

## Muslim Teachers' Experiences with Race and Racism in Quebec Secondary Schools

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### Abstract

This qualitative study examines the experiences and attitudes of three Muslim teachers working in Quebec secondary schools in the post-9/11 context. Interviews with these teachers were analyzed in light of recent nationalist debates, which have positioned Muslims as eroding traditional Quebecois values and culture. This study aimed to explore these teachers' experiences of racism/prejudice towards Muslims and Islam, while working in Quebec English public secondary schools. While other studies have examined the experiences of Muslim and other racialized youths' experiences with racism in secondary schools, this study uniquely examines the experiences of Muslim teachers who work in these institutions. The findings of this study indicate that teachers' experiences with anti-Muslim sentiment appear to be connected to wider discourses surrounding both the War on Terror in the North American context as well as to domestic Quebec state policies and nationalist debates. This inquiry is relevant as it contributes to a greater understanding of Muslim teacher experiences of race and racism and suggests a potential connection between these teachers' experiences and other research highlighting Muslims' post-9/11 experiences. This article may be of interest to researchers, teachers, and teacher educators interested in stimulating dialogue and debate surrounding critical and anti-racist education.

## Introduction

This qualitative inquiry examines three Muslim teachers' perceptions and experiences of race and racism in their Quebec secondary schools after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. A number of previous studies have explored racism through the experiences of Muslim and other racialized youth attending secondary schools in the Canadian and North American contexts (CDPDJ, 2011; Sensoy & Stonebanks, 2009; Zine, 2001, 2006). None of these studies, however, looked specifically at Muslim teachers' experiences in Quebec schools. This study contributes to the discussion of discrimination experienced by Quebec Muslims within educational contexts by examining experiences of racism in Quebec secondary schools from the perspectives of Muslims working within these institutions. Furthermore, the issues raised in this study are particularly urgent in light of growing biases and negative views towards Muslims and Islam in Quebec and Canada (Angus Reid, 2013). Examples of anti-Muslim discrimination include the desecrations of mosques and the harassment of Muslims in the aftermath of the Parliament Hill shootings in Ottawa, Ontario, and the hit and run attack in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec (CBC News, 2014).

This study is guided by two primary questions: (1) How did Muslim secondary teachers in Quebec feel they were perceived in their schools? and (2) If the teachers perceived that anti-Muslim racism existed in their Quebec secondary schools, what were its causes and how did it manifest?

### Quebec context: Perceptions of Muslims post-9/11

The 9/11 terrorist attacks and the ensuing War on Terror have fundamentally altered the lives of Muslims in Muslim majority countries, as well as in European and North American nations (Razack, 2008; Salaita, 2006; Sheehi, 2011; Thobani, 2007). In the decade since 9/11, there has been a significant increase in distrust and prejudice towards Muslims in Canada (CAIR-CAN, 2008). Recent polls indicate that 69% of Quebecois(es) have biases towards Islam, while 54% of Canadians, as a whole, have a negative opinion of the faith (Angus Reid, 2013).

In the Quebec context, identity politics combined with secularist discourses have framed Muslims as a threatening 'Other' outside the 'nationalist space' (Bilge, 2013; Leroux, 2010; Wong, 2011). The nationalist space refers to an imagined space or community over which nationalist subjects (i.e., members from the majoritarian culture) believe themselves entitled to manage and define who does and does not belong (Hage, 2000). Building from the works of Anderson (2006), imagined spaces and communities are socially constructed by nationalist subjects who exclusively perceive themselves as members of a said community. By invoking 'imagined', we recognize that despite a seeming unity, people will never have face-to-face interactions with the vast majority of members of a community. Discourses surrounding the imagined Quebecois nationalist space most recently emerged in the Reasonable Accommodation debates, which took place between 2006 and 2008 and are further manifested in the 2013 proposed Quebec Charter of Values, tabled by the Parti Quebecois government. The Reasonable Accommodation debates involved a string of highly publicized debates in Quebec society centred on the limits to which religious communities should be accommodated in light of perceptions that traditional Quebecois culture was being threatened by immigrant communities (Mahrouse, 2010). In 2007, at the request of the Quebec Premier, the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec appointed the Bouchard-Taylor Commission with a mandate to examine the issue of Reasonable Accommodation in Quebec. The commission's final report was published in April 2008. The 300-page report concluded that the collective wellbeing of Quebec society was not in danger from immigrant communities and public claims that Quebecois identity was being threatened were unsubstantiated (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008). While perhaps unsubstantiated, the unrest that erupted over Reasonable Accommodation was indicative of nationalist subjects' paranoia relating to preserving cultural dominance.

