delivered by Enoch

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<sup>142</sup> McLaren, “Immigration and Political Trust in the UK,” 14.

<sup>143</sup> Mark Israel, *South African Political Exile in the United Kingdom*, (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999), 93.

<sup>144</sup> Israel, *South African Political Exile*, 93.

<sup>145</sup> Ziauddin Sardar and Waqar I. U. Ahmad, “Introduction,” in *Muslims in Britain: Making Social and Political Space*, ed. Ziauddin Sardar and Waqar I. U. Ahmad (New York: Routledge, 2012), 2.

<sup>146</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 2.

<sup>147</sup> McLaren, “Immigration and Political Trust in the UK,” 14.

<sup>148</sup> McLaren, “Immigration and Political Trust in the UK,” 14.

Powell in 1968, which urged for tighter controls over immigration.<sup>149</sup> This led to the follow up Acts of 1968 and 1971, aimed to further restrict the entry of those not born within the borders of the UK or who had familial ties in the UK.<sup>150</sup> Thus, the 1960s was a time of reaction against the initial rush and build-up of the mass postwar immigrants. At this time British policy aspired to assimilate the immigrants into British culture;<sup>151</sup> in this way attempting to dissolve the differences within diverse cultures.

Despite these restrictive Acts, the population of immigrants with Commonwealth origins rose to 1.1 million by 1971.<sup>152</sup> During the midst of these struggles with the rise of diversity within Britain, was the OPEC oil crisis of 1973. This embargo was the result of political and economic strategizing of the Organization of Arab Petrol Exporting Countries (OAPEC), who demanded the evacuation of Israeli forces from all Arab territory, as well as, the restoration of Palestinian rights.<sup>153</sup> This embargo was, in part, caused by the October War between the Israelis and the Arabs in 1973. It translated as the entry of “oil power” into politics and reflected the dependence of industrialized states on foreign oil.<sup>154</sup> Coming at the end of the postwar economic boom, oil embargo contributed

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<sup>149</sup> Poynting and Mason, “The Resistible Rise,” 64.

<sup>150</sup> Poynting and Mason, “The Resistible Rise,” 65.

<sup>151</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 2.

<sup>152</sup> McLaren, “Immigration and Political Trust in the UK,” 14.

<sup>153</sup> Rudiger Graf, “Making use of the ‘Oil Weapon’: Western Industrialized Countries and Arab Petropolitics in 1973-1974,” *Diplomatic History* 36, no. 1 (2012): 185.

<sup>154</sup> Graf, “Making use of the ‘Oil Weapon,’” 185.

to the economic crisis.<sup>155</sup> This crisis led to the upsurge in the consumer prices of petroleum,<sup>156</sup> which affected the daily lives of ordinary citizens in the UK.

The oil crisis had an impact on the perception of the Muslims residing in Britain. Previously seen as merely different and ‘alien’, but otherwise not any different from the other immigrant groups, they were abruptly singled out from the rest of the ‘others’. Suddenly, “Muslims were regarded as despotic ogres, dangerous revolutionaries and violent, treacherous thugs bent on undermining decency and democracy.”<sup>157</sup> This was, in part, due to the portrayal of Muslims throughout European history as depended on the “desires and fears” that the West cast onto them.<sup>158</sup> After the oil crisis, all ‘Muslims’ were thought of as ‘Arabs’, and all ‘Arabs’ seen as deceitful and conniving people.<sup>159</sup> This perception was aided by decades of European history that characterized Muslims as infidels and bloodthirsty barbarians, due partially to, the challenge Muslims presented to the Crusaders and the invasion of Ottomans into Christian Europe.

Thus, to the background of a rising tide of immigrants that were noticeably different, came the downfall of the economy and a series of events; including the Six-Day War in the Middle East and the OPEC oil embargo of the early 1970s. All of which show that negative changes on the perception of Muslims were starting to permeate into the attitude of the British. Furthermore, these events demonstrate how instability in the

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<sup>155</sup> Graf, “Making use of the ‘Oil Weapon,’” 208.

<sup>156</sup> Kier Thorpe, “The Forgotten Shortage: Britain’s handling of the 1967 Oil Embargo,” *Contemporary British History* 21, no 2 (2007): 212-213.

<sup>157</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 2.

<sup>158</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 2.

<sup>159</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 2.

Middle East was slowly starting to affect the lives of those living in the West. The significant change in the impression of the Muslim communities abroad was reflected on the Muslims within Britain. Transformation in the view of the Muslim populations could occur, more or less swiftly, because of a history of hostility and ‘othering’ already present between European and Muslim cultures. Although the oil embargo put the spotlight on the Muslim populations in the UK, and changed the perception of them from potentially neutral to disliked, it is noteworthy that they were not seen as ‘dangerous’ until the Rushdie affair of 1989.

### **Rushdie Affair and the Gulf War**

The spread and rise of Islamophobia in the UK can be attributed largely to the media, which started to focus more on Muslims at the end of the 1970s. This section will examine the doctrine of multiculturalism, which began in the 1980s, and how it evolved, along with the impact of the Rushdie affair on demonstrating cultural barriers between Muslims and those in the West. Followed by the Gulf War and its significance on further alienating Muslims from “Britishness”. These vital events, which occurred within a few short years of each other, became global issues with the aid of the media and contributed to the rise of Islamophobia.

The 1980s saw the beginnings of what would later be understood as globalization. There was a shift in the importance given to immigration as a political issue; the British government realized that immigration had led to a large diversity within the country and the new problem was incorporating minority groups into a multiracial and multicultural

society.<sup>160</sup> The incorporation of multiculturalism in the UK in the 1980's, reflected a society trying to address the needs of the growing minority populations whilst attempting to figure out how a multicultural model would work. It is noteworthy that the 1988 Immigration Act, which removed the rights of New Commonwealth citizens to bring over their spouses,<sup>161</sup> demonstrates a realization in the shift of political issues.

In the case of the UK, multiculturalism was a strategy aimed at the immigrant populations, it was not for the nation as whole,<sup>162</sup> which might have contributed to its demise in the later decades. Official multiculturalism in Britain was established in a laissez-faire way, where it was instituted in some branches of state and ignored in others.<sup>163</sup> Moreover, Britain aimed to become a “community of communities”, where people were encouraged to practice their cultures in the delegated spot of the private sphere (in their private lives or their communities).<sup>164</sup> The public sphere remained with a single political culture.<sup>165</sup>

What intensified the problems of diversity was the ongoing economic malaise. There was large scale unemployment and few future prospects for a lot of the British youth, which in some cases was manifested in the white youth as an inclination towards

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<sup>160</sup> Sally Tomlinson, “Immigration, Immigration, Immigration,” *Renewal: a Journal of London Labour Politics* 21, no. 4 (2013): 69.

<sup>161</sup> Tomlinson, “Immigration,” 69.

<sup>162</sup> Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State,” 247.

<sup>163</sup> Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State,” 249.

<sup>164</sup> Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State,” 249.

