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Victory in the First World War saw British power advance over large swathes of the Middle East. Even before 1914 Britain ruled more Muslims than any other power and many imperial troops - from places like Nigeria and India - were Muslim. By 1919 more than half the world's Muslims were subjects of the empire and a British system of client states extended across what were - notwithstanding sometimes substantial Christian and other minority religious populations - the historic heartlands of Islam, including the Holy Places of Mecca and Medina. Britain's position as the pre-eminent power-broker in the Middle East was consolidated through the elaboration of that system at the Cairo conference of 1921. It thus stepped into the power vacuum resulting from the largely British-engineered demise of the Ottoman empire. With that demise came as well the question of the Ottoman claim to the Caliphate and their historic spiritual as well as political leadership of Islam, a claim acknowledged far beyond Ottoman frontiers. The Great War thus not only led to much greater British power-projection and cultural penetration into Muslim lands, but also robbed Islam of a declining but historic symbol of power and, as a result, of its last Caliph.

For Britain it ended with imperial over-extension. This was clear from the motives its prime mover, Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill, brought to the Cairo conference. His overriding aim was to cut military costs in the Middle East and somehow maintain empire on the cheap. In contrast, for figures like Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 1928, it was a moment of Muslim humiliation. In particular, he regarded the ending of the Caliphate as a 'calamity' constituting an attack on Islam as a whole.[1] This paralleled the social, political and cultural impact of the British colonisation of Egypt. The search for Islamic renewal that he and others embarked upon would have long-term, and eventually domestic, consequences for Britain.

One of al-Banna's intellectual and spiritual descendants, via the thought of Sayyid Qutb, was Kalim Siddiqui, who played a pivotal role in the Rushdie affair in 1989. By then there had been an organised Muslim presence in Britain for around 100 years, greatly supplemented by large-scale immigration, particularly from South Asia, in the 1950s to 1970s. The Rushdie affair, however, was the moment that

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[1] Brian R. Farmer, *Understanding Radical Islam: Mediaeval Ideology in the Twenty-First Century* (NY: Peter Lang, 2007), p.83.

crystallised for the British public that Britain's encounters with Islam had relocated from far-flung imperial provinces onto the streets of British cities.

Not that the imperial map-makers who gathered with T. E. Lawrence and Gertrude Bell to advise Churchill at Cairo necessarily thought themselves dealing with unified 'Islamic world'. Notional form might be given to this concept by the ideal of the *Ummah*, the unified Muslim community. Similarly, the concept of the *Dar al-Islam* is embedded in Islamic cultural geography, though it proved sufficiently flexible for the British empire to be included within by the Meccan '*ulemā* during the Great War. An 'Islamic world' existed in principle, but not as a lived reality for most Muslims in the early 1920s. The risk that some charismatic figure akin to John Buchan's *Greenmantle* (1915) might emerge to unite Islam and rouse its feared fanaticism against the empire meanwhile remained a work of fiction. Muslim disunity, confusion and weakness faced with the advance of the West was more palpable. By the 1880s figures like Jamal al-Afghani were already responding to the perceived political and cultural threats posed by Western colonialism. His vision of a pan-Islamism that would provide a unified resistance constituted an imagined and idealised Islamic world, albeit one overly defined by what it was not. Beyond the efforts of the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II in the late nineteenth century to use such ideas to bolster his own position and finances, constituting these ideals in practice proved challenging. The very idea of the Caliphate, influentially talismanic though it was, indeed itself proved divisive once there was no longer agreement over the claimant.

Furthermore Muslims at the end of the Great War inhabited a patchwork of territories characterised either by alien European rule - predominantly British, French, Russian, Dutch or Italian - or by local rulers in client relationship with these Europeans. These latter, from Ibn Saud to the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, were generally more interested in pursuing their own ends than wider Islamic ones. This naked self-interest was apparent in the attempts based on descent from the Prophet by the hard-pressed Sherif Hussein of the Hejaz in 1924 to claim the Caliphate vacated after the new Kemalist government in Turkey had abolished both the Ottoman dynasty and this title. Although he had been offered the Caliphate ten years earlier by the British,[2] these efforts did not succeed, nor did they save Hussein's kingdom from conquest by Ibn Saud the following year.

This conquest gave Ibn Saud control of the Holy Places and the much-needed revenue from pilgrims that went with it. Problems with the management of the Hajj had been one reason why the British dropped support for Hussein in favour of their other client, Ibn Saud. The notionally universal experience of the Hajj was

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[2] Sean Oliver-Dee, *The Caliphate Question: The British Government and Islamic Governance* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2009). Umar Ryad, 'Anti-Imperialism and the Pan-Islamic Movement' in David Motabel (ed) *Islam and the European Empires* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp.131-49.

one common culturally transnational factor linking all Muslims. It was also potentially a radicalising experience, spreading ideas of Islamic revival across the North Africa route as exemplified by the Nigerian communities who picked up Mahdist forms of revivalism during their passage through Sudan. In 1927, for instance, an ADC in northern Nigeria was killed by a group returning from the Hajj. Facilitating the Hajj and co-operating with the local 'ulemā was both a means of preventing such problems and part of Britain's justification for ruling Muslim lands. This facilitation was carried out with everything from financial to consular support.[3] Not that they succeeded in preventing the pilgrims from being fleeced when they arrived at their destination, at least until the discovery of oil in his kingdom in 1936 gave Ibn Saud a more significant source of income.

The Hajj was a rare example of the British official mind conceiving of Islam as a unity. Otherwise, mindful of the potential threat posed by pan-Islamism to a thinly stretched empire, imperial officials were reluctant to see Islam in this way. The brief efflorescence of the Khilifat movement in India at the start of the 1920s demonstrated the risk of Islam being used politically to rally opposition against them.[4] Similar anxieties about Western attacks on the Ottomans and the Caliphate were also potent motives for some eminent British converts to Islam, most notably the novelist Marmaduke Pickthall, who as editor of the *Bombay Chronicle* was active in the Khilifat movement. Even among Muslim elites in India, however, such causes still did not prompt effective Muslim unity. Anger at the treatment by the Western allies of the defeated Turks at Sèvres could lead to them making common ground with nationalist anti-British activities by Hindus in 1919-20. The Sèvres terms, however, were first defeated on the battlefield by Kemal Atatürk, and then swept away when the British backed down in the October 1922 Chanak crisis, causing the fall of Lloyd George's belligerent coalition government. Notwithstanding this British humiliation, such far-off events henceforward ceased to provide a unifying factor for Muslim political activity in India. The Khilifat movement petered out. Muslim elites thereafter focused on political goals specific to India, either in alliance with the Congress party or through specific political organisations such as the Muslim League.