As several studies have shown, fears over the erosion of Quebec's traditional values and attempts to preserve cultural dominance persist (Bilge, 2013; Mahrouse, 2010; Mookerjee, 2009; Zine, 2009). These fears were apparent in the proposed Quebec Charter of Values, which took place in 2013. The Quebec Charter of Values was a Charter of state secularism and religious neutrality (Rawls & Freeman, 2007). The Charter proposed that state employees or employees of state-funded institutions not be permitted to wear

“conspicuous religious symbols” (ANQ, 2013). In the aftermath of the proposed Charter, there have been a number of occurrences of anti-immigrant harassment. Many of these incidents have involved Muslim women, as anti-Muslim rhetoric has filled media and political discourses and hate crimes against Muslim women have increased (Garber, 2014).

In Quebec, prevailing post-9/11 anxieties have manifested through discourses accusing Muslims of precipitating the cultural erosion of traditional Quebecois culture and identity; this narrative pervaded the Reasonable Accommodation debates, as well as the more recent discussions over the proposed Charter of Values. Additionally, there have been a number of incidents involving vandalized mosques and violence against Muslims (CBC, 2013, 2009). Muslims’ experiences of prejudice and racism in Quebec can be better situated through examining some of the literature that has theorized anti-Muslim racism in Western societies.

### Theorizing Anti-Muslim Racism

Anti-Muslim racism has been examined by a number of scholars from various theoretical traditions in North American, Canadian, and Quebec contexts (Bilge, 2013; Kumar, 2012; Razack, 2008; Salaita, 2006; Stonebanks, 2010; Thobani, 2027), which detail the social construction of the Muslim ‘Other’. ‘Otherness’ is “the condition or quality of being different or ‘other’, particularly if the differences in question are [deemed] strange, bizarre, or exotic” (Miller, 2008, p. 587). Often the concept of ‘Other’ is represented as a diametrically opposed ‘self’. Hence, designating a group or individuals as ‘Other’ not only defines that group or individuals, but also defines the ‘self’ as its antithesis. One such example can be seen in the ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis, which has positioned Eastern—particularly Muslim—cultures as diametrically opposed to Western cultures. ‘Other’, as I will be using the term, is a conception designated by a hegemonic subject, which mystifies and fetishizes an object (Said, 1979). In other words, ‘Othering’ involves an obscuring and demonization of the ‘Other’.

The ‘Othering’ of Muslims in the Western imagination has been inextricably linked to the War on Terror. As Razack (2008) observes,

three allegorical figures have come to dominate the social landscape of the ‘war on terror’ and its ideological underpinning of a clash of civilizations: *the dangerous Muslim man, the imperiled Muslim woman, and the civilized European*. (p. 5, emphasis added)

The ‘dangerous Muslim man’ is rage-filled and inflicts violence through terrorism and abuse towards women. The ‘imperiled Muslim woman’ is the figure of the oppressed Muslim woman in need of rescue from her backwards culture and religion. The ‘civilized European’ represents the antithesis of the archaic Muslim. His/her interventions in Muslim majority nations are legitimized and sanitized through the need to quell the violence of the former and liberate the latter. These clichéd oversimplifications, or archetypes, characterize representations of Muslims perpetuated through educational materials in a number of Quebec secondary schools.

McAndrew, Oueslati, & Helly (2007) looked at textbooks used in French secondary schools across Quebec throughout the 2003-2004 school year to examine how these texts represented Islam and Muslim people. They examined 117 excerpts from 21 French textbooks to see how they presented Islamic culture in Quebec and Canada, as well as abroad. Their findings were similar to those of other studies conducted elsewhere in Canada as well as in the US, which found that textbook representations of Muslims reinforced notions of ‘Otherness’ (Ali, 2013; Sensoy, 2009). Their study revealed that despite some improvements in the ways Muslims and Islam have been represented in textbooks since the 1980s, “ethnocentric and stereotypical presentations, as well as factual errors, still abound” (McAndrew, Oueslati, & Helly, 2007, p. 173). In particular, they found that there were biases in the representation of “historical events that largely legitimizes Western actions”; “a strong tendency towards homogenizing and essentializing Muslim cultures”; and “a near total absence of Muslims as Quebec and Canadian citizens” (p. 173). Thus, while the archetype of the ‘civilizing European’ was perpetuated through these textbooks, the exclusion of Muslims

from the Quebec and Canadian imagination depicted in these texts supported the image of the imagined Quebecois nationalist space, in which the Muslim ‘Other’ does not belong.

