

# **Where does Islamophobia take place and who is involved? Reflections from Paris and London**

*Kawtar Najib\* and Peter Hopkins*

*School of Geography Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University,*

*Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, UK*

*\*Corresponding author. Email: kawtar.najib@newcastle.ac.uk*

This paper explores and compares the socio-spatial effects of Islamophobia in Paris and London. Our research focuses on different spaces and types of discrimination against Muslims or people who are perceived to be Muslim in Paris and London using primarily quantitative data. A quantitative analysis of the geographical spaces of Islamophobia is presented, while highlighting the ways in which anti-Muslim discrimination is gendered, racialized, classed and aged. We identify the different contexts in which Islamophobia takes place in each city. This spatial analysis highlights not only particular places such as public areas, transport networks or public institutions, but it also describes specific logics of spatial organisation showing the importance of the centre and the suburbs, transport axes and pockets of segregation. Using an intersectional approach, we also demonstrate that Islamophobic discrimination is often shaped simultaneously by other types of exclusions associated with gender, race, class and age. We found that victims were more likely to be young women who wear a headscarf with the perpetrators more likely to be men in the UK and both men and women in France.

**Keywords:** Islamophobia; Spaces; Intersectionality; Muslim; discrimination

## Introduction

The increase in the number of anti-Muslim acts in many western European countries is causing serious concern (EUMC, 2006; Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2010; CNCDDH, 2014; CCIF, 2014; Tell MAMA, 2016). This increase is related to recent terrorist attacks and political debates about the visibility of Muslim populations and their apparent difficulties with ‘integrating’ into European society. In predominantly non-Muslim countries and especially in France and United Kingdom (UK), these debates are not new; they have been present for the last ten years or so and have led to the implementation, notably in France, of several laws<sup>1</sup> prohibiting the visibility of religious symbols in public spaces. It is essential to be able to criticize religious and cultural practices but this ‘political enterprise’ (Lorcerie, 2005) has ultimately led to worrying processes of marginalisation, such as for example the increasing stigmatisation of Muslim populations. This stigmatisation has fostered the emergence of anti-Muslim sentiment and numerous acts of discrimination or violence that have a direct impact on the everyday lives of Muslim families and those who are perceived to be Muslim. We contend that the socio-spatial effects of Islamophobia shed light on the complexities of Islamophobia and how best to respond to such incidents. Indeed, by knowing that Islamophobic

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1 In France, there are two main laws: the law of the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2004 (impulsed by the hijab) prohibiting the wearing of ostensible religious signs in public schools and the law of the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2010 (impulsed by the niqab) prohibiting the concealment of the face in public space. These laws have been adopted in the name of secularism, gender equality, and empowerment of women. In general, the 2004 French law was perceived as an attack against the individual freedom of the Muslim women and their dignity, and was characterized as racist and sexist (Hancock, 2009).

discriminations happen in specific places, target specific people, and function in a specific way, then we can understand that we need a specific policy to adequately address the problem of Islamophobia.

Research about Islamophobia has increased since the late 1990s (Halliday, 1999; Saeed, 2007; Allen, 2010; Geisser, 2010; Hajjat and Mohamed, 2013; Meer, 2013), yet few studies focus on the geographical dimensions. Islamophobia has been primarily explored by sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists. Social and cultural geographers, however, are key actors in the study of religious discrimination. Important research on Muslim exclusion and Islamophobia (Dwyer, 1999; Dunn, 2005; Mansson McGinty *et al.*, 2012; Hancock, 2015; Hopkins *et al.*, 2017) focuses on spatial justice, racism, identity and feminist geography. Our intention in this paper is to question how Islamophobia is read spatially, and how space makes a geographical approach essential in enabling us to understand experiences of Islamophobia. Islamophobia targets people because of perceptions about their affiliation to the Islamic faith, and in this research project, we define Islamophobia as anti-Muslim hate crimes targeting Muslim or presumed Muslim populations and institutions. A hate crime is motivated by discrimination or prejudice based on who you are or what you look like (examples of hate crime include verbal abuse, harassment, physical assault, and so on). The first goal of our paper is to present a comparative case-study of spatialized Islamophobia in Paris and London to social and cultural geographical literature on Muslim exclusion and Islamophobia.

This paper explores the spaces of Islamophobia in France and United Kingdom. Both countries report a large number of Muslim populations (Duncan, 2016) and a high rate of Islamophobic acts (Ray *et al.*, 2014), but we focus on Paris and London because they are both ethnically and religiously diverse world cities and important European

capitals. These two countries of study are also prioritized because they present different political models: one fosters the republican equality among all its citizens (the French republican model), while the other recognizes the multicultural differences among all its inhabitants (the British multicultural model). These two models have a direct impact on the dynamics of Islamophobia observed in each country, and notably the spatial dynamics that we highlight in this contribution. This paper is part of a research project entitled SAMA (Spaces of Anti-Muslim Acts) funded by the European Commission. Islamophobia occurs in specific places and spaces, and its spatial distribution reflects specific urban patterns. Our intention is to identify not only the places of anti-Muslim acts (whether it is a public area, a public transport, or a public institution) in order to better understand the mechanisms of functioning of Islamophobia, but also the urban locations of where these acts occur (e.g. the centre, suburbs, or peripheral districts) by analysing geographical data that allow us to highlight the main spatial logics of Islamophobia. With this spatial analysis, we examine if the pattern describes a specific urban model (such as for example models<sup>2</sup> borrowed from urban sociology: the centre-periphery urban model, the model taking transport axes into account or the mosaic model that describes specific focal points referring mostly to deprived urban areas). Indeed, we

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<sup>2</sup> Initial research on spatial inequality was conducted in Chicago where three different well-known urban models were developed. The first model is the concentric model, which is also called the centre-periphery urban model (Burgess, 1925), contrasting the city centre with its suburbs. The second model is the sector model which takes into account the importance of the specific axes, and notably transport axes (Hoyt, 1939). And the third one is the multiple nuclei model (Harris and Ullman, 1945) that describes an urban structure in mosaic where focal points present a certain competition between primary and secondary centralities.

will observe whether or not spaces of discrimination correspond or contrast with the situation in the suburbs where Muslim populations and places of worship are overwhelmingly located in the Parisian region (Vieillard-Baron, 2004) or with specific areas in the London region, like the boroughs of Tower Hamlets or Newham (Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2010; Naqshbandi, 2006). These areas could also reveal several oppositions or associations between different districts of the studied cities: rich or poor districts, Northern or Southern districts, well-considered or stigmatized districts, etc.