Conceptions of a coherent 'Islamic world' in the early twentieth century thus centred on the Ottomans and did not long survive their demise. Those like Pickthall, who converted in part due to admiration for the Islam he encountered in travels around the Ottoman empire, had to adjust to this new reality. For him, Lloyd George's government exemplified a Turcophobia nurtured by the animosity of late nineteenth century Nonconformity against the Ottomans. Pickthall was also appalled around the time of his conversion by the tone of Lloyd George's speech celebrating Allenby's conquest of Jerusalem in 1917 as 'the last and most

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[3] John Slight, 'British Imperial Rule and the Hajj' in David Motabel, pp.53-72.

[4] Gail Minault, *The Khilifat Movement: religious symbolism and political mobilization in India* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1982).

triumphant of the crusades'. Islam, he emphasised in an article the following year, avoided such nationalism. Indeed, the perceived inclusiveness of the Ottoman empire seems to have been one factor in a conversion that, while no doubt sincere on the part of a future translator of the *Qu'ran*, was also political in nature.

In the absence of that empire Pickthall by the end of his life in 1935 was increasingly drawn to *Sharia* as an alternative overarching Islamic social framework. He shared a patrician view of Islam as a source of order and stability with fellow Tory converts such as Lord Headley, though not the latter's lax approach to Islamic practices and law. Such laxity meant that coherence was not readily apparent within the small, little-noticed British Muslim community then largely confined to immigrant seafarers and their wives in certain ports, various well-to-do converts and a proselytising group of heterodox Ahmadis centred on Woking. These last, like their founder responding to British Christian missionary activity in India in the 1880s, could be said to be reacting to the impact of Britain on Islam in ways similar to the contemporary rise of Pan-Islamism, by imagining a revived Islamic World, rather than articulating one that already existed.[5]

This impact was considerable. Indeed Islam generally throve under the empire. Its centrality to indirect rule consolidated its place in local political identity. Imperial economic stability and the challenge of often insensitive Christian missions also had effects, the latter prompting organisational development, such as the Young Men's Muslim Association founded in Cairo in 1926. Imperial views of Islam as a source of social stability and order also meant that local officials sought to protect it and associated local customs, including slavery in northern Nigeria, to maintain the power of local rulers on whose collaboration imperial suzerainty rested. Such non-intervention with customs and *Sharia* also helped to ensure local '*ulemā* did not support rebellion.

Neither in the colonial periphery nor in Whitehall was Islam primarily understood as a unifying belief system across this vast multifarious swathe of territories. It was as a cultural framework through the prism of India, the Ottomans, and a romantic attachment to the desert, the nomadic Arab and an austere, hierarchical lifestyle that it was a reference point for most British diplomats and officials,[6] whose memoirs rarely featured Islam except as an underlying socio-religious framework used to bolster traditional authority structures. Managing religious tensions through local elites could nevertheless prove complex. For instance, the indirect rule the British operated in northern Nigeria via local amirs was complicated by the spread of ideas, notably Mahdist ones brought via the Hajj, which competed with the Sufist Qadiriyya school followed by these elites.

[5] Geoffrey P. Nash (ed), *Marmaduke Pickthall: Islam and the Modern World* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); Ron Geaves, *Islam and Britain: Muslims Mission in an Age of Empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018); James Gilham, *Loyal Enemies: British Converts to Islam 1850-1950* (London: Hurst, 2004).
[6] Kathryn Tidrick, *Heart-Beguiling Araby* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

Particularly in the early 1920s Islamic radicalism prompted anti-British plotting and risings from Sokoto to Somaliland, often reflecting these local tensions between schools of Islam or anti-missionary feeling as much as anti-imperial impulses.[7]

With the demise of the Caliphate and fears about pan-Islamism receding, Islam nonetheless was diminishingly seen as the principal threat to British hegemony. The forces released by the overthrow of the Ottomans, both among those who successfully created new states of their own and those like the Kurds whose aspirations were rebuffed at the Cairo conference, primarily seemed instead those of nationalism. This rise in nationalism was seen by the British as a significant factor in the failure to agree a new, Arab Caliph in 1924. Meanwhile, in the form of parties such as the Wafd in Egypt protesting at the lack of representation at the post-war peace conferences, it built upon the opposition to foreign - especially British - dominance of politics and finance already apparent at the time of the 'Urabi riots in the 1880s. Religion was part of this reaction, but it was not the dominant force.

What therefore impressed British officials in terms of the challenges of political management more often was the rise of these nationalist, broadly secular and urban-based movements. Liberal political elites who led these movements accordingly had to be contained in an imperial game of divide and rule. Hence in Egypt the British High Commission balanced the interests of the royal palace against the Wafd and the crowd,[8] preventing concentrations of power and authority to challenge their own position. Islam's role in this, insofar as it had one, was as a management tool.

For these British officials Islam served three rather different purposes:

> 1) To divide and rule;
> 2) To bolster client collaborators;
> 3) To undermine perceived threats (which might come from forms of Islam not espoused by the local elites).

Divide and rule was particularly deployed in locations like India where Muslims were a significant minority whose interests might be played off against Congress party nationalists. The most notable example of this was the bolstering of the Muslim League, despite its failures in the 1937 elections, in the new regional governments of India during the Second World War after Congress refused to

[7] Benjamin D. Hopkins, 'Islam and Resistance in the British Empire' in Motabel, pp.150-69; John Fisher, *Gentlemen Spies: Intelligence Agents in the British Empire and Beyond* (Stroud: Sutton, 2002), pp.78-107; Jonathan Reynolds, 'Good and Bad Muslims: Islam and Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria' *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34/3 (2001), 601-18.
[8] James Whadden, *Monarchy and Modernity in Egypt: Politics, Islam and Neo-Colonialism between the wars* (London: I B Tauris, 2013).

support the war effort. This process culminated in the emergence of the Muslim-dominated separate state of Pakistan in 1947.[9]

The second technique was used with Muslim princes in India and throughout the Middle East. The British often had exaggerated expectations of this. For instance, the idea that descent from the Prophet would help Hussein in the Hejaz or his sons Faisal and Abdullah in Iraq and Jordan respectively, where the British established these branches of the Hashemites after the Cairo conference, proved over-optimistic. Socio-political rather than sacral authority had to be consolidated, either based on an overly narrow range of Sunni elites in Iraq or on Bedouin tribesmen in Jordan. Quasi-European, and unIslamic, concepts of kingship proved difficult to transplant.