Another process that has facilitated the ‘Othering’ of Muslims is the dichotomization of Muslims into ‘good Muslims’ and ‘bad Muslims’. According to Mamdani (2004), ‘good Muslims’ are “modern, secular, and Westernized” and ‘bad Muslims’ are “doctrinal, antimodern, and virulent” (p. 24). Good Muslim/bad Muslim discourses advocate that “good Muslims can be assisted into modernity, bad Muslims, figured as ‘anti-modern’ and as having ‘a profound ability to be destructive’, require incarceration and military action” (Razack, 2008, p. 49). The operationalization of this binary in media and political discourses has been the subject of many studies (Bilge, 2009, 2012, 2013; Razack, 2010; Thobani, 2007), which argue that Muslims have been perceived and presented as fomenting the deterioration of Canadian and Quebecois culture. Zine (2009) examined events in Ontario and Quebec that received widespread national attention and media coverage. Zine described how these events put the Canadian Muslim community in the spotlight and constructed them as ‘Other’, specifically in the debate around the anti-immigration Code of Conduct produced by the Quebec municipality of Hérouxville. These measures were aimed at preserving ‘true Quebecois’ values and culture by delineating norms that immigrants must adhere to when immigrating to the municipality. The prohibitions in the Code reinforced a number of tropes surrounding violence experienced by ‘imperiled Muslim women’ and enacted by ‘dangerous Muslim men’. Most notable among the practices that were banned were the stoning of women, the burning of women with acid, and female genital mutilation (Mahrouse, 2010). Hence, this study demonstrated how, in some Quebec municipalities, there were fears that Muslims immigrating to Quebec were ‘bad Muslims’, thus warranting preclusion from the nationalist space.

Grounding my analysis of anti-Muslim racism through the archetypes of ‘dangerous Muslim men’, ‘imperiled Muslim women’, and ‘civilizing Europeans’, in conjunction with good Muslim/bad Muslim political and media discourses, help provide a context for comments discussed by the respondents. I turn now to elaborate on the methodological processes utilized in this study.

### Methodology

This study is a qualitative inquiry drawing from interpretive research approaches in the field of teaching and education (Erickson, 1986). Through this inquiry, I seek to understand and produce meaning from the experiences of three Muslim teachers working in Quebec secondary schools in the post-9/11 context. This was accomplished by having them narrate their daily interactions as teachers in light of growing fears and tensions relating to Muslims within broader Quebec society. Participants for this study teachers were chosen who taught in various schools from the Greater Montreal Region. While I examine a small portion of the interview data for the purposes of this inquiry, these data are part of a larger study examining the experiences of eighteen former and current Muslim students and Muslim and non-Muslim teachers in Quebec secondary schools in the post-9/11 context.

I conducted one to two semi-structured interviews with each of the three teachers, typically 45 to 60 minutes in length over a span of six months, from May 2013 to October 2013. Interviews typically took place in the teachers’ classroom or another convenient location. My questions, while wide-ranging, focused on two key areas: (1) the teachers’ beliefs about how Muslims were perceived in society; and (2) if the teachers had encountered racism or prejudice within their educational contexts. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

I employed inductive analysis for coding data (Thomas, 2006) with the intent of constructing my understanding of respondents’ experiences of racism and prejudice in schools. This involved detailed readings of the data to derive concepts and themes. Hence, the interviews were coded after listening to the audio-recordings and reading each transcript multiple times. Close readings of the transcripts helped me identify meaningful units, which enabled me to derive categories and emergent themes from the text. In total I came up with four major relevant themes that re-occurred in the data. The category labels for these themes were: (1) experiences with racism in society; (2) experiences with racism in schools; (3) experiences relating to 9/11; and (4) experiences/perceptions relating to media representations of Muslims. Identification of these themes, through colour coding, facilitated data reduction and analysis. As there was not a large number of participants in this inquiry, I reduced and collapsed the codes manually using the

physical transcripts. Through continual revision and refinement of the category system, I selected “appropriate quotations that convey[ed] the core theme or essence of a category” (Thomas, 2006, p. 242) for this inquiry.

