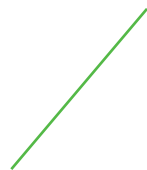




CCIF Report 2019



Report of Islamophobia
in 2018



A word from the Director

JAWAD BACHARE

Dear members,
Dear readers,
Dear friends,

It's in the context of the year 2018 that my assumption of duties take place. In that sense, I fall within the continuum of my predecessors Lila Charef and Marwan Muhammad.

The work that is mine, my mission, mainly consists in walking the claimants through the process all the while leading a work of research, prevention regarding Islamophobia and raise awareness upon it towards our fellow citizens, institutions and public authorities. Since its creation in 2003 the "Collective Against Islamophobia in France", Human Rights group, publishes annual reports to establish a picture on the situation of racism and raise alarm on its expansion. Today, the CCIF presents to you its 15th annual report coinciding with the March 15th 2004 law anniversary in regard to the prohibition of religious symbols within the walls of public schools.

Since then, the CCIF has followed the case of thousands of people.

A census work is led by our statistical observatory in order to keep track and gauge the progress of Islamophobia in France.

We look at 2018 with worry, as Islamophobia soared with a 50% gain compared to the year before, which did not get the smallest reaction out of public authorities.

A progress accompanied with a certain consistency in the profile of those discriminated as much as those who discriminate. Islamophobia remains a racism based on gender. The recorded data show that

women are the first individuals targeted by these Islamophobic attacks, which is 70% of them. They moreover are the most exposed to brutal assaults. Public administration continues to be the main actor partaking in discriminatory activities regarding public service access with over 55%, weakening in the meantime the republican pact. These numbers remain below the reality of things because of the under-declaration phenomenon occurring in France.

To resolve this, the CCIF has elaborated a proximity approach with its network of local antennas made out of volunteers and spread through most of the country. This land base is also part of a dynamic of partnership with local actors yearning to fight efficiently against Islamophobia.

This presence on the field strongly contributes to a better care and support of claimants. 2018 also marks the achievement of a long lasting battle of a decade which wrapped itself up on the recognition of discriminations based on religion and gender by independent experts of the United Nations Committee on the 'Baby-Loup' case.

However, the current legislative climate cannot be overlooked as it is gradually damaging individual and collective rights. This situation is nothing more but the byproduct of the institutionalization of the State of emergency in common law with the SILT law (internal security and counterterrorist legislation).

The future is becoming a real cause for alarm according to the CCIF, especially regarding the mistreatment of Muslims whom are constantly essentialized and stigmatized.

We can see new Islamophobic trends emerging, in addition to some type of attacks that persist and some that at last substantially drop.

The CCIF also emphasizes new tendencies, in particular pertaining to topics such as the insertion of the neutrality principle in company rules and regulations for positions that are in contact with customers which is just another spurious excuse to discriminate women all the more.

Unofficial summonses, phone calls, relatives undergoing examinations undertaken by intelligent services are perceived by people as a real act of bullying and an unacceptable evidence of distrust.

We indeed observed a notable increase in the number of Fiche S (state security cards). The effectiveness of it however must imperatively be questioned as proved by the seemingly failed attempts to prevent terrorist attacks. We notice that very often note blanche (documents issued from intelligence services that possess no date, no signature, no header and nor any identifiable author) refer, in their essence, to the 5 pillars of Islam. Nowadays, behaviors are under suspicion, not the deeds themselves.

Another tendency observed is, those of passports and ID cards abnormally taking too much time to be delivered by prefectural services after the process of their creation or renewal. As if by magic, people retrieve them as soon as they contact the services in question with certified letters and confront them about the illegal attack to their fundamental right which is to travel in and out.

Other cases registered by the CCIF coming to give a visual on these new tendencies are some families undergoing surveillance due to the practice of their faith. During sessions of examination for the monitoring of learning achievement of children, some questions like "Do you listen to music?" or "Sing me a song" were asked to them.

Finally, we spotted another tendency that touches on the report of families to the State for potentially alarming pieces of information by services of the Ministry of National Education although sensible and nonbiased elements are nonexistent.

The decreases, on the other hand, mainly concern prohibitions on the supervision of school outings where mothers wearing headscarves could not participate, or for those who are applying or are already registered in nurse training institutes.

The number of cases about the wearing of long skirts or long dresses is declining. The prevention and the

various cases have made it possible to raise awareness among the administrative and teaching staff of the schools in question.

This fall also applies to summonses, searches and exit bans.

We note that with the establishment of the State of emergency in the legislation, the CCIF is no longer contacted for this type of acts.

The last trend deals with recurring themes. Indeed, numerous acts observed were about the veil ban in advanced education, business schools, training centers or even gym facilities, and the entry to pools, water parks and activity clubs.

This is the reason why fighting against Islamophobia should be a national cause for which all the forces should join and work together.

Indeed, it is a combat weighting on us all. And it requires all participants to contribute as it is now more than ever essential in this one particular context.

To join the CCIF means rejecting, collectively, the outbreak of Islamophobia and working towards its diminution.

Joining the CCIF means to play your part in the fight against discrimination, and to come to aid the victims. Joining the CCIF signifies rallying all together in order to build a more equal society for our children.

The CCIF will keep working relentlessly to ensure the respect of the claimants' rights who call upon us. Rally together. Because together, we are stronger.

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2018 in dates

Unlike the two precedent years, 2018 is defined by a significant increase in the number of Islamophobic acts. Collective mobilization appears to be more than vital, especially regarding the Islamophobic speech freeing itself and tainting all societal spheres: from entry denials to public services to verbal and physical assaults, without forgetting the many debates stigmatizing Muslim people.

Islamophobia is indeed, everyone's concern.

The CCIF continues to provide resonance to the voice of the people suffering from it to the highest national, European and international institutions.

JANUARY

Two women assaulted by a local resident.

Two young women wearing a veil were attacked because of their assumed or real belonging to Islam. The author of the crime received a conviction on January 9th by the magistrates' court of Meaux.

PARTICIPATION OF THE CCIF IN THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF FRANCE AT THE UNITED NATIONS (Geneva)

The Universal periodic review of France took place on January 15th 2018 at the United Nations located in Geneva. Before its members, France was heard on the situation of its minority communities and the respect of their rights. The CCIF and Human Rights League went on this occasion to the United Nations and called out the discrimination Muslims in France were facing. Amendments on the rules and regulations of the National Assembly: prohibition of religious signs. This means one step towards the restriction of Muslim women's rights which by implications calls into question their ability to get elected just as the same as everyone else.

Statements of Gallimard

Head of eponymous publishing company, Gallimard stated in the newspaper "Le Monde": "Nowadays, anti-Semitism is no longer conducted by Christians, but Muslims and they don't read Céline's texts."

FEBRUARY

Islamophobic comments in the medical field

A mother accompanying her child for a medical examination was subjected to Islamophobic remarks because of the hijab she was wearing. The first Instance of the Disciplinary Chamber of the Ordre Des Médecins (Medical Association) of Aquitaine has decreed for the physician a disciplinary penalty implying a 6 month ban from practicing medicine, three of which are suspended. The accused appealed against this ruling and the court's decision will be given sometime in 2019.

Discussion on religious diversity inside companies

The European Network Against Racism and the Collective against Islamophobia In France organized on February 9th, a round-table upon "religious diversity: a new challenge for companies?"

The stakes of the question on diversity was addressed on this occasion with the presence of Lulia Sala, founder of Creative Intersections, Marc Rivault from the French Association of Diversity Management (AFMD), and Ms. Nadia Smail, trial lawyer (barrister). Lila Charef was the moderator of this meeting.



Mennel Case

A candidate to singing competition The Voice was spurred by popular pressure to leave the show mainly because of the turban on her head, which only worked to solidify the idea that a fuss is instantly made in the midst of French society at the mere sight of such signs.

MARCH

Publication of the 27th annual report of the CNCDH (National Consultative Commission for Human Rights)

This CNCDH highlights the fact that Muslims and North-African people seem to be the less tolerated minority. It also underlines the under-reporting of racist acts and warns about the dangers of the acceptance of daily racism.

APRIL

Institute for Training in Nursing (IFSI)

The CCIF had seized the Council of State to object to the illegality of the Ministerial Decree of April 21st 2007, banning religious signs in paramedical training facilities. The Council of State confirmed the analysis of the CCIF and asked for an amendment or the repeal of the problematic decree. By the virtue of that fact, the Department of health changed the disputed decree on April 17th of 2018 which resulted in the ability for IFSI students to express their religious beliefs.

Bensoussan trial

The Court of Appeal ended by dismissing the historian Georges Bensoussan for the following statements "It's a shame to keep this taboo, to wit in Arabic families in France - and everyone knows but nobody will say, they suckle anti-Semitism straight from the mother's milk." The CCIF appealed to the Supreme Court.

MAY



Pepper Grill case

French State is condemned by the Administrative Court of Cergy-Pontoise to pay over € 10,000 in damages to Pepper Grill restaurant as a result of the violent search that was carried out, a Saturday, while clients were peacefully seated. President of the Tribunal assessed the use of force to be excessive on this absence of danger and considered the order of the search to be unjustified. An illustrative example is the doors systematically being destroyed. It is precisely these most questionable aspects of searches that forced Bernard CAZENEUVE, former Minister of the Interior, to edit a circular on November 25, 2015 commonly called "the Pepper Grill circular".



Maryam Pougetoux case

The President of the French National Students' Union (UNEF) at the University of Paris-Sorbonne, Maryam Pougetoux shows up in an interview wearing religious attire. This mere fact is enough to hit the headlines and cause an outcry largely fuelled by politicians.

United Nations: Hearing of victim of the State of emergency

Mr. Gomes, and the CCIF were heard by the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the fight against terrorism, Fionnuala Ni Aolain. On the occasion of her first visit to France, she received Lila Charef, former CCIF director in the offices of the UNESCO in Paris.