<sup>165</sup> Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State,” 249.

extreme right-wing groups and racists agendas.<sup>166</sup> On the other hand, the minority groups which had been increasing since the late 1940s were no longer grateful immigrants seeking labour; there was a new generation of youth, born and raised in Britain.<sup>167</sup> Unemployment hit Muslims the hardest; they also had the least educational qualifications and highest numbers in manual work.<sup>168</sup> Along with these troubles, they were amongst those most likely to be targeted for attacks on person and to property, as well as those living in the worst housing conditions.<sup>169</sup> Thus, the new generation of Muslim youth faced a more profound social and identity dilemma. They were the fruits of both cultures; they retained the culture which they received at home from their parents and the dominant British culture in which they grew.

The alienation felt by this generation of youth was even higher than the one for their parents; they experienced institutional racism from almost all parts of society such as, education, employment, housing and the media.<sup>170</sup> This led them to believe that they could not belong in British culture, regardless of their efforts. The rejection from mainstream society resulted in some of these youths turning towards more orthodox and extreme forms of Islam for answers.<sup>171</sup> This can also be seen as a form of resistance against the society in which they wished to belong, but were made to feel as if they did

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<sup>166</sup> Zafar Khan, "Muslim Presence in Europe: The British Dimension— Identity, Integration and Community Activism," *Current Sociology* 48, no. 4 (2000): 41.

<sup>167</sup> Poynting and Mason, "The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia," 73.

<sup>168</sup> Modood, *Multicultural Politics*, 103.

<sup>169</sup> Modood, *Multicultural Politics*, 103.

<sup>170</sup> Poynting and Mason, "The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia," 73.

<sup>171</sup> Poynting and Mason, "The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia," 73.

not. Since identity is formed through differences,<sup>172</sup> these youths fell back on what emphasized and exaggerated their difference when they reconstructed their identity against the collective. In essence, it was merely a struggle to find a place in society.

The Rushdie affair came in the wake of the OPEC oil crisis and the Iranian Revolution, whilst the 1980s economic struggles, marking a grand transition in the perception of Muslims in the UK. Salman Rushdie's ridiculing of the Prophet Mohammed in the novel *The Satanic Verses* produced a massively negative reaction from the Muslim communities. Muslim protesters took to the streets to burn copies of the book. Poynting and Mason argue that the protestors were hoping for public support,<sup>173</sup> in what they felt was disrespect towards their beliefs and culture, however, the result was quite the opposite. Images of angry Muslims burning books were televised all over the world, and this was likened to images of Nazis or the Inquisition.<sup>174</sup> These protests took a global turn when they were mirrored in other cities such as Johannesburg, Bombay and Islamabad, and gained an even bigger significance when the Iranian Leader called for a *fatwa*,<sup>175</sup> to the global Muslim community, asking for the death of Rushdie.<sup>176</sup>

The result of this affair was a demonstration in a clash of cultures. Western critics were astounded at what they felt was an attack on the freedom of speech, with some well-

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<sup>172</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 163.

<sup>173</sup> Poynting and Mason, "The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia," 68.

<sup>174</sup> Kepel, *Allah in the West*, 138.

<sup>175</sup> *Fatwa* is defined as an official statement or order from an Islamic religious leader.

<sup>176</sup> Poynting and Mason, "The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia," 68.

known people commenting on how Muslims appeared repulsive and backwards.<sup>177</sup>

Within the UK, the perception of Muslims completely changed, they were now seen as potentially dangerous and uninterested in British values.<sup>178</sup> At the same time, the Muslim communities in the West experienced a similar distaste; translating the reactions of the West to mean they were not interested in understanding why Muslims would be offended.<sup>179</sup> Muslims became targeted as threats and ‘strangers within’. It had become a grand moment of collision and hostility, which contributed to the increase in Islamophobia.

Subsequently, the Gulf War of 1991 occurred before the Rushdie incident had a chance to cool down. The Gulf War positioned the British state against the Muslims. This was because the British government became part of the effort against a Muslim country. Even though Britain’s role in the effort required cooperating with Arab Muslim countries in order to bring liberation to an Arab Muslim country, it resulted in a vast divide within the British population.<sup>180</sup> Muslims within the UK were asked to prove their loyalty to Britain.<sup>181</sup> It is interesting to note that anti-war sentiments expressed by white British folk were legitimized; however, a Muslim expressing anti-war sentiment was viewed as anti-British.<sup>182</sup> This atmosphere of fear and hostility escalated to attacks on Muslims residing

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<sup>177</sup> Poynting and Mason, “The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia,” 68.

<sup>178</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 2.

<sup>179</sup> Khan, “Muslim Presence in Europe,” 34.

<sup>180</sup> Philip Lewis, *Islamic Britain: Religion, Politics and Identity Among British Muslims* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994), 5.

<sup>181</sup> Poynting and Mason, “The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia,” 69.

<sup>182</sup> Poynting and Mason, “The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia,” 69.

in Britain and imprisonment of some of them on the grounds that they were a ‘threat’ to national security.<sup>183</sup>

The important role of the media in these debacles, and those that followed cannot be underemphasized. Following the Rushdie affair and the Gulf War, coverage of Muslims grew, along with an interest in Islam in the media.<sup>184</sup> After these events new racist terminology entered the media and the negative portrayal of Muslims escalated.<sup>185</sup> For example, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities were represented as, “separatist, insular and unwilling to integrate with the rest of society,” in the British media.<sup>186</sup> This further contributed to creating a singular image of Islam and Muslims as the ‘other’ and a threat to Western societies, which further demonstrates the escalation of Islamophobia.

It is well known that the media has the power to represent the world in any specific way.<sup>187</sup> The media is ruled by those who are the primary definers of what is classified as news and the ‘correct’ version of it.<sup>188</sup> It does not acknowledge that there is usually more than a single perspective on the meaning of an event.<sup>189</sup> Furthermore, within the case of the UK, the media and its portrayal of immigration issues as race issues was seen in several studies; thus racism was the problem with race relations in the UK and its

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<sup>183</sup> Poynting and Mason, “The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia,” 69.

<sup>184</sup> Saeed, “Representation of Islam,” 444.

<sup>185</sup> Saeed, “Representation of Islam,” 452.

<sup>186</sup> Saeed, “Representation of Islam,” 452.

<sup>187</sup> David Miller, “Promotion and Power,” in *Introduction to Media* ed. Adam Briggs and Paul Cobley (London: Longman, 2002), 246.

<sup>188</sup> Saeed, “Representation of Islam,” 449.

<sup>189</sup> Saeed, “Representation of Islam,” 449.

media.<sup>190</sup> Historically, ‘race’ in the British media has been portrayed as an ‘external threat’ in relation to fears of immigration,<sup>191</sup> which has continued on to today and has contributed to Brexit.