My subjectivities were inevitably entangled in my interpretations, as I have personally experienced and observed instances of anti-Muslim racism within Quebec secondary schools. While engaging in this inquiry, I viewed participants as the subjects and not the objects of the study. I have attempted to achieve this end through engaging in a self-reflexive process. Reflexivity can be understood as a “process of self-examination that is informed primarily by the thoughts and actions of the researcher” (Russell & Kelly, 2002). I engaged in a self-reflexive process through self-reflective records and diaries; examined my personal assumptions and goals; and attempted to clarify some of my individual belief systems and subjectivities (Ahern, 1999). This was particularly important as I am a Muslim man working in the Quebec educational system. Through engaging in a self-reflexive process, I wanted to avoid overstating respondents’ comments, as well as avoid an over-deterministic analysis.

### *Muslim teachers’ experiences with racism*

Hamza, Ibrahim, and Alia are Muslim teachers in Quebec (all names are pseudonyms). Hamza had been teaching social studies for eight years at the time of the interview and identified himself as a practicing Muslim man. Ibrahim was in his third year of teaching secondary school at the time of his interview. Ibrahim taught mathematics and technology at his school, and, like Hamza, identified himself as an observant Muslim. Alia had worked in the secondary school system for seven years and was planning on returning to teaching upon completing her maternity leave, resuming her position as a science teacher. Throughout Alia’s experiences as a secondary school teacher she wore the *hijab*, a scarf, which covers a woman’s head, hair, and ears but leaves the face exposed; thus she was visibly identifiable as a Muslim. All excerpts discussed below relate to the theme of experiences and perceptions with racism in schools.

### *Ibrahim*

Ibrahim described his experience with prejudice directed at him from his students because of his faith:

the event that happened last year, with one of the kids taking a picture of me and posting it on his Facebook page and putting a picture of an airport, the map of an airport, right next to it as if I was planning to blow it up. That was totally racist and judgmental. He took a picture of me teaching in class and he said “terrorist Math teacher?” was the comment that he put there. So that was something very racist that happened. Other than that, in the same class, one of the students who was later expelled from the school because of bullying, he used to make planes in the class and throw the planes and he would say, “sir are you going to destroy that plane” something like that. And I would say, no I won’t, I don’t believe in that but still he kept on bullying me. But they [other students] were quite impressed they were really surprised how I didn’t used to get mad at them and just laughed off their stupidities. They were expecting me to get completely angry, but I told them what you are perceiving is completely false.

Ibrahim described here how students drew on ‘Othering’ discourses to position Ibrahim as violent and susceptible to terrorism by virtue of his faith. Similarly, another student indirectly associated terrorism with Ibrahim by implying he wanted to blow up planes, which occurred on 9/11. Both these incidents described by Ibrahim involved students reinforcing the notion of ‘Otherness’ with Ibrahim by associating him with the ‘dangerous Muslim man’ archetype (Razack, 2008).

Ibrahim was also falsely dichotomized as a ‘bad Muslim’. His comments suggested that his students did not openly hurl taunts and engage in racist acts towards him, yet they still made assumptions about him. Those assumptions entailed a predisposition to anger. Ibrahim mentioned that he felt his students were expecting him to “get completely angry” when disciplining abusive students. When discussing these incidents in more detail with Ibrahim he stated “they [i.e., his students] were all on board” with regards to the assumptions they had of Ibrahim, which cast him as a ‘dangerous Muslim man’. Ibrahim’s experiences were indicative of how his Muslim identity was linked to emotions of anger, commonly employed in societal and popular

cultural representations of Muslims (Salaita, 2006; Shaheen, 2001, 2008). As such, Ibrahim's accounts described a range of student responses to his perceived 'Otherness'. Some students expressed their perceptions of Ibrahim explicitly through ridiculing him on the Internet and associating him with terrorism and the 'dangerous Muslim man' archetype, while other students engaged in micro-aggressions with Ibrahim. Micro-aggressions can be understood as regular exchanges between people that send racist or condescending messages to individuals because of their ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural affiliations (Paludi, 2012). In another instance, Ibrahim described how two female students claimed that Ibrahim unfairly sided with male students over them in a class dispute. Ibrahim stated how these girls openly claimed he was being "sexist". Ibrahim believed that these claims of sexism were rooted in the perception that Muslim men are misogynistic and unfair to women. Hence, these micro-aggressions assumed Ibrahim was a 'bad Muslim' pre-disposed to anger and oppression towards women.