Insertion of the principle of neutrality in company rules

In December 2017, an employee is summoned to a preliminary interview before a possible disciplinary penalty that could lead to her dismissal. Her quality of work is not questioned, it is quite the contrary. In fact, her chosen attire is what is pointed out. Her employer indeed chose to include the neutrality principle in his

company rules after a client requested it. With the approval of the employee, the CCIF seized the Defender of rights who has issued a decision in May 2018, in which he advised the company to change the terms of the neutrality clause contained in the freshly edited regulation in order to align it and meet the expectations of the labor code and the jurisprudence.

JUNE

Burkini

Summer 2016, in the middle of all the turmoil brought by anti-burkini decrees, a random woman enjoying the sun and beach was taunted for the simple veil she was wearing. She received a fine for it which she contested on the advice of the CCIF who was following her case. The town hall of Cannes was condemned by the Administrative court of Nice on the 21st of June and reimbursed the citizen that was unfairly sanctioned.

Condemnation of the newsdealer of Albi

The manager of the bar-tobacco store and parcel pick-up point in Albi kept on refusing Muslim customers wearing a hijab. The public prosecutor requested a 3000 euros fine and a suspended 3 months time in jail for religious discrimination. Criminal court sentenced her to pay about 9000 euros for refusing to provide a service or good to an individual because of their religion.

Members of far-right AFO group arrested

Ten people in relation with far-right wing were apprehended for their project to carry terrorist attacks over Mosques and political figures. These individuals were planning as well to attack women wearing the veil, randomly picked in public places but also attack ex-convicted for radicalization or even halal supermarkets. Despite the premeditated design of their plans and their sick determination to carry them out some French personalities found it clever to legitimize the actions of this terrorist group and pointed out the shortcomings of the Government in the fight against "Islamism". Under these reasons, the CCIF addressed a report to the Public prosecutor of Paris.

JULY

Report on the clothing restrictions of Muslim women in Europe

July 10, 2018, following the alarming report published by Maryam H'madoun over the clothing restriction on women in the European Union, the women's rights committee of the European Parliament approached the condition of Muslim women in Europe. The conclusion: France is the one European country with that much restriction on clothing.

For this occasion the European Parliament auditioned the international pole of the CCIF on the urgency of the matter regarding the situation of French Muslim women and their constant discrimination.

Summer pools denied for rental

Summer 2018 was garnished with the several refusals for renting houses with pools to Muslim families.

AUGUST



Baby-loup case: The battle of a decade ends on a victorious note!

The independent experts of the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations concluded that the restriction on the right to wear a headscarf by the employee established by the internal regulations of the kindergarten in question and its implementation constitute an attack on the employee's religious freedom in violation of Article 18 of the pact and that the sanctions imposed on her constitute a transgression of Article 18 and 26 of the aforementioned agreement. The Committee declared that the wearing of distinctive clothing or headwear is part of religious freedom and that the prohibition of wearing a headscarf in a workplace is an interference with the exercise of that freedom. The French State is therefore required to compensate Ms. Afif, to take the necessary measures to prevent similar violations and has 180 days to inform the Committee of the measures taken to address the ascertainment.

"I can't with these people anymore. Anyway, she reeks, she's a local ISIS. She's veiled from head to toe!"

At Guéret, in the Creuse, an employee of the Carsat (Fund of pension insurance and health at work) uttering Islamophobic insults against a retired lady. The latter, waiting information and advice on her rights, received a voice message of an adviser of the Carsat who informs her that her file will not be received. What was to be a banal informative voicemail, turned into a foul rant and slander. Indeed, initially thinking to have hung up, he proceeds to express his deep distaste for the one he has the mission to accompany with kindness and respect. The complainant filed a complaint. As for the Midwest Carsat, they apologized publicly for the victim in a statement.

Is "The Beauty" forced to marry "the Beast"?

An 11 year old child following school at home undergoes an examination on the subject of an inspection from the Ministry of National Education. It is in these circumstances that she is asked about the tale of beauty and the beast. She tells in her own words: "it is the story of a beast victim of a spell that lives in a castle and a young girl, Belle, who, to save her father, goes to live with the beast.

- Does she agree with it?

-At first, no. Belle doesn't want to, but she did it to save her father. Then after, she discovers that it is a male prisoner in the body of a beast, and she ended up loving him.

-When the beast asked Belle to marry him, she refused. Do you think it is normal? Do you think it is normal that Belle got married against her will?"

On the basis of this exchange, the inspector submitted the young girl for registration in a school the following year based on the latter to "seem not aware enough to the values of the Republic: she for instance refers to arranged marriage and willful obedience of the woman (in Beauty and the Beast) as 'normal'".

SEPTEMBER

Civil union at Val-de-Reuil

Upon the filling of the file, head of civil service of the Town hall informs the bride to be that the celebration of her civil ceremony would be under the condition that she removes her headscarf because of the Republican frame the ceremony would be taking place in. Thanks to the intervention of the CCIF plus their mediation and contact with the Prefect, this citizen was able to keep her scarf in accordance with the principle of secularism and respect of religious freedom.



IFSI include in their regulations a clause forbidding religious signs

IFSI students have reached to us informing us that the board of their institute often control the size of their headband and forbid them to wear religious signs like headwear. Students now have the right to express their religious beliefs, including by adopting a headwear complying with health and safety rules.

OCTOBER

Grouped case of school catering

During September 2018, parents represented by their lawyers decide to call upon the judge for a suspension of the rules of procedure freshly edited for the same year applied in the kindergarten that welcome their infants. This new version stated that children were to be served full meals by the staff with all ingredients although it may or contain meat and that parents are against it. On the 17th October of 2018, the urgent applications judge suspended the regulation in the absence of technical or financial constraints justifying the amendment of the regulation.

NOVEMBER

The access to a training center subjected to a prior removal of the woman's headscarf

Following her registration in a training center, an intern is summoned by the head of it, whom asked her to remove it if she intended to continue to follow the courses in the structure. The CCIF intervening and mediating between the director and intern allowed her to keep it during her time there.

DÉCEMBER

Al Jazeera documentary about the pub "La Citadelle" at Lille

Members of "Génération Identitaire" (far-right movement) group uttered Islamophobic comments inciting hate and violence plus are authors of racist and Islamophobic assaults that were on recorded on camera.

Christmas market

A pastry exhibitor in the market of Saint-Gratien is ordered by the Mayor to leave her booth for the mere fact that she's wearing a headscarf. With the CCIF at her side, the victim filed a complaint and submitted an action for liability against the Mayor in question, Mr. Julien Bachard.

2018 in numbers

The CCIF has drawn the conclusion that Islamophobia indeed increased in 2018. 676 islamophobic acts were reported to our services. In annual variation, the latter increased by 52% compared to the figures for 2017, which recorded 446 cases. The reality of Islamophobia in France is more than alarming.

EVOLUTION FROM 2017 TO 2018

Census of islamophobic acts (2017 vs 2018)
A **52%** rise of islamophobic acts in France for 2018



We also observe interpersonal violence: 20 physical assaults were recorded in 2018.

Despite the attempts to sugarcoat this phenomenon, islamophobic acts have multiplied this year. This increase in the number of actions can be explained through the fact that the claimants understand their rights better, along with the general sense of injustice they feel the day following public statements where fingers are being pointed at them. This rise is above all the consequence of "Islamophobia" taking on a different shape: it's the result of public policies from the fight against terrorism and radicalization which, if poorly defined but yet put in practice, gives way to several disastrous misdeeds.

THE NATURE OF ISLAMOPHOBIC ACTS

The 676 Islamophobic acts treated by the CCIF are distributed as follows:

- 568 of them take the form of discriminations and represent almost 84% of these islamophobic acts,
 - 88 are linked to hate speech and symbolize almost 13% of identified (?) Islamophobic acts,
 - 20 of them refer to assaults and establish almost 3% of identified Islamophobic acts.
- No act of vandalism on places of worship has yet been reported to our CCIF services.

Division of islamophobic acts based on who discriminates



THE VICTIM'S GENDER OF ISLAMOPHOBIC ACTS

In 2018, Islamophobia remains a gendered racism, and women are its main victim.

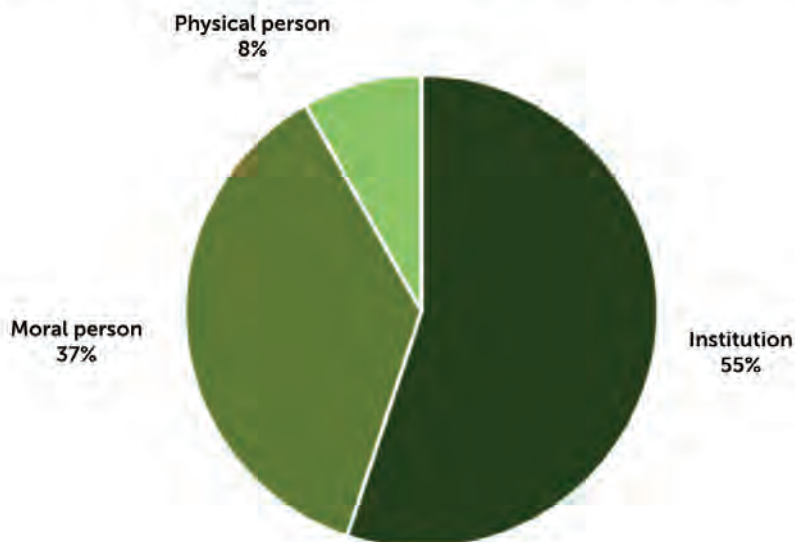
Division of islamophobic actions by gender