Beyond this first spatial approach, we also consider the ways Islamophobia is shaped by its intersections with other markers of inequality such as gender, race, age and class. Our second approach to Islamophobia is rooted within feminist geographies of intersectionality (Rose, 1993; Kobayashi and Peake, 1994; Kofman *et al.*, 2000; Kern and Mullins, 2013; Kobayashi, 2014; Hopkins, 2017; Najib and Hopkins, 2018). In recent decades, feminist geographers have considered issues of fear, place and the contested geographies of Muslim women began to incorporate gender, sexuality, race, religion, dress, etc. (Dwyer, 1999; Pain, 2010; Hancock, 2015; Listerborn, 2015; Teeple Hopkins, 2015; Yorgason and Della Dora, 2009; Secor, 2002). People have a complex combination of identities and can be discriminated against due to these multiple identities or due to one in particular. Discrimination and hostility directed toward Islam can be explained by the fact that it is often interpreted as a public problem in Europe (Mamdani, 2002; Lorcerie, 2005; Cesari, 2009; Hajjat and Mohammed, 2013, Goody, 2013), but also especially by the fact that this religion holds within itself other sensitive indicators related to immigration, colonial past, oppression of women and concerns about being associate with terrorist dangers (Abu-Lughod, 2002 and 2006; Khiabany and Williamson, 2008; Hopkins, 2008 and 2009a; Staeheli and Nagel, 2008; Le Cour Grandmaison, 2010;

Reynaud Paligot, 2011; Simon and Tiberj, 2013). These negative representations have contributed to increase in discrimination or violence against institutions or individuals because of their real or presumed affiliation with the Islamic faith. In this paper, we investigate and critically explore the characteristics of the victims of Islamophobia as well as the perpetrators. In so doing, we demonstrate that Islamophobic discrimination is connected to other types of intersecting discriminations such as sexism, racism, ageism and classism.

Specifically, we focus on discrimination against individuals, and their socio-demographic and ethnic criteria in order to better highlight these intersections. We show that Islam is a racialized religion, a point that scholars have situated from a historical perspective of Orientalist colonial tropes (Said, 1978; Le Cour Grandmaison, 2010; Reynaud Paligot, 2011). Islamophobia appears as a racialization process of individuals presumed to be Muslim; a process that essentialises a group of highly diverse individuals under one single religious attribute (Dunn et al., 2007; Naber, 2008; Allen, 2010; Sayyid and Vakil, 2010; Meer and Modood, 2010). Indeed, the Muslim community in both France and the UK is very diverse in terms of culture and ways of understanding and practicing the Islamic religion; which is why we use, throughout this paper, the term ‘Muslim populations’ in the plural for describing the French and British contexts and for refuting the idea that Muslims represent a monolithic bloc (Kalin, 2001; Halliday, 2003). Sometimes even non-Muslims (such as Sikhs, Hindus, non-religious North Africans and South Asians or women who wear a veil due to illness or for fashion) are also victims of Islamophobia (Hyndman et al., 2010; Hopkins et al., 2017). This refers to a sociological dimension of Muslim identity (to appearances and representations) (Venel, 2004; Hancock, 2015) that we also have to take into account. Indeed, this kind of aestheticism and visibility of being Muslim or presumed to be Muslim are important when considering

the issue of Islamophobia, and especially regarding women who wear the headscarf. Veiled women, as a result of their headcovering, their gender and their relations with public spaces, society, and state institutions (Gökariksel, 2009), become the centre of attention. Therefore, the aim is to consider the intersectionality of Islamophobia with other markers of social and cultural difference in the both cities, because Islamophobia can be shaped by other types of discrimination such as those related to gender, ethnic origin, age or socio-occupational status of the individual (Modood, 1997; Geisser, 2003; Fassin and Fassin, 2006; Listerborn, 2015). Indeed, these other discriminations do not possess any ‘acceptable’ justification, unlike Islamophobia which can appear from some perpetrators’ point of view as the simple criticism of a religion (CCIF, 2014). Research has found a correlation between hostility against Islam and the rejection of Muslim populations (Runnymede Trust, 1997; Meer and Modood, 2009; Bleich, 2011; Klug, 2012). In this sense, the report on Islamophobia conducted by the Runnymede Trust (1997) explains that this hostility (or fear) is precisely based on stereotypes used to justify these discriminatory practices.

### **The study, data and methods**

While most studies on Muslim exclusion rely on qualitative methodologies (Dwyer, 1999; Dunn, 2005; Hancock, 2015; Hopkins, 2009b; Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2010; Mansson McGinty, 2012; Zempi and Chakraboti, 2015; Hopkins, 2016), we contribute a quantitative analysis of discrimination affecting Muslim populations or people who are perceived as Muslim. Indeed, there is a lack of research on Islamophobia that uses quantitative methods or mixed-methods approaches (Hopkins, 2009b). Peake (2009) has outlined the recent lack of quantitative research in gender studies. In our contribution, it is not about assessing or opposing quantitative and qualitative methods.