### **7/7 London Bombings**

The 1990s in Britain was a time when race relations became even more important. There was an intensification of inequalities experienced by the minority groups, such as the Muslims and a growth in hatred, which led to violent reactions in later years. This section of the paper will analyze the 7/7 London bombings; the significance of how they brought the fear of security ‘home’ and demonstrated how Britain had failed to grow a sense of Britishness in its Muslim youth. Subsequently, the apparent failure of the multicultural model in the UK will be discussed.

It is without a doubt that the post-9/11 climate around the world has been a “pervasive culture of risk and insecurity,” which has shaped into, “Islamophobic and discriminating attitudes which cast a shadow on Muslims and further their resentment, thus playing into the hands of the radical political propaganda.”<sup>192</sup> The events of 9/11 have created an atmosphere of fear linked to terrorism, which in turn, is linked directly to Islam. This has led to a plethora of institutionalized Islamophobia, both in the UK and elsewhere.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Saeed, “Representation of Islam,” 451.

<sup>191</sup> Saeed, “Representation of Islam,” 451..

<sup>192</sup> Stefano Bonino, “Policing Strategies against Islamic Terrorism the UK after 9/11: The Socio-Political Realities for British Muslims,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 32, no. 1 (2012): 5.

<sup>193</sup> Bonino, “Policing Strategies,” 6.

The London train bombings of July 2005, later referred to as 7/7, were a series of attacks on the London transport system by British-born Muslim men.<sup>194</sup> Coming at the wake of 9/11, the events of 7/7 very much brought the issues over security 'home'. The results of these events were two-fold; not only did they exacerbate the Islamophobic attitudes, they also suggested a clear rejection of Britishness from some of the Muslims 'within'. Coming on top of an already established history of rising Islamophobia within the UK and a lack of acceptance towards Muslims; 7/7 in the post-9/11 climate, demonstrates the failure in British multiculturalism and integration efforts. Moreover, 7/7 is especially significant because it increased the suspicions of threat coming from the Muslims living in the UK and suggested an inherent lack of assimilation between Muslim and British values. Thus, further alienating and 'othering' Muslim communities.

Furthermore, issues over immigration continued to be a major concern throughout the 1990s, with civil wars all over the world and asylum seekers trying to gain entry into the UK. Refugees were coming from places such as, the former Yugoslavia, Somalia and Somaliland, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Kurds from Turkey and Zimbabwe.<sup>195</sup> Paralleling the concerns over immigration was a growth in racism. Violence within the UK towards ethnic minorities had only grown over the 1990s. This can be demonstrated in the 1997 Human Rights Watch report, which indicated that the UK had one of the highest levels of racially motivated violence and harassment, having risen 275% between the years 1989 and 1996.<sup>196</sup> Moreover, the report indicated that the problem was

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<sup>194</sup> Sales, "Britain and Britishness," 40.

<sup>195</sup> Tomlinson, "Immigration," 69-70.

<sup>196</sup> Poynting and Mason, "The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia," 74.

projected to worsen in the following years.<sup>197</sup> However, for a long period of time Britain suffered from codifying and thus, potentially denying the existence of racism within the country. This occurred through a process of referring to racism as ‘race relations’. Acts and institutions were created to improve, what was called ‘race relations,’ although perhaps the problem would have been better represented had they been called ‘anti-racism’.

Failures in properly addressing racism resulted in the eventual downfall of the multicultural framework within Britain. Other concerns such as the rise in Islamophobia, security threats, and the ever present contentions over identity aided this demise. The race-riots of 2001 in various English cities, along with the events of 7/7, highlight the ongoing problem with race that multicultural policies had not been able to rectify. What came out of the reports following these riots demonstrate that in order to allow minorities to observe their own cultures, Britain had gathered ethnic groups into private communities and separated them from mainstream Britishness. Thus, there was no connection between the identity one held within their own ethnic group, and one they held within the nation; national identity remained singular. Moreover, public debates continually failed to properly address issues in race, religion and culture.<sup>198</sup> As Connolly states, “If you are marginalized, stigmatized, vilified, or excluded by public identifications inscribed upon you, and if these identifications are somehow fundamental

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<sup>197</sup> Poynting and Mason, “The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia,” 74.

<sup>198</sup> Joppke, “The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State,” 250.

to the integrity of collective identity, the politics of identity puts you in double jeopardy.”<sup>199</sup>

Thus, the collective identity is the hegemony of a singular idea and set of traits that inherently have certain exclusionary characteristics. If one belongs to the groups that are excluded from definitions of collective identity then one’s freedom is impinged upon and they are secluded from the collective. Since the state is the official center prescribing collective action, it is also responsible for constructing the collective identity with the aid of its institutions. Therefore, the state defines, “the most fundamental division between inside and outside, us and them, domestic and foreign, the sphere of citizen entitlements and that of strategic responses.”<sup>200</sup> In the case of Britain, Muslim groups had continually been excluded from the collective identity of the nation as a whole, which even multiculturalism could not properly remedy. This was because the collective identity of Britishness did not experience a large transformation. The framework of multiculturalism was aimed at the immigrant groups. Thus, it was recognized that they had their own culture, which the liberal state admitted they should be able to practice. However, this did not translate into giving them a place within the national identity; instead, it allowed them to form their own separate collective identities away from the national collective. Although, it should be noted that some scholars have argued that Britain’s imperial past and island mentality has made them more tolerant to diversity than other European nations,<sup>201</sup> which can be seen in their attempts to adopt multicultural policies, initial

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<sup>199</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 199.

<sup>200</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 201.

<sup>201</sup> Modood, *Multicultural Politics*, 189-192.

endeavours in giving citizenship rights to Commonwealth citizens, and accepting the presence of robust public debate surrounding multiculturalism within Britain.

Nevertheless, more tolerance does not equate to more acceptance.

### **Conclusion**

The ongoing fears of immigrants and the heightened levels of Islamophobia (because of a classification of Muslims as the ‘other’, growing conflicts in the Middle East, violence perpetrated by extremist Muslim groups all over Europe, and within the UK, and intensified media exposure of these issues) have led to a failure in multiculturalism and failure in the acceptance of diversity within Britain. This was demonstrated through the original construction of British nationalism, which was built on conquests and the exceptionalism of the English identity. These identity struggles were seen over and over again in the British case. Although, it should be noted that because the British nation was created with the coming together of several other nations (Welsh, Scottish and Irish) and they have retained a separate identity for themselves, there is a regional identity distinction that can be made. The English identity remains more exclusive than, for example, the Welsh identity in terms of creating a space for ethnic minorities to belong. Scholars have argued that there is more acceptance towards ethnic groups in the regions outside of England.<sup>202</sup> For instance, studies show that a Muslim living in Scotland readily identifies as Scottish, as opposed to British.<sup>203</sup> However, the English identity continues to “lay claim” on everything that encompasses Britain;<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 10.

<sup>203</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 10.

<sup>204</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, “Introduction,” 10.

including, 'Britishness'. Therefore, it can be said that, in a sense, Muslims remain ostracized from attaining true Britishness.

