The Evolving Muslim Community in America:

The Impact of 9/11

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Mosaica - Research Center for Religion, State and Society

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Editor: Dr. Aviad Hacohen

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Executive Summary

This study examines the impact of 9/11 on the American Muslim community, with a particular focus on issues of concern for the Jewish community. The study is divided into three parts: (1) A review of the history, demographics and community life of Muslims in America prior to September 11, 2001; (2) an examination of Muslim responses to 9/11 over the first year; and (3) an analysis of three issues that demonstrate how 9/11 has shaped Muslim community priorities and perspectives.

The major findings of this study are as follows:

A community diverse in ethnic and religious orientations, with old roots but a young public presence. Although Muslims trace their historical encounter with America back centuries, the American Muslim community began to coalesce in the 1960s. American Muslims hail from over 60 countries, creating a uniquely diverse Muslim population. As most Muslims are first generation immigrants, ethnic identification remains strong. The three largest ethnic groups are South Asians, Arabs, and African Americans, with occasional tension between the immigrants and African-Americans. Muslim activists entered American politics only in the last fifteen years, by forming organizations that focused primarily on international issues. The up-and-coming second generation of Muslims identify more strongly with American civil values

and are more comfortable balancing their Muslim and American identities.

Impact of 9/11: Political awakening in the domestic arena. The most significant change in Muslim public opinion following 9/11 was the end of the debate over Muslim participation in American domestic politics. Consensus now supports Muslim political activism *on the domestic level* to promote American Muslim interests. As a corollary, Muslim organizations have understood the dangers of isolationism and have begun to seek allies for their political and social agendas.

Who speaks for the Muslims? The rise of young progressive Muslims and public intellectuals. When Muslim organizations vacillated in their condemnations of Islamic terrorism, alternate voices stepped forward with a clear mandate of rejecting religious violence and advocating peace and diplomacy to solve conflicts. Second-generation Muslim professionals and young Muslim academics are promoting a progressive and distinctly American kind of Islam, founded on principles of democracy and religious pluralism.

First public declarations by mainstream Muslim organizations against Palestinian suicide bombing. As a consequence of the suicide attacks of 9/11 and of American public pressure, a number of Muslim organizations issued their first public statements condemning Palestinian suicide bombing against civilians. American Muslim support for Palestinian rights remains unquestionable, and their rejection of violence against noncombatants has not made Israeli policies any more sympathetic. Most Muslims reject Zionism as an ideology but accept Israel's reality, and advocate a negotiated settlement to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

Despite the headlines of continuous Jewish-Muslim conflict, these trends leave room for a cautious optimism

regarding the future of Jewish-Muslim relations in America. The crisis following 9/11 has created a window of opportunity: not only are Muslim organizations seeking alliances to promote their interests, but progressive young Muslims are advocating serious engagement with other communities. It is in the Jewish community's interest to seek out those American Muslims who espouse religious pluralism and pragmatism and to expand the process of building connections with diverse members of the American Muslim community.

Introduction

The September 11, 2001, attacks and their aftermath continue to shape the lens through which America considers Islam and American Muslims see themselves.* American Muslims regard themselves as doubly affected by 9/11: some of them were among the victims and yet they were also sometimes accused of being the perpetrators. The American response to 9/11 has led to increased hate crimes against Muslims, continuing discrimination and expanding restrictions on civil liberties and more restrictive immigration laws. But 9/11 has also galvanized the Muslim community to study and defend their civil rights and to positively engage the broader American public.

This study examines the impact of 9/11 on the American Muslim community, with a particular focus on issues of concern for the Jewish community. Like other Americans,

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* This paper is the fruit of research that began with a summer research fellowship from Mosaica - Research Center for Religion, State and Society and included numerous interviews with professionals and academics in the American Jewish and Muslim communities. A preliminary version of the paper was presented at the Mosaica-sponsored conference, "Dialogue or Clash? September 11, 2001: The Year Later." I am grateful to Mosaica's Chairman, Aviad Hacohen, for his continuing support and interest in this project. I am also indebted to Jessica Lieberman, Shari Lowin and Munir Shaikh for their constructive criticism and feedback, as well as to the anonymous readers. All errors are, of course, my own.

the organized Jewish community has approached the Muslim community with both interest and apprehension. Specific to the Jewish community has been an added concern regarding Muslim anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, and the targeting of Israel by Muslim community and campus organizations. In fact, these concerns began to shape Jewish community policy in the late 1990s with the breakdown of the Oslo process, but have been sharpened by the events of these past two years.