Religion could nonetheless support such traditional (if relocated) rulers in other ways. Territories with weak civil societies and strong, often regionally focused, tribal structures had few common mechanisms across them through which to legitimate authority other than religion. The latter could thus authenticate a ruler's credentials. Its potential effectiveness was demonstrated by the alignment of the monarchist *Itlihad* party with the '*ulemā* in Egypt in the 1920s. It did not always work however, even for Ibn Saud, despite his dynasty's historic links since the eighteenth century to austere Wahhabi forms of Islam. In 1927 his religiously inspired soldiery broke the treaty he had just signed with the British by raiding neighbouring territories that they controlled. The *Ikhwan* revolt had to be put down in 1929 with British help.

Religion could be turned on the British and their client rulers. This was particularly the case when delicate internal relations were disrupted by imperial actions, as occurred when the British occupation of Buraimi oasis in 1955 undermined the autonomy of the Imamate of Oman, prompting a lengthy rebellion led by the Imam's brother, Talib bin Ali. When such challenges were aligned with nationalism and significant internal and external supports were lacking or forfeited, even secular leftists could initially back a successful religious rising. The classic example was Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979.

British officials were aware of this threat to their position: that conservative Islam was not enough to contain the discontents fuelling nationalism and needed to be supplemented with reform.[10] This still illustrates that nationalism, as a means to advance the socio-economic advancement of disadvantaged groups, tended either to trump religion as a political factor or - as in Khomeini's case - to co-opt it as an additional means of identification and mobilisation. Religion, in other words,

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[9] D. N. Panigrahi, *India's Partition: The story of imperialism in retreat* (London: Routledge, 2004); Robin J. Moore, 'India in the 1940s' in Robin Winks and Alaine Low (eds) *The Oxford History of the British Empire, vol.5: Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp.231-42.
[10] William Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the US and postwar Imperialism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), p.744.

operated as a subordinate political force supplementing either traditional rule or nationalism. The *Kaum Muda* movement in Malaya, which rejected the traditional Sufi-infused Islam of the Sultans through whom the British ruled, exemplified the latter, developing by the 1930s into a nationalist opposition.[11] More radical examples were the activities of Izzedine Qassam in Palestine until killed by the British in 1935, or the Muslim Brotherhood involvement in the Arab Revolt that began the following year.

Additionally, Islam could not be used to trump the grievances of the Kurds in Iraq in the 1920s held in check by policing from the air by the Royal Air Force. These grievances were more effective mobilising factors than negative integration promoted via religion. This was also apparent in the Cairo of the Second World War in which Gamal Abdel Nasser had his nationalist epiphany. Nasser was a sincere Muslim, but his seizure of power in the Free Officers coup of 1952 was a nationalist one. The dichotomy between nationalism and religion must not be overstated when considering which proved the prime political factor. Both are legitimating ideals around which support can be rallied against corrupt and failing elites, such as the regime of King Farouk. In the hands of a populist leader like Nasser, rather than the traditional rulers the British sought to use, religion could support nationalism.

Not all Egyptians agreed. The Muslim Brotherhood did not aim primarily at changing the power structures of Egypt. Instead it articulated a radical critique of the decline of Islam as a civilisation back into the darkness of the ignorance of *Jahiliyyah* in the pre-Islamic Arabian peninsula. It did not express the cautious pan-Arabism Nasser espoused and that his British opponents feared and exaggerated. Though largely confined to Arab territories, its ideology was pan-Islamic in nature, with branches formed in various Middle Eastern countries by the end of the Second World War. Its initial foundation and early development had been covertly supported by the British, while the branch in Iraq was founded by the British agent Freya Stark. The British originally intended to use it to counter the Wafdists, and their promotion of the spread of the movement in the 1940s was similarly anti-nationalist.

Similar movements drawing on traditions going back to pan-Islamism emerged elsewhere. Despite a continued yearning for the now absent Caliphate, marked in the establishment of Hizb-ul-Tahrir in Jerusalem in 1953, the focus however became more on a dream of renewal, through a restoration of the Salafi order that had obtained at the time of the Prophet himself. Similarly, a rejection of the westernising ideology of nationalism represented by Muhammad Ali Jinnah's championing of the idea of Pakistan in Lahore in 1940 led Abdul Ala Maududi to found Jamaat-i-Islami the following year to campaign to replace such disorienting,

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[11] William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967).

secular errors with the purity of a totalitarian Islamic state. These bodies were therefore generally as opposed to secular nationalism as the British.

In other settings with more monolithic elites the British sought to interdict the emergence of such radicalism through creating economic opportunities, indirect rule and ensuring a compliant 'ulemā. These techniques were, for instance, deployed in Sudan using the Mahdist leader, Sayyid Abd al-Rahman successfully to contain millenarian rural protests either side of the Great War of the kind that had erupted under his father in the 1880s.[12] Similar attempts were made to use the slippery Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, to contain Arab protests during the Palestine mandate. Ultimately in this incendiary situation neither he nor the British were able to control the discontents resulting from the growing Jewish settlement. That the attempt was made, in the absence of other viable authority figures on the Arab side, nevertheless shows that the British all too often understood Islam as a fundamentally conservative social and political force. Notwithstanding its universalist aspects, they saw Islam more as a means of maintaining the power of local traditional rulers. Indeed, they saw these universal features as helping to undermine and delegitimate nationalist movements conceived as secular and elitist, while recognising it could also pose a threat to their collaborators.

With the onset of the Cold War it was this approach to Islam, supplemented if possible by socio-economic reforms, which became increasingly important for the British. The emergence of this new conflict with the Soviet Union was one of three new factors impacting on the encounters between Britain and Islam between 1945 and the late 1960s, the others being the advent of Nasserism and the rise of new forms of media and communications. Indeed, it originated in the Middle East with the crisis in 1945-46 over Soviet reluctance to vacate northern Iran at the end of hostilities with Germany. The Cold War became the leading prism through which the British viewed the world. Jamaat-e-Islami were therefore seen by British intelligence as usefully conservative, anti-Communist bodies.[13] Conveniently, the Cold War also provided ideological justification for the British pursuit of often oil-related economic self-interest, particularly in their dealings with the Americans, who were increasingly active in the Middle East.