THE NATURE OF ISLAMOPHOBIC ACTS

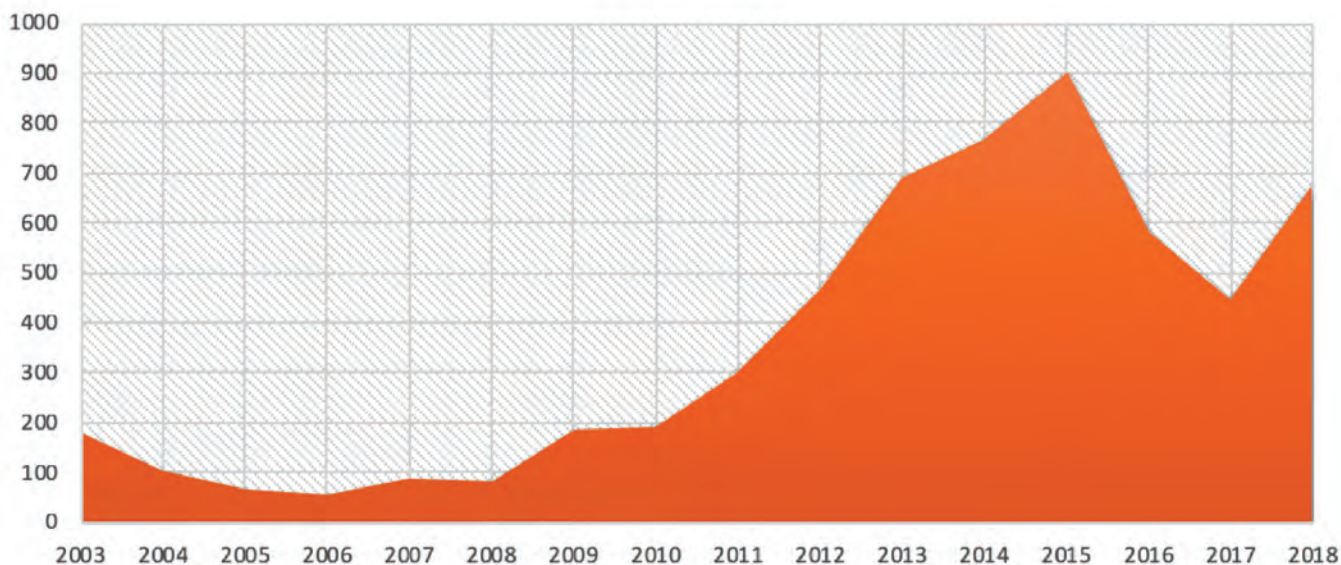
In France, institutions are the first actors to perform acts of Islamophobia.

Division of islamophobic acts by their author



EVOLUTION OF ISLAMOPHOBIA IN FRANCE THESE LAST 15 YEARS

Islamophobic acts 2003-2018



How Islamophobia evolved in 15 years

While Islamophobia has taken the shape of an extension of the 15th March 2004 law regarding the banning/prohibition of religious signs for pupils and teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, this phenomenon remains diverse, intense and heightened. Indeed; the many polemics revolving around religious signs worn by women of Muslim faith have led to their stigmatization all the while constricting the outward expression of their religious beliefs which translates into for instance the access denial to job trainings, to training facilities, examinations...

Year 2015 is a watershed: the state of emergency is declared soon after the terrible attacks that plunged our Nation into mourning. Islamophobia has then shifted shapes and adopted a new dimension of securitarianism. As a result, the occurrence of these actions taken against Muslims or those who seemed to be Muslims, significantly increased. House arrests, bans from leaving national soil and searches against Muslim citizens skyrocketed, unjustifiably so, without ever leading up to any legal procedure involving counterterrorism. The trauma is real.

A drop in the number of cases could be observed for 2016 and 2017, though it must be contrasted and naturally put into perspective, since the latter was compared to the surreal increase observed from the events of 2015. Indeed, the amount of Islamophobic acts recorded during this period of time remains exponentially higher than from the years preceding the state of emergency.

A spike can also be observed in 2018. This Islamophobic hostility displayed is being more openly admitted, and is spreading throughout public speeches. In addition to provoking the execution of acts of violence and some failed attempts in which the most disturbing but illustrative case is the dismantling of terrorist Group "AFO".

INTERVIEW WITH LILA CHAREF

According to you, how has Islamophobia evolved in 15 years in France?

In 15 years, Islamophobia has actually changed. It took the shape of an extension of the 2004 March 15th law regarding the prohibition of religious signs for pupils and teachers in public elementary and secondary schools. The loss of legitimacy regarding the right to wear religious symbols induced by this law encouraged some sectors to close their doors to religiously visible women. This movement has begotten the denial access to services and Muslim women were subjected to some special requisites to enter (banks, leisure activities, examinations, driving licence, supervising school trips, training, universities, job , etc.)at times even ended on the complete removal of religious signs which got demonized along the way. 2008 was tainted under the extreme violence of the Islamophobic attack perpetrated against Mr. Nouredine Rachedi by right-wing activists.

2013 is a real turning point regarding the aggravation of the expression of violence carried out against Muslim women which is the pillar of Islamophobic hatred. 2013 and the following years are in fact linked together for the verbal and physical assaults are becoming more and more regular on the sole criterion of religious affiliation.

As of 2015, this multidimensional islamophobia turned into an "Islamophobia for security reasons" with eventually the execution of an Emergency State on November 14th, 2015, as well as preventive laws against radicalization. House arrests and violent searches intensify and come in quick succession for the Muslim community, when scarce are the ones that will lead to indictments for counterterrorist motives.

Since the CCIF was created, the number of reports continuously increased. How can it be explained?

The expansion of this Islamophobic phenomenon can be explained through several factors:

- The media and political class indulging into an anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim rhetoric
- The denial of Islamophobia,
- The use of Islamophobia as a trademark
- The absence of stern and public condemnations from public authorities regarding Islamophobia,
- The absence of public policies in the fight against Islamophobia.

Touching on jurisprudence, what are the advances made by the CCIF's substantive work?

This work allowed to:

- restore the fundamental rights to the citizens, especially of Muslim women, whom are discriminated solely based on criteria such as their religious beliefs, the illicit nature of the religious discrimination, the

insults and religious libel and slander, the incitement to hate, to violence, and discriminations on the grounds of religion;

- obtain court decisions later on used as arguments and references in favor of potential victims of discrimination;
- fight impunity.

You once were head of the CCIF as well as leader of the legal department. With this double leadership and vision of the structure, what is your assessment on the Collective?

The CCIF is a structure that provides support, listening and legal care, essential elements to the defense of individuals' rights that are oppressed on the mere basis of their religious beliefs.

When I began to run the legal aid hotline in September 2004, I had callers drowning in so much self-guilt and blame because of the religion they practiced that it led them to believe that they were outlaws. While in fact, they happened to be heavily discriminated which only served to fuel their illusion. Their religion became their blot. Nowadays, more and more people are getting educated about their rights, to protect them, and fiercely object to Islamophobia. They also know that an organization is standing by their side ready to fight this plague and vouch for them.

The CCIF takes their speech, their history, up to national and international institutions to promote awareness on the expansion of Islamophobia.

In 2003, according to many, like NGOs, public figures and national authorities; Islamophobia does not exist. For some, it would only be an extension of a type of racism directed towards North-Africans. Today, the notion of "Islamophobia" undeniably became an integral part of our vocabulary. The CNCDH (National Human Rights Commission) treats this social reality every year in its annual report on racism since 2013. The Defender of Rights has made a number of deliberations treating cases of Islamophobia. As for the Ministry of the Interior, they measure this phenomenon too, but it lacks accuracy as it does not include discrimination cases, which happens to be the most important aspect of the expression of anti-Muslim racism.

In your opinion, what are the prospects for the future in terms of fight against Islamophobia?

As long as public authorities do not actively and seriously plan on tackling this issue of Islamophobia, the scourge will keep going stronger since the pattern is set by the higher-ups and institutions.

As for the CCIF, it plans on seeing this mission to its end.

Recommendations for 2019

TO THE FRENCH STATE AND ITS INSTITUTIONS

They should integrate in the system of fight against discrimination and violence made against women, those of which women suffered from because of their hypothetical or actual affiliation to Islam.

To acknowledge Islamophobia as a specific form of racism and make it a national issue, since it is already the case for some other type of racism.

Assign an "anti-discrimination" point of contact in each and every Ministry in order to coordinate and follow this fight in a conjoint operation with the civil society.

Mandate the CNCDH or other independent bodies, to carry out the evaluation of public policies in order to prevent radicalization, and to evaluate the application of the SILT Act.

In light of fighting cyber hate, it should be best to set up an efficient referral system in order to train moderators and make them aware of the different kinds of hate speech as well as to prosecute and punish the authors who incite hate and violence.

Establish a genuine collaboration between associations that fight against racism, the police and the prosecution.

IN THE EDUCATIVE FIELD

Establish a quantitative and qualitative balance of the law since its entry into force (Marth 15th, 2004), repeat the operation every two year, and return with conclusions.

Launch a training campaign aimed to the whole education community, on the concept of secularism and religious discrimination at school in order to fathom the issues on gender equality and equal opportunities. This campaign should be carried out in collaboration with civil society actors who are already familiar with these good habits.

Train people to combat radicalization and review the

method used to report radicalized profiles. A poor diagnosis on the definition of the symptom naturally leads a wrong prognosis and there is ultimately a risk of criminalization of traditional Muslim practices.

Provide training to those in charge of fighting radicalism and review the method used to report radicalized profiles. A mishap on the diagnosis can only result in a wrong prognosis which is why it is important to define its symptoms correctly. In fine, a penalty on traditional Muslim practices is to be feared.

TO THE FORCES OF LAW AND ORDER

Reform the current system of complaint handling. All data must be recorded electronically as well as the racial motive; especially Islamophobic (or anti-Muslim) of the said discrimination which must always be included in the complaints.

Establish a quantitative and qualitative balance of the 2010 October 11th law and draw conclusions. Put in effect training courses on the reception, and assistance to the victims of discrimination (and those linked to origins and religion), as well as the warrant of the investigation.