From the OPEC oil crisis to the Rushdie affair, issues over clashing cultures and violence have shown an escalation. This has resulted in the rejection of British identity and the British multicultural model from the Muslim youth who deeply felt a lack of belonging in the country in which they were born. The struggle was only worsened by Middle Eastern wars and the British involvement in them, such as the Gulf War of 1991. Moreover, post 9/11 and 7/7 atmosphere of homegrown terrorism has placed the blame of a lack of integration on the failure of multiculturalism.<sup>205</sup> This line of argument intones that multiculturalism has failed to be inclusionary enough and for that, Britain is to blame. However, this might be too simplistic of a correlation to make.<sup>206</sup> Although, immigration remains a hot topic within the UK and differences are still seen as a lack of integration. Thus, minorities, such as the Muslims, remain at the center of social problems. As Poole argues, "The liberal response to Islam reveals a level of intolerance not found in other minority groups."<sup>207</sup>

There has been much scholarly debate on the presence of religion in the public sphere in Western societies, and how it does not have a place to belong.<sup>208</sup> It has been argued that the nature of Muslim acceptance in European countries, such as Britain, is

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<sup>205</sup> Nasar Meer, *Citizenship, Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism; the Rise of Muslim Consciousness* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 20.

<sup>206</sup> Meer, *Citizenship, Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism*, 20.

<sup>207</sup> Poole, "The Case of Geert Wilders," 186.

<sup>208</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, "Introduction," 3.

inherently problematic because their identity is based on their religion.<sup>209</sup> However, being identified based on their religion is not a conscious and active choice made by the Muslim populations in these places; it is Western society that defines them as such and then confines them into a system that is reluctant to see them in a different light. This is part of a larger problem of Islamophobia, which contributes to the exclusionary attitudes of Europeans towards the Muslims living in Europe.

The British case has repeatedly demonstrated that although there has been much debate over the place of diversity within British culture and identity, acceptance has been lacking. The steps that were made towards integration and plural understanding of British society have currently taken a step backwards. With Brexit, a move towards right-wing politics and potential disintegration of the UK into even smaller pieces, the positive outlook on multiculturalism is dismantling.

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<sup>209</sup> Sardar and Ahmad, "Introduction," 3.

CHAPTER 3:  
France, *Laïcité* and Islam

Following the attack on one of the most famous streets in Paris close to the end of the recent French elections in the spring of 2017, Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the National Front party, made an unsettling, yet not uncommon, speech addressing the prominence of security concerns in France; “*L’islam radical défie nos valeurs et notre force d’âme* [Radical Islam defies our values and our strength of soul].”<sup>210</sup> This comment emphasizes the place of Islam as the ‘other’ that does not belong within French identity, as well as, nodding to a Catholic tradition with the phrase ‘*force d’âme*’<sup>211</sup>. Therefore, Le Pen’s statement has a dual effect; it rejects Islam, and thus Muslims, from partaking in French identity found in both the post-revolutionary France and in the ancien regime. That is to say, both modern secularism and traditional French ties to Catholicism. Le Pen is alluding to a nationalism that joins the past, present and future of France as connected to one another and indivisible; thus refuting the position of diversity in possibly changing that.

Issues relating to security and identity of the Muslim population are ever more a growing concern within France. Not only does France host the highest number of Muslims within Europe, it has also been one of the least accommodating towards ethnic

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<sup>210</sup> “Attentat à Paris: Cazeneuve accuse Le Pen et Fillon d’avoir fait ‘le choix de l’outrance et de la division” *20 Minutes*, April 21 2017.

<sup>211</sup> “Force d’âme” translates roughly to ‘fortitude’ and is a phrase loaded with Christian meaning due to the fact that it is one of the four Cardinal Virtues of Catholicism. Moreover, it is a phrase that is not commonly used in everyday French, thus making Le Pen’s use of it even more striking, and the emphasis on the religious connotation more clear.

minorities.<sup>212</sup> Issues over national identity and the integration of diversity have not been present in French discourse for as long as it has been in the UK. Moreover, a framework of ‘multiculturalism’ has never existed in France. Instead dealing with diversity has occurred through the concepts of ‘citizenship’ and ‘integration’, both of which come under *laïcité*.<sup>213</sup>

This chapter will analyze how the French have responded to a rise in diversity, especially with regards to their Muslim population, whilst a rise in Islamophobia has occurred. This will be done through the analysis of certain significant laws and events that have had a major impact on the Muslims residing in France. This chapter will not be as historically linear in the development of analysis as the previous chapter due to the fact that the French case exhibits certain recurring concepts, which are better analyzed in groups rather than in a linear fashion. Firstly, the construction of *laïcité* and French notions of nationalism will be conceptualized and how it has coloured the experience of the Muslims in France will be laid out. Followed by an analysis of the head scarf scandal of 1989 and how it has been exacerbated with the aid of the media. Lastly, the 2005 suburban youth riots in France will be examined under the context of rising Islamophobia due to conflicts in the Middle East and within and the failure in integrative frameworks. Thus, this chapter will argue that France’s dependence on secularism has delayed the discourse on pluralism within the nation and contributed to limitations in the acceptance of diversity.

### ***Laïcité* and Nationalism in France**

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<sup>212</sup> Kuru, “Secularism, State Policies, and Muslims in Europe,” 3-4.

<sup>213</sup> Lassalle, “French Laicite and British Multiculturalism,” 230.

This section of the paper will firstly, trace the conceptions of nationalism and citizenship in France. Subsequently, the impact of this conception of nationhood on the construction of the concept of *laïcité* will be analyzed. This will be done with a focus on the 1905 Law on secularism. Followed by a brief overview of how these concepts have affected citizenship and immigration. Although, direct translation and definition of *laïcité* is difficult to make, some scholars have defined it as ‘secularism’ and ‘secularity’.<sup>214</sup> It will be further defined throughout this section with a historical analysis of its origins.

The modern French sense of nationhood can be traced back to the French Revolution of 1789. Coming out of the Enlightenment values, “the Revolution established the nation as a voluntary association or contract between free individuals.”<sup>215</sup> Thus the Republican concept of nationhood has come from putting an emphasis on the sovereignty of the people.<sup>216</sup> This conceptualization of the nation as ‘*une et indivisible*’ (one and indivisible) was created to combat the ruling of the monarchy and the aristocracy.<sup>217</sup> Moreover, the focus on unity has assimilated with ideas of ‘homogeneity’ and ‘uniformity’. Thus, the view of the nation as a united and uniform collective came from this fundamentally important period in the construction of the French identity. In this light, indivisibility and unity is also at the core of the French idea of citizenship.

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<sup>214</sup> Jonathan Chaplin, “*Liberté, Laïcité, Pluralité: Towards a Theology of Principled Pluralism,*” *International Journal of Public Theology* 10 (2016): 357.

<sup>215</sup> Maxim Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism and Citizenship in Modern France* (London: Routledge, 1992), 19.

<sup>216</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 19.

<sup>217</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 19.