This self-interest was apparent in the first significant post-war example of the Cold War impacting on British approaches to Islam, the Abadan crisis of 1951. Major British interests were at stake in the form of the Anglo-Iranian oilfields nationalised by the Iranian Prime Minister, Mohammed Mossadegh. That part of Mossadegh's support allegedly came from the effective if outlawed Iranian Communist Party,

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[12] Heather J. Sharkey, 'Jihads and Crusades in Sudan from 1881 to the Present' in S. H. Hashmi (ed), *Just Wars, Holy Wars and Jihads: Christian, Jewish and Muslim encounters and exchanges* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp.263-82.

[13] André Gerolymatos, *Castles made of Sand: A Century of Anglo-American Espionage Intervention in the Middle East* (NY: Thomas Dunne Books, 2010), pp.66-9, 195.

the Tudeh, gave the situation a Cold War dimension which British propagandists were quick to exploit. The threat of Communism was also something they played on not just in their dealings with the Americans, but also with elites in Tehran, including the 'ulemā and Ayatollah Abo-Ghasem Kashani, who the British paid to foment riots against Mossadegh. The Ayatollah was anti-British, but quite willing to make an alliance of convenience with them to overthrow Mossadegh. This, with his and the CIA's assistance, duly occurred in 1953.[14]

As a non-Arab, Mossadegh's brand of nationalism was not as exportable as that of Nasser was to become, although techniques such as nationalisation were. It was Nasser who proved a thorn in the British side throughout the Arab Middle East. His popularity was marked by the pictures of him that sprouted throughout the region, particularly after his humiliation of the British in the 1956 Suez crisis. For the British there was a Cold War dimension to this as well, but as with Mossadegh, it was as a bogus stick to beat Nasser with. It was also less effective in mobilising religious and secular elites against the Egyptian ruler. Nasser was every bit as anti-Communist as his British protagonist, Sir Anthony Eden. His purchase of a large arms shipment from Czechoslovakia in 1955 was prompted in part by the British refusal to sell him larger consignments of weapons themselves, rather than a pro-Soviet alignment. Above all, his prime motivation in politics was to avoid the humiliation at the hands of the British he had observed meted out to Farouk in 1942. The British failure to respond effectively to the Cairo demonstrations led by religious students and the Muslim Brotherhood in January 1952 showed that circumstances had changed. This failure helped create the opportunity for the Free Officers coup a few months later. Thereafter handling the Egyptian situation proved ever more challenging for the British. There were now no counter-balancing forces that they could exploit, as in the interwar years, with the possible exception of religion.

Nasser, however, carefully kept firmly under control that former protégé of the British, the Muslim Brotherhood. He suppressed it after a 1954 assassination attempt, as well as executing the influential Islamist ideologue Sayyid Qutd in 1966. Nor, unlike his contemporary military ruler in Pakistan, Muhammad Ayub Khan, did he need to play on Islam to help legitimate his rule and unite, as the British at independence had recognised, an ethnically disparate state. Like traditional rulers, Nasser had a charisma of his own which, like theirs, did not derive primarily from Islam. This brand of street populism coupled with his overthrow of an unpopular and corrupt monarchy limited the space for populist Islamism to emerge. Its appeal elsewhere enabled Nasser to export his nationalism around the region. This was done, however, very much with an eye to the ways in which the apparent spread of Egyptian influence enhanced his standing at home.

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[14] Stephen Dorril, *MI6: Fifty Years of Special Operations* (London: Fourth Estate, 2000), pp.558-98.

The British wilfully misread Nasser's nationalism. Psychologically they were perhaps prepared to do so, having anticipated that the creation of Israel in 1948 might prompt the emergence of a *Greenmantle* style figure. Nasser, although they readily understood he was no pan-Islamist, instead became the subject of these fears. The British also misread his influence. They were inclined to see Nasser's hand in every check, even when he was not involved, as in the Iraqi revolution that overthrew the monarchy and Britain's long-term collaborator, Nuri al-Said, in July 1958. Qasim's seizure of power in Baghdad, however, was a home-grown version of Iraqi nationalism, the (temporary) popularity of which was apparent from the public response. It was a sign that, particularly in larger and more urbanised Middle Eastern states, British indirect rule through collaborators, even ones embarked on ineffective modernisation such as Nuri or the Shah, was increasingly a problem rather than a solution for those rulers. The remaining Hashemite monarch, King Hussein in Jordan, had already concluded this in January 1956, removing Sir John Glubb from his command of the Arab Legion to Eden's chagrin.

Nor did a Cold War dimension necessarily help the British to maintain their influence. It could have the opposite effect. For instance, the British initiative of the 1955 Baghdad Pact - ostensibly to establish a Northern Tier of allies across the region to confront the Soviets - appealed to non-Arab (but Muslim) states along the Russian border such as Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. However, in the one Arab state that the British prevailed upon to join, Iraq, this looked too much like another British attempt at manipulation. Street demonstrations in Amman ensured Hussein resisted the enormous British pressure to also join.

The British misread how far the Cold War allowed them, through devices such as the Baghdad Pact, to reassert influence in the Middle East. This and another event of 1955, their successful expulsion of the Saudis from Buraimi oasis on behalf of their clients in Abu Dhabi and Oman, deluded them into an exaggerated sense of their continuing heft across the region. Yet their declining ability to project power regionally had been apparent since the scuttle in Palestine in 1948. This also dented British prestige in the Middle East. So did their entirely sensible negotiation with Nasser of withdrawal from the now obsolete (in Cold War terms) Suez Canal base in 1954. These new realities, however, were only to dawn on the British government with the Suez crisis two years later, when Nasser nationalised the Canal within two weeks of the last British soldiers departing.

Declining British power in the Middle East should not be exaggerated. They could still deploy to support Hussein in July 1958 after the fall of his Hashemite cousins, or the al-Sabah dynasty in 1961 after Qasim had revived nationalist claims to a Kuwait then newly independent of the British but still hugely important to the sterling balances. Yet these, and the subsequent covert British support for Kurdish and Assyrian rebels against Qasim until his fall in 1963, were limited exercises.

After the failure to undertake Operation Rodeo in Egypt in 1952 in response to the Cairo demonstrations there were no more large-scale British operations in the Middle East.