To systematically migrate cases of insubordination and contempt directed to officers of the law and assign them to another location, another unit so that any possible conflict of interest can be avoided with the plaintiff.

Get the law enforcement to participate to an awareness campaign for the good of fighting against Islamophobia, through the making of a training program.

IN THE FIELD OF JUSTICE

The aggravating factor from the racial motive of the act when proven should systematically be retained which in this case, is the religious belonging. And also guarantee that the investigators gather all the necessary pieces of element going in that way.

Strengthen the conjoint work with organizations fighting racism and the Prosecutor's department so as to reduce the excessively high rate of cases closed regarding discriminatory crimes, among which is: religion.

Put in motion the penal actions, without delay and under the highest criminal category, and give the firmest and stringent sentence to forefend repeated offences.

Systematically present the victim with alternatives, legal proceedings, including a reminder of the law at best, to offer them some symbolic measure of reparation through the judiciary acknowledgement of their status of victim.

To count and evaluate the action of the Anti-Discrimination Poles (ADP), reinforce their actions and their bonds with the civil company due to the unequal character of their action and their mobilization from one district attorney to the other. Instate again a judicial judge, guarantor of individual and collective rights, to provide better protection for the citizens especially in terms of personal data recording and retrieval.

IN THE FIELD OF EMPLOYMENT

Create professional training and coaching sessions upon anti-discrimination legislations in collaboration with civil society actors while including a section on religious discriminations.

Distribute to all employers educational guides on managing religion amidst workplace and emphasize the fact that religious demands ever so rarely lead to situations of blockage remain relatively scarce (of second hand).

Provide good practice tips in an endeavor of diversity promotion (including faith-based).

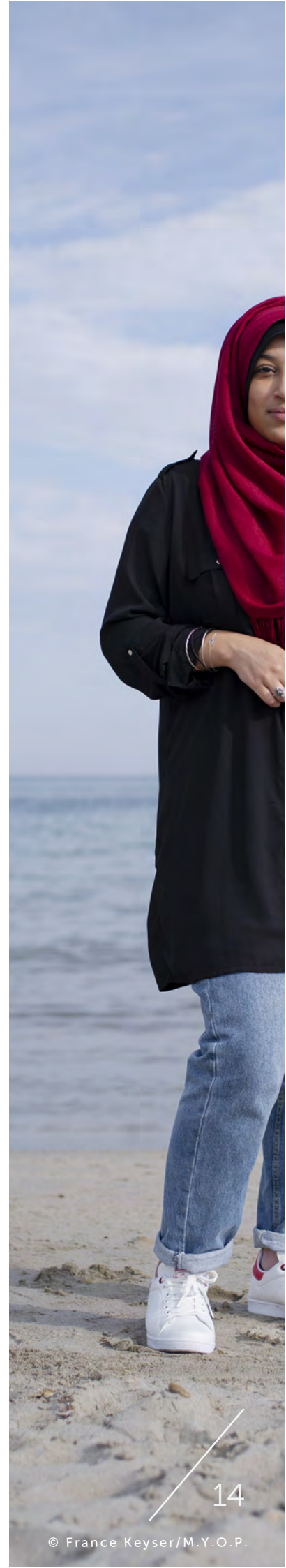
Create a report on the consequences of the insertion of the neutrality principle in company rules and regulations and the right that was given to private employers, therefore making the situation more difficult on Muslim women wearing a headscarf. Re-examine the respect and efficiency of diversity charter.

TO JOURNALISTS AND EDITORS

Develop and facilitate referral mechanisms to supervisory authorities in hate speech and discrimination.

Give media coverage to news related to Islamophobia, including acts of discrimination and acts of physical violence, and give voice to the people concerned to make their voices heard.

Encourage the participation of experts from civil societies plus independent and legitimate institutions on topics related to Islamophobia



Why does Islamophobia surface and from what does it feed itself?

Fatma Zragua, PhD, specialist in inclusion and discrimination

The history of the CCIF began in October 2003. Claude Imbert, figure of French journalism and member of the High Council for Integration (HCI), said during a televised debate on LCI:

"Let's be a bit honest. I personally am a bit islamophobic. I don't mind saying it".

A spontaneous gathering took place in front of the premises of *Le Point* magazine, of which he was the founder. This collective mobilization is part of a broader context of stigmatization of the Muslim community for several years.

At the initiative of civil society actors discontent with the lack of response from anti-racist institutions, the Collective against Islamophobia in France (CCIF) was created by the end of 2003. Its mission is to take legal action against the violence and discrimination that a part of French citizens suffer from, whom, at that time, had no structure to turn to, to assert their rights. This association defending human rights focuses in particular in the defense of the rights and freedoms of the Muslim community in France.

Stereotypes as one of the phenomenon of Islamophobia

In human and social sciences, several theories can explain the phenomenon of Islamophobia. These theories can be grouped into a cognitive approach, such as stereotypes or prejudices.

The phenomenon of stereotyping represents normal mechanisms from a cognitive point of view, but problematic from a social point of view when these are manifested through acts of discrimination.

The notion of cognition "refers to the set of activities and processes that develop, organize, use and modify mental representations" (Bertrand and Garnier, 2005, p. 57). The notion of category is central. It defines the abstract structure of knowledge that groups together things that follow a similar pattern on the basis of certain logic (Leyens et al, 1996). Social categorization, on the other hand, is the cognitive mechanism by which a physical or social stimulus is perceived, processed by the existing elements according to a similarity procedure. Categorization produces intergroup bias, including discrimination. This is a societal process that fulfills essential social functions. Categorization, from which stereotypes derive from, is a cognitive process that induces the grouping together in the same class of objects or persons of the same nature (Leyens et al, 1996).

Categorization mechanism consists firstly in classifying and then grouping within the categories of individuals, groups or events. This is done by exaggerating the similarities between items classified within the same category. Categorization makes it possible to simplify the social reality, to structure it and thus to better understand it. This categorization is an automatic process triggered as soon as we are in contact with others, and especially when we have to give a judgment upon another individual, as in for instance the case of an interview. Cognitive schemas

are applied to social groups. They are defined by Fiske (2008) as the cognitive structure that groups together attributes related to a concept or type of stimulus and the relationships between these attributes. Categories are linked to stereotypes that are "a set of shared beliefs about personal characteristics, usually personality traits, but also group-specific behaviors" (Leyens et al, 1994, p. 129).

Stereotypes are beliefs from which an individual is judged not on the basis of his personal characteristics but in reference to his group affiliation (Bourhis and Leyens, 1999). The stereotype can be referred to as the arbitrary opinion of an individual X who is the source, about the group to which the other Y who is the target belongs (Sales-Wuillemin, 2006). It comes down to X thinking of Ys in general. The stereotype refers to attitudes adopted by individuals when judging others by themselves.

Based on all the characteristics (personal, physical, behavioral, cultural) associated with the member of another social group. To speak of stereotypes refers to the notion of ethnocentrism which consists in considering the group to which one belongs as superior to the other groups. Stereotypes are activated in daily interactions between individuals, on both interpersonal and intergroup levels.

Stereotypes are the consequence or the product of an act of categorization vis-à-vis individual members of a group. Stereotypes are class-based generalizations referring to the fact that all members of a category share the same features/attributes/properties. Being placed in a group situation will lead the subjects to categorize the behaviors of the members of the group, this act of categorization leading, ultimately, but not necessarily, to prejudices that may themselves lead to discriminative behaviors towards the members of the categorized group (Kohler, 2017).

Institutional discrimination is, in a way, the result of an ideological and radical understanding of the concept of secularism. Widely distorted by political spheres of right and left, secularism legitimizes the most discriminatory behavior and the most vehement speeches against Muslims. Amidst French institutions, it has become an instrument of stigmatization and exclusion.

To conclude, the work of the CCIF is far from drawing a close especially if "the legislative answer to religious expression in a professional setting happens to be ineffectual" (Guillet and Brasseur, 2019, p. 3).

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From a protective State to a State mongering trauma?

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“The condemnation of racism, the protection of minors, the provision of aid to displaced persons and refugees, and the mobilization of international solidarity towards all the needy are nothing other than consistent applications of the principle of world citizenship. ”

Pope John Paul II (1920-2005)

It is known that people suffering from mental disorders can be marginalized; in return what is observed in our clinic is that social exclusion can cause mental disorders. Social or even mental difficulties do not necessarily mean pathology. Today, who can gloat of being lifeproofed in personal or private matters? However a lack of support, of understanding or the repetition, the intensity and the duration of exposure to these situations, resulting in these difficulties, show the pathological nature of these mental sufferings.

This concept of mental suffering is still broad inasmuch as everything can be put in it. When supporting the victims of Islamophobia, we can insure that the overused and widespread ‘mental suffering’ actually makes sense in mental, social, professional or even intimate victims’ disorganisation.” If the Islamophobic act is not the only responsible for this disorganisation, it plays a major role in the aetiology of this condition.

1. STATE’S DISORGANISATION CAUSES A MENTAL DISORGANISATION AMONG ISLAMOPHOBIA VICTIMS

The year 2015 marked a turning point in French Islamophobia history. The violence and the horror of the attacks of January and November left the entire French society in deep mourning. One of the State’s responses was to declare a state of emergency. Until November 2019, 4457 administrative searches were carried out in the country for about only twenty proceedings initiated by the Paris anti-terrorism Prosecution. As psychologists, we had to face the same symptoms, the same woes at the same time with people often coming from very different backgrounds. The only common ground that united them was that all of them had been raided and/or put under house arrest and/or were forbidden to leave the French soil on the grounds of their real or supposed belonging to Islam, for the most part. There are few studies carried out on mental and behavioural disorders caused by Islamophobia. Nonetheless, through our clinic, we observe that reports collected by my colleagues and I, echo for sure and have the same pathological consequences, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD): shame, isolation, guilt, rumination or avoidance.