Indeed, this research project uses both methods, because we think that it is important to first start with quantitative data in order to better understand the general context, and then to focus in on more qualitative specificities that figures cannot explain. Indeed, quantitative data can also reveal important findings on the process of functioning of Islamophobia. Specifically, the statistical work we present here allows us, on the one hand, to identify the geographical spaces where anti-Muslim acts took place in Paris and London, and on the other hand, to better describe the characteristics of the first victims and perpetrators. Our study of spaces of Islamophobia draws upon the collection of geo-referenced and personal data from the main organisations that focus on identifying these acts. For the French case, it is the CCIF (*Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France*; the Collective against Islamophobia in France) which has, at the individual scale, a rich database because it takes all statements into account (after a verification of conforming material elements), unlike the Ministry of Interior which provides data that is difficult to collect and only considers acts that conclude with formal complaints. Concerning the British case, we refer to the findings of Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) because the organisation has produced a report entitled 'Geography of anti-Muslim Hate in 2015' in the UK. Regarding the city of London, we also refer to the Metropolitan Police data that the MEND association (Muslim Engagement and Development) provided to us. Consequently, our quantitative work is based on several databases and findings (CCIF, Metropolitan Police, Tell MAMA). The comparison between the two cities of London and Paris also represents an innovative contribution to the literature as there are few comparative studies of Islamophobia (Cesari, 2011).

By analyzing recent data, we note for the French case that the CCIF recorded 905 anti-Muslim acts in 2015 (CCIF, 2016), among which 43% were in the Île-de-France region (region of Paris). Thus, the region of Paris is the most affected region in France



(followed by the region Auvergne/Rhône-Alpes which records 17% of Islamophobic acts, and then by the region Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur which records 8% of these acts). In Britain, Tell MAMA received 1128 reports of anti-Muslim acts in 2015. These acts are mainly concentrated in England, and in large urban areas where live in great majority the Muslim populations (Peach, 2006), such as Birmingham, Manchester and London where there is the majority of the geocoded data (Tell MAMA, 2016). But the Metropolitan Police recorded an impressive total of 1052 acts the same year only in London.

For the two case studies, we analysed the most recent data available at the time of our investigation (data from 2015). The CCIF distinguishes between 65% of discrimination, 5% of verbal abuse, 6% of physical assault, 17% of discourse, and 7% of degradation and profanation. As for Tell MAMA, the organisation differentiates between offline acts from online acts (respectively 39% and 32%). Offline acts correspond to acts that happen in person between a victim and a perpetrator, while online acts are mainly those on social media platforms. Of these offline acts, there are 50% of verbal abuse, 17% of assault, 10% of vandalism and criminal damage, 7.5% of discrimination, 7.5% of threatening behaviour, 5% of anti-Muslim literature, and 3% of hate speech. For both cases, Islamophobic acts increase over time. In France, there is an increase of 18% between 2014 and 2015 (CCIF, 2016) and in Britain, there is a 200% increase in offline Islamophobic acts in 2015 (Tell MAMA, 2016). Therefore, it is important to understand that the year 2015 represents a specific year for both countries. Indeed, 2015 remains a difficult year for France with several terrorist attacks and the state of emergency, but also for the CCIF which had to face the highest rate of anti-Muslim acts since its existence. These terrorist attacks in France but also other high visibility events (such as for example the terrorist attacks in Tunisia which killed several British tourists) have a clear impact on anti-Muslim acts in the United Kingdom with increases in reported hate crimes. In

addition to these high visibility events, Muslim people are usually portrayed as the ultimate 'Others' by political narratives and the media is one of the major contributing factors, which is often seen to cause discrimination between Muslim and non-Muslim populations (Ameli, 2004; Saeed, 2007; Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2010).

### **Spaces and places of Islamophobia in Paris and London**

According to the acts recorded in France in 2015 by the CCIF, 64% of Islamophobic acts take place in public institutions (such as a town hall, a school or a hospital). Therefore, the main perpetrators of anti-Muslim hostility in France are public institutions. Some public service employees believe that they have the right to extend the scope of the 2004 French law (which bans the headscarf in public schools) to all the users of public services and institutions. Additional discriminations in Paris are from a legal entity (for example, through the boss of the victim or a colleague) and from an individual (who can be, for instance, a passerby on the street). The overwhelming majority of the discrimination takes place within an institutional or professional frame (98%), unlike in the United Kingdom where anti-Muslim acts primarily occur in public areas (in the street or in the park for example) and public transport (such as on the bus or a railway station), respectively 25% and 20% in 2015 (Tell MAMA, 2016). Spaces of Islamophobia in the UK rather refer to everyday spaces such as areas with a high pedestrian activity. These observations can lead us to question the different ways in which Islamophobia functions in each city. In France, we can undoubtedly read the impact of the 2004 French law and therefore a top-down descending process that would emanate firstly from the State and not from individuals themselves. On the contrary, in the UK, this phenomenon rather describes a bottom-up ascending process that would emanate primarily from individuals, under the influence of the media (Ameli, 2004; Saeed, 2007). That said, some researchers

reveal nevertheless signs of institutional Islamophobia displayed by the British government (Nagel, 2002; Ansari and Karim, 2005; Poynting and Mason, 2007).