The focus on uniformity in the French understanding of the nation and citizenship has led to problematic results for immigrants to France. According to this conceptualization, some historians argue that the role of immigration in the development of French society has largely been ignored by French history.<sup>218</sup> Since the historiography of France has placed a prominence on the homogeneity of the nation rather than its differences, this has advised its ideas of assimilation, uniformity and universality.<sup>219</sup> Thus, creating an atmosphere where differences arising from region, ethnicity and other factors could be masked.<sup>220</sup> Subsequently, discourse on immigration has been constructed as a phenomenon exterior to the history of the French, as opposed to, an internal problem which has been developing within French history.<sup>221</sup>

The conceptualization of *laïcité* is linked strongly to the ideas of citizenship. French secularism can be traced back to the 1801 Concordat, in which the church was placed in the hands of the state. Historically, the results of this could best be seen in the French education system. Out of all the other European countries, France remains the only country with no religious education in public schools (with the exception of the Alsace-Moselle region).<sup>222</sup> This separation was further endorsed and defined in the 1905 Law on *séparation*, which replaced the 1801 Concordat. This law made the relationship between the state and all religions crystal clear by declaring that the State would not

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<sup>218</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 17.

<sup>219</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 17.

<sup>220</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 17.

<sup>221</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 17.

<sup>222</sup> Gunn, "Religion and Law in France," 958.

“recognize, finance or subsidize” any religion.<sup>223</sup> It is important to note that the 1905 Law placed an emphasis on ‘religions’ instead of ‘the church’, which indicates the intent was to reinforce the French belief in secularism to the core.

Since its establishment, the 1905 Law has acquired a cultural significance in France; it is seen to embody the Republican and national principles in *laïcité* and *unité*. As it has lasted the constitutions of 1940, 1945 and 1946, in a sense, it is even stronger than the most current constitution.<sup>224</sup> The 1958 Constitution, which is still in effect today, further defined the country with the terms ‘one’ and ‘indivisible’. Reinforcing the separation between the state and religion. Although, it should be noted that this law has not always been upheld strictly. It seems as if there has been some favouritism shown, majority of the time, to Catholics. This could be demonstrated in the Alsace-Moselle region retaining a religious education in their public schools on the grounds that the region was incorporated into France after the law was passed (it was part of Germany before).<sup>225</sup> Moreover, the French government chooses to subsidize some private schools, with most of the chosen ones being Roman Catholic.<sup>226</sup> Although, the state has also subsidized the building of a Grand Mosque in Paris, which should not to be overlooked.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Gunn, “Religion and Law in France,” 955.

<sup>224</sup> Gunn, “Religion and Law in France,” 954.

<sup>225</sup> Gunn, “Religion and Law in France,” 958.

<sup>226</sup> Gunn, “Religion and Law in France,” 959.

<sup>227</sup> Gunn, “Religion and Law in France,” 959.

The focus on French secularism and indivisibility has led to assimilationist tendencies towards immigrant groups. However, historical expectations of assimilation has been presented as a paradox. At the heart of assimilation is the idea that the national community, in this case France, must supersede all other identities.<sup>228</sup> Thus, promoting the concept that every newcomer must be like the French, whilst also exclaiming that French identity has been culturally constructed through a shared history and unity, meaning no outsider could ever truly be French.<sup>229</sup> This can further be seen in the official French category for the *étranger* (foreigner), which includes a vast number of non-immigrants, such as the children born in France to immigrants parents who have not yet acquired full French nationality.<sup>230</sup> Silverman further argues that, although this is the official terminology, within popular political discourse the term ‘foreigner’ is readily confused with the term ‘immigrant’. He goes on the claim that in contemporary French public discourse, the term ‘immigrant’ has been used to address visible minorities, most especially those of North African descent.<sup>231</sup> Within the ideological underpinnings of French society (the reflections of which can be seen in the terminology on ‘foreigners’ and ‘immigrants’) there is an indication that assimilation has failed; both in terms of the acceptance of visible minorities such as the Muslims, and from the perspective of the minorities’ who feel rejected from French culture. This has become even more apparent with the French reactions to some pivotal events and the creation of certain laws which have directly targeting specific ethno-religious groups.

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<sup>228</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 32.

<sup>229</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 32.

<sup>230</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 3.

<sup>231</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 3.

Although this paper will focus on immigration after World War II, a significant number of foreigners had been in France since before that period. This can be demonstrated with the 1851 census which provided statistics on the number of foreigners in France at the time,<sup>232</sup> thus clearly, indicating that there was enough of a visible number of outsiders that a census was deemed necessary. Immigrants to France were generally seen as temporary contract workers, arriving just to fill a labour gap.<sup>233</sup> Even though the naturalization law of 1889 projected to make ‘Frenchmen’ from foreigners, which comes in contrast to the economic view of immigrants.<sup>234</sup> From this perspective France could be seen as showing more initial openness to immigrants, as they were readily accepted into the Republic as workers. Immigrants helped with the amount of labour that was required to allow France to sustain its economic growth during these years.<sup>235</sup> Thus, these contradictions indicate a confusion over immigration issues since the beginning.

### **The Headscarf Scandals**

In the immediate postwar period France was open to immigration from various countries of origin, as previously stated, to fill labour shortages. However, the main recruits were arriving from other European countries. This can be seen in the 1945 Ordinances, which outlined that immigrants would not be selected based on their

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<sup>232</sup> Silverman, “Citizenship and the Nation-State in France,” 335.

<sup>233</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 31.

<sup>234</sup> Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, 31.

<sup>235</sup> James Hollifield, “France: Immigration and the Republican Tradition in France,” in *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective* ed. James Hollifield, Phillip L. Martin and Pia Orrenius (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 158.

countries of origin.<sup>236</sup> This section of the paper will firstly, lay an overview of how immigration issues evolved and created the background for the headscarf scandal of 1989, followed by an analysis of the scandal with regards to the media's role in intensifying it. Modern conceptions of problems arising from immigration in France started after the 1960s, precisely after the Algerian War. Therefore, controversies over immigration are a product of decolonization and the long lasting Algerian War, which created, "ethnic and racial fault lines in French society that persist today."<sup>237</sup> Since the postwar period, policies pursued by the French state have tried to dissuade immigration, in particular, they wanted the North Africans to return to their countries of origin.<sup>238</sup> This could be seen in the ambiguous status of immigrants from North and West Africa. The Evian Agreements, which provided Algeria with independence in 1962, nevertheless, kept their colonial status as 'citizens' unchanged.<sup>239</sup> This status allowed Algerians to move freely within France. Thus, leading to acceleration in the arrival of thousands of Algerians into France in the late 1960s, which encountered tighter French controls. Other former French colonies in Africa also provided a lot of immigrants in this time period.<sup>240</sup>

The 1970s was a time of economic downfall, and a period when the French government was trying to figure out how to better control the rising tide of immigration.

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<sup>236</sup> Hollifield, "France: Immigration," 160.

<sup>237</sup> Hollifield, "France: Immigration," 160.

<sup>238</sup> Hollifield, "France: Immigration," 161.