Smaller, less urbanised states, particularly those of southern Arabia and the Gulf, were however a different matter. By the 1960s British oil interests, and the troops to protect them, were increasingly concentrated in these areas. Here Britain still exercised power with the collaboration of traditional rulers. The limits to such techniques were nonetheless becoming apparent in Aden, the most important city in that region, by the late 1950s. British-controlled since 1839, this port was increasingly difficult to manage as a result of urbanisation, the resulting population influx from Yemen, and unionisation. Radical discontents stoked urban riots and strikes and a growing Marxist movement. This gave the endgame of British empire in Southern Arabia a Cold War flavour which, perhaps surprisingly, does not seem to have been strongly perceived by local British officials. They were instead more struck by the challenge from Nasser, whose intervention in support of the republican coup in Yemen in 1962 gradually had spillover effects in the neighbouring Aden Protectorate. Merging the port of Aden with the traditional sheikhdoms of its hinterland into a new South Arabian Federation proved ineffective in containing these radicalising tendencies. The Army mutiny in Crater in 1967, following Nasser's allegations that the British had aided Israel in the Six Day War, showed how weak this successor state's authority was. It collapsed shortly after the subsequent British withdrawal. The Marxists rather than the Nasserites seized power and the base that the British had expensively built up in Aden was soon instead being used by the Soviet fleet. In Aden they undoubtedly suffered a significant Cold War defeat.[15]

This, however, was not the story elsewhere. Without the complicating factor of Aden, the British were able to assist the Sultan of Oman in defeating rebels inspired and abetted by their Adeni neighbours in the Dhofar War of 1965-75. Collaboration with traditional rulers, with the charisma of monarchy bolstered by religion, largely worked in sparsely populated territories such as this. So much so that it was the British themselves who decided, shortly after the debacle in Aden, to withdraw from the Gulf, to the obvious concern of most of the local rulers.

Some aspects of this demission of empire in the 1960s were complicated by Islam, most notably in Bahrein, with its large Shia population. The principal drivers, however, were metropolitan and financial, actuated by the cost-cutting on overseas spending that informed the 1966 and 1968 Defence White Papers. By the end of 1971 withdrawal from East of Suez was largely complete. Only scattered Muslim states remained under British protection, such as Brunei. This oil-rich Sultanate, notwithstanding the ineffective revolt of 1962, was another example of

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[15] Spencer Mawby, *British Policy in Aden and the Protectorates 1955-67: Last Outpost of a Middle East Empire* (London: Routledge, 2006).

successful British empire through indirect rule. Ninety-five years after a protectorate was established there it was finally granted independence in 1983.

The formal British presence in Muslim lands was coming to an end. The encounter between Britain and Islam became qualitatively different as it was replaced by various other, still important, soft power relationships. These ranged from Commonwealth ties with countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Malaysia, through defence contracts and military training arrangements particularly with Saudi Arabia and Oman, to the continuing widespread role played by British finance capital and infrastructure engineering, not least in the Middle East. Accordingly the failings of British divide and rule, rule through collaborators and informal cultural penetration in Muslim countries should not be exaggerated. Particularly in smaller, less urbanised states these proved largely successful. Where they did not it is too simplistic to attribute this failure to a rising nationalism, still less to the impact of Islam as a social category. It was only towards the end of this period that Khomeini demonstrated that religious leaders could themselves harness nationalism for their own ends, rather than the other way around. Until that happened, with Khomeini able - unlike the Grand Mufti - to seize such opportunities, Islam may have been pervasive but it was not a key independent variable in the socio-political dynamics of Muslim societies. Indeed, in some ways it was more of an element in British techniques of divide and rule. A nationalism based upon social and urban change, including reactions against the often corrupt power structures that supported British control, was from the 1920s to the 1970s a more significant dynamic.

Such discontents were parted fuelled by the aforementioned changes in the media and information flows. The growing importance of these opinion-forming devices was such that during the Second World War covert British media propaganda even used subtle anti-British messaging to ensure a hearing. After all, media outlets form publics and create the banal nationalism through which they speak to these groups in their vernacular. Despite the weakness of civil society and lack of identification with the state in most Muslim societies therefore, the advent of modern media, at least at the elite level, prompted nationalistic discontent with existing power structures and the distribution of social goods. It also brought a new language of nationalism exploitable by a charismatic leader. Controlling the airwaves became as important as controlling territory: indeed, it was a means to control territory. In the form of Nasser's Voice of Cairo Radio, it was also a threat to the British throughout the Middle East. Countering Nasser, according to the Foreign Office in 1956 therefore involved these new media alongside increased use of old media such as Friday sermons.[16]

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[16] The National Archives, London [henceforward TNA]: FO1110/941, tel.352 to Amman, 2 March 1956.

Yet information flows could no longer be controlled by rulers and imams through traditional means such as the pulpit. These forms of authority were disrupted by the rise of the new media. As Nasser demonstrated, the new media also spilled over borders. In due course this created an international competition for authoritative communication among various Muslim states, not least through state investment in controlling media outlets, including Saudi attempts to control the Arab press in London that, after the Lebanese civil war broke out in 1975, concentrated there.[17]

While London had long been a source of finance for Muslim countries, it also now began to attract banks originating in those countries. These included the notorious Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI). Founded by Agha Hasan Abedi after Bhutto nationalised the banks in Pakistan in 1972, it was wound up in 1991 in light of shady activities such as money laundering and arms-trading. In finance, media and arms-trading London offered Arab elites critical mass, ease of establishing a new institution (particularly compared to setting up a newspaper in the Middle East), geographical position and the advantage of the English language.[18]

Meanwhile, back in the Middle East, the growth of the media impacted upon society through the relativising nature of mass communications. Qutb may have been executed, but his Salafist message of the need to return to the purity and simple certainties of the founders of Islam found increasing receptivity in this changing environment, offering a totalising vision of a society purged of such insidious Western influences. It also had political resonance in societies long controlled by unaccountable elites. The first generation of nationalists in states which effectively became independent since the Second World War could be blamed for failures which would be cured by the Islamicisation of politics. Indeed, this critique could also be applied against those nationalists who failed to secure independence, as seen with the 1988 emergence of Hamas against Fatah in Palestine.