(LAPLANCHE and PONTALIS 2007) underline that the traumatic event is characterized by an unusual intensity of emotions. The victim is then unable to find a suitable response which provokes an intense fear, a feeling of powerlessness and a distress reaction. It is to note that to be considered as a trauma, the integrity of the victim has to be threatened and the event has to appear suddenly. It is not about abstract threats but real threats that provoke an intense terror

and represent an immediate and external danger to the victim. (FREUD 2015) explains that a sudden intimacy with death has permanent consequences on the psychological balance of the victim. As a consequence, it is observed among our victims' follow-up that there is a before and an after event.

(SIRONI 2007) uses the term 'deliberate trauma'. She defines this concept as a trauma deliberately induced by humans on humans. Though, she specifies that "intentional traumas can also be induced by non-humans (for instance: ideologies, beliefs, systems or an organisation...)." She also explains that the power behind an intentional trauma is actually a system or a mechanism provided with some measure of intention.

Following the wave of searches, house arrests or prohibitions to leave the country, we have provided support to some victims. For instance to Amina, a single mother. She has a 8-year-old daughter when her house was searched at 4:30 am. Following this search, the prefect gets in touch with Amina's employer to notify she has been searched. Amina will lose her job after this call. Another example is that of Inès, a single mother of three children. One day, she received a visit from the police to withdraw her identity documents.

Amina: "They came home and found nothing. When they get into your house it is like a violation. We do not authorize them to enter so they search everything all the way up to your handbag and they even take your sanitary pads! It's like being hit by a hammer, it emotionally knocked me out. I did not expect that all the recent attacks would have consequences on my private life like that. My 8-year-old daughter was there, they came at 4:30 am hooded and equipped. My daughter thought they were robbers. "

Inès: "You are home and it is like something falls on your head. You do not have time to ask them questions. You then become a puppet, so I told myself "be small and discreet if you do not want anything happening to you." I was really scared and I felt threatened when they came because there were a number of searches and I had heard a lot of stories. Besides, just before the event, I had received a mail from the court saying I was an extremist, a Salafist, a public danger. I was scared for my children and for myself. They told me they were there to get my identity documents, I went to get them in my bedroom and the police followed me. At some point, their colleagues heavily knocked at the door, we were very afraid. My son opened the door and they entered without permission because they did not have news from their colleagues. I was wondering if it was a joke or if I were in a movie... Especially when I heard these words. I don't understand what they were thinking. "

As it can be seen, the victims, as the majority of other Islamophobia victims we meet, witness a brutal and unexpected event. This event implies various symptoms like guilt, rumination, nightmares, somatisation or isolation.

Amina: "When it happened, I could not take care of my daughter any more. I went to my sister's ten days and had to get some pills to sleep. I had insomnias because I was thinking too much about it, I had nightmares with some unremitting sentences, like in movies: "dismissed for gross misconduct"; so, I would wake up and take medicines to get back to sleep... I still have not accepted it; I still have nightmares about work. I loved my work, I had a good situation and I had built up myself. It had been fourteen years since I had the same job and they fired me all of the sudden. It is not acceptable. This event knocked me out, I felt the physical effects later on, I had strong neck pains like never before. "

Inès: "I could not even sleep. I could not get a wink of sleep because I was wondering: "What are they going to do of me?", "Will they take my children?" The pressure was so intense I could not sleep much, it was not bearable. There was not a night when I got into bed without telling myself "they are going to kick my mom's door down." During the day, I was afraid, I was on a watch. When I was hearing the police siren outside, I stood up to see if the police was coming to my place. I was dreadful, I wanted to know to let my children know that everything would be alright, to prepare them psychologically to what they could be living. All of this led to consequences on my health which was not at its best, I had a lot of dizzy spells, palpitations, I felt weak inside. I still live with this fear, it is hard because even if you know you have not done anything wrong, even if they do not arrest you, you do not want to live through this mental pressure they put on you. For instance, my children are scared to visit their grandma, they kept the memory of it and so when she has to take care of them, she has to come home. "

The victims here perfectly explained the syndrome of repetition as well as the tough experience lived again and again through nightmares and daily fears. They get sleep disorder cadenced by insomnia linked to nightmares. Life is cadenced by this traumatic event.

Amina: "Everything pushes you to feel guilty: press article... I was questioning myself because people said "there is a reason why she got fired." Everything makes you think it is your fault. They put the guilt on you through media coverage and the front pages, "X society let a radicalizing employee go." They succeed in making you feel guilty and casting the doubt inside you. Did I do something? You become paranoid. The only thing they could reproach was that I was Muslim. I had never been a victim of racism before, it is a shock in today's world. With the recent attacks, people look at Islam differently and media contribute to it. It is not me who has to change. "

Inès: "I felt guilty because my children were suffering too but at the same time, I was not feeling guilty because I had done nothing wrong. I had done nothing wrong! I did not deserve that treatment, just because I went to Egypt? I never hurt anyone, I have no criminal record! They just took advantage of their power. It is worse than a humiliation, you become a puppet because they are threatening you, and they clearly said "if you do not want us to take your children, you have to submit." You act as a robot, everything you say is distorted so I had to take care of what I was saying or it could be turned against me, and you become paranoid. They wanted a scapegoat and they put label on my children. They were expected certain behaviours, certain drawings. At that moment, I felt my children did not belong to me any longer because they could take them away any time. Another thing that affected me was that woman who decides whether she grants you the welfare or not. She clearly told me: "*The veil is a problem, we live in a secular country*" and she showed me Marianne. They want us to take off our veil because it is disturbing. "

In their work, *The Empire of Trauma, An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*, (FASSIN and RECHTMAN 2007) express the idea that the status of the victim undergoes a conversion in the social sphere. Thus, they show that things have changed, if the victim and his or her condition looked suspicious at a time, there was no doubt on the trauma itself. Division and split of the victim today are factors of the trauma validity. Its actual presence can be less important than the mark it leaves in the subject. In other words, today, visible symptoms on the victim are undeniable. The traumatic event is also very much present but it has less power than the marks it has on the individual. It is then easier to understand that the symptoms at the roots of the

trauma have to make disappear the marks by making the witnesses suspicious. Consequently, the trauma having a less visible presence, its marks will have less impact on the victim. The persons being at the origin of all of this will be safe. Then nor the trauma nor the victim will be taken into account.

In addition to the emotional disorder noticed through guilt, sadness, extreme vigilance or depressed mood, the victims will adopt some defensive mechanisms like avoidance that will lead to withdrawal. They would say:

Amina: "It is a situation where we are not at ease with people who are watching us. My friends were calling me but I could not see them. I would say that I did not want to see anyone. My mother tried to get me out of the house but it would require a great effort. Besides, I do not feel protected by the State and with everything that we see on television and the labels they try to put on us... I am French but France put me in a weird situation. I do not accept this justice. ."

Inès: "I felt rejected, not in my place. I felt even worse than that because I was rejected but also crushed. They want you to be in pain, they want you to feel rejected. My mum lodged me when I did not have any documents, it was really hard for me to look for a flat, a job or to take my driving test. Outside, it was ok, I was used to glances, to insults towards my veil, but as soon as I had to show my card I was not at ease, I felt like I was showing a sign where there was written "beware, the State is watching me". As soon as I was showing my card, people's look changed, it would be tense and the person facing me was not the same. At the post office, my card was not accepted, even if I insisted: "Take a look, this is me on the picture, it is my ID", but they would not accept it. Because of this card, I could not do anything: find a job, follow a training, I was scared about what they could tell me or how they would look at me. So I was living like an undocumented person, I surrendered. But I was not the only one because if I sank, my children would sink with me too. I lived at my mum's, the State was behind me and my older child was asking questions. You feel lonely in this situation, you are mocked because you want your documents back, and you are transferred from one administrative centre to another. They make you understand you will never have your documents back.

With this card, it is as if I am told "you are not French" or as if I would never have the same rights as other citizens. To be honest with you, if I or my children are attacked, I know the police will never be on my side, I would never make a report and I would have to overcome that. I would never feel safe and I am even scared they could turn the situation against me. It is as if I reminded them I exist and it would start over again. "

When victims meet, different statements heard explain that measures taken by the French State following the 2015 attacks are experienced like psychological, economical and social traumas.

Time flies and searches are not as numerous. Yet, we still help the numerous victims from Islamophobia with a psychological support. A lot of them have to face discriminating words, injustices and acts from fellow citizens (aggressive or threatening neighbours, road accident, public attack...) This shows the mental disorganisation of a society that is already suffering psychologically.

We also notice that violence, Islamophobia and discriminations come from a part of our society that should be protected from that. Indeed, some people are theoretically subjected to the duty of neutrality but they will get out of the ethical, deontological and/or legal code in front of

people from Muslim religion. On the media headlines, what is debated is only the reflection of an emergency traumatic state which is spreading in every part of the society.

Racism, Islamophobia and violence appear in our society like structural phenomena and are reproduced through institutional policies. They now lead to a pathology of social ties that is more and more increasing the already existing divisions in a society in crisis and in mutation (Touhami and al. 2017). A society that has difficulties in maintaining a social cohesion.

2. SOCIAL DIVISION AND EXCLUSION OF FRENCH MUSLIMS FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS

In the confusion it goes through, France gives the impression of losing itself. The adopted policy, the revisited secularism and media elite mischiefs play a major role in making more objective and turning into reality French people of Muslim religion. This is how, French people from Muslim religion are losing their citizen status and are marginalized as “‘terrorists’, ‘radicalized’, ‘jihadists’, ‘bipolar’ person or ‘something else’”. These terms describe a way of being rather than the subject itself.” (F. TOUHAMI and al. 2017). Then, this clear distinction between French and the ‘new category’ of citizens composed of French citizens of Muslim religion shows one of the various social divisions. (V. GEISSER 2003) underlines the fact that ‘media intellectuals’ take part to the “spreading and the normalization of Islamophobia into the French society.” The sociologist makes clear that journalists do not create Islamophobia but “contribute to its normalization under the cloak of detailed investigations” through the spread of stereotypes on Muslims often exposed as ‘a radical and contentious otherness’.

