

# Respecting and Ensuring Rights: Feminist Ethics for a State Response to Fundamentalism

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## Abstract

*This article revisits the multiple terrorist attacks that took place in England in 2017 and, through a closer examination of the narratives of the eight male perpetrators of these attacks, it draws the readers' attention to the flaws in state and non-state responses to fundamentalist mobilisations. The article works with Karima Bennoune's (2008) radical universalist approach to highlight the importance of a human rights framework for tackling fundamentalism. This is positioned against a neo-liberal and nationalist state response and a reactive left/anti-racist response in order to make visible the connections between terror and torture and also the myopia of a response that emphasises an obligation to either respect or ensure rights rather than both simultaneously. This is particularly underlined within the final section where a discussion of gender perspectives on tackling fundamentalism distinguishes between the human right to security, an important concern for feminists involved in ending violence against women and girls, and the government's protection of its own interests through securitisation. In keeping with the conjoined objectives of the piece, the final section offers a simultaneous critique of non-state actors for whom every state intervention on fundamentalism, and every feminist engagement with the state, is sullied by the accusation of 'securitisation'.*

Keywords: Prevent, Human Rights, Terrorism, Gender, Security

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## Introduction

After a ten year hiatus, in 2017 Islamist terrorism once again made its presence felt on the streets of the UK. The year began with news of the suicide bombing by Jamil al Harith, a prominent Manchester based ISIS operative and a former Guantanamo detainee. Then, alongside images of British nationals, including young female ‘jihadi brides’, leaving the UK to fight for the so called Islamic State, five terrorist attacks in the space of five months - Westminster (22/03/2017), Manchester (22/05/2017), London Bridge (3/06/2017), Finsbury Park (19/06/2017), and Putney Green (19/09/2017) – became a stark reminder of the ongoing recruitment of British nationals to a violent Salafi-Jihadist ideological world view and the co-terminus rise and rise of racism. The personal-political narratives of eight men set the mood music for discussions on pathways into and the prevention of terrorism. Their stories provide key insights into the array of issues and tactics with which counter-terrorism measures now need to contend but also highlight the immense flaws and inconsistencies in the British state’s counter-terrorism work.

Gender was right at the heart of these discussions. The Manchester bomber, Salman Abedi, specifically targeted the concert of a young female singer with a largely female fan base; the majority of those killed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 were women and girls condemned by Abedi for their ‘immoral western’ lifestyles. Following the Manchester attack, the former Chief Prosecutor, Nazir Afzal, who had previously used the term ‘gender terrorism’ to talk about child sexual exploitation and honour-based violence, began applying this term to Muslim fundamentalism. Nimco Ali, the feminist campaigner against female genital mutilation, connected the dots across white supremacist and Islamist<sup>i</sup> attacks by diagnosing these as a problem of ‘toxic masculinity’ while the feminist journalist Joan Smith used the term ‘misogyny’ to connect a range of male perpetrated mass killings (in the UK and in the USA) with the perpetrators’ individual histories of intimate partner violence. Moreover, women and girls were implicated in these supremacist gender orders. Questions were posed about complicity as we got to know more about Jamil al Harith through

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interviews with his wife. We heard of the death of one of three ‘jihadi brides’ who had travelled from the London borough of Tower Hamlets to Syria and public attention once again turned to female recruiters and female recruits. On the other hand, Islamists and left leaning academics attacked Muslim women who decided to work with government, through the Prevent agenda, to tackle fundamentalism within their own communities.

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This article is informed by Karima Bennoune’s (2008) radical universalist approach to tackling both terror and torture but also borne of the legacy of Women Against Fundamentalism’s writing and activism. I attempt to push the reader to think simultaneously from an anti-racist, anti-fundamentalist, feminist position within the context of a highly polarised debate. In doing so, I critically engage with the landscape on which Prevent is rhetorically advocated and implemented, by acknowledging the importance of challenging fundamentalism in all religions, without conceding to either civil society denial or state over reach, and with the objective of holding both state and non-state actors to account.

The article begins with an introduction to Karima Bennoune’s (2008) important reminder of the bi-focal obligation of human rights – to ensure rights and respect rights – and the many ways that this dual duty is compromised within the circle of indignity that connects terror and torture. I position this commitment to a human rights approach as in conflict with nationalist and neo-liberal responses to terrorism. In the first section, I voice antipathy for the displacement of an important emergent 1980s debate about ‘fundamentalism’ with a far less coherent conceptualisation of ‘extremism’, particularly the way it is bound to patriotism, integration, and individualised risk assessments. If this first section is a focus on problems with the state’s framing of the issues, the following section highlights the myopia of non-state actors that focus on state over reach and push against any serious consideration of the threat posed by non-state actors engaged in terror and torture. This part of the argument highlights the importance of a feminist ethics that can distinguish

between supremacist, authoritarian projects and liberatory ones. The final section focuses on gender in order to draw out the tensions in getting both state and non-state actors to value and defend security as a human right. On the one hand, civil society actors accuse the state (and whoever engages with government) of 'securitisation' whenever government takes up its responsibility to tackle fundamentalism. On the other hand, the British state rescinds its duty to protect all its citizens and frequently falls back on securitisation, particularly the use of immigration controls, to ultimately protect the interests of the nation-state over and above the rights of its citizens.

### **Radical universalism vs nationalism and neo liberal governance**

In 2008, in the wake of academic and activist campaigning around Guantanamo and refashioned arguments about the manipulation of women's and LGBT rights in the service of imperial power, Karima Bennouna – then a Rutgers Law Professor and now the UN Special Rapporteur for Cultural Rights – developed a bold and brave new critique of state and NGO responses to fundamentalism. In her paper 'Terror/Torture', Bennouna (2008) argued that both fundamentalist terrorism and the state's response to this are bound together by the same philosophical tenets, both are an incursion on people's human rights and they often involve the same acts. These acts are intended to cause 'severe and deliberate human suffering', they dehumanise their victims, they both 'represent a spectrum of brutalising practices often justified in the name of a greater good or higher purpose' (Bennouna, 2008: 17). Moreover, they violate the right to bodily autonomy, to freedom of conscience and expression and they both sever 'all bonds of human sympathy' between those engaged in torture or terror and those being tortured or terrorised (Bennouna, 2008: 7, footnote 21). Although state and non-state actors portray terror and torture as dichotomous categories, they are in fact 'points on the circumference of the same circle: terror/torture, terror/counter-terror, security/human rights, state action/non-state action' - as one side brutalises,

the other side rescinds the rule of law which in turn leads to a violation of rights, and so on and so forth (Bennoune, 2008: 9).