These developments ensured that religion became a more important factor in socio-political relations in Muslim societies by the 1970s. This was not least because civil society under the nationalists was sometimes even more suppressed than under the traditional rulers they supplanted. Secular party systems, trade union structures and other means of expressing civil society were often absent. Islamic preachers and organisations like the Muslim Brotherhood, who had learnt to exploit the new media, were accordingly the default options for mobilising

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[17] Said K. Aburish, *A Brutal Friendship: The West and the Arab Elite* (London: Gollancz, 1997), pp.48, 353-70.
[18] Mahmoud Hassan Tarabay, 'The Social Context of News Production: Internal and External Influences on the Arab Press in London and Beirut' Unpub. PhD Thesis, University of Leicester (1994), chap.2.

society and a new identity politics.[19] Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, found that to his cost when he tried to used religion to bolster his power, only to be assassinated by Islamic radicals in 1981 after his deal with Israel.

To these internal effects leading to Islam becoming a more important socio-political factor in Muslim societies from the 1970s onwards can be added significant geopolitical changes, not least those which reshaped the power balance between various Muslim states. A key catalyst was the Six Day War in 1967. The scale of the Egyptian defeat undermined Nasser's appeal and prestige, impacted on Egyptian finances, forcing him to withdraw from Yemen, and suggested the limits of the Nasserite prescription for social and political renewal. The scale of the Israeli victory was to have even more momentous consequences. It for the first time revealed the scale of the power imbalance between Israel and its Arab neighbours. The consequent Israeli occupation of the West Bank also highlighted the unresolved Palestinian issue while the seizure of the whole of Jerusalem, the third holiest site in Islam, gave an additional religious dimension to what became known as the Arab-Israeli conflict. Indeed, with Britain's direct interests in the Middle East now effectively curtailed, British public understanding of the region and of issues in Muslim lands more generally came to be structured from 1967 to the late 1980s largely through that prism.

Nasser's declining prestige after 1967 was balanced by the rising importance of Saudi Arabia. Since the death of Ibn Saud in 1953 Britain's relations with this state had been chequered. Relations soured under his successor Saud, not least because of Buraimi oasis, but improved again during the shared covert support for the doomed royalists in the 1962-70 Yemen civil war, especially following British backing for Saud's replacement by his brother Faisal in 1964.[20] In addition to the close relations between the two royal families, a particular feature of the relationship was a series of substantial arms deals, culminating in the al-Yamanah agreements in the 1980s. Britain thus went from being the power-broker in the Middle East to a somewhat grubby salesman. Corruption, investigations into which were stopped by the Blair government in 2006, was only part of this. There was the related complicity in Saudi abuses of human rights. For instance, the Saudi diplomatic and commercial responses to the Anglo-American drama-documentary *Death of a Princess* in 1980 prompted the Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, to exclaim he 'wished it had never been shown'.[21] A *Realpolitik* recognition of the growing power and wealth of Saudi Arabia was the dubious justification.

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[19] Ghassam Salamé (ed), *Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1994), p.19.
[20] Mark Curtis, *Secret Affairs: Britain's Collusion with Radical Islam* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2012), pp.86-7.
[21] David Brockman, 'Behind the Screens: *Death of a Princess*' *Transdiffusion* 7 February 2005 [https://www.transdiffusion.org/2005/07/02/princess accessed 25 September 2018].

This process was substantially advanced by the events of 1973. Another Arab-Israeli conflict, the relatively inconclusive Yom Kippur War, the outcome of which nonetheless moved Sadat towards the peace he concluded with Israel three years later, 1973 prompted the first of the two oil price hikes of the decade. The low cost of extraction for the Saudis has meant that they have often subsequently used oil diplomacy to reduce oil prices in order to weaken competitors. In the 1970s, however, these price hikes were to further enhance Saudi wealth and influence.

Some of this oil wealth from Saudi and other Arab states was to be invested back in London, not least in media, finance and health tourism. Most notable were the donations from Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi towards the building at last of the Central London Mosque. First promoted by Headley, for whom recognition of the importance of Islam in the empire was part of his patriotic imperialism, this idea had been taken forward for similar reasons during the Second World War. The Colonial Secretary, Lord Lloyd, argued in the dark days of 1940 that establishing this mosque 'would serve as a tribute to the loyalty of the Moslems of the Empire and would have a good effect on Arab countries of the Middle East'.[22] The resulting Islamic Cultural Centre opened by George V in 1944 in Regent 's Park was subsequently augmented by the grand adjacent mosque opened in 1977.

Saudi soft power and financial and cultural penetration of Britain thus was apparent by the end of the 1970s. The Iranian revolution at the end of that decade then began to change the Saudis' geopolitical position in the Middle East, leading to a growing proxy confrontation with their Shia neighbour. Meanwhile, the perceived challenge the new Islamic Republic of Iran posed to the West right from its advent in 1979, prompted a limited British return to the projection of power East of Suez. Initially this was through armilla patrols with the Americans, ostensibly to protect shipping in the Gulf during the Iran-Iraq War launched by the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein in September 1980. This war marked the culmination of a long period of tension between the two countries, exacerbated by the Iranian revolution and Khomeini's appeals to the Shia majority in Iraq to stage a similar revolt there.

Although ostensibly maintaining an evenhandedness between the two belligerents, Britain in practice favoured Iraq in the conflict. Formally the export of material with 'lethal uses' was interdicted, yet these rules were not effectively enforced and by 1985 secretly relaxed. The motive was partly the venal one of arms sales opportunities, but also reflected British geopolitical calculations. The war may have been launched by Saddam Hussein with the expansionist aim of annexing Khuzistan, an Arab-inhabited part of Iran. Arab nationalism, however, was no longer regarded by the British as a threat to their interests in the Middle East. Instead, it was now the willingness of Iran export its Islamic Revolution, not

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[22] TNA: Lord Lloyd, 'Proposal that His Majesty's Government should provide a site for a mosque in London', WP(G)(40)268, 18 October 1940.

least through support for the usually repressed Shia populations elsewhere, that seemed most likely to destabilise the region in ways inimical to the West. An example was the Iranian engagement in southern Lebanon following the 1982 Israeli invasion which led to the founding of Hezbollah three years later.

Accordingly, if 1967 prompted the decline of Arab nationalism as a socio-political factor in the Middle East, then the 1979 Iranian revolution marked the revival of religion instead. There were, however, important differences from the pan-Islamism of the late nineteenth century. This was partly because of the Shia complexion of Iran and its tendency therefore to use Shia populations elsewhere to spread its influence. It was also partly because this revolution placed Islam at the centre of the overthrow of a failing and corrupt regime. Islam thus supplanted nationalism as a means for social and political renewal within a country. Meanwhile the centrality placed on Islam in the new state and the efforts to export that revolution invoked the idealised cosmopolitan world of which Qutb wrote in ways that could appeal to Sunni populations as well.