Social violence feeds social exclusion feeling of French citizens from Muslim religion. “Today disastrous effects in terms of mental and psychopathological suffering risks provoked by collective violence (SIRONI 2007) and linked to racism and Islamophobia are proven.” (TOUHAMI 2018) Thereby, the subjects we follow share their feeling of being stigmatised. They have accepted in their belief that Islamophobic acts are normalised. Consequently, victims of Islamophobia mainly adopt as defence mechanism avoidance and leaving their house only when needed. A part of the nation does not take responsibility for itself. (TOUHAMI and al. 2017) notice that “what matters is how the subjects manage similarities and differences in particular circumstances of profound mutation in the society. More than that, what matters is to spot how an identity label is mainly built under the main lens of religion. This identity confines and conditions in a way that is impossible to imagine interbreeding. Also, it encourages a phenomenological split that increasingly widens the invisible fault lines and unconscious cracks between them/us, in/out, Muslims/non-believers.”

In his book, *Le malaise dans la culture*, (FREUD 2015) speaking of this social suffering, notices that “suffering coming from this source (relationship with others) might be felt more painfully than any other suffering...” Thus, the notion of ‘mental vulnerability’ can be developed. (FURTOS 1999) gives a definition: “mental instability corresponds to mental vulnerability facing the indecision of the world and the difficulties to the Self recognition existing in a given group of human beings.” In other words, mental vulnerability corresponds to social death. In this situation, social environment does not play its protective role and cannot insure the integrity of

the individual any more. According to (FREUD 2015), in this situation, everything is conducive to a reactivation of the newborn's biological mental distress condition.

Social exclusion leads to: a great anxiety, a risk of depressive episodes, identity disorders, an imperfect or underdeveloped Self ideal, a narcissistic devaluation and a difficulty to create social links. This suggests that, in the excluded population, it exists different mental profiles that pass each other on key points. One psychopathological analysis will be exposed.

Various victims of Islamophobia told us about this new feeling of strangeness in an environment they otherwise know well. The majority of them do not understand this rejection. One victim shared this misunderstanding and the feeling of being treated differently than other citizens: "Why am I attacked when I condemn the atrocities that were perpetrated?" A lot of victims speak of this 'rejection'. This feeling is consistent among the victims even if their French identity is fully built. Discrimination and stigmatization take off their 'Frenchness', even a part of them. These statements are often reported. For instance: the case of a mother whose her one and only French passport had been removed. She reported during an interview: "I do not understand why they took my passport. I am French, I do not want to go anywhere else so why take it from me? Where do they want me to go?" These different cases are only a few among many reports that reflect the victim's common feeling: rejection that provokes a potential identity disorder. Telling Islamophobia victims they are different from the rest of the community is a very bad experience because they built themselves on the feeling and belief of being fully French.

The Defender for rights wrote in his 2016 annual report that "each individual is not considered equally in the scale of this new 'society based on suspicion' that is emerging. Facing the emergency state or other exceptional measures, it is better not to be Muslim and to not show no characteristics that could be interpreted as being radicalised, of being an activist or having some mental disorders... For some people, police practices linked to exceptional legislation and to security practices could then lead a rule of law to a 'discriminatory rule of police'. The state of emergency would come to justify some acts and practices that provoke: an amplified anxiety on the victims, their social, economical and mental isolation, some identity disorders but also divisions, depression and a profound feeling of shame.

Nonetheless, we also notice that a lot of victims of this state of emergency were mentally unable to ask or accept a mental and/or legal support. Sometimes, the painful withdrawal from the victims on themselves when a trauma is perceptible can be difficult to accept for psychiatrists or legal experts groups. Though, what has to be kept in mind is that the intrusion caused by the police (most of the victims would qualify them as 'cow-boys'), that endured 'humiliations', intimidation from those who represent civil protection, neighbors' suspicion, other people's look, whereas their own legal record is 'full of blank pages' is a burden for the targeted individuals. All of this plunge the individual into a questioning and a feeling of fatality that is more than understandable. It is necessary to grant the victims the possibility to accept or not the help they potentially need.

During a conference, (SIRONI 1990) said: "Switching constantly between denial of their own existence and their manipulation by involved people, intentional traumas have their own history. They have a use, a social weight. They produce acts, thoughts and ways of doing in a given society." Which leads to think that in today's France, French citizens being Muslims is a problem and an emergency to deal for the country's safety.

The climate of tension is normalized and unfortunately affects the even most protected spheres. Thus, what is noticed is a collective and specific thought widely spread by media representatives who came to initiate, cause or ingrain an old, present or future trauma. Recently, for instance, an elected representative, school director, called for “bringing the Muslims into lines”, despite being subjected to the principle of neutrality. These kind of words freed from complexes, came to strengthen fear and a potential division with Islamophobia victims and French Muslim citizens. This kind of statement is usually followed by apologizes: “I did not want to hurt anyone.” This sends a very strong message about the normal functioning of the actual social thinking. Society advocates the fight against the conflation it creates itself.

We supported several victims of Islamophobia (the great majority were women) and most of their stories tell that an Islamophobic act came from people going out of their neutrality duty or code of ethics. Words or acts being said to them are all the more violent when they come from individuals initially thought as neutral and responsible for their safety.

We can take the example of a pediatrician in endocrinology who commanded a mother to take off her veil when she was simply accompanying her 9-year-old daughter on consultation on November 6th, 2018.

Pediatrician: “You have to take off what you’re wearing on your head.”

Mother: “Why should I do that? I came for my daughter; I don’t understand why I should have to take it off.”

Pediatrician: “We are in France, things are happening, you could carry weapons under that veil.”

Mother: “I am a Muslim woman, not a terrorist.”

Pediatrician: Doesn’t matter. In France, things are happening and I am telling you again, you could have weapons under it. You cannot wear it in here”

The mother eventually takes it off so her daughter can be examined. During the medical appointment, the mother tells us that her daughter and she were subjected to humiliating remarks from a health professional who had taken the Hippocratic Oath. For instance, when the young girl needed to be measured, she took off her head band after the doctor asked. The little patient who has fuzzy hair, styled in a ponytail received a look of repulsion from the Doctor who said: “That is going to be a hassle to get her measurement.” Another example, when a doctor who asks for the social security card: the mother asks her daughter to take her bag in the waiting room, the doctor would say: “Hurry up, I have some other things to do.” When the pediatrician asked if the young patient practiced any sport, the mother answered ‘no’ and the pediatrician would then shamelessly say: “Why? Is it forbidden?”

The story of this young girl is not an isolated case. It actually was the topic of one edition of *Le magazine de la santé* entitled “The veiled patient case. A 48-year-old woman went to her family doctor (who was not here at the moment but was replaced by the person responsible of the Islamophobic act.) The practitioner would say to her patient in front of the camera: “I do not want any veiled woman in my office” under the excuse that it would be illegal in France. A complaint was filed at the police station and the **Public Prosecutor's office**, who will still decide to close the case, despite the fact that the practitioner maintained her view.

It is difficult to believe that the victim's integration as an accomplished and comfortable individual is gained without difficulties when even a representative of the authority comes to downplay a traumatic event.

This social violence has disastrous consequences that it observed in our clinic. It encrusts the ego, especially among the young victims that are building themselves mentally. The violence they suffer today will impact the adult-to-be.

In another case three pedestrians (a mother, her 9-year-old daughter and another adult person) have been knocked over by a road hog who ran away. My colleagues and I took in charge the mental follow-up of these three victims. After the accident, victims went to the police station to file a complaint (the number plate had been picked up by one of the adult). Victims were denied the right to file the complaint. It is only after the call of a legal expert that it could have been accepted.

During the interview with the young girl, more than thirty minutes were necessary to stop her from crying and to listen to the few words coming out of her mouth explaining that she did not understand what happened neither why the police "did not want to help (them)." According to (Guerra and al. 2012), children hit by social violence are "more exposed to an important, out of control and chronic anxiety (...) With time, these reactions can lead to mental health troubles including depression, anxiety and PTSD as well as health, social and school problems." Violence committed on children is an experience that impacts their way of thinking, of acting and of feeling.

Since her accident, this patient has had difficulties in staying at home when television is on and violent situations are shown (like a high-speed pursuit). Her mother does not want to tell the story of the accident; her daughter wants to straighten her hair in order to get out of the ethnic box.

Today, there are legal and ethical laws that rule each profession. Professionals, from different fields, try to make a priority of these rules. Nevertheless, today it is noticed that in our support there has been a lot of reported failures and so for several years. Professionals' awareness seems to be less strict when they are faced to Muslim citizens. School teachers, professors, doctors, policemen and politicians do not hesitate to break the rules to express their clear opinion on Muslims, without concern for mental consequences on the victims, unjustly being considered as 'Muslim' only.

During interviews, we ask about the mental impact that Islamophobia acts have. These acts can be committed by any citizens or by a State or professional 'representative'. Each of us experiences a trauma differently. Victims' stories help us in defining the different representation each person has.

According to (BECHROURI 2017), Muslims are enclosed in a relationship with terrorism by said 'Countering Violent Extremism' strategies. Besides, like previously mentioned, emergency measures adopted after the November, 13th attacks justify some acts by favoring a climate that is already islamophobic and splits the social link even more.

When supporting the victims, we noticed speech elements that can bring up the idea of division with the usual social world; this idea is linked to suffering and humiliation in the endured act. The idea that the endured act has identity and narcissistic consequences is also highlighted.