Bennoune argues that to counter this circle of dehumanisation, all state and non-state bodies need to focus on creating a 'circle of decency' and indeed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) obliges states to both *ensure* rights and *respect* rights. However, she explains that:

In our time of terror, security experts usually emphasize the aspect of ensuring rights (though not often using such language) while human rights advocates largely focus on respecting rights (though they usually at least acknowledge, en passant, that governments must protect their populations). The trick, which neither side in the debate has adequately referenced, is that states have to do both - respect rights and ensure rights - and at the same time.

[Bennoune, 2008: 10]

In ensuring rights, the British state has a duty to protect its population from 'violent attack by non-state armed groups' but, at the same time, it 'must not itself contravene the rights guaranteed in the ICCPR' (Bennoune, 2008: 10). Unfortunately, campaigns against state injustices powerfully illustrate the British government's failure to respect rights while it claims to undertake activities to ensure rights. Sadly, there are more examples than space permits within this article, but touchstones include the British government's involvement in extraordinary rendition, deaths in police custody, the use of control orders to curtail freedom of movement, the use of immigration controls to deport jihadists (including to countries where they face persecution) and the use of immigration controls to stop young people who travelled to Syria and Iraq from returning to the UK.

Moreover, Amnesty International UK's (2016) submission to the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review lists the current government's 'hostile environment' and immigration detention practices as one of the key human rights issues in the UK. The same report raises concerns about the ways

that new security measures – such as the Investigatory Powers Act – infringe on the right to privacy and freedom of expression. At the time of writing, there is a groundswell of support for the Stansted 15 who were convicted under the Aviation and Maritime Security Act 1990 and the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 for using non-violent protest methods to stop a charter flight being used to deport asylum claimants to Nigeria and Ghana.<sup>ii</sup> This case is a clear illustration of the way that the state uses security claims and security legislation to enable deportation and suppress anti-deportation / human rights activism.

As Chetan Bhatt (2012) has pointed out, these developments are taking place within a techno-geo-political context where state over reach is now characterised by drone strikes and multi-layered insidious intrusions into governance structures, or shells of structures, within other countries (justified on the grounds that they are ‘failed’ or ‘fragile’ states), while jihadists scatter their attacks across a range of geographical territories utilising a wide range of tactics and tools. The rules of war have changed as both state and opponent claim that everywhere is a battlefield (Reiner, 2018). Consequently, it has become usual for western states to claim that the use of extra-judicial measures is a necessary act for protecting the security of their populations - the assassinations of prominent Al Qaeda leaders Osama Bin Laden and Anwar Al Awlaki, were defended with recourse to the language of war and a claim to *ensuring rights* while at the same time completely obliterating out of any recognition the simultaneous obligation on states to *respect rights*.

On the other hand, human rights, anti-racist and left activist circles have largely glossed over the terrorist supremacist ideologies and networks of former Guantanamo prisoners and other Islamist activists and instead depicted them as virtuous victims harassed by the insidious practices of security services (Bhatt, 2017). When faced with the struggle between global fundamentalist forces and western imperial powers, these groups and movements make ethical choices to present ‘salafi-jihadis and their supporters as bewildered victims unburdened with ideology, volition or agency... (for instance) in the case of Aafia Siddiqui<sup>iii</sup>, it is not simply that human rights organisations focused

on 'torture', but that they actively worked to make 'terror' disappear, remade its ideologues into virtuous figures' (Bhatt, 2017: 7). Such a perspective sees power only in relation to western states and the progressive struggle only in relation to fighting imperialism (ibid).

Karima Bennoune similarly argued that this is typical of a human rights discourse that 'minimises discussion of ensuring rights to protection from terrorist violence by the enforcement of international law' (2008: 10) and is largely focused on campaigns directed at nation states and their obligation to respect rights.

Some would argue that international human rights are now a central part of globalised governance and there are similarities between the fundamentalist recourse to human rights as legal innocence and the neo-liberal instrumentalization of a human rights language as both have been emptied of any 'progressive visionary content' (Bhatt 2017: 18). Nonetheless, in this article, I draw a clear distinction between a radical universalist rights-based response to fundamentalist mobilisations and a response that is mired by nationalism and the managerial tools of neo-liberal governance, which have in turn relied on communal forces.

In the context of a globalised world, the nation-state is impacted by (and impacts) international governance structures which have become increasingly dominated by the drive to instil neo-liberal political economy (Sassen, 1996) in a context where the power of capital is intensified (Hall, 2011). The privileging of neo-liberal economic interests over social welfare and social democracy has seeped into the very fabric of our culture, our language, ethics and daily practices (Hall, 2011) while western governments develop management tools akin to insurance firms to ameliorate the risks of global traffic, both material and virtual (Rose, 1999).

In the face of global transformations, the nation state retains its autonomy, authority and legitimacy by strengthening its executive over judicial and legislative wings (Sassen, 2004) but when people resist the growing power of the executive, government relies on nationalist fervour to get through these

crises of governmentality and governability (Yuval-Davis, 2012). These trends are really evident right now with a Conservative government pushing against international human rights conventions, relying on a crude recourse to immigration controls and nationalist scripts (the ‘hostile environment’ and ‘British values’), and an over reliance on punitive measures for tackling social problems so that it can continue to squeeze the life out of the welfare state. Moreover, these tendencies are particularly clear in the British Prevent agenda.

### **Nationalism, neo-liberalism and Prevent**

Since its birth in 2005 to the events of 2017, the Prevent agenda was much less a political argument against right wing formations and much more a combination of patriotic expectation and neo-liberal managerialism. In Opposition, the Conservative Party election campaign oriented around three key distinctions from New Labour: to stop state funding of Islamist groups (there has never been a statement about other religious fundamentalists); to ensure that Prevent money is used for focused counter-terror work rather than generic cohesion / social development activities; and to tackle the ideological shifts that enable fundamentalist activity by looking at ‘extremism’ and not just ‘violent extremism’.

However, there have been several continuities between the New Labour and Conservative Party approaches to fundamentalism in the way they have been defined more by the interests of the nation-state (nationalism) and the power of capital (neo-liberalism) than by a commitment to respecting and ensuring rights. Firstly, although the current definition of extremism appears to be located within human rights and anti-discrimination commitments, it continues to emphasise loyalty to the British state and does so in a context where the current PM Theresa May is issuing conflicting messages about the government’s commitment to human rights – on the one hand she is advocating a Domestic Abuse Bill that will ratify the Istanbul Convention, on the other she has been a vociferous opponent of the Human Rights Act and is



complicit in the decimation of resources (e.g. legal aid) and support services that assist people to activate those rights.