To some extent such developments were already in train before 1979. It was a civilian politician, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who presided over a dramatic Islamisation of politics and institutions in Pakistan after his 1971 election victory. Not that this saved him from execution in 1979 following the military coup that brought Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq to power. Bhutto's attempt to use religion to consolidate identity politics and his own position was now to be taken much further. This military dictator's rule incubated a radical Islamism, not least in Pakistan's security services, that was already taking root as a result of the religious flavour of the insurgent confrontation with India in Kashmir. Through this Pakistan, and irregular Pakistani fighters, were already involved in the type of guerrilla warfare that would become far more intense to the North after 1979.

Zia, however, was regarded with far more favour by the British than the Iranians. The key distinction was that Zia was seen through the prism not of the Middle East, in which the British - unlike the Americans - had never included Pakistan, but of the Cold War. This conflict deepened dramatically because of another key event of 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Zia was both on the right side then as far as his Western allies were concerned, and also a key facilitator of the covert aid channelled into Afghanistan to counter the Soviets.

Earlier in the Cold War Islam had been regarded by Britain primarily as a means to bolster existing rulers and weaken nationalists. To these functions was now added Islam as the rallying point for resistance to the Soviets in the relative absence of other mobilising factors, as invoked by the speech of the new Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, to the American Foreign Policy Association in December 1979. Religion became the key recruitment tool to the mujahideen conducting guerrilla operations in Afghanistan, the key component in the ideology that fuelled their

resistance and the signifier that secured the Western-supplied weapons enabling them to wage war.

Contrasts with the earlier insurgent conflict in Aden should be picked out. That also had a Cold War backdrop. However, then there was a three-way conflict between Marxists, Nasserites and traditional British-backed rulers, with religion not a notable factor. In Afghanistan, in contrast, although ethnicity was significant in some resistance to the Soviets, the West's decision to focus resistance around religion turned that into a major factor and internationalised its appeal, drawing towards the conflict those who sought to wage militant Jihad from elsewhere, including Saudis like Osama bin Laden. It also encouraged an Islamicisation of society along the Pakistani supply lines, not least in the training camps for the fighters who headed north.

Changes in mass communication, disillusionment with nationalist elites and wider geopolitical developments created opportunities for these ideas to have much greater purchase by the 1980s. They did not, however, become dominant expressions of Muslim identity or everywhere mobilising factors in the politics of Muslim societies. Because of their perceived centrality in the struggle in Afghanistan and the emergence of bodies like Hezbollah and Hamas, the notion of militant Islam nevertheless became increasingly central to the Western imaginary. The trope of fanaticism as a label which simplistically obviated the need to understand tensions in Muslim societies had never really gone away. This was despite the efforts of figures such as the Syro-Egyptian reformer Muhammad Rashid Rida earlier in the century to subvert such rhetoric by reporting examples of fanaticism among the Christians of Britain.[23] It was now to revive strongly. These apparently militant developments were to result in the consolidation of a reductionist view of an alien 'Islamic World' for a fearful Western gaze, unaware of the complexities of Islam, refracted through crude tabloid representations of incendiary preachers. They also provided a spurious justification for racist hostility to postwar immigration.[24]

An exasperated Edward Said was already pointing out how these distorted stereotypes othered Muslims in 1980.[25] This othering was exacerbated by the geographical separation effected in British cities by segregationist housing policies. Awareness of these developments, and that international currents among Muslim societies could now impact politics on British streets, was then catalysed by the Salman Rushdie affair.

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[23] Umar Ryad, 'Islamic reformism and Great Britain: Rashid Rida's image as reflected in the journal *Al-Manār* in Cairo' *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 21/3 (2010), 263-85.
[24] W. Shahid and P. S. van Koningsveld, 'The Negative Image of Islam and Muslims in the West: Causes and Solutions' in Idem (eds) *Religious Freedom and the Neutrality of the State: The Position of Islam in the European Union* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), pp.174-96.
[25] Edward Said, 'Islam through Western eyes' *The Nation* 26 April 1980.

Two figures linked that affair to Britain's past imperial encounters with Islam. One was Rushdie himself. He was a child of empire, having been born to a well-to-do Muslim family in Bombay two months before Indian independence. He came to fame through his Booker Prize winning novel, *Midnight's Children* (1981), a dizzying magical realist exploration of empire and its legacy in post-independence India. Like his protagonists in the subsequent novel which proved so controversial, *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie had also journeyed as an immigrant from the periphery to the heartland of the former empire, with this disorientating cultural experience constituting the backdrop to his novelisation.

The other represented even more directly the domestication of Britain's encounters with Islam. Siddiqui also originated from India, but there similarities with Rushdie ended. Far from the latter's left-liberal intellectual detachment from religion either as a belief system or as a form of belonging, Siddiqui was a devout Sunni Muslim. In 1972 with Saudi finance he co-founded the Muslim Institute to map out Qutb's future Islamic civilisation and turn back the assault of secularism. He also deeply admired Khomeini, his revolution and its demonstration that Islamicist ideas could animate the Muslim masses. These connections helped turn the 1988 publication of Rushdie's fourth novel into an international as well as domestic confrontation with a seemingly militant Islam.[26]

This was not the only connection between Qutb, Siddiqui and Rushdie. Qutb, drawing on Maududi's influence, in his *Islam: The Religion of the Future* identified what he called the 'Hideous Schizophrenia' produced by error since the dawn of Christianity and the resulting dissonance in religion's relations with science.[27] These dissonances were becoming apparent through the disruption to systems of knowledge in the Middle East resulting from the advent of mass communications by the time Qutb was drafting this sometime in the 1950s. For Qutb the way to cure this schizophrenia was by replacing both the corrupt Christianity allegedly causing it in the first place, and the corrupt Islam of his own era which had been infected by it. Instead of this *Jahiliyyah*, his Islam of the future would see a Salafist restoration of the Islamic order at the time of the Prophet, with the schizophrenia cured by an overarching structure of belief and obedience that would expunge all those painful dissonances he himself had experienced on a trip to the US. Although not his most influential work, this book neatly summarises the key outlines of Qutb's thinking. Furthermore Rushdie, through the sufferings of his characters in *The Satanic Verses*, conjures up very much the schizophrenia of which Qutb complained.