<sup>239</sup> Hollifield, "France: Immigration " 163.

<sup>240</sup> Hollifield, "France: Immigration " 164.

The open immigration regime held until the 1973-1974 OPEC oil crisis,<sup>241</sup> which further led France towards an economic recession. After which the government tried to organize better control over worker and family immigration. This led to an immigration stop in 1974, however, family reunification continued.<sup>242</sup> Economic downfall and unemployment rates also contributed to a rise in xenophobia.<sup>243</sup> During this period, the relations between the French state and the Muslim populations has been classified as toleration and minimal accommodation.<sup>244</sup>

Immigration became a large topic of concern in the 1980s, and started a dialogue on discussions of citizenship and nationality. The government finally recognized the vast amount of immigrants that had settled in France and acknowledged that policy and the state had to address them more directly. Muslims in particular, stood out, as there was 5 million from North African origins.<sup>245</sup> Moreover, Muslim populations were experiencing considerable disadvantages and were disproportionately affected by the economic strains. This can be seen in the children of North African migrants that lived in the suburbs suffering from high rates of unemployment, insufficient prayer spaces and no representation in the National Assembly.<sup>246</sup> Furthermore, 1981 March for Equality and Against Racism was the first large-scale call for civil rights and was organized by the

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<sup>241</sup> Hollifield, "France: Immigration," 165.

<sup>242</sup> Hollifield, "France: Immigration," 165.

<sup>243</sup> Hollifield, "France: Immigration," 165.

<sup>244</sup> Jonathan Laurence, "From the Elysee Salon to the Table of the Republic: State-Islam Relations and the Integration of Muslims in France," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 23, no. 1 (2005): 38.

<sup>245</sup> Laurence, "From the Elysee," 40.

<sup>246</sup> Laurence, "From the Elysee," 40.

second-generation youth.<sup>247</sup> Thus, leading the government in constructing a “proactive state support for the emergence of an Islam *de* (of) France.”<sup>248</sup>

Although the recognition of Muslim communities and the need to address their needs was a positive move towards addressing the growing diversity in France, it came under heavy difficulties. This was due to a legal and social bind in the separation of the state and religion. Thus, trying to institutionalize and provide for the needs of the Muslim communities reignited the discussions around the place of religion in French society. Religion is especially significant in the French case because addressing diversity in French society from the point of view of citizenship or race and ethnicity was rejected.<sup>249</sup>

Thus, with these discussions in mind, France moved towards policies of integration of immigrant populations. It is within this background that the ‘headscarf affair’ of 1989 erupted. In essence, this affair was the expulsion of three Muslim students from a public school in Creil, due to the fact that they refused to remove their headscarves. The head teacher at the school asserted that their refusal was a direct attack on the principles of *laïcité*, which were at the core of the Republic. As this was an issue with only 3 pupils at a small school in Creil it would not have been a huge national affair had it not been for the role of the media. In an atmosphere of immigration and integration issues and with right wing politics on the rise, this affair received wide attention.

Not only did this affair confirm a clash of cultures between the Muslims and the French, it also contributed to a view of Muslims as the alien ‘other’ which did not belong

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<sup>247</sup> Laurence, “From the Elysee,” 41.

<sup>248</sup> Laurence, “From the Elysee,” 40.

<sup>249</sup> Laurence, “From the Elysee,” 40.

in France. The culture of Muslims, especially with regards to the headscarf, was seen as sexist and archaic, thus, not fitting the French ideals of liberty and equality. Connolly argues that the state responds to alienated and fragmented identities within it by intensifying efforts to create unity.<sup>250</sup> In this way, the state tries to establish a standard for normality. However, creating these pressures results in an expansion of abnormality and fragmentation.<sup>251</sup> This was demonstrated in French politics and governance in the aftermath of the head scarf scandal. The slow contribution of this affair to the rise of Islamophobia could be seen in the rise of the right wing National Front party, which campaigned with the slogans claiming to end, “the colonization of France by Arab immigrants.”<sup>252</sup> The government reacted to the rise of the National Front and the headscarf affair in 1989, by changing their soft assimilationist approach with a stronger assertion of integrationist plans. This could be demonstrated with the establishment of the High Council on Immigration, which would focus on developing integration goals and policies.<sup>253</sup>

Similar laws restricting and, most specifically, targeting Muslims have come into effect in later years, Such as the 2004 prohibition on religious symbols in public schools, also referred to as the Headscarf Ban, and the 2011 Burqa Ban, which are still in effect today. As well as the most recent 2016 Burkini Ban, which was later declared illegal by the court. These laws demonstrate the ongoing and repetitive nature, in the struggle for French society and state, to accept the rights of the Muslim communities in expressing

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<sup>250</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 172.

<sup>251</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 172.

<sup>252</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 33-34.

<sup>253</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 34.

and practicing their religion as they choose. To contrast, some scholars have argued that the discussion surrounding laws such as the 2004 prohibition on religious symbols are more often constructed on a binary framework which overlooks the institutional efforts to make more infrastructures available to Muslims. For instance, the opening of private Muslim schools.<sup>254</sup> Although, the creation of more separate spaces for Muslims does not necessarily meet the requirements of a society, which needs to change its framework on where diversity can belong. Isolating certain groups from the mainstream only aids the further alienation of them from partaking in the collective identity. This arises from a paradox in France with regards to managing its Muslim population. Although, France officially institutionalized Islam in 2003; there is still a dynamic of trying to emancipate Muslims from their culture and religion.<sup>255</sup> This is due to the fact that Islam is still feared and viewed as despotic and primitive within secular French ideology and culture.

### 2005 Riots

The effects of 9/11 were experienced all over the world. As discussed in the previous chapter, the atmosphere of Islamophobia it created was observed everywhere. For the French case, the Muslim populations which had been seen as hostile to assimilation became perceived as more and more hostile towards society. This prompted the state to create more avenues to recognize and include Muslims in the national community. This can be seen in the establishment of the *Conseil Français du Culte Musulman* (CFCM) in 2003, which marked the official institutionalization of Islam in

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<sup>254</sup> Murat Akan, "Diversité: Challenging or Constituting *Laïcité*?" *French Cultural Studies* 28, no. 1 (2017), 124.

<sup>255</sup> Vincent Geisser, "Islamophobia: French Specificity in Europe?" *Human Architecture: Journal of Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 8, no. 2 (2010): 39.

France. Moreover, it was also made to combat rising levels of religious extremism.<sup>256</sup>

Thus, displaying the rising level of fear directed at Islam within France. This section of the paper will outline the issues between the Muslim and Jewish communities that have been affected by the conflict in the Middle East. Subsequently, there will be a focus on the impact of the 2005 Riots, with the results of it seen in the new conceptualization of 'diversity' within France.