In general, this study focuses on the ways in which the Muslim community has dealt with the events of these past two years, giving voice to diverse elements and differing views. The study is divided into three sections. First, I present the history, demographics and communal structure of the American Muslim community up until September 11, 2001, emphasizing its diversity and the recent emergence of its political institutions. Second, I examine initial Muslim responses to 9/11, highlighting the fragmentation of Muslim consensus and the slow evolution of new Muslim perspectives and the emergence of new Muslim voices. Third, I analyze three issues that reflect the ways in which 9/11 has shaped American Muslim priorities and communal structures:

(1) Domestic political power and the emerging Muslim recognition of its urgency

(2) Community leadership and the struggle over who speaks for American Muslims

(3) The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the effects of 9/11 on American Muslim attitudes

In presenting these findings, I hope to stimulate discussion within the American Jewish community regarding its policies and relations vis-à-vis the American Muslim community.

I. Background

History

Historical surveys of Islam in America start with fragmented narratives recorded by pre-Colombian and later Muslim or crypto-Muslim (Morisco) explorers to the New World. Significant research has demonstrated the presence of Muslims among the slaves brought to North America from Africa, with some arguing that up to 15% of slaves were Muslims.[1] While Muslim travelers arrived on the continent as explorers or slaves in the 14th-18th centuries, not until the turn of the 20th century did Muslims begin to immigrate in large numbers, mainly from Greater Syria and from the rest of the declining Ottoman territories. Early attempts by Muslims to form community structures focused on creating social and cultural centers, and mostly did not

1. See Allan Austin's *African Muslims in Antebellum America* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1984). Both American Muslim scholarly authors, such as Professor Sulayman Nyang, and popular authors, such as Asma Gull Hasan, credit the celebrated book and TV series on slavery, *Roots* (by Alex Haley, 1977), with bringing this aspect of Muslim history to mainstream America, because the protagonist of the book, Kunta Kinte, was an African Muslim. [Sulayman S. Nyang, *Islam in the United States of America* (Chicago, IL: ABC International Group, Inc., 1999), 12; Asma Gull Hasan, *American Muslims: The New Generation* (New York; London: Continuum, 2001), 14-17]

yield enduring institutions. Rather, the Muslim community began to cohere substantively only after World War II, with the arrival of war refugees first from Eastern Europe, then from the Middle East and India.

The real expansion of the Muslim community came following the 1965 U.S. repeal of country-based immigration quotas by President Lyndon B. Johnson, which led to a decline (in percentages) of European immigrants and an increase in non-Europeans. Unlike previous waves of 20th century immigrants, the Middle Easterners who arrived post-1965, and the South Asians who entered the U.S. in the seventies and eighties, were educated and relatively wealthy; the same was true for Iranians fleeing the 1979 Revolution. Many Muslim young men came to pursue graduate studies in the natural and engineering sciences, with the original intention to return to their countries. With continued political unrest and few economic opportunities back home, many of these Muslim students remained in America and built families and communities.

A largely separate part of the Muslim narrative in America concerns the conversion of large numbers of African-Americans and smaller numbers of other Americans who have become Muslims by choice. Whereas some convert as a way of "opt[ing] out of dominant American cultural identity," others choose Islam for theological reasons or in order to marry Muslim partners.[2] Most African-American Muslim communities trace their roots to the separatist movements of the early 20th century, which offered African-Americans an identity and culture that did

2. Quote taken from Yvonne Y. Haddad, "The Dynamics of Islamic Identity in North America" in *Muslims on the Americanization Path?* Eds., Yvonne Y. Haddad and John L. Esposito (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 20.

not bear the taint of slavery and White domination. These movements borrowed from Muslim beliefs and practices but did not limit themselves to mainstream Islamic norms; these groups incorporated Christian, and at times Jewish, elements as well. The largest of these movements, the Nation of Islam (NOI), espoused Muslim doctrines interwoven with a narrative of Black superiority and the prophetic status (and at times, divinity) of its leaders. Founded by the mysterious Wallace Fard in 1930, NOI was built into an immensely successful centralized institution by Fard's devotee, Elijah Muhammad. However, when Elijah Muhammad died in 1975, his son, Warith Deen Mohammed, eschewed the heterodox elements of his father's doctrine and began a slow process of integrating the NOI community into mainstream Islam. As Professor Sulayman Nyang describes the process, "W.D. Mohammed turned the movement around by 180 degrees."[3] Mohammed's attempts to decentralize and disband his community met with popular opposition, and the community – currently named "American Society of Muslims" – continues as a network of mosques, schools, community centers and businesses.[4] While most adherents followed W.D. Mohammed into mainstream Islam, a small group allied with Louis Farrakhan has held onto the old NOI doctrines and the NOI name. Other African-American Muslim groups have evolved differently, with Sufi, Shi'i and Orthodox Sunni influences.[5]

3. Sulayman Nyang, cited in Mary Rourke, "One Faith, Two Minds," *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 2002. http://www.latimes.com/features/lifestyle/la-013002muslims.story

4. W.D. Mohammed recently retired from his official role as ASM leader, but continues to play a number of leadership roles in the community. See Appendix B for more details.