Throughout the New Labour years, Prevent was wedded to the Community Cohesion and Integration agenda. The potential for a human rights framework was jettisoned in favour of chauvinistic 'British' pride. As the SBS/WAF (2007) submission to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion spelt out then and is still relevant now, government discourse assumed that 'there are a set of fixed and given (unchanging) 'British' values that are superior and to which all those who enter the country must subscribe' (p.2). The absence of any acknowledgement of the contribution of minorities, including Muslim activists, to the development of human rights and equality principles 'reinforces the distorted and dangerous view peddled by many in the media and western governments and mirrored by fundamentalists, that the battle lines are between the West and Islam' (SBS/WAF, 2007: 4).

This recourse to 'British values' involved a renewed pressure on minorities to 'integrate' and to demonstrate their loyalty to the British state (see Tony Blair's speech 8/12/2006 'The Duty to Integrate: Shared British Values'). At the time, Sivanandan (2006) astutely observed that the war on asylum had merged with the war on terror – 'race riots' and religious violence became part of the projection of second or third generation ethnic minorities, particularly Muslims, as immigrants in need of integration rather than as established British citizens that had contributed to the struggle for human rights and equality. The state's response to fundamentalist recruitment completely sidestepped discussions on racism, poverty, class inequality, and foreign policy in favour of cultural and behavioural arguments placing the onus on minorities to 'integrate'.

This emphasis on British values and integration has continued under the Conservative Party; the revised Prevent Strategy (2011) defined extremism as follows:

'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and

tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

[HM Government, 2011: 107]

BME feminists are caught between a rock and a hard place as Theresa May has opened up space for conversations about gender and fundamentalism that simply didn't exist under New Labour, particularly by establishing a Commission on Countering Extremism steered by the BME feminist Sara Khan and a group of academics and activists with strong track records of defending human rights, equalities and civil liberties. However, the Conservative Party's interest in gender inequality is tarnished by its destabilisation of citizenship - British minorities continue to be treated as immigrants sandwiched between a 'hostile environment' and a 'culture clash'.

Integration (or lack of) continues as a feature of mainstream assumptions about extremism in the UK and as an element of the current Conservative government's Prevent agenda. Louise Casey's (2016) report on opportunity and integration reflects many of these assumptions – she leans towards assimilationism by focusing primarily on ethnic minorities while simultaneously ignoring the rising tide of white fascist extremism, which is pinned to the same claims of authentic British identity and values. She also advocates the teaching of 'British values, laws and history' without cognisance of the spoils of colonialism.

Recent campaigns against gender segregation have been important for highlighting separatist tendencies among fundamentalists and the ways that they enforce unequal gender roles, cloister and control women and girls within minority communities (see Patel, 2018). However, the presumption by government and others that extremists are in part defined by their inability / unwillingness to integrate conceals many truths about the British state *and* about fundamentalist activity. Under New Labour, Islamists were notoriously given Prevent funding for anti-radicalisation work and consulted by police forces in England (see Maher and Frampton, 2009) but they were not the only

ones. The New Labour government claimed as ‘moderate’ those fundamentalist organisations (such as the Muslim Council of Britain, Hindu Forum and the Sikh Federation) who appeared to be ‘integrated’ because of their engagement with democratic lobbying tactics and electoral politics and their use of human rights language. As Sahgal (2016) highlighted more recently, this relationship with fundamentalist forces continued under the last two Conservative governments. Moreover, fundamentalist groups have long since been able to mainstream their religious interpretations and practices by being ‘integrated’ into local multi-faith forums and Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACREs).<sup>iv</sup> As is obvious from the examples discussed in the next two sections, fundamentalists strive to impose ideological projects of separatism and superiority but they do this through full engagement with social and political institutions in the public realm.

The British state continues to engage with fundamentalist groups across shared interests (see, for example, Sahgal, 2016; but also unintentionally highlighted by O’ Toole et al. (2015) in their review of state-Muslim governance). In most part, this alignment of interests concerns a moralistic pre-occupation with policing women, young people, minority communities, illegality and criminality (see Dhaliwal, 2011 and Dhaliwal, forthcoming). Drawing on Naomi Goldenberg’s (2013) theory of religions as vestigial states, I have argued that government happily overlooks ‘extremism’ so long as its fundamentalist partners do not pose a threat to its monopoly on violence (ibid).<sup>v</sup> As I’ve explained elsewhere (see Dhaliwal, 2011, 2017 and forthcoming), the continuities between New Labour and the Conservative Party can also be seen in their mobilisation of communal identities and fundamentalist formulations wherever communitarianism can assist the project of the neo-liberal shrinking of the welfare state. In short, these features of contemporary governance mean that a claim to tackling extremism is compounded by contrary interests (nationalist and neo-liberal not to mention long standing local networks) that have come to depend on extremist formations.

Moreover, an agenda that shifts attention from human rights to the pathologising discourses of integration fits neatly with risk assessment tools that emphasise individual behaviour and rectitude without contending with the structures and contexts that, although not the cause of fundamentalist activism, have nonetheless enabled right wing formations and agendas to flourish.

The Prevent programme is delivered as a package. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a legal duty on public sector bodies to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism' during the exercise of their functions (HM Government, 2015a). Due regard means that 'the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions' (HM Government, 2015a: 5). To fulfil this Duty they are expected to perform a risk assessment, produce an action plan, train staff and collaborate with other areas. Contrary to popular beliefs, this is not a duty on individual employees but on organisations and local authorities as a whole.

Connected to this new statutory Prevent Duty is the Conservative government's updated Channel programme guidance (HM Government, 2015b). The Channel programme was first piloted in 2007 by New Labour. It was rolled out by the Coalition government in 2012. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 set out 'the duty of local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism' (HM Government, 2015b: 2). Channel panels are expected to be part of multi-agency responses by: 'a. identifying individuals at risk; b. assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and c. developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned' (HM Government, 2015b: 5). This support plan can range from mentoring, life skills coaching, anger management sessions, cognitive behavioural work, something referred to as 'constructive pursuits' which includes leisure activities, education training and careers guidance, family support work including parenting programmes, health awareness training, housing support, and drugs and alcohol awareness training. The

guidance also states that ‘where an individual has a need for theological / ideological support, Home Office approved intervention providers must be commissioned to mentor them. The mentoring aims to increase theological understanding and challenge extremist ideas where they are used to legitimise terrorism’ (HM Government, 2015b: 17).