In Paris, 35% of anti-Muslim acts occurred in the Parisian centre (i.e. the department of Paris, named *Paris intra-muros*), compared to 60% in the inner suburb<sup>3</sup> (named *proche banlieue*). But taken separately, we notice that Paris is the most affected department within the Greater Paris region (and even within the Île-de-France region<sup>4</sup>) as shown in the figure 1 revealing a difference of 13 to 17 points compared to the other departments. Departments of the inner suburb are slightly more affected than that of the outer suburb. Thus, anti-Muslim acts take place more in the Parisian centre, and they decrease progressively as we move away from the centre. Spaces of Islamophobia in Paris reflect a centre-periphery urban model opposing the city-centre and its suburbs, as we see in the Paris urban model in figure 2. This centre-periphery model usually describes the urban patterns of most European cities (because they are built from a medieval centre around which have developed peripheral belts and then suburban areas). From the 2012 population census of INSEE<sup>5</sup>, the poorer classes are mostly relegated to enclaved and marginalized areas located in the suburbs, while the privileged classes are enjoying the dynamism of the centre and its various metropolitan functions. However, people living in the suburbs are strongly attracted to the central town, but we can see for the Muslim

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<sup>3</sup> The inner suburb is made up by the three departments of Hauts-de-Seine, Seine-Saint-Denis and Val-de-Marne, and form with Paris *intra-muros* what we call the Greater Paris region.

<sup>4</sup> As for the Île-de-France region, it consists the Greater Paris region and the outer suburb, which comprises the four departments of Seine-et-Marne, Yvelines, Essonne and Val-d'Oise.

<sup>5</sup> The National Institute of Economic Studies (*Institut National des Etudes Economiques*) which conducts the census of the population in France.

populations that they seem excluded from the centre not only because of their social class but also because of their religious appearance, which can allow them to be a more visible target for potential Islamophobic acts. Finally, the relationships between a prestigious centre and suburbs that are more deprived are more obvious and readable.

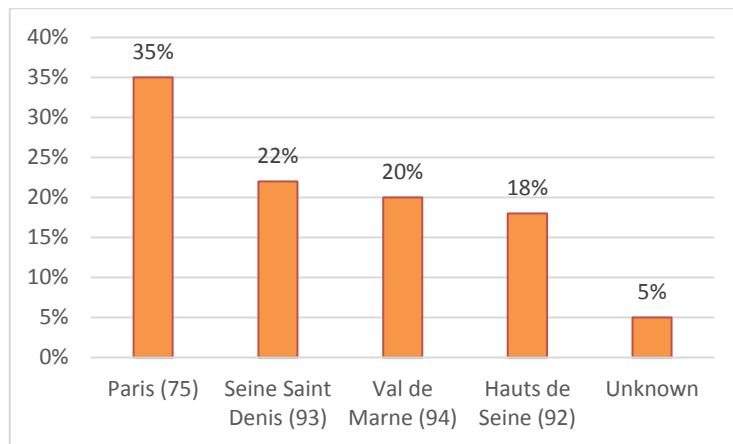


Figure 1. Anti-Muslim acts in the Greater Paris region (CCIF)

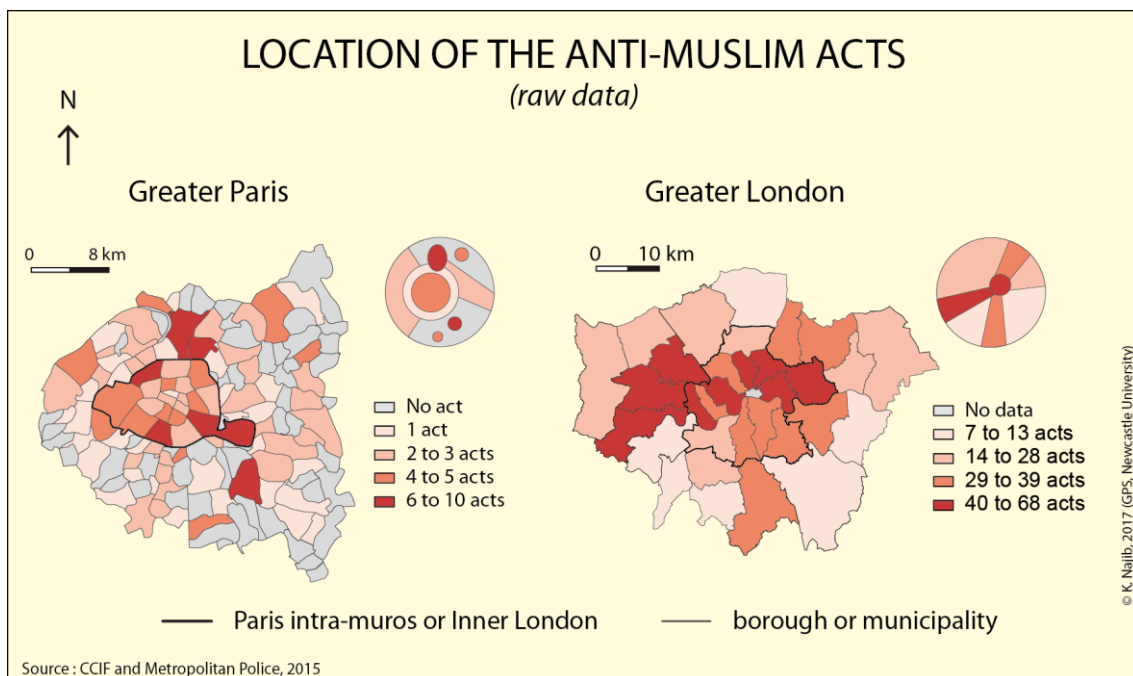


Figure 2. Location of anti-Muslim acts in Paris and London

As for the London case, there are as many anti-Muslim acts in inner London as there is in suburban London (that is to say, respectively 50.3% and 49.7% according to the Metropolitan Police data). Unlike in Paris, the importance of some main horizontal and vertical lines is shown by the corresponding urban model. Indeed, in the Greater London region, anti-Muslim acts occur mainly in everyday places, that is to say in public areas and public transport (Tell MAMA, 2016). The phenomenon seems to be more spatially diffuse than in Paris, and seems to extend mainly along the major roads. Therefore, the spatial pattern of Islamophobia in London rather describes a model which takes into account the important role of transport axes in its configuration.