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[26] Paul Berman, 'The Rushdie Affair and the Struggle Against Islamism' *The New Republic* 7 December 2012 [https://newrepublic.com/article/110804/who-are-the-real-blasphemers] accessed 14 September 2018.
[2727] Sayyid Qutb, *Islam: The Religion of the Future* (Delhi: Mazaki Maktaba Islami, 1974).

Rushdie's familiarity with such thinking was already apparent in his third novel, *Shame*, which thinly disguises the contest between Bhutto and Zia and picks out Jamaat-e-Islami's doctrines as a particular target. *The Satanic Verses* satirised the alluringly simple dogmatism of such ideas and their tendency to arrogate to themselves God's role as judge, in the process turning religion into 'the servant of the lowest instincts' and God into 'the creature of evil'. This magical realist embedded such observations in a dystopian rendition of encounters between a distorted and dream-like setting in which this debased Islam is encoded, and the vivid London of the novel. With a right-wing government still focused on the Cold War and the Left focused on confronting Thatcher, rising Islamism in Britain nonetheless went largely under the radar. The CEO of Rushdie's publisher, Penguin, commented: 'One relied on the sanity of secular democracy....It never occurred to us that this time it might be different or that it would become such as huge worldwide event'. After all, the Muslim riots in London and Africa in 1938 over H. G. Wells' denigration of the Prophet in his *A Short History of the World* did not snowball in this way. Even journalists who were of Indian Muslim background like Kenan Malik found that it was only as the Rushdie affair broke in 1989 that they realised its significance.

Malik recounts meeting an old friend from confrontations with white racism in the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party in the 1970s, to find that he had rejected the 'white left' and rediscovered his Muslim roots in a new Salafist form. This reflected a shift from one type of identity politics to another. For Malik the turning-point was the reaction to the widespread riots of 1980-81. These broad-based ethnic minority responses to aggressive policing prompted a new and well-funded focus on community relations which, through the device of multiculturalism, divided the broad left that had existed hitherto into various client groups. Accordingly 'Racism now meant not the denial of equal rights, but the denial of the right to be different'. The need to defend against perceived oppression was transferred to identity politics as community politics was balkanised. Community leaders who could contain tensions among their ethnic or religious groups were incentivised to self-identify in return for cash. One consequence was the expansion of mosques during the 1980s with local government and Saudi or Iranian money, helping thereby to turn multiple ethnic identities into religious ones. In the process British Muslims, most of whom originated from the Sufi-influenced Barelvi tradition, also became influenced by Wahhabi ideas, or by the strict teachings of the Deobandi preachers Zia sent to Pakistani communities in Britain. For Siddiqui it was also a perfect opportunity to use the rhetoric of religious and political oppression to contain feared secularisation among the second generation of Muslim immigrants then reaching maturity.[28]

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[28] Kenan Malik, *From Fatwa to Jihad: The Rushdie Affair and its Legacy* (London: Atlantic Books, 2009); John Piscatori, 'The Rushdie Affair and the Politics of Ambiguity' *International Affairs* 66/4

Rushdie observed in 1982 that a Britain no longer capable of exporting power had instead imported empire. Certainly the management techniques developed in the 1980s resembled the old imperial tactics. Multiculturalism tended to divide and rule discontented ethnic minority groups, the Councils of Mosques which appeared at local level starting in Birmingham from 1981 onwards provided collaborators supposed to contain these discontents and the Islam they purveyed was still understood, as in the heyday of empire, as a socially conservative force. This view was to be radically altered by the crisis that *The Satanic Verses* provoked.

The first protests in Britain began with the Saudi-funded and Jamaat-e-Islami founded Islamic Foundation in Leicester in late 1988. It was not, however, until the book-burning in Bradford on 14 January 1989 that these protests were widely reported. Bradford had particular resonances because its association with the controversy over multicultural education in the city sparked by headteacher Ray Honeyford in 1984 had already brought public attention to the large Muslim presence there, and Honeyford's ousting had been the first victory in Britain for Muslim political campaigning.[29] A month later Khomeini issued his *fatwā* informing 'the proud Moslem people of the world that the author of *The Satanic Verses* book, which is against Islam, the Prophet and the Koran, and all those involved in its publication who were aware of its content, are sentenced to death'. [30] The following day an Iranian organisation put a price on Rushdie's head as the novelist went into hiding, and a week later Britain withdrew its diplomats from Tehran.

Siddiqui's role in this process is obscure. He was definitely in Tehran at the time. Although he had initially opposed actively campaigning against the book it is alleged that he encouraged the Iranians to take action. Certainly, Khomeini's declaration enabled Siddiqui to propel the hitherto little-known Muslim Institute into a leading role in the burgeoning protests in Britain. His background as a journalist and ability to coin a soundbite for the BBC also turned him into a 'media-friendly militant' who shamelessly sought to exaggerate the radicalism of his co-religionists.[31]

The outcome of this process was a growing sense of an existential crisis. This is not least because it led to a growing assertiveness on the part of British Muslims around issues such as the extension of the moribund blasphemy laws to religions other than Christianity. It also started a reconfiguring of ideas about Islam in British official and media minds away from an assumption of social and political

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[29] Mark Halstead, *Education, Justice and Cultural Diversity: An Examination of the Honeyford Affair 1984-85* (Brighton: Falmer, 1988).

[30] Cited in Zig Layton-Henry, 'Race Relations and Immigration' in Peter Catterall (ed), *Contemporary Britain: An Annual Review 1990* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), pp.376-80.

[31] Malise Ruthven cited in Seyfeddin Kara, 'Between Salman Rushdie and Ayatollah Khomeini: Kalim Siddiqui and Political Islam in Britain in the last quarter of the 20th century' *The Muslim World* 107/3 (2017), 375-400.

(1990), 767-800; Kalim Siddiqui, *Generating 'Power' without Politics* (London: Muslim Institute, 1990), p.18.

conservatism back towards the images of fanaticism marked on the imperial frontier in the 1890s. This formulation had never entirely gone away in the mindset of British officials like Sir John Troutbeck during a long and distinguished career in the Middle East in the mid-twentieth century. Both of these views were, of course, orientalist constructs. Both also served largely to obscure rather than enlighten the British about how to relate to the Muslims now within their midst.