There are several contributions within this Special Issue (such as Parker, Chapot and Davis), which demonstrate that Prevent funded initiatives and Channel Panel interventions comprise fairly innocuous educational, developmental and youth work. Moreover, Cowden and Picken (also in this Issue) emphasise the numbers of children and young people that have been averted from fundamentalist activism because of Channel panel interventions. While Channel guidance accepts that there is no single factor that makes someone vulnerable to radicalisation, it does provide a Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) that is built around three criteria – engagement with a group, cause or ideology; intent to cause harm; capability to cause harm. From my perspective, the second two points are key for a human rights approach to tackling fundamentalism. However, matters are confused when the VAF is supported by as many as 22 factors (known as the ERG 22+) and professionals are asked to consider the following in making a referral for a Channel intervention: ‘feelings of grievance and injustice; feeling under threat; a need for identity, meaning and belonging; a desire for status; a desire for excitement and adventure; a need to dominate and control others; susceptibility to indoctrination; a desire for political or moral change; opportunistic involvement; family or friends involvement in extremism; being at a transitional time of life; being influenced or controlled by a group; relevant mental health issues; over-identification with a group or ideology; ‘Them and Us’ thinking; dehumanisation of the enemy; attitudes that justify offending; harmful means to an end; harmful objectives; individual knowledge, skills and competencies; access to networks, funding or equipment; criminal capability’ (HM Government, 2015b: 28). Other than ‘criminal capability’, these indicators are wide ranging and many could apply to most young people in their formative years.

It's important to bring a critical lens to this process but a feminist critique needs to be clearly distinguished from that led by Cage (2016) in their report, *The Science of Pre-Crime*. As a fundamentalist organisation (see Tax, 2013 and Bhatt, 2017 for further details) their objectives are entirely different. Sadly, they have managed to harness the integrity of academic critique<sup>vi</sup> in order to try and undermine necessary discussions of a role for the state in tackling fundamentalism. They seem to have convinced a huge range of academics that there is no Islamist recruitment taking place in the UK in spite of the shocking reality of terrorist attacks and of British nationals travelling abroad to join ISIS. This wide ranging support for the Cage position assumes that ISIS recruits are responding entirely to British foreign policy and/or imperialism rather than the fact that people are effectively targetted by ISIS recruiters and that those recruited subscribe to an authoritarian ideology.

Instead, I take my lead from a number of feminist academics whose work to end violence against women has pointed to the ways that risk assessments (whose formula has been devised by the police) are flawed for the simple fact that risk is never static, it is dynamic, and therefore can not be subjected to a tick list approach, no matter how detailed (Coy and Kelly, 2011). Moreover, within contexts of dwindling public resources, there is considerable pressure to find ways to distinguish between high and low risk cases i.e. those that require an urgent response and those that can be de-prioritised, even though an incident classed as low risk may well be an indication of something more serious (Stark, 2009). In fact this is perfectly illustrated by the stories of the eight men responsible for the attacks in 2017 but also by the Deghayes brothers whose referral to Channel did not prevent their radicalisation (see Connett, 2017) because it did not address the multi-faceted problems confronting them - bullying and racism at school, poverty, domestic violence at home, an uncle that had been in Guantanamo and was released to an address near them that led to them being subjected to racist abuse but also exposed to Salafi-Jihadi ideology, their involvement in gangs, and their political views. An approach that encourages independent youth projects that are focused on advocating for universal human rights (against the racist and

fundamentalist assault on rights) at the same time that welfare needs are being met by the state, might be a better step in the right direction.

### **In denial of Terror and Torture**

2017 began with the news that Jamil al Harith, a 50 year old British convert to Islam, was the suicide bomber at the centre of an explosion near the Iraqi city of Mosul (Rawlinson, 2017). He was known to ISIS as Abu Zakariya al-Britaini. He was known to his natal family as Ronald Fiddler. The plot thickened as press attention switched to the £1 million compensation awarded to Harith in 2010 (while Theresa May was Home Secretary) for false imprisonment and torture at Guantanamo Bay (MacAskill et al., 2017). Harith had been detained without charge at Guantanamo for over two years. During this time, he had been subjected to beatings, sleep deprivation, food and water deprivation, religious abuse, and daily humiliation during which he was forced to kneel in front of US officials. He was kept in a cage and shackled into a painful position for hours at a time. This treatment needs to be condemned. Whatever his crimes, Harith deserved to be treated as a human being with the right to food, shelter, accommodation and the right not to be tortured.

However there is another side to the story. Harith had converted to Islam back in 1994, while he was in his twenties. Six years later, he travelled to Pakistan and claims to have been arrested by the Taliban as he was passing through Afghanistan on his way to Iran. Along with several other British nationals, he was picked up by US Army officials at an ex-Taliban prison in Kandahar in 2001 (ibid). He claimed that while he was waiting for Red Cross officials to organise his return to the UK, US officials decided they didn't believe his story, detained him as a 'suspected enemy combatant' and moved him to Guantanamo. A series of media outlets tracked Harith's journey since his release from Guantanamo. He was one of 17 British nationals (including Moazzam Begg, the Tipton Three, Mohammed Emwazi - later known as Jihadi John - and Omar Deghayes) whose release from Guantanamo was negotiated by a New Labour government in 2004 (Quinn and Weaver, 2017). The then Home Secretary,

David Blunkett, asserted that he was confident that none of these men posed a security threat (Blunkett, 2017). Jamil al Harith was also one of four British plaintiffs represented by the Centre for Constitutional Rights (CCR) in New York in a bid to sue Donald Rumsfeld (the then US Secretary of State) for false imprisonment and torture at Guantanamo. The case was dismissed in 2009 but is linked to Meredith Tax (2013) and Karima Bennoune's (2010) argument that, in representing jihadists as victims of state torture, CCR chose to overlook their participation in acts of terror.

According to Harith's sister, when he returned from Guantanamo in 2004, he struggled to find work. At some point he met and married Shukee Begum. She claimed that Harith was radicalised in 2013 after being affected by the plight of Syrians (McKee, 2017). That would be almost ten years after his return to the UK. From 2013 onwards, he was ensconced in a network of Manchester-based jihadists through his contact with a key ISIS recruiter at the centre of that network, Raphael Hostey, known to ISIS as Abu Qaqa Al-Britaini. By 2014, just one year later, Harith had moved to ISIS controlled territory. A Channel 4 interview with Shukee Begum revealed that Harith had travelled to Gaza and was 'stopped and questioned by UK authorities for six hours' when he tried to re-enter the country. She had thought he was 'involved in the distribution of aid in al-Bab on the Iraq/Syria border and was ideologically opposed to suicide attacks' but when he moved to ISIS territory she followed him (with her five children!) to try to convince him to return to the UK (ibid).