### ***Islamophobia in Paris***

When focusing on the twenty *arrondissements* (districts) of central Paris, every area has recorded Islamophobic acts. But at this scale of *Paris intra-muros*, there is no clear asymmetry, no North/South, East/West or centre/periphery asymmetry (Najib, in press), unlike at the Greater Paris scale (or even at the Île-de-France scale) where we know that Paris is the most affected department. We found that the 17<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> *arrondissements* record the highest number of anti-Muslim acts (respectively 6, 7 and 10 acts) (appendix 1). This last number of 10 acts is primarily due to one Islamophobic situation that happened in work contexts which has affected five different people, all of whom have reported their experience. Beyond this Parisian centre, all of the cities of the department of Hauts-de-Seine (located in the west of the Greater Paris region) are affected by Islamophobia. Even if the total number of Islamophobic acts is lower than other departments, 70% of the cities located in this department record at least one Islamophobic act. This department of Hauts-de-Seine represents a wealthy area where there is a low rate of unemployed people, manual labourers, immigrants (according to the 2012 population census of INSEE).

More than 50% of municipalities located in the departments of Seine-Saint-Denis and Val-de-Marne record no Islamophobic acts (they appear in grey in the map of figure 2). Within Paris *intra-muros*, the second *arrondissement* records only one act, but we found that the number of anti-Muslim acts is not important in popular *arrondissements* such as the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> *arrondissements*. In this sense, we know (as the next section on intersectionality will show in-depth) that Muslim populations in France usually refer to immigrant, working class and disadvantaged families (Vieillard-Baron, 2004; Le Cour Grandmaison, 2010; Reynaud Paligot, 2011; Simon and Tiberj, 2013, Hajjat and Mohammed, 2013). Therefore, an important question is about the extent to which spaces where anti-Muslim acts take place correspond or contrast with spaces where Muslim populations live in great majority. This question is difficult to answer for the French case because data on race and religion are not available in France. The lack of statistical information in these areas poses challenges of analyzing important issues such as Islamophobia without data about race or religion to hand. That said, we know that only 11% of anti-Muslim acts (when we have the precise location) took place in ‘troubled urban areas’ (named ZUS, *Zones Urbaines Sensibles*) referring to spaces of poverty and degradation, and where Muslim populations seem to live in great majority (Najib, in press). Indeed, this information can only be cautiously considered because of the non-availability of the data, but most researchers have already demonstrated this connection (Vieillard-Baron, 2004; Laurence and Vaïsse, 2007; Simon and Tiberj, 2013; Adraoui, 2013). Thus, the majority of anti-Muslim acts are observed in areas not classified by the Town Policy.

That said, there are focal points located in the Northeast of the greater Paris region in the department of Seine-Saint-Denis which records the highest number of ZUS in the whole of France (CIV, 2010; Chevalier, 2010). In this area, anti-Muslim acts occurred

mostly in the cities of Saint-Denis and Aubervilliers, and to a lesser degree in Aulnay-sous-Bois. These municipalities reveal ‘pockets’ of segregation where Islamophobic acts are important. Besides, there are also other isolated and scattered focal points in the South of the Greater Paris in the cities of Créteil and Orly. In Créteil, which is an important administrative and academic municipality, there were 8 anti-Muslim acts that occurred mostly in public institutions (such as education and training institutes, hospitals, etc). As for Orly, all the 5 anti-Muslim acts are related to the airport.

Spaces of Islamophobia generally contrast with spaces where Muslim populations and places of worship are overwhelmingly located (in the suburb and in ZUS) (Najib, in press). This observation highlights geographical tensions (Göle, 2003) which reflects – in line with Listerborn’s findings (2015) – some opposition or contradiction between spaces generally well considered and socially valued but where the victims could feel vulnerable, with spaces generally stigmatized and feared by the majority but where these populations could feel comfortable. In Paris, Islamophobia describes a clear centre-periphery opposition with some focal points referring to either institutional areas or some deprived areas.

### ***Islamophobia in London***

As far as the Greater London region is concerned, we observe that generally boroughs located in the north of the Thames are more affected than those located in the south. There is also an important horizontal line in dark red in the map of figure 2 showing a worrying level of Islamophobic acts. This line is located just north of the Thames from Newham to Hounslow boroughs (appendix 2) and refers to one of the major roads in London. According to Tell MAMA (2016), we know that anti-Muslim acts occur, in great

majority, in areas with good transport links and a high pedestrian activity.

In inner London, the main clusters are in the east but also in the west. The first cluster in the east consists the boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets, Hackney, and Islington (in dark red) where there are several mosques and Islamic centres. This area is affected because there are important Muslim populations and Islamic institutions that have been frequently targeted by Islamophobic acts. Tell MAMA (2016) has demonstrated that there is a direct relationship between the number of mosques in an area and the number of Islamophobic acts, unlike in the Parisian region where anti-Muslim acts mainly take place in public institutions. A second important cluster is observed in the west, in the wealthiest part of London that is to say the boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster which record an important level of anti-Muslim acts (respectively 45 and 62 acts). These acts generally occurred around major shopping and tourist areas, busy streets and areas with public transit access (Tell MAMA, 2016). These two clusters form a line that extends in the west to outer London, to the three boroughs of Brent, Ealing and Hounslow (Hounslow which represents the most affected borough with a total of 68 anti-Muslim acts). This 'line' (from Hounslow to Central London) crosses residential areas where Muslim populations live in majority, and reflect their probability to be attacked when they use public transports to go to Central London for example.

In the suburbs of London, there is a cluster located in the northeast, in the boroughs of Waltham Forest and Redbridge, where there are also mosques. A second line, a vertical one, can be observed from this cluster located in the northeast of the Greater London region to the borough of Croydon located in the South. Incidents in the South London are also important and notably in the boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham, and they concern areas that attract many individuals for commuting, work, leisure and shopping (Tell MAMA, 2016). With this analysis on different parts of



London, there is no significant relationship between the proportion of Muslim populations in an area and the likelihood of anti-Muslim acts (although, at the scale of the whole city, this relationship seems more relevant) (Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2010; Tell MAMA, 2016). As is the case with Paris, spaces of Islamophobia do not necessarily occur where Muslim populations live (in link with the data of the 2011 census of the Office for National Statistics, ONS).