Indeed, a number of speech elements show mental difficulties linked to their social representation (for instance, the daughter that was knocked over). What we have learnt is that the victims fight against the process of making things more objective. What matters here is the victims' reactions to the exclusion they experienced. For instance, Amina explained in one interview: "I was working in a big company with a lot of employees. When I came across some colleagues in the streets they would not pay attention. I did not know if I was feeling ashamed because I would have stayed home otherwise but I was not at ease. Amina highlights the lack of esteem she experienced. Last but not least, every victim told us about their safe space being invaded; it is a separation or a trauma provoking a mental division. Islamophobic experiences in its first moments are harsh and violent.

CONCLUSION

From our clinical experience among Islamophobia victims, we had stated that the situation of social exclusion had more consequences than depression or anxiety on mental health. For some of the subjects, social exclusion makes no sense. It only has the destructive effect of the trauma and leads closely to the edge of death. During the interviews, what came up as a main idea was the notion of trauma being linked to the Islamophobic act.

Today, France has to create preventing measures to stop manipulating the religious aspects in order to fight the evil and make the best of its complexity, but also of its past (even if sometimes painful.) Would it not be time for France to realize and even get out of this 'limited state' in which it is, as well in panic as in neurosis? Some individuals that have a limit-state have already experienced a trauma. Then, a parallel can be drawn with the way France favors a culturalist racism that has domination mental effects (FANON 1952). Indeed, Islamophobia in France shows that there is a past which is not integrated and so on not resolved.

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Muslims and Photography

France Keyser

Independent photo reporter, I do photographic researches based on the work of other researchers.

I have been developing a documentary research on my fellow citizen at the heart of social issues. My work is mainly based on Islam in France and on the Front National in south East region.

By establishing photo-sociological portraits of these often “controversial” actors, I am exploring French society tensions.

On Islam in France, I am building my photographic work with current events which implies my fellow Muslim citizens.

- It started in 2004 when the French Parliament voted a law against religious signs at school.

In this context, I asked myself: How do French Muslims live?

To answer this question, I based my search on Islam specialists works in France, like Oliver ROY (research director at the CERI), Nilüfer GÖLE (research director at EHESS) or Vincent GEISSER (searcher at CNRS-IREMAM). They show how Western Muslims are naturally adapting to the traditions, principles and values of their residential countries.

From this observation, I go to meet them.

In my book, “We are French and Muslims”, I destroy clichés on Islam and show another reality on Muslims in France. I try to highlight the daily life of the silent majority of our fellow Muslim citizens to moderate the debate. I try to show the daily life of the common relaxed citizens in a passionate context.

- Then in 2012, the Merah case. Jewish children and French military men have been killed.

Since January, 7th 2015, attacks against Charlie Hebdo and the Hyper Cacher in Vincenne gate, the murder of policeman Ahmed Merabet by terrorists. Then, the tragic and gloomy November 2015 Paris attacks.

In this context, I came back to see the Muslims I had seen for my book during the summer of 2015 and asked them: In this context of general suspicions, how do they do?

The climate is tense, I shoot black and white portraits, a series entitled “Français d’islam”.

Shoots are accompanied by a hand-written message from the model.

These witness statements are intimate and honest. They reveal their deep belonging to France, despite their worries and doubts. Muslims are still happy citizens; they are active and participating despite their profound wounds. They are citizens that do not want to live as ashamed Muslims.

- Summer 2016, “burkini”, a swimsuit that covers a faithful Muslim woman from head to toes, disturbs French beaches.

A lot of cities, mainly on the Mediterranean coast, produce municipal orders to prevent women in burkini from swimming or veiled women from laying down on beaches. Some women cannot access public areas which are open to everyone in general.

In 2018, on Southern French beaches, I photographed veiled women. They are calm, ordinary, symbols of a generation in love with freedom. My shootings show how they are happy to be on the beach.

This series of photographs, “Françaises”, big size printed, show ordinary Muslim women.

My objective with this photographic work on Islam is to normalize Muslims. My pictures highlight citizens engaged in our society, in their boroughs, in their cities and villages and show a France with several faces.

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Photographs published by MYOP

<http://www.myop.fr/fr/photographer/france-keyser>



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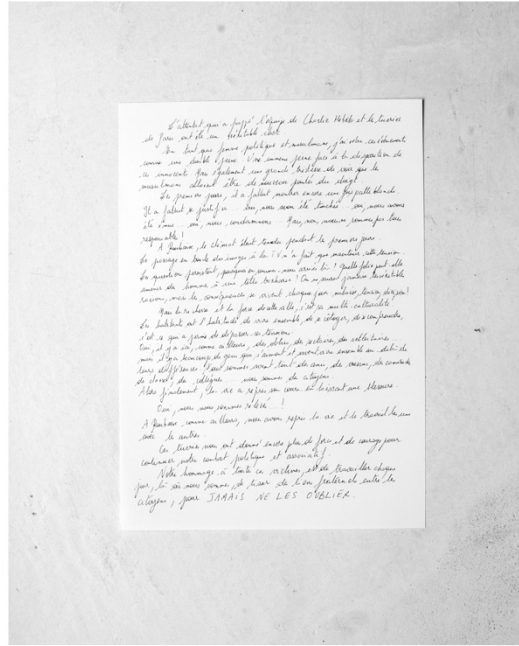
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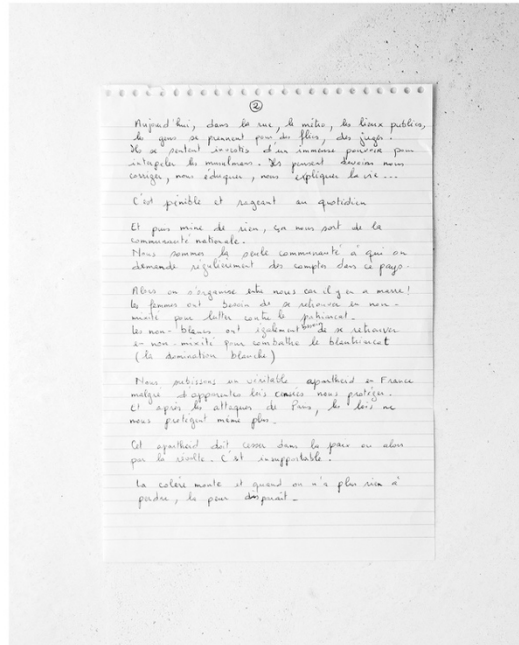
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« Nous sommes Français et musulmans » <http://myop.fr/serie/french-and-muslims>

« Français d'islam » <http://myop.fr/serie/français-dislam>

« Françaises » <http://myop.fr/serie/french-women>

*avec Vincent Geisser, Editions Autrement, 2010.

Female students in nursing institutes come out triumphant against pseudo-secularism

Attorney Joao Viegas, lawyer recognized by the Paris bar,

As we know it, racism and discrimination are often disguised. That's how we noticed during the last decade, the approach of a very conservative current (at the time in favour of traditional church) who arguments in favour of a supposed "strict" secularity which would have as consequence the exclusion from public spaces of all religious signs. This conception inherently misconstrued and stranger to the principle of the law regarding the separation of the Church and the State of November 9th, 2015, obviously serves to target one religion in particular : Islam (we don't have any knowledge of any petition against the existence of the Sainte-Chapelle located within the Justice palace). This law often is invoked in the endeavour to rip away the possibility for Muslim women to wear their veil in public places.

Sadly there are some instances in which upholders of this supposed secularity manage to treacherously incorporate the said law into the administration by concealing its true nature and make it appear like the authentic French secularism. All that the victims have left is to turn to administrative courts, commence gruelling procedures that may take up forever to be processed by the system but will thankfully still allow to rectify the wrongs. That's what happened in the case of supervising mothers for school outings who prevailed (but not without any trouble) with the help of the CCIF to render void the initiatives of some academic leaders who, based on an ambiguous circular, claimed to have the right to forbid them to wear their veil. It's also what the students of Nursing Training Institutes have just experienced thanks to the course of action of two brave and praiseworthy students of the Institute of the Saint-Antoine Hospital in Paris (APHP).

These two students were sanctioned after refusing to comply with the requirements of an Institute's direction that split hairs regarding their veil which started with them demanding to Muslim female students to wear a turban, then a headband and at last by asking that the width should be reduced of a few inches. These injunctions were sustained by a rule mentioned in the school regulation inspired by an example of a regulation provided in the decree of April 21st, 2007, which stated: "Any sign or type of dressing that ostensibly display one's affiliation to a religion shall be prohibited within all premises belonging to the training Institute. This same rule shall be applied throughout the course of the activities that are under the responsibility of the said Institute or professors, including those taking place outside the walls of the establishment."

This specific measure boils down to the same one that is applied in schools, junior highs, high schools in the virtue of the law n° 2004-228 of March 15th of 2004 (Article L.141-5-1 of the Education Code). Problem: IFSIs are establishments from superior education therefore do not get impacted by the implementation range action of the March 15th law on secularity and conspicuous religious symbols in schools. (Do not fall within the scope of the law). In that sense, it is therefore not for the regulatory power to extend the field of action of restrictive laws.

The two students in question challenged the disciplinary sanctions imposed on them. At the same time, and with the support of the CCIF, they requested for the appropriate Minister to repeal the unlawful order but upon implicit refusal of the latter, they took the matter up to the Council of State.

First and foremost; the Administrative Court annulled the sanctions pending on the two students invoking the illegal nature of the institute rules because it was initially legally impossible for them to prohibit completely and absolutely the wearing of religious symbols. The sanction inflicted on both students thereby was an error of law (rulings of 2015, 3rd of July n° 1418243/2-1 and 1418776/2-1) because the Ministry that elaborated this restriction was not the body competent to declare such decree on the fundamental right that is freedom of religion.