The circle of Terror/Torture was quickly reproduced as civil society actors avoided any concrete discussion of the heinous ideology to which Harith had subscribed while government compensated for its own oversight by curtailing civil liberties. Theresa May re-introduced the same control orders that David Cameron had scrapped as part of Coalition brokering with the Liberal Democrats and moved quickly to a conversation about strengthening immigration laws to enable the deportation of jihadists – Theresa May's pet project as then Home Secretary - and rescinding citizenship to British nationals in Syria and Iraq to prevent them from returning to the UK, even where they



felt remorse and disillusion with joining ISIS, and irrespective of whether they had committed any crimes.<sup>vii</sup>

Harith's personal-political journey and the noise around it, raises a number of issues that are pertinent to an understanding of the current Prevent landscape. This was a man at the apex of both torture and terror. His story is a stark reminder of the globalised enmeshing of local, national, international, real, lived and virtual worlds through intense time-space compression, that in turn pose significant challenges to the purview of British state powers. The daily experience of humiliation, violence and abuse that he incurred at Guantanamo, his insights into US and UK security services, army and police officers *must* have impacted his world view.<sup>viii</sup> However, while his family stated that he was forever changed by his experience at Guantanamo and his wife claimed that he was radicalised by the injustices of the Syrian conflict in 2013, alternative accounts suggest a radicalisation narrative that spanned thirty years.

The reasons why Harith was ever in Afghanistan back in 2001 remain unclear. This is not dissimilar to the cases of other British men that were initially deemed 'enemy combatants' and later freed from Guantanamo (such as Moazzam Begg) who anti-racist, left and human rights groups portrayed as 'perfect victims' (Sahgal, 2010) of western imperial powers until Gita Sahgal (2010), Karima Bennouna (2010), Meredith Tax (2013), Chetan Bhatt (2017), and members of Women Against Fundamentalism pointed to the many ways in which they had been, and continue to be, involved in Islamist networks. This was reflected, for instance, in their trips to countries that map directly on to the Islamist geo-political narrative (Bhatt, 1997) calling on true Muslims to engage in 'defensive jihad' (Bhatt, 2017). Harith allegedly accompanied Abu Bakr (a key Al Qaeda operative) to Sudan as far back as 1994! He then claims to have been 'picked up' by the Taliban in 2001 for trying to cross from a 'religious retreat' in Pakistan through a post 9/11 war-torn Afghanistan to reach Iran! (see Rawlinson, 2017). At some point in the mid 2000s, he was stopped by intelligence officers on his way back from Gaza.

There is also another twist to the story: a suggestion that Harith was detained by the US because he could offer insider information on the Taliban. These are *Homeland*-esque machinations that are compounded by Lord Carlile's (the man responsible for reviewing terrorism legislation) assertions that there was likely always to have been an understanding that Harith was a jihadist and the compensation awarded to him in 2010 was an attempt to hold onto national security data rather than a genuine view that Harith was not a jihadist. Pragna Patel's (2019) article in this Special Issue points to similar machinations that enable the kinds of narrative lapses and contradictions that exacerbate rather than chip away at the Terror/Torture circle of abuse and indignity. The only un-established fact is whether Harith became entrapped by jihadists or whether he pro-actively aligned himself with fundamentalists in spite of his experience in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Media and right wing outrage focused on the compensation Harith was awarded and this undermined his very real experience of torture. On the other hand, Jamil al Harith's activities are a mirror on left/anti-racist critiques of Prevent and radicalisation theses. In a process not dissimilar to the anti-racist defence of Moazzam Begg and absolute resistance to the exposition of Birmingham-based jihadist networks nurtured and cemented over two decades (see Tax, 2013; Bhatt, 2017), a Letter to *The Guardian*<sup>ix</sup> accused the newspaper of racial profiling and pathologisation after one of its journalists (an Asian/Muslim woman from the north of England) produced an investigative piece detailing Islamist networks in South Manchester (see Parveen, 2017). She identified 16 ISIS recruits from within 2.5 miles of Harith's home, including the notorious ISIS enlister Raphael Hostey, who was killed by a drone attack in Syria in 2016. Hostey and Harith were good friends. Hostey was also friends with Salman Abedi, the suicide bomber who killed 22 people at Manchester Arena just weeks after Harith's suicide mission in Mosul. Harith and Hostey were also acquaintances of Salma and Zahra Halane, twin sisters that travelled to Syria to become 'jihadi brides'. The report suggests that histories of

belonging previously associated with gangs have given way to networks organised around particular ISIS recruiters.

Despite all this, the letter<sup>x</sup> from two academics and a youth worker, received wide circulation among anti-racist academics and activists on social media. The authors of the letter state:

The government's misunderstanding has been to claim that radicalisation is the main cause of terrorist violence. Often known as the "conveyor belt theory", it states that extreme interpretations of belief systems offer the best explanations for why people commit acts of violence. This has been largely discredited by most mainstream academics (with a link to Arun Kundnani's Claystone Report) as it ignores the role of structural violence: racism, poverty, vulnerability, foreign interventions etc. – often the products of state policy.

This Letter is an archetypal underscoring of respecting rights and the total sidelining of the duty to ensure rights. In my view it is also emblematic of the way that a range of academics round on anyone that meets with government to discuss responses to fundamentalism. In fact, by completely ignoring the reality of fundamentalist mobilisations in Manchester, the authors are not respecting the rights of those millions of people, mostly Muslims, that feel the full force of fundamentalist violence on a daily basis.

Moreover, the point about 'mainstream academics' links to a report by Arun Kundnani (2015). Obviously this statement shifts the onus from fundamentalist activism to state policy. The same circles are silent on the 16 ISIS recruits and Islamist networks that must have developed in the area and gone unchallenged for decades. Other than an essay on South Manchester by Kenan Malik (2017), there were no left or anti-racist letters of opprobrium and concern about the extent and embeddedness of fundamentalist activity in minority neighbourhoods.

At this point, one does have to ask - why isn't the recruitment of men and women to terrorist networks, and the impact on universal human rights, a

cause for concern for these anti-racist activists and academics? Moreover, as Gita Sahgal asked of me recently, why is it that anti-racists work with network analyses of fascist activists but proclaim state conspiracy and underscore infringements of civil liberties when others urge us to look closely at jihadist networks?

In a twisted push back against all radicalisation theses, Arun Kundnani would have us believe that it is the British state rather than fundamentalist activism that is responsible for perfectly 'nice' young men and women becoming terrorists.<sup>xi</sup> In fact Kundnani never describes jihadists as terrorists but frequently speaks of state terrorism. If the cause is state policies, it follows that for Kundnani (and the many left/anti-racists that follow his line of argument) the way to tackle fundamentalism is to focus on rectifying state policies, particularly British foreign policy.