### **Intersectionality of Islamophobia in Paris and London**

From the CCIF's data in 2015, we know that in the Greater Paris area, anti-Muslim acts primarily affect women and in particular veiled women. Women are 81% of the victims, among which at least 85% were veiled women (whether it is mostly a hijab (81%), or less commonly a jilbeb (8%), a turban (5%), a simple bandana (3%) or a niqab (3%)). At the scale of the French nation, physical assaults mostly affect women (82%) and veiled women (at least 80%). The place of the veiled women became a problem in France when her social integration became visible, that is to say when we started to see her at school, university, and in the labour market. In this context, the body and the outfit of women occupy a central place in policies of integration and in particular in the construction of citizenship and national identity (Scott, 2007; Fernando, 2009). In the UK, women are also the first victims: they represent, in 2015, 61% of the victims, among which 75% were visibly Muslim women, that is to say women wearing Islamic clothes, such as a hijab (77%), a niqab (13%) or an abaya (Tell MAMA, 2016). They are, just as in France, very affected by abusive behaviors (62%), and most of the time, perpetrators use misogynistic and sexualized language towards these women (*ibid.*). Therefore, Islamophobia is highly gendered since women are more targeted than men. Women are more affected because they are at the same time more visible targets (by wearing a

headscarf) and more fragile targets (when they are alone for example). Often in France, the UK, and in other non-Muslim countries, dominant public discourse often associates the wearing of the veil with negative representations of women's submission, gender inequality, lack of integration and modernity, and religious extremism (Guénif-Souilamas and Macé, 2004; Staeheli and Nagel, 2008; Hancock, 2009; Moors, 2009). Although these types of drifts exist in various parts of the world, it is necessary to hear the voice of these 'French' and 'British' veiled women and understand that, for the majority of them, this is an individual choice which is a matter of a personal spiritual journey and a desire to fully decide how to present their own body. Finally, it is complicated for Muslim women to be seen as complete women and feminists because they are systematically referred to as the embodiment of 'failed integration', especially in France, while on the contrary the Muslim woman who decides not to wear the veil is assimilated to a successful integration (Fernando, 2009; Listerborn, 2015). They are seen either as submissive to Muslim men or either as saved by non-Muslims. In any case, whether it is the male domination or the western paternalistic vision (Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988; Okin, 1999), the assumption is often that Muslim women (veiled or not) have no agency to make their own decisions and analyze themselves over time.

In France, students are often affected by anti-Muslim discriminations. In the Greater Paris, they represent 32% of the victims in 2015, among which 15% were more at school. High school students in France are in great majority under 18 years old, and the average age for the French students is 21.5 years old in 2011 (OVE, 2011), the youngest age compared to ten other European countries. Thus, Islamophobia seems to affect younger people (Ramberg, 2005) more than older people. Older people who practice the Islamic religion, likely to be foreigners or immigrants, are less subject to Islamophobia because their practices often refer to traditional customs of their country of

origin, unlike the youngest who can live in France and in the UK and experience a real religious revivalism (Cesari, 1998; Abbas, 2005; Poynting and Mason, 2007; Hamid, 2011; Simon et Tiberj, 2013;), sometimes in connection with their experiences of discriminations (Poynting and Mason, 2007; Phalet *et al.*, 2008). Finally, young Muslims, who have grown up in France and UK and who ask for access to the same rights as everyone, feel more excluded when they wear a sign of belonging to the Islamic religion. By choosing to wear a veil or a beard for example (or any other sign), they can be denied access to education and freedom symbolically offered to them, in comparison with their parents. And in response to this exclusion, some young Muslims (Liogier, 2012) react by creating new modes of ethical and political engagement (Jonker and Amiraux, 2006; Fernando, 2014; Finlay *et al.*, 2017).

As for the socio-occupational category of the victims, there is a high proportion of victims referring to the category 'other' in Paris. They are 34% and can correspond to either housewives or no-answers. Employees represent 18% of the victims, and unemployed people 6%. And there is only one victim referring to the category of 'executives and intellectual professionals'. For the British context, Tell MAMA (2016) does not show detailed information on the socio-occupational category of the victims, but it explains that 7% of anti-Muslim acts occur in the workplace. And victims who work in customer service are particularly vulnerable to anti-Muslim incidents. This question of social class is important because it describes the socio-economic profile of Muslim populations living in France and UK who experience discrimination. It is clear that these populations are rather precarious (in comparison with other countries such as the United States where they are more part of the upper-middle class and are rarely referred to the inhabitants of poor districts kept in the margins of the society (Marzouki, 2017)). Muslim populations in France and UK mostly describe populations in difficulty; but does this

have an impact on the extent of Islamophobia? Is it more or less strong according to the social status? The study of this correlation is not easy, but this difference could doubtless be observed (thanks to a more qualitative approach; hence the importance of a combination of the various methods) in France and UK with the example of veiled women and their occupation of rich or poor spaces in Paris and London. Due to their limited and restricted mobility, veiled women feel safer in familiar spaces (i.e. their own neighborhood) (Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2010; Zempi and Chakraboti, 2015). For example in Paris, Muslim women pass unnoticed in some luxurious areas, such as the famous Avenue of the Champs Elysées compared to other spaces because they are assumed to be wealthy people from Saudi Arabia or Dubai for example (Najib and Hopkins, 2018). Here, it can be noticed that the hijab of rich foreigners and the hijab of French Muslim citizens have varying impacts on discrimination: there is less hostility toward Muslim women perceived as upper-class international tourists than as working-class French Muslim women.

