

The other British

- ➔ Although there are a lot of differences within the British people (*Welsh, Scottish and English*), they don't regard each other as foreigners but similar as British citizens in spite of their specificities. Yet, they consider newcomers, the ethnic minorities "Asians, Blacks, Indians..." as **foreigners** even if these people are British citizens (of *immigrant descent*).
- ➔ After the Second World War, **racism** started in Britain because the British Empire which was the strongest in the world lost its colonies upon which its prosperity was based. The majority of its colonies were colored people (*India, South Africa ...*). So, as imperial rulers, the British believed that their culture was superior and identified "Blackness of skin" with inferiority and strangeness. By the collapse (decline) of the British Empire after the Second World War, it became just a nation among others whose economy was completely bankrupt. So, many British people held that these countries (*ex-colonies*) were responsible for their decline as they wanted to be independent.
- ➔ In the 60s, Britain as a country (*no longer empire*) which **needed to be rebuilt**, its **economy** was in need of a **cheap labor force**. So, the government opened the doors for unskilled workers coming from the previous colonies (Jamaicans, Indians, Pakistanis, and Africans). So, racism was introduced to the British society: for the very first time, White British people have Black neighbors, live next door to Indians whose culture was completely different (cooking, religion...) → **Clash of cultures** → a lot of stereotypes "Kari eaters".
- ➔ The "British Indians" who were unskilled workers concentrating in industrialized areas and living in poor neighborhoods (*ghettoes*) had been suffering racial harassment up to the 80s with the economic crisis when most of them, if not all, lost their jobs as the new job market was restructured and required more skills, more education and more qualifications that they didn't have. So, ever since, to move upward, they have become **self-employed** so as to have their **own business** (*though it is small: small shops, snacks and cafés which became today supermarkets and restaurants*), **not to rely on the white boss**, and most importantly **to keep their identity** within the British Indian community. Also, self-employment within the Indian community was a way to escape from racism and discrimination because of being no longer in close touch with the White British people.
- ➔ **Today**, the British Indians give more importance to **education**, they even outperform the others, because it is the key to move up and be part of the British society in all fields.
- ➔ **Today**, the new generations of British Indians, more particularly British Hindus, have to deal with lots of **conflicts**: the **generational conflict** because they are torn between the Hindu culture (*parents and grandparents*) and the British culture (*society*). So, most of the time, they try to combine the old with the new → a clash (e.g.: arranged marriage "patriarchal family", early marriage which is unusual for young British Indians) because they're more British than Indians; most of them have never gone to India and don't know anything about India except what their parents taught them.
- ➔ British Indians situation today: Many British Indian children have been abused and attacked not only by white people but by British Indians themselves. There are conflicts among them because originally in India, there's **the caste system** which is a class system prohibited by the law; still, it exists. There are four castes: **1-** The Priests who represent religion. **2-** The ruling class who represents the rich people. **3-** The merchant that is equivalent to the middle class. **4-** The unskilled workers. When one is born in a class, they stay in it for ever. In addition, there is another group of people who are not part of the class system "**The Untouchable**" or "**The Dalit**" who are considered not to be pure, will never be pure and whosoever touches them, he's no longer pure and has to clean himself. They are based in the rural area, outside the big cities and they are confined to the dirtiest jobs in the Indian society. ➔ The caste system is deeply rooted in the Indian culture though it is prohibited.
- ➔ While many British Indians are victims of discrimination by White British because of their skin color, religion, culture; a lot of British Indian children are discriminated against by British Indians because they are from a low class. → Clash between classes.

- ➔ So when they came to Britain, many of the Untouchable changed their names since the class belonging depends on the name the person has. (*Mc* → *of Scottish descent*, *O'Bryan* → *of Irish descent*).
- ➔ **Pakistanis**: all of them are Moslem accounting for 45% of the Moslem community in Britain. Unlike the British Indians, the majority of them belong to the lower class (the working class) because they refused assimilation → completely isolated; that is to say, it has always been difficult for them to be British and Moslem because the British society doesn't go in the same direction as the Moslem Pakistani society.
- ➔ (It's very often heard, in Pakistani communities, that some women / people were killed because the girl had a boy friend that was killed by the father which is against the law in Britain).
- ➔ When they came to Britain, the Pakistanis brought with them **a tribal mentality** (*marriage, religion, life style...*). They have developed a "**clan system**" which is called the "Biraderie" which is a clan system based on mutual help. → The Pakistani community, not the government, helps the Pakistani newcomers find a job, an accommodation, put their children in schools, give them financial support. → They marry within the community (*endogamy*).
- ➔ **Young Pakistanis** rose in **rebellion** against this clan system (tribal mentality) because they believe that it is totally in opposition with the democratic values in Britain (the freedom of speech, the freedom of action within the limits of law) and the way of life they want. They even feel so frustrated because they experience racism and discrimination every single day and some of them have sunk into "radical Islam"; they're viewed as potential terrorists.
- ➔ **ISLAMOPHOBIA** started in **1988** in Britain when the British were deeply offended by a book "*The satanic verses*" as a **blasphemy** written by a Pakistani British "**Salman Rushdie**" in which he talked about Islam as a religion of violence which made British people criticize and insult Islam. → They were very violent Moslem riots all over the world which were focused on by the **media** to distort the image of Islam and to make the society perceive Moslems as violent. → As a result, Rushdie lived under police protection at a secret address for many years though he became a star. → A lot of people in Britain wanted the government to ban the publication of the book in the world which was against the British democracy that is based on the freedom of speech.
- ➔ So, the British became racist and responded to this "violence" by attacking Moslems and Mosques because of the misunderstanding and the ignorance of the other as people weren't ready to live together and be tolerant.
- ➔ The British government tried to calm down these anger and frustration within the Moslem community by declaring that Britain is **a secular nation** (the church and the government are separate).