Concurrent to the struggle of Muslim populations to integrate into French society, there has been an ongoing internal friction between the Muslim and Jewish populations. Not only are the Muslim and Jewish communities the largest two ethno-religious groups within France, France also holds the largest amount of Muslim and Jewish populations living together (outside of Israel).<sup>257</sup> Although the Muslim population is proportionally larger.<sup>258</sup> Prominent scholars, such as Mandel, have argued that the polarization between these groups have a complex history, however, one of the greatest contributing factors is the Arab-Israeli conflict happening in the Middle East.<sup>259</sup> This has resulted in continuous distaste between the communities, especially increasing after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Minor strife could be seen in the student protests following the war, and again in the tensions following the Gulf War in the 1980s,<sup>260</sup> and since then, in other instances such as the violence against Jews perpetrated by Arab youth in the autumn of 2000. The tensions

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<sup>256</sup> Lassalle, "French Laicite and British Multiculturalism," 232.

<sup>257</sup> Maud S. Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France: History of Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 1.

<sup>258</sup> 4, 000, 000-6, 000, 000 Muslims to 500, 000-600, 000 Jews, in 2014.

<sup>259</sup> Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France*, 2.

<sup>260</sup> Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France*, 126.

between these groups have predominantly been caused by conflict in the Middle East and have enforced a negative perception of Muslims and their lack of ability to let go of fraternities outside of France, thus, demonstrating a lack of assimilability.

However, the threat of Muslims to the people of France became even more profound and gripped the attention of the public after the riots in 2005. These riots started just a few months after, and within the same year, of the London bombings. Thus, drawing the potential of violence closer to home until it finally erupted in the French *banlieues* (suburbs). The riots were perpetrated by the second-generation youth of immigrant backgrounds. It involved arson on cars and public buildings. These riots resulted in many changes, both on the discourse surrounding ethnicity and the perception of Muslims in France. They demonstrated an accumulation of discrimination and marginalization felt by the Muslim youth for years.

The political response to these riots was that there was a “deep malaise”, within French society.<sup>261</sup> Second and even third generation immigrants still did not feel as if they belonged. Assimilation and integration strategies had clearly failed to some extent. It has been argued by many scholars that France is ‘colour-blind’, that is to say, public discourse was not as open to discussions around ethnicity and race. There has been many restrictions on measuring diversity in French legislation.<sup>262</sup> Moreover, throughout the 1980s and 1990s racial problems were obscured by social euphemisms.<sup>263</sup> Ignoring the racial problem has created paradoxes with the French attitude on diversity issues. It has

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<sup>261</sup> Cervulle, “The Use of Universalism,” 119.

<sup>262</sup> Cervulle, “The Use of Universalism,” 120.

<sup>263</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 62.

also not helped with research and policy development. This ambivalence has been prominent in French politics for decades. As it has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, France has had a growing diversity for a long period of time, regardless of this fact there is no direct recognition and framework for addressing ‘race’ the way there was in Britain. The word ‘diversity’ itself, only enters the lexicon after the 2005 riots.<sup>264</sup> Thus, it is the impact of these riots which helps both the state and the society realize more strongly that there is inequality and dissatisfaction within minority ethnic groups in France. More specifically, it brings ‘ethnicity’ to the foreground of discussions. As Nicholas Sarkozy remarks, “[the rioters] are legally fully French. But let’s say things as they are: polygamy and acculturation of a certain number of families means that is more difficult to integrate a young person originating from Sub-Saharan Africa than it is a young French person from another origin.”<sup>265</sup>

The acceptance that there was diversity within French culture widened the discussion about how to manage it. This brought forth new conceptualizations of *laïcité*. It was argued that a new perspective on *laïcité* could help France cope with its multicultural nature. This was explained by some scholars as *laïcité plurielle*, which acknowledged the plural nature of French society while trying to unify it. The Stasi Report of 2003 declared the presence of a new *laïcité* in France, which Sarkozy claimed would defend state support for building religious infrastructure.<sup>266</sup> Although, after the 2005 riots the intellectual and public debate in France surrounding *laïcité plurielle* turned

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<sup>264</sup> Cervulle, “The Use of Universalism,” 119.

<sup>265</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 42.

<sup>266</sup> Akan, “*Diversité*,” 131.

sour. This can be seen in the arguments of the philosopher and historian, Pierre-André Taguieff. As Kiwan argues, Taguieff's earlier work focused on anti-racism and the cult of cultural difference, whereas in the post-riot era he declared a more hardened stance on the issues of diversity.<sup>267</sup> He said that new plural visions of *laïcité* were 'hyperpluralism' and 'hypertolerance', which impeded on true liberalism in Western societies.<sup>268</sup> Taguieff further argued that only the true *laïcité* could bridge the differences in society and cultures, and in this way, he was espousing the continuation of the assimilationist perspective.<sup>269</sup> Moreover, Kiwan argues that Taguieff's views reflected his fears of Islam and Islamism within Europe.<sup>270</sup>

### Conclusion

From the perspective of identity politics, it can be argued that the French reaction and delays in addressing the concerns of Muslim population by relying on a notion of their culture as secular and thus inherently opposed to religiosity, demonstrates the fundamental flaw that exists in all cultures. As Connolly says, "Every culture seems to contain some themes that are both indispensable to it and inherently problematic within it."<sup>271</sup> Moreover, the indispensability of these characteristics lead to their concealment.<sup>272</sup> Thus, making it harder to realize and change their problematic nature. Within France, this

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<sup>267</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 57.

<sup>268</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 57.

<sup>269</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 57.

<sup>270</sup> Kiwan, *Identities, Discourses and Experiences*, 57.

<sup>271</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 3.

<sup>272</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 3.

notion has manifested itself in the strict conceptualization of *laïcité* and its protection in society which is caused by its deeper connection to nationality and the identity of the French. As the prominent philosopher, Charles Taylor, has argued there needs to be redefinition of *laïcité* and secularism, because the current construction of it has been contradictory and restrictive. Taylor argues that secularism endorses state neutrality and a neutral state should avoid favouring at all costs.<sup>273</sup> This means one religion cannot be favoured over another; moreover non-religion cannot be favoured over religion. Proper secularism should be the maintenance of absolute state neutrality.

In the French case, this would translate to not placing a tradition of Christianity over the Muslim religion of the immigrant groups, as well as not championing nonbelief over belief. All of which is to say there are clear imbalances and contradictions still very much present in French society. As can be seen in the most recent events, such as Charlie Hebdo of 2015 and the Burkini Ban of 2016. The Charlie Hebdo incident, similar to the Rushdie affair of the UK, more profoundly demonstrated the continuing clash of cultures that has, not only, remained unresolved but has worsened over time because of a contribution of factors such as; increasing conflicts in the Middle East, rise in extreme Islamic terrorism in the West, and the emphasis placed on these issues in the media. Thus, upon deeper analysis, it begs to question whether complete state neutrality could solve the problem of negligence and hostility felt by the Muslim communities that have been directly disrupted by certain laws. Is it realistic to espouse an agenda that aims to ignore differences in order to accept differences?

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<sup>273</sup> Charles Taylor, "Why We Need Radical Redefinition of Secularism," in *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere*, ed. Eduardo Mendieta and Jonathan Vanantwerpen (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 36-37.