Finally, concerning the ethnic origin of the victims, the CCIF does not have any detailed data on this issue compared to Tell MAMA. In Paris, 89% of the victims are Muslim-born men and women, compared to 9% who declare themselves converted to Islam. Moreover, we know that French Muslim populations are largely a result of immigration from the Glorious Thirty Years<sup>6</sup> (Simon and Tiberj, 2013). These Muslim-born men and women are either foreigners or French citizens with a foreign background from countries located in North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa or Turkey. Thus, Muslim populations who are discriminated against according to their religious affiliation can also

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<sup>6</sup> This refers, in France, to the prosperous period from 1945 to 1975 (called in French '*Les Trente Glorieuses*').

be discriminated against because of their ethnic origin. In this sense, several CCIF reports explain that a certain number of Islamophobic acts and discourses refer to the foreign origin of the victims, and in particular to their Arabic background (CCIF, 2011, 2012, 2015). Therefore, we can assume that people with Arabic or North African origin are more affected than others. We were able to verify this by identifying the origin of the victims with their name. Even if this information does not necessarily correspond to the real ethnic origin of the individuals, we can nevertheless notice that 81% of the victims have an Arabic-sounding name, compared to 10% who have a French or European sounding name and 6% from Sub-Saharan Africa (the rest corresponding to files with no name or with names difficult to identify). For the British case, anti-Muslim acts are also accompanied by insults referring to the ethnic origin of the individuals. Indeed, 60% of the victims are South Asians. They represent the first victims, following by victims who are Arabs or North Africans (13%), Whites (12%), and Blacks (6%)<sup>7</sup> (Tell MAMA, 2016). The proportion of South Asians is much higher in the UK than it is in France, as well as the proportion of North Africans is much lower in the UK than it is in France. But what it is clear is the fact that Islamophobia focuses on and targets one of the most stigmatized minorities of each country, notably the minority who is related to the colonial past of each country. The racialization of Islamophobia therefore refers to existing relations with former colonial empires that are France and United Kingdom (Hancock,

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<sup>7</sup> Surprisingly, these percentages correspond to the percentages of the different Muslim populations in England and Wales in 2001 according to the Ceri Peach's article (2006). He specifies that there are 67.8% of South Asian Muslims, 11.6% of White Muslims, 6.9% of Black Muslims.

2009). This is also the case with white converts. Indeed, when a white woman with a French or British origin converts to Islam and decides to wear the veil, she is also assumed to be from a foreign background. She becomes racialized; the attackers can tell her to go back to her country while she is from France or the UK. In this sense, Ahmed (2000) explains that an individual become a stranger when we begin to recognize him or her as a stranger and when he or she begins to feel stranger. Thus, it is common for some converted women to feel foreign and to distance themselves from the majority population, especially after having decided to wear the veil.

Consequently, it is possible to portray the typical profile of the victim for both studied areas. The contexts of Paris and London present almost similar findings in terms of victims' characteristics. It is about women, and particularly veiled women with foreign backgrounds and low social class. They can be either students and young people or shoppers and customers. The intersectionality of Islamophobia describes a general domination already known in our contemporary societies related to sexism, racism, ageism and classism. The main victims refer to marginalised people because Muslim populations in France and UK usually refer to immigration, working class and poor areas (Vieillard-Baron, 2004; Laurence and Vaisse, 2007; Simon et Tiberj, 2013; Stephen and Khan, 2013; Ali, 2015). In addition, this typical profile of the victim mirrors the typical profile of the discriminator, as depicted in the report on anti-Muslim hate crimes in the UK (Copsey et al., 2013) – a British white man between 25 to 59 years old. This finding is exactly the same as found in the Tell MAMA's report (2016), with exception of some teenagers between 13 to 18 years old who are also very active. That said, for the French case, the CCIF in its report of 2010 explained that perpetrators are generally more than 25 years of age and half the time a woman (CCIF, 2011); which is also what the data of 2015 show for Paris. As far as the information is available, there are as much women

(42%) as men (42%) in Paris in 2015. Finally, with this question of the typical profile of the perpetrator, Islamophobia works as a male domination (because we can see men attacking women, and very often women in situations of fragility, that is to say when they are alone or accompanied by their young children (CCIF, 2014, Listerborn, 2015); or conversely as a feminist double standard (because we can see women attacking other women in the name of women's emancipation).

### **Conclusion: two different Islamophobias?**

This comparative analysis of Islamophobia in Paris and London is relevant because it reveals the specificities of each country despite their shared European context. The two cities highlight more differences than similarities, in connection with their own political, social, urban and racial context. These are summarised in the table below:

	<b>France, Paris</b>	<b>UK, London</b>	<b>Comparison</b>
Spaces	Mostly in the Parisian centre than in the suburbs	Areas with important transport axes and a high public transit access	≠
Places	Public institutions	Public transport and public areas	≠
Urban model	Centre-periphery model	Along the major roads. Everyday places	≠
Geographical tensions	Not necessarily where Muslim populations live: Opposition between spaces (well considered <i>versus</i> ZUS).	Not necessarily where Muslim populations live: The phenomenon is more diffuse.	= <b>and</b> ≠

	Not around mosques and Muslim institutions	Rather around mosques and Muslim institutions.	
Perpetrators	Men and women	Mostly men	≠
Victims	Veiled women, with an Arabic background	Veiled women, with a South Asian background	= <b>and</b> ≠
State model	Republican equality	Multicultural model	≠
Functioning	From the State: Impact of the 2004 law (headscarf ban)	From individuals: Contact with different communities	≠
Consequences	Muslims are worried about their mobility and French policy.	Muslims are worried about their mobility and daily lives	= <b>and</b> ≠

Table 1. Two different Islamophobia in France (Paris) and UK (London)