- 1) This answer was confirmed by the Paris Administrative Court of Appeal, which for its part, puts forward another legal reasoning on the issue which was in this case that: the institute's regulation could not allow to punish anyone on the ground that they're wearing a religious sign, because it does not constitute an act of pressure neither disruption to the proper functioning of public services (ruling of December 6th, 2016 n°15PA03527 and 15PA03528). The judgements confirming that the establishment was to pay reparations for the damages caused to the two students were not contested and therefore did not go under appeal.

The Council of State gave a ruling on the annulment of the order with a judgement that supports the reasoning of the Administrative Court and therefore gives full satisfaction to the two claimants as well to the CCIF, also petitioner in this case (ruling of July 28th, 2017, n°390740, 390741 and 390742).

The High Court having drawn the consequences from the order of illicit nature actually demanded to the Minister in question to repeal and amend the disputed rule of the 2007 decree relating to the conditions on the functioning of the nursing training institutes; on April, 17th 2018 the Minister ultimately revoked the last decree and fashioned a new one stating that from now onward IFSI students will now be able to express their religious affiliation under the condition that it does not disrupt the good going of the establishment and respects all individuals present within the Institute.

These judgements which come as gratifying for us prove that secularism (principle of organization of the State) is not some elastic concept that can be moulded to our liking. Originally the concept of secularism hailed from the lack of equality between the various faiths as well as the matter of protecting the freedom of belief. Secularism has nothing to do with rules that marginalize and sideline people with religious signs; rather it would be incompatible with the freedoms characterizing the rule of law.

A delightful irony when the two students who were unfairly punished are the ones to have given a good lesson on secularism to their establishment and by extension, to all IFSIs around France.

Women experiencing discrimination in the working field: Layla case.

Oumalkaire MOHAMED BARKAT, student in sociology

Introduction

In March 2017, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJUE) delivered two separate judgments upon the subject of the veil in private companies: a French one and a Belgian case. In the first one, a research engineer, Mrs. Bougnaoui, was dismissed after the request of a client to not receive the services from a veiled woman. Mrs. Achbita, from the second case, was dismissed for failure to comply with the obligation of the neutrality principle in the company rules, by wearing the veil later on, on her workplace.

In the absence of a neutrality policy (restricting the expression of religious beliefs as well as political and philosophical opinions of the employees) within the company, the EU Court concludes in the situation of Mrs. Bougnaoui that a client's wish cannot justify the sacking of an employee merely because of the religious sign she may be wearing. However, in Mrs. Achbita's case, the Court of Justice of the European Union judged that no direct act of discrimination was established considering that the company rule and regulations included a clause of general neutrality. Even though in truth, this employee's dismissal was also considered by her employer after a client refused the assistance of a veiled woman.

By relying on the presence of a neutrality rule to determine that the discrimination was not direct, the Court of Justice of the European Union clearly favoured the neutrality principle over the employee's protection against discriminations (especially those of religious nature).

At national level, the El Khomri law in the labour code allows private companies to regulate the display of their employees' religious beliefs. Indeed, an employer, if desiring to restrict the employees' religious freedom can invoke the notion mentioned as "necessity for proper functioning" from the El Khomri policy. Although the law provides that the employer must be able to justify that the restriction is proportionate to the nature of the job and the tasks to be performed, this notion still paves the way to abuses and misuse. While the law provides details on the requirements regarding religious signs in the public sector, it's still as unclear as ever for the private sector. By promoting the insertion of a neutrality clause in the company's internal regulations, employers are given free rein to choose whatever interpretation of the law they prefer and by extension the management of religious matters within private companies, fall into their hands.

It's within the scope of this poorly protective legal framework for employees, especially Muslim women who are veiled, that I took it upon myself to analyze the religious discriminations these women are facing at work. So I led several interviews with 12 women that in the past received assistance from the CCIF. The aim of these interviews was on one hand, to learn about the kind of feelings or emotions discrimination provoked in these women, and on the other hand the strategies they adopted in front of such adversity.

Each and every one of them worked with their veil at some point (5 of them were hired with initially no headscarf). The age spectrum goes from 22 to 40 (at the time of the research) and they all lived in mainland France or in its Overseas' Territories. The interviews happened all over France and were in

the form of video calls or phone calls. These women all reached the CCIF following discriminations they were experiencing at work because of their veil between 2013 and 2018. The feelings they harboured and the strategies they embraced might differ from one another but the case of Layla clearly shows the Islamophobic climate these women were and are confronted to.

Interview:

Hello Layla, thank you for agreeing to this interview and let us know about your story.

Thank you.

You can start by introducing yourself first, maybe with some few words on your studies and professional path for instance.

My name is Layla, I'm 35 years old, mother of 3. I graduated from a vocational pathway in commerce (vocational baccalaureate diploma) and I started my professional career in a private company at an airport. It subcontracts with national and international corporations and I worked there as a transit agent. This was my first job after graduating. My father and brother worked there too, but after 13 years of service, I opted for a contractual termination because many things made so that I couldn't stay.

During these 13 years, were you wearing your veil?

No, I started wearing it in 2007. A turban only in the company at first, but outside I still had a hijab on that covers all the way down the neck. At work, my colleagues and superiors kind of noticed a change we could say, I received some questions, but it wasn't that problematic until the day when new company rules and regulations were voted.

And when were these new company's rules adopted?

It was in 2014. After this new regulation was voted, I was asked to remove my turban at work, but I refused and told them that I wouldn't take it off. They informed me that a new blue working outfit would be put in effect for everyone; I explained to them that I had no issue with it, but I still will wear a tiny navy blue scarf along with it. In the end I got pregnant and I went on maternity leave and the regulation was not yet set in place within the company. I actually took a maternity leave because with the attacks of 2015, my badge was taken away from me on the grounds that I supposedly was part of a dangerous movement and therefore my access to the premises was denied. This is when I contacted the CCIF, who advised me to get a lawyer to challenge this ban. My lawyer and I went to court but the judge condoned the decision taken by the company I was working in. My attorney appealed this judge's decision, though we haven't heard of him since then.

So, that means you stopped working for this company since 2015?

Indeed, my maternity leave ended in 2018 but because I still had no update on my situation I requested a mutually agreed severance. Even if I had retrieved my badge in some way, I would've had to fight to keep my veil and I didn't have any strength for that. It takes a toll on you and your spirit and because I am separated with 3 children to support I didn't see myself engage into a legal battle with them and remain with no salary for months. I know though that if I had this personal strength and a family behind me to support me I would have held on and fought. While in my case, alone with children, it would've been impossible to wage war in which the victors are unknown.

What about your colleagues? How did they react to this?

Some supported me; others claimed that I was causing a ruckus inside the company and seasoned it with some cutting remarks like: “Oh, you looked better with your hair loose, you were prettier when your hair was visible”. And like any other workplace, there were people lacking genuineness and were blatantly Islamophobic. You know, the day of the attacks that occurred in 2015, I had to go on sick leave for a few days because I was so afraid of the reactions and didn’t want to find myself in a position where I had to justify myself for whatever reason.

Do your brother and father still work in this company?

No, my brother left because he set up his own business, and my father went into retirement. But my father could have still pursued his career in this company; however with everything that transpired he couldn’t just put on an act and pretend nothing happened. So he asked for early retirement.

Are you currently looking for work?

I’m going to a professional retraining. It’s still a bit fuzzy in my head because I’ve done the same job for over 13 years. I was thrown into the working world at an early age and it’s not easy to do a professional conversion after so many years, but I think ultimately I’ll shift to the social field. Of course, it will still require a solid and sturdy spirit but whether it’s in that field or another, I’ll still be confronted to the question of my veil. Now I know that if I present myself to a job interview with my hijab I will instantly get brushed off and sidelined. Or maybe I won’t, but the probability that I will is very high. From what I feel and the experience of people I hear about, I tell myself that if I work while wearing my veil, I will only get positions as a stock room worker when I am somebody who on the contrary loves to be in contact with people.

Have you considered working without your veil?

Given the way things are right now, I plan on taking it off for work. Truthfully, I hope it won’t come to that, but if I really come across even more hurdles, I will be inclined to remove it. Because as a single mother, it’s difficult, however I truly wish I won’t have to. That’s what I told my adviser at the Job Centre. Even if I manage to find a job, it will still be complicated to work properly. Will an employer comply with me having flexible work hours for my kids? If the youngest were 12 then I’d be reassured but she’s still a 3 year old toddler, it is way too young. It’s all right though, you know, there are people in situations way worse than mine. Al hamdullilah (praise to be Allah), in that sense we can say I’m a warrior and a fighter. I have always fought even if sometimes my path was hindered. Then again, good people still exist out there, and a lot is done to help others.

What reason encouraged you to contact the CCIF specifically?

Because apart from the CCIF, I felt judged by all the other structures I came in contact with. For instance, had I mentioned the issue of my veil to the other organizations I would have been told: “Yes, but you can work without your veil, you must blend in our society”. Whether in the public field or private one, I’d have heard things like: “For your kids, can’t you work without your veil?” etc. But when I first contacted the CCIF that’s not at all what they told me and that’s what motivated me to request their assistance.

So what did you think of this first contact with the CCIF?

It was comforting, I felt like I was heard at last, and if I needed counsel I was one call away from the jurist. She provided me with legal material such as references, articles of the law so I could defend

myself. I was met with support and a sympathetic ear. Thankfully the CCIF exists; it makes you feel safer knowing that a structure is here to enforce your utmost rights.

Today, what relationship do you maintain with the labour world?

Honestly, I'm dreading the labour market and the hundreds of denied applications I might face simply because of the veil I'm wearing. At first, I will try to find companies that accept veiled women, but I really get nervous thinking that I might be forced to take it off. Sometimes I really feel like wearing a headscarf in France is one huge risky business. You really ought to be tough as nails, especially when I see women from my circle of friends also take off their veil for work and how it damages them psychologically! But I also fear most for my daughter, I see her grow up and I don't want her to go through the same thing I did. I still have hope, maybe when my children get older and enter in the working world; things will have changed by then.



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