In conclusion, this chapter has argued that France's reliance on secularism has delayed the discussion on pluralism and has been partly responsible for the lack of acceptance of diversity that is still present within the French state. This has been done through a discussion of the place of nationalism and *laïcité* within French identity and its contribution to the understanding of citizenship and immigrants. Moreover, the headscarf scandal of 1989 was discussed in length and how it portrayed a divided society was shown. Finally, the 2005 riots were explained and their impact on the discourse and lexicon surrounding diversity was demonstrated. Overall, the French case illustrates an ongoing battle with competing identities and limiting frameworks that make the acceptance of diversity even harder in the backdrop of an ever more challenging global environment and hostility towards Islam and Muslims.

## CHAPTER 4: Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has illustrated a rise in identity politics over the years with the concurrent rise of Islamophobia, which has led to a lack of acceptance towards diversity within Europe, especially towards Europe's Muslims. This was demonstrated with an analysis of the case studies, UK and France. The UK has used a multicultural framework to address its diversity which has been progressive, yet insufficient. This was contrasted with the case of France. France has rejected the multicultural framework and instead depended on their already rooted framework of secularism to deal with diversity, which has shown to have clear limitations in accepting diverse groups.

For the case of the UK, it was demonstrated that a construction of British identity and nationalism arose through an imperial mindset of conquest and superiority. As seen in the original expansion of England towards Ireland and Scotland, and the resilient exceptionalism in the English identity, which has survived onto today, making it harder for migrant groups to feel an acceptance within an English identity as opposed to a Scottish identity. This identity framework has been applied to the immigrant groups which came in the post-colonial, postwar period, and led to the construction of multiculturalism. On the other hand, French nationality has been shown to be rooted in the ideals obtained in the French Revolution. One of the strongest of which has been the concept of *unité*, which contributed to the development of *laïcité* through later laws and constitutions. *Laïcité* has grown to be a national ideal and a distinct part of French identity. Thus, although diversity had been growing in France for some time, especially

in the postcolonial period, France has asserted the framework of *laïcité* to assimilate its diverse immigrant populations.

In the early immigration period there does not appear to be a specifically hostile environment towards Muslims in Britain, they are alienated just like the other migrant groups. However history in the rise of Islamophobia shows how the perception of Muslims in particular has changed dramatically. One of the significant events which have been a catalyst in this change has been the OPEC Oil Embargo, along with the general distaste which came with the economic disparities of the time. After this incident, the Muslims in the UK really stood out and became disliked members of society. This perception later experienced a complete change after the Rushdie affair of 1989, which demonstrated the length of difference between Muslim and British cultures. Moreover it added to the growing landscape of Islamophobia with the use of the role of the media in hyping this event. Rising levels of Islamophobia due to the media was also seen in France with the headscarf scandal of 1989. The headscarf issue illustrated several faults within French society, firstly, a lack of tolerance in the different practices of Muslims and secondly, alienation and ostracizing of Muslims from mainstream French culture.

The perception of Muslims and their country of citizenship has also been affected by conflict and wars happening in the Middle East, primarily through aiding a rise in Islamophobia and creating fault lines between the host country and their countries of origin (or affiliation through race or religion). This was demonstrated in the UK with the Gulf War of 1991 and in France with the ongoing conflict between Arabs and Israelis. In the case of the UK the Gulf War led to the alienation of Muslim groups and asked for them to prove their alliance to Britishness as opposed to another identity; whereas, in

France, the Arab-Israeli conflict was reflected in their Arab and Jewish populations, which further portrayed Muslims as a violent group.

The peak in Islamophobia was observed after the events of 9/11, but more profoundly after homegrown violence was perpetrated by the Muslims within the UK and France. This was seen in the UK after the 7/7 attacks, which led to a questioning of the multicultural framework that had been developing since the 1980s and its effectiveness. On the other hand, in France violence was seen in 2005 as a reaction of Muslim youth to being disadvantaged by the state. Moreover, it was only after these riots that a lexicon on ‘diversity’ really entered France. Until then there was minimal acceptance of the actual amount of immigrant groups present in France. Although the acceptance of the vast amount of diversity only aided the creation of further assimilationist and integrationist frameworks. Thus, in comparison to the UK, France has shown a lag in accepting its diversity; which demonstrates a denial within the French state and society towards both the presence of a large number of Muslims and a need to create a competing mechanism for including them within the French identity.

This is especially significant for the case of France, as it holds the highest number of Muslims, and according to PEW Research Center, is projected to have the largest growth in Muslim populations in the coming years, with the UK coming in second. To have a better understanding for the reluctance to accept the Muslim populations in Europe, a further analysis of how religion has been affected by secular and multicultural frameworks is necessary. For the UK, there has been a tradition of internal religious

plurality which has affected the relations between the state and the church.<sup>274</sup> This has contributed to the creation of multicultural, multi-religious, framework of tolerance. Even if Islam has experienced an exclusion from this acceptance with the rise of Islamophobia, the UK has benefitted from a history of trying to balance between the distinctiveness of multiple cultures and subsections of Christianity. On the other hand, France has built its identity over a culture of secularism and uniformity, which has resulted in little public space for difference. This has created a public sphere which has disregarded the differences of plural cultures and religions. Further explaining why it has taken France a longer time than the UK to more actively accept and address its diversity.

The study of diversity and Islamophobia in Europe has opened up the valve to identity politics and how best to address plurality. According to Connolly's theory the best way to combat difference in a society is to create an engagement between collective and personal identities.<sup>275</sup> As everyone has both a personal identity and a desire as humans to belong to a collective identity.<sup>276</sup> Thus, Connolly argues that the public sphere should be where an open and free dialogue between the differences in collective and personal identities can take place.<sup>277</sup> Moreover, a harmonious identity cannot be created by shunning difference in the place of neutrality. Therefore, neutrality in essence, is the ignorance of the differences in identity and society. Thus, creating a paradoxical relationship between identity and difference could be a way to solve diversity problems,

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<sup>274</sup> Meer, *Citizenship, Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism*, 18-19.

<sup>275</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 161.

<sup>276</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 161.

<sup>277</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, 161.

in order for people, who do not belong in the hegemonized version of identity within a culture, to feel a sense of acceptance with regards to their differences.

Overall, although the UK has shown a better mechanism to deal with difference, latest trends in security and global affairs demonstrate that diversity is not as accepted as it might have otherwise seemed. Moreover, the growth of nativist nationalism and right-wing politics indicates a move away from multicultural solidarity. It should be emphasized that the rise of Islamophobia and the backlash towards diversity is a multilayered and complex issue, which this paper has attempted to unwrap by examining a combination of factors, some of which are: immigration, policy, economy, conflicts in the Middle East and other major events. There is much more work that could be done in this area. Later research in this field could focus on providing a more comprehensive study of the perceptions of the actual public with regards to the Muslim populations, as well as the perceptions of the Muslims with regards to feeling accepted. Further gaps could be present between the opinion of the general population and the creation of public policies.

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