### *Alia*

Alia described similar experiences with racism by students. However, Alia also experienced discriminatory behaviour from other members of her secondary school community:

At another school there was a teacher that was basically bullying me. She would bring up things like, oh, your religion allows men to beat other women. She would bring up these random things, and I'd be like, are you kidding me. And finally one day she basically—I was sitting at my desk and she was standing over me pointing her finger in my face and yelling at me things like, if you claim Muslims are so misunderstood why aren't Imams going on national television speaking up for your religion. And I remember thinking, obviously when you're being verbally attacked your brain turns off, after I remember thinking, what TV do you watch? There's people on the TV all the time and she was trying to allude to the fact that she felt you people need to change yourselves when you come to Canada.

The incident Alia described took place in 2006 while the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan were ongoing. The racism she experienced involved the archetype of 'imperiled Muslim women' and 'dangerous Muslim men' (Razack, 2008), as her colleague claimed Alia's faith permitted Muslim men to beat women. Perceptions of Muslim women being oppressed similarly circulated throughout the Reasonable Accommodation debates in Quebec society around the same time. As Mahrouse (2010) observes, with regards to the Reasonable Accommodation debates, the report was primarily concerned with Muslim religious practice, notably "the wearing of the veil, which suggests that the oppression of Muslim women has come to be perceived as the greatest threat to Québec identity" (p. 92). Alia related her ongoing attempts to explain to this colleague how Muslims were misunderstood and misrepresented in the media. However, these attempts fell on deaf ears, and her colleague continued to harass her while she worked at that particular school. Alia felt her colleague was implying that she did not fit into Canadian society, as she stated, "you people need to change yourselves when you come to Canada". Her statements were troubling for Alia, as she was born and raised in Canada.

Alia's beliefs and appearance signaled a type of 'Otherness' to this colleague, which expelled her from inclusion as a member of the nation. Alia mentioned how this particular colleague of hers had friends from other ethnic groups, such as an East Asian friend. However, Alia believed that her difference was deemed unacceptable to tolerate as her 'Otherness' was irreconcilable with this colleague's conceptions of what constituted the Canadian nation. Alia needed to "change herself", because she was not welcome in what this colleague believed to be *her* country and society.

### *Hamza*

In my interview with Hamza, Hamza did not describe having personally experienced racism. However, he explained that some students at his school faced challenges negotiating their Muslim identities:

One story that comes to mind, was once there were two Muslims in our school and one of them asked the other if he was Muslim because he wasn't sure. But the other one was with a bunch of friends and he kind of denied it and said, no I'm not and later when we saw the two of them

together, one of the students asked the other, well you said you weren't Muslim before. And he kind of mentioned that sometimes when he's around his non-Muslim friends he didn't want to admit that, or he felt that whatever shame or embarrassment and wasn't up for admitting that he was Muslim in front of his non-Muslim friends. And the other Muslim student was kind of confused by that.

Hamza described how one Muslim student felt conflicted about his Muslim identity when he was around his non-Muslim friends. Because of a perceived judgement, he denied being a Muslim when he associated with these friends. Later in the interview, Hamza described how this student mentioned that being identified as a Muslim could cause him social marginalization and ridicule. This is similar to findings by Abo-Zena, Sahli, & Tobias-Nahi (2009) who suggest that Muslim students may engage in such behaviour "in order to minimize the apparent differences between themselves and their non-Muslim peers. Muslim youth may feel pressured to keep secret, deny or even abandon their Muslim faith in an attempt to blend in" (p. 9). Hamza went on to mention another incident where a female Muslim student came to him after being verbally and physically harassed by a non-Muslim student in the school where Hamza worked, and the girl had her *hijab* pulled off. Typically, within a secondary school setting, the action of pulling off a woman's *hijab* is not an isolated incident, and it is usually preceded by less abrasive forms of abuse over an extended period of time (Liese, 2009). Hamza discussed how wearing the *hijab* in the secondary school posed a major challenge for Muslim women who may have been inclined to do so. Some female Muslim students would come to school wearing the *hijab*, at some point later in the year, stopped wearing it. Hamza associated these events with the social pressures and anxieties that arose from wearing the *hijab* as a signifier of 'Other' within society and the secondary school. This was apparent as he mentioned how the *hijab* makes a Muslim student "very, very visible", which resulted in becoming an "automatic target". Not wearing the *hijab* or choosing to stop wearing the *hijab* could possibly prevent the categorization of 'Other'. It would appear that some of the female Muslim students at the school understood the *hijab* as an Islamic symbol in the eyes of the public, which signified sympathies or affiliations with 'bad Muslims' (Mamdani, 2004). In order to avoid social marginalization or stigmatization at the school, many girls stopped wearing it.