5. For a survey of various African-American groups, see Aminah Beverly McCloud, *African American Islam* (New York : Routledge, 1995).

Thus there are four distinct streams in the historical development of the Muslim community in the United States, including:

- Those who have been in the U.S. for several generations and are well-integrated and/or assimilated;
- Those who immigrated to America over the past thirty years seeking a better economic, political and social future;
- Refugees who remain strongly affiliated with their native countries and desire to return (often called, in Muslim discussions, "the myth of return"); and
- Those who turn to Islam by choice, as a compelling system of belief and practice, as an alternative or counter-cultural identity, or for other reasons (e.g., marriage).

Understanding the multiple, and often overlapping, positions of Muslim immigrants and converts goes a long way towards explaining the different impulses and voices within the Muslim community.

Population Estimates and Demographics

How many Muslims live in the U.S.? Population estimates for religious groups are notoriously unreliable, since the U.S. Census does not ask for religious affiliation. Twenty recent surveys place the current Muslim population from 3-9 million.[6] The most oft-cited estimates range from three million

6. In his analysis of competing estimates of the U.S. Muslim population, Tom W. Smith writes: "Since the Sept. 11 terror attacks, the media has used estimates of the Muslim population in the United States of 5 million to 8 million, with an average of 6.7 million or 2.4 percent of the total population." However, he argues that "none of the 20 specific estimates during the last five years is based on a scientifically sound or explicit methodology. All can probably be characterized as guesses or assertions." [Tom W. Smith, *Estimating the Muslim Population in the United States.* (New York: The American Jewish Committee Report, January 2002), 1-2] Smith uses the available data to develop his own educated guess of 1.8-2.9 million.

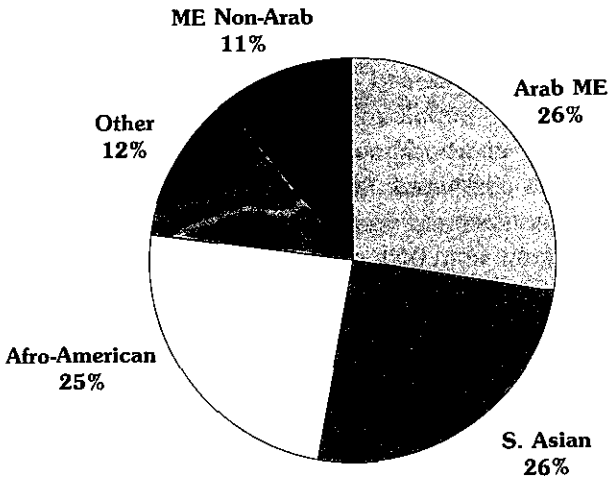
according to a 2001 study by the City University of New York to six to seven million, according to a survey mainly sponsored by the Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR) in the same year.[7] A more recent study by the research director of CAIR, Mohamed Nimer, suggests a conservative and rudimentary population range of 3.2-5.1 million.[8] However, each report acknowledges that no comprehensive study has been conducted. Although people disagree about the absolute numbers, all agree that the Muslim community continues to grow from both conversion and immigration.[9]

7. The CUNY study: Barry A. Kosmin, Egon Mayer and Ariela Keysar, *American Religious Identification Survey* (The Graduate Center City University of New York, 2001). The CAIR-sponsored study: Ihsan Bagby, Paul M. Perl and Bryan T. Froehle, *The Mosque in America: A National Portrait* (Washington, DC: Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2001), 3. The latter report, overseen by CAIR, was sponsored by CAIR as well as the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), the Ministry of Imam W. Deen Mohammed, and the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA). The study was part of a larger investigation into American congregations called "Faith Communities Today," which has been coordinated by Hartford Seminary's Hartford Institute for Religion Research.

8. Mohamed Nimer, *The North American Muslim Resource Guide* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002),27. Nimer based his research on extrapolations from immigration data for immigrants and from college board data for African-Americans. Bagby, et. al, extrapolated from mosque-attendance data provided by mosque leaders. Both reports cite their population estimates as reasonable conclusions from the data.

9. Given the lack of comprehensive data on this subject, one notices a

Muslim Demographics by Ethnicity