The table above simplifies the general findings and does not seek to impose a single vision of the phenomenon of Islamophobia that exists in France and in the UK. This table must be read as a summary of the two contexts and as a tool to see the similarities and differences between the two contexts. First, we know that in Paris, the spatial patterning of anti-Muslim acts describes a centre-periphery urban model, unlike in London where the phenomenon seems spatially more diffuse and more focused along transport axes. Thus, the urban models are different from one country to another. We also know that anti-Muslim acts are numerous around mosques and Muslim institutions in London, unlike in Paris where we do not observe a relationship between the number of mosques in an area and the number of Islamophobic acts. In the Greater Paris region, less than 2% of Islamophobic acts happen in Muslim institutions. However, in both contexts, anti-Muslim acts are not necessarily significant in districts where Muslim populations are



present (even if we have noticed some focal points). Indeed, the scale of the district of residence is known to be a place that foster encounters and exchanges (Ahmed, 2000; Hopkins, 2014). These zones of contact probably prevent the multiplication of anti-Muslim acts. Therefore, we can observe a disjuncture between the political elite and the media that usually portray Islam and its followers in a negative way; and the people on the ground who know, often very well, the Muslim populations, that is to say who have grown up with them, studied with them, worked with them, and interacted on a daily basis with them. The French republican model bases its principles precisely on this social mix. This is probably why we observe in France less anti-Muslim acts in public areas, unlike the United Kingdom whose multicultural model promotes diversity in multiple forms and does not necessarily favor the intermingling of different communities. Finally, the zones of contact, in the British context, may be subject to more violence when the different communities meet; hence the observation of a higher rate of Islamophobic acts and a more general zone of contact which refers to spaces with a high pedestrian presence such as public areas and transport hubs. In this sense, these two models present at the same time advantages and disadvantages; first the British model recognizes and respects the plurality of ethnic-religious identities as well as the proud manifestation and visibility of their practices in the public space (unlike the French case which denies such differences); the French model promotes the mixing and the sharing between the various populations. In France, the impact of the 2004 law banning the headscarf in public schools is also strong and leads to see more victims among students and in public institutions. Therefore, Islamophobia in France seems to be more institutionalized (as Simon (2006) has observed, but for all other forms of discrimination), unlike in the UK where it seems to come more from the individuals themselves. Indeed, in the UK the victims are rather shoppers and customers, and Islamophobia occurs in the spaces of everyday life. Also,

the victims are more likely to be of South Asian ethnic background in the UK and from a North-African background in France. In the UK, they are mostly men, unlike in France where they are as many men as women. Some specific French feminists tend to resist the veil, and argue that a veiled woman cannot be a feminist (Scott, 2007; Fernando, 2009). They usually agree with the headscarf ban, while in the UK, it seems rather a matter of male domination and control in public spaces.

Although there are a lot of differences, there are some similarities: spaces of Islamophobia do not necessarily occur where Muslim populations live; the first victims are veiled and racially minoritised women; and Muslims in both countries are worried about their spatial mobility. This issue of mobility raises many important questions related to the spatial and behavioural practices and strategies developed and adopted by the main victims (Najib and Hopkins, 2018). Indeed, as previously demonstrated, geographical tensions describe important oppositions and contradictions, but they can also highlight new specific mobility and behaviours of veiled women. For instance, it is already known that veiled women (Perry, 2013; CCIF, 2014; Listerborn, 2015) usually avoid visiting certain areas particularly in privileged, shopping and central districts at certain times (CCIF, 2011; OSF, 2011; Hancock, 2013; Tell MAMA, 2016). Knowing that experiences of oppression restrict mobility (Rose, 1993), we can understand that these women avoid the spaces where they have already experienced a situation of discrimination, and they eventually develop new spatial strategies such as major detours or the use of specific means of transport (Listerborn, 2015). Thus, we can question if there are no-go areas for these women, as Tell MAMA (2016) suggests as well as if a geography of Islamophobia corresponds or contrasts with geographies of segregation and exclusion (Najib, in press). Hierarchies of feelings can compete and drive the discriminated individual to feel more connected to one area rather than another, and especially to their

neighborhood or their city rather than their country (Koefoed and Simonsen, 2010; Lorcerie and Geisser, 2011; Millington, 2011).

Finally, the findings stemming from these large scale comparative data allow us to better understand each context of study and the relationships between places, identities, social hierarchies and racialized histories of both countries. When comparing France and the UK by taking into account the political, social, historical, spatial and national context of each country, we can better target the problem, make stronger claims and develop adequate actions to reduce Islamophobia. For example, the data show that the majority of anti-Muslim acts are discriminations and happen in public institutions in France. The French policy, notably the 2004 law could be said to foster such specific institutionalized discriminations. Training could be provided to service public employees in order to better understand that this law does not concern the users of public services. As for the UK, Islamophobic acts are mainly verbal abuses and occur mostly on public transport. The local transport companies could promote hate crime policies by displaying for example posters or CCTV dissuading such abusive acts. A geographical view on the study of Islamophobia enables us to demonstrate that space makes visible important differences, associations, contradictions, attractions and repulsions in relation to anti-Muslim acts (Clayton, 2009; Hancock, 2015).

Ultimately, these discriminations send a very clear message; the people concerned are not tolerated, they are seen to dress badly, and they should not be here. Anti-Muslim discrimination only serves to marginalize Muslim populations and has the effect of reaffirming their unacceptable difference (Scott, 2007). Thus, it is important to understand what it means to be a Muslim in France and the United Kingdom and what place is granted to Muslim populations in these two important European countries; we need to understand why this minority is perceived as a threat to urban order and to

European culture (Law et al., 2004; Hancock, 2009; Moors, 2009; Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2010 ; Liogier, 2012; Listerborn, 2015) if we are to eliminate Islamophobia.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Appendix 2