There is little space to get into the dominant radicalisation theses here but, as noted above, there are flaws with the VAF approach, it's myopic focus on individual psychology and behaviour when a leading expert on radicalisation, Peter Neumann, has identified over 200 personal and political conditions that could potentially push people towards fundamentalist formations (Brown, 2017). It feels to me that the VAF pales into insignificance when one looks at the personal-political journey of Jamil al Harith. Conversely, a rights based approach would actively challenge all mobilisations that seek to dismantle others' rights and it would support projects that are engaged with fighting for universal human rights, whether this is local women's organisations or secular anti-racist projects.

In the context of Manchester, Kenan Malik (2017) provides an important personal insight - his political trajectory was vastly different to Jamil al Harith, he argues, because of the anti-racist and class based progressive social movements that marked his youth, a context that has been in sharp decline for some years. Given this, is it not equally possible that the decline of secular anti-racist or trade union activism and/or complicity in strengthening the hand

of religious identity politics and communal projects, is also part of the problem?

Moreover, as Karima Bennouna (2008) points out, the term ‘terrorism’ remains controversial among left, anti-racist and civil liberties activists even though there are clear definitions of both terror and torture within international law and it is not accurate to claim, as some human rights organisations have done, that ‘the term terrorism is without legal significance’. Bennouna cites the 2004 definition established by the UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes as:

Any action, in addition to actions already specified by the existing conventions on aspects of terrorism, the Geneva Conventions and Security Council resolution 1566 (2004), that is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organisation to do or to abstain from doing any act...

[as cited in Bennouna, 2008: 20]

While Bennouna contends with the shortcomings of this definition, including ‘the exclusion of state conduct from the scope of the definition’ (2008:21), she maintains that it is not correct for international human rights organisations and left activists to claim that there is no agreement on how to define ‘terrorism’. She notes that, at least until the date of her article, Amnesty International were writing the word terrorism in quotation marks in order to emphasise the lack of international agreement on the use of the term. This was underscored by their adoption of the line that ‘one person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter’. While there are clear examples of the ways that states use the phrase ‘terrorism’ to pathologise and root out opposition<sup>xii</sup>, there has been a long period of international human rights organisations refusing to, categorically, denounce the actions of Muslim fundamentalist groups.

Moreover, this is not the case for the British government's list of proscribed terrorist organisations – whatever you may think of the word 'terrorist' and in lieu of an urgent debate about proscription, most of the organisations on the government's list (as of September 2018), are supremacist groups intent on embedding fear and terrorising civilians. If anything, the list does not go far enough in terms of the full range of fundamentalist organisations operating within the UK that present themselves as respectful ('integrated' into civic, political and electoral systems) while they fund, support, advocate and their members and leaders engage with acts of violence across the globe.

However, the state does not make any distinctions between forms of non-state political violence and this is where we need to foreground and develop our own feminist ethics. For the British state, Britons recruited to fight ISIS by organisations outside of the British army are placed on the same terrorism-radicalisation footing as those that join ISIS. So in the British government's view, Anna Campbell's<sup>xiii</sup> armed resistance alongside the progressive YPJ (the Kurdish Women's Protection Units) in Rojava would be subject to the same terms of reference as Jamil al Harith's suicide bomb for ISIS. Clearly there is an ethical problem with this and we need to find ways of distinguishing between violence perpetrated in the name of authoritarian supremacist projects and that perpetrated to resist such projects. Feminist ethics needs to help us cut through the claim that Muslim fundamentalists are the same as Irish nationalists fighting British colonialism or South Africans fighting apartheid (see Tax, 2013 for more on the many ways that fundamentalists are not anti-imperialists).

### **Security vs securitisation**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017, 52 year old Khalid Masood rented a large car and drove it at high speed at pedestrians walking on the pavement of Westminster Bridge killing four people and injuring another 32 (Anderson, 2017). Masood dumped his car then ran across the road to New Palace Yard where he stabbed an

unarmed officer. Masood was shot dead by another police officer just inside the gates of the Palace of Westminster. Born Adrian Russell Elms, he had converted to Islam while he was in prison. He was known to MI5 as a 'peripheral figure' in a plot to bomb the base of the territorial army in Luton in 2010 but the police claim that he was not considered a threat and he had not been charged with any terrorist offences. Between 2010 and 2012 he worked for a language school in Luton where the manager claimed he came across as apolitical ('integrated'?) and rarely expressed anger but he did feature as part of police intelligence on Al Mouhajiroun networks. Although the Islamic State were quick to claim the attack, there was little evidence to suggest any direct links between Masood and ISIS. For all intents and purposes this was a man that acted alone out of a strident belief in a particular ideology, using as ammunition items that are readily available to adults in the UK.

Exactly two months later, Salman Abedi walked into the foyer of Manchester Arena, towards the end of a concert by Ariana Grande. He was carrying a rucksack containing a home made bomb filled with shrapnel. He positioned himself by parents and family members who were waiting to collect children and young people at the concert. He detonated the bomb as hundreds of people poured out of the concert. The blast itself killed the people in his immediate vicinity but the shrapnel enabled him to injure people as far as 80 metres from where he was standing. Abedi killed 22 people. Another 116 people required hospital treatment (Anderson, 2017). Half of those killed were under 20 years of age, the youngest was just 8 years old. The majority were girls and young women, representative of Grande's white western female teen following. By targeting a concert by this specific artist, Abedi was making an ideological statement about pop culture and expressions of female sexuality. Since he did not leave a definitive statement about his actions it is difficult to know his intention, but his target and his timing appeared to fit clearly with the ISIS call for Muslims around the world to use the month of Ramadan to demonstrate their opposition to western values.

Just two weeks later, on a warm Saturday evening (3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017), still in the period of Ramadan, another three men, Khuram Bhatt (aged 27), Rachid Redouane (aged 30), and Youseff Zaghba (age 22) drove a hired white van into groups of people on London Bridge. The van was loaded with home-made Molotov cocktails. After driving into pedestrians on London Bridge, the three jumped out and, armed with large knives, they set upon people in nearby Borough Market. They killed 8 people and injured 45 (Anderson, 2017) before being shot dead by police officers. Here the focus was not specifically on a group of women, but it was clearly a response to ISIS calls to use the Ramadan period to show contempt for 'western' values, which they actioned by targetting bars and nightlife.

At the height of attention to Islamist attacks, a 47 year old white man, Darren Osborne, went to Wales and hired a van which he drove back over night. He headed straight to the Finsbury Park Islamic Centre where large numbers of Muslims had gathered to break their fast. Osborne drove his van into a pedestrian, killing him at the scene. He injured 10 others. He was remanded by other worshippers and handed over to the police.