#### *The Muslim 'Other': Emergent themes*

All respondents discussed how anti-Muslim racism existed in various spaces within the secondary schools they worked in and were influenced by societal perceptions of Muslims. Ibrahim experienced racism from his students in his classroom and Alia from a colleague, while Hamza described how Muslim students encountered identity issues relating to how their faith was perceived. Hamza also discussed how Muslim women faced challenges relating to their 'Islamic' appearance and how it may have been perceived by non-Muslims. Much of what was described by the respondents related to dominant frames surrounding Muslims in media and political discourses stemming from the War on Terror (Kumar, 2012; Razack, 2008; Sheehi, 2011), which is indicative of the ongoing impact of the War on Terror in the daily lives of these respondents.

Ibrahim described how he was 'Othered' by being categorized as a 'dangerous Muslim man' by his students, while Alia was confronted with the archetypal depiction of the 'imperiled Muslim woman' by one of her colleagues. This same colleague hurled abuses at Alia for her perceived 'Otherness', precluding her from the nationalist space. Other reductionist stereotypes, such as those of 'good Muslims' and 'bad Muslims' shed light on Hamza's experiences. A number of female Muslim students who attended his school stopped wearing the *hijab*, while another student had her *hijab* pulled off. Hence, the *hijab* signaled 'Otherness', which was disavowed within the school culture as having affiliations with 'bad Muslims'. Hamza's comments also suggested that female and male Muslim students made attempts to obscure their religious identity in his secondary school by removing the *hijab* as well as by hiding their 'Muslimness' in front of non-Muslim students, respectively.

The comments by respondents bore resonance with the exclusionary perceptions and discourses surrounding the proposed Charter of Values and public debates on Reasonable Accommodation. It is my contention that the anti-Muslim racism experienced by respondents was emblematic of state policies and media, and political discourses in Quebec informed by a meta-narrative characterized as anti-Muslim

racism manufactured by the War on Terror. Through the Reasonable Accommodation debates and discussions over the Quebec Charter of Values, perceptions of Muslim ‘Otherness’ were prevalent in political and media discourses. The type of ‘Othering’ that occurred employed archetypal depictions, and dominant frames prevalent in the context of the War on Terror. Hence, anti-Muslim racism experienced by respondents was inextricably connected to the War on Terror and was further impacted in Quebec by state policies and nationalist debates.

### Conclusion

Anti-Muslim racism in the context of the War on Terror has had far-reaching implications for Muslims in North America, Europe, and Muslim majority nations. This inquiry examined the lived experiences of three Muslim Quebec secondary school teachers in the post-9/11 context. The experiences of these teachers indicate that anti-Muslim racism has been experienced by both teachers and Muslim students. The type of racism experienced and observed by teachers revolved around archetypal depictions and tropes relating to misogyny, oppression, and violence present in media and political discourses, which simultaneously existed within the Quebec nationalist imagination. While one can situate these teachers’ experiences within the broader context of the post-9/11 and War on Terror era, quite importantly, their experiences resonated particularly with racism and discrimination prevalent in Quebec’s current political and media discourses. Synthesizing the global meta-narrative of anti-Muslim racism within the local context of these participants provided a more nuanced and salient understanding of their experiences. This study’s findings suggest a need to further explore the issue of anti-Muslim racism in Quebec secondary schools. Such an examination could involve Muslim teacher and student experiences in public/private and English/French educational settings in Quebec. Furthermore, the possible existence of systemic racism in Quebec secondary schools highlighted in this study suggests a need to study the potentials and limitations of the Quebec educational curriculum in challenging anti-Muslim racism, as well as possible ramifications for challenging stereotypes at both the pre and in-service levels of teacher-education.

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