All four of the above events were classed as acts of terrorism.

Despite the continued denial and displacement by many non-state actors, terrorism involves a series of violations of human rights. As Bennoune (2008) makes clear, terrorism has the potential to:

(V)iolate human rights across all categories: civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, as well as individual and group rights, women's rights and children's rights. Those rights most often affected include the fights to life and to security of person, the fights to be free from torture and ill-treatment and arbitrary detention, the right to humane treatment, the right to be free from discrimination, the rights to be free from violence against women and to free consent in



marriage, the rights to freedoms of opinion and expression and assembly and conscience and religion and belief and movement, the rights to take part in public affairs and to vote, the right to health, the right to education, the right to work, the right to take part in cultural life, the right to protection of the family, the right to development, and the right to peace (2008:41).

Moreover, a human rights perspective ‘can illuminate aspects not highlighted in governmental security discourses’ such as the imposition of dress codes and marriage codes (Bennoune, 2008:40). Bennoune and members of Women Against Fundamentalism (WAF) have fought over many years for public recognition of the specific gender dimensions to fundamentalist, racist and communal attacks.

In the wake of the 2017 attacks and also because of the attention to ‘jihadi brides’ and the sexual violence perpetrated by ISIS, the gender dimensions of ‘extremism’ began to be foregrounded. However, these discussions have been far from clear and there’s still a lot of thinking to be done on this. Unfortunately, there is little space to get into detail but I want to end this paper by making three key points on gender that speak to the need for a clear feminist distinction between security and securitisation.

Firstly, there has been a move to diagnose the problem of fundamentalism as one of patriarchal power relations. References to ‘toxic masculinity’<sup>xiv</sup>, ‘misogyny’<sup>xv</sup> and ‘gender terrorism’<sup>xvi</sup> in relation to the events of 2017 and the eight men involved in perpetrating those events are clearly a means for highlighting the connections between their personal histories of violence against women, their affiliation with fundamentalist and racist political views and the specific targeting of women and girls. Indeed Bennoune (2008) also used the phrase ‘gender-based terrorism’ to refer to the specific forms – like attacks on reproductive rights and on sexual health clinics – that are clearly targeting women’s rights. This connects with aspects of the term ‘sexual terrorism’ coined by Carole Sheffield (1995) around three decades back in order to expand the notion of terrorism so that it takes account of rape culture

and sexual harassment and the way that fear and threats to personal security and bodily autonomy are a key mechanism for enabling male control over women.

To think of security in relation to the right to be free from this threat of and actual harm, is an important invocation of human rights values, particularly the notion of security as a human right. As an extension of this, Bennoune's (2008) calls for security proponents 'to expand their notion of safety to include fundamental aspects of human rights, including the right to be free from torture' (page 9). In practice this means we work with expanded notions of security that cover the torture inflicted by non-state actors and push against attempts to inflict torture or compromise rights (freedom of movement, bodily autonomy, the right to life) in the name of fighting terrorism. To sustain the universality of human rights requires a deep commitment to human dignity (Bennoune, 2008: 9).

Having said that, the current discussion in the UK of patriarchy and fundamentalism feels reductive. We can easily lose sight of a radical universalist approach to Terror/Torture by reducing everything to patriarchy. For instance, male dissidents are targeted by fundamentalists – how does patriarchy help us to understand that and to respect/ensure their rights? Moreover, not all men exposed to violence and abuse, or all misogynists, or indeed all male perpetrators of domestic abuse, then go on to subscribe to fundamentalist ideologies let alone commit acts of mass violence. Perhaps what we could argue is that the bodily autonomy and security of women and girls is indicative of conducive contexts for fundamentalist and other right wing mobilisations?

Secondly, as WAF and others in the UK have maintained, women and girls are at the forefront of tackling fundamentalism. Yet when women and girls sit down at the table with government to talk about tackling fundamentalism they are accused of being co-opted by a surveillance state, of giving way to state over reach and of fuelling anti-Muslim racism, even now when the government's counter-extremism agenda is so obviously fixed on white

supremacist groups (see Haroon-Iqbal and Rehman articles in this Issue). As WAF has known since its birth in 1989, women speaking out on Muslim fundamentalism in particular are de-legitimised by minority communities. For instance, Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal and Yasmin Rehman (in this Issue) point to the way that they are accused of not being Muslim enough to speak on the issue. The fact is that women that engage with the state to underline its role in ensuring the rights of its citizens, including the human right to security, bodily autonomy and freedom of expression, are accused of supporting a post 9/11 'securitisation' agenda (see Fekete, 2006).

Having said that, my final point brings us to the murkiest part of the discussions on Prevent. By speaking of 'gender terrorism' in relation to child sexual exploitation, honour based violence and Muslim fundamentalism and not other forms of violence, it is being applied to acts of violence perpetrated by BME men. It is in this way that the phrase runs the risk of sitting more closely to securitisation (as protection of the nation-state, its monocultural characteristics and its monopoly on violence) than to security as a human rights value.

Moreover, it is difficult to dismiss concerns about securitisation when David Cameron (2011) ushered the Conservatives back in to power by presenting a critique of multiculturalism at an international security conference and calling it 'muscular liberalism', when counter-terrorism money is used to fund CCTV cameras in majority BME areas in Birmingham, when 'security services overlap with community engagement teams' so much so that a counter terrorism police officer is seconded into the council's Equalities Division (O' Toole, et al., 2015), when conversations about immigration are not too far from conversations about tackling extremism, and when there is a constant lobby to extend police powers – the fact that Khalid Masood sent a WhatsApp message before he murdered people on Westminster Bridge led to a renewed pitch to extend police powers so that they can access all private WhatsApp messages, a clear infringement on the right to privacy and freedom of expression and thought.

The police role has been the single most problematic and misunderstood issue in relation to the polarisation of debate on Prevent. The anti-Prevent lobby may rely on the misrepresentation of Pursue cases as Prevent cases and the mass reproduction of these myths (see Parker et al; London ESOL teacher, in this Issue) but this much is true, the 2015 guidance makes clear that the police are at the centre of Channel's work – the Channel Police Practitioner (CPP) or dedicated police Channel co-ordinator is tasked with co-ordinating activity 'by requesting relevant information from panel partners about a referred individual' and responsible for making the initial assessment based on a Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF). Once compiled, this information is passed to a Channel Panel that is chaired by the relevant local authority and tasked with drawing up a tailored support plan for Channel cases whose progress is then reviewed on a three month basis. As Rahila Gupta (2015) has pointed out, statutory workers sit on 'Channel panels, a multi-agency forum heavily populated by crime enforcement agencies: police, immigration officials, border force, prison officers, youth offending services'.

However, when critics of the central place of the police are asked *what* the role of policing should be in relation to *preventing* terrorism, there is a deafening silence. Several people I have spoken with have tentatively suggested, as has the youth and community studies expert Paul Thomas (2012), that there should be an 'intelligence - led' approach to tackling terrorism. Yet this still leaves undetermined the precise distinction between intelligence gathering and surveillance. To come full circle and revert back to Bennoune for guidance, surely the key distinction is between policing in the interests of preventing violations of rights and policing with an interest to safeguard 'statist concerns' and/or the power of capital.

## **Conclusion**

In this article I have adopted Karima Bennoune's radical universalist approach to argue against a nationalist and a neo-liberal governance response to

fundamentalism in favour of a coherent human rights approach that requires us all, state and non-state actors, to recognise the human rights violations of both terror and torture. I have pointed to the many ways that the state response falls short – privileging loyalty to the state, working in partnership with some fundamentalists while condemning others, using anti-terror powers against protestors of all hues, and mobilising gender and equalities in nefarious ways. I have also pointed to the many ways that non-state actors – civil society organisations, human rights, civil liberties, left and anti racist groups – also fall short primarily by refusing to see and to challenge the human rights violations being committed by fundamentalists, primarily against minorities be they dissidents or women or children. The final section works through a discussion on women/girls to bring together the tensions between state over reach and civil society conspiracy theories. There are many unanswered questions, but to raise questions is itself an important starting point for debate.

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- i In this article I refer to the same civil society structures and that quell dissenting voices and practices either with the threat of violence or the actual use of force.
- ii See The Letters page in *The Independent* following the conviction, particularly ‘The UK’s approach to the Stansted protestors has been shameful – it should inspire us all to action’, dated 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/letters/letters-stansted-protests-15-protestors-uk-human-rights-immigration-brexit-christmas-a8689056.html>
- iii In Chetan Bhatt’s words, Aafia Siddiqui is ‘a Pakistani citizen currently incarcerated in Texas, having been found guilty of attempted murder and armed assault on US soldiers while she was in US custody in Afghanistan. The details of why she was in military custody in July 2008, why she was flown to the US, and other issues surrounding her movements are strongly disputed... For her supporters in Pakistan, and for much of the human rights movement internationally, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, Aafia Siddiqui symbolised powerfully the atrocities and injustices of the ‘global war on terror’ and US imperialism... She is frequently characterised as an innocent neuroscientist who worked tirelessly for the welfare of others, a loving mother who suffered horrifying atrocities for years at the hands of the US military, including physical and mental torture, rape, solitary confinement, sustained degradation, and enforced separation from her children and family... Siddiqui’s past work for charities, including ones known to be Al Qaeda fronts, is glossed in the representation of her as ‘a savior of humanity.’ [2017: 6].
- iv Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education or SACREs usually comprise dominant religious organisations within local areas. Their main function is to advise on religious education and collective worship in schools within their area. While it is also a mechanism for schools with diverse populations to gain an exemption from Christian worship, it also gives particular religious groups the power to establish normative understandings and determine interpretations and practices of their specific religion. For examples see Chapters 4 & 11 of Dhaliwal, S. (2011) *Religion, Moral Hegemony and Local Cartographies of Power: Feminist Reflections on Religion in Local Politics*, PhD thesis submitted to Goldsmiths, University of London. Available at: <http://eprints.gold.ac.uk/7802/>
- v A similar argument was made by Gita Sahgal in respect of the government’s willingness to cut deals with both Muslim and Christian fundamentalists as she and other feminists campaigned for de-recognition of Sharia law in the UK. See Sahgal, G. (2016) ‘Sharia, security and the church: dangers of the British Home Office inquiry’ published by *openDemocracy* online on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2016. Available at: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/gita-sahgal/sharia-security-and-church-in-uk-dangers-of-home-office-inquiry-into-sharia> [Last accessed 3/02/2019].
- vi For instance see Letters (2016) ‘Anti-radicalisation strategy lacks evidence base in science’ published in *The Guardian* on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016. Available at:
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<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/sep/29/anti-radicalisation-strategy-lacks-evidence-base-in-science>

- vii For further information see this BBC News coverage ‘Theresa May pledges new measures to tackle British jihadis’ dated 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014 and available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-28905776> [Last accessed 4/02/2019].
- viii For a full account of the torture that Jamil al Harith endured, see his full statement to the Council of Europe meeting, reproduced here: <http://humanrights.ucdavis.edu/projects/the-guantanamo-testimonials-project/testimonies/prisoner-testimonies/statement-of-jamal-al-harith-former-detainee-at-guantanamo-bay> [Last accessed 4/02/2019]. With such intense and shocking testimony it is no wonder that stories post 9/11 have continued to impact other young men and women disparaged by the US power across the globe, the lack of accountability and the level of impunity.
- ix See: ‘Unfair criminalisation of Moss Side residents’ in the Letters section of *The Guardian*, published on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/feb/27/unfair-criminalisation-of-moss-side-residents> [Last accessed 4/02/2019].
- x See: ‘Unfair criminalisation of Moss Side residents’ in the Letters section of *The Guardian*, published on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/feb/27/unfair-criminalisation-of-moss-side-residents> [Last accessed 4/02/2019].
- xi Asim Qureshi of Cage notoriously referred to Mohammed Emwazi – also known as Jihadi John – as a ‘beautiful’ and ‘kind’ man not long after Emwazi was seen beheading people in ISIS films.
- xii A prime example of this is Narendra Modi’s use of ‘UrbanNaxal’ to criminalise human rights and left critiques of his government in India.
- xiii Anna Campbell was a 26 year old feminist from Lewes in East Sussex who travelled to northern Syria in May 2017 and was killed by a Turkish missile in March 2018 while she was trying to help evacuate people from Afrin. See further details in Vardy, E. (2018) ‘Britain Anna Campbell killed fighting with Kurdish YPJ unit’, BBC News online, posted on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43453292> [Last accessed 4/02/2019].
- xiv See this interview with Nimco Ali on Channel 4 news: <https://www.channel4.com/news/extremism-debate>
- xv See: Smith, J. (2017) ‘The seeds of terrorism are often sown in the home – with domestic violence’, *The Guardian*, published 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jul/10/seeds-terrorism-sown-home-domestic-violence-islamic-state> [Last accessed 4/02/2019].
- xvi See: Afzal, N. (2017) ‘Nazir Afzal’s Diary: the Manchester bombing was an attack on women’ in *The New Statesman*, published on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017. Available at: <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2018/05/nazir-afzal-s-diary-manchester-bombing-was-attack-women-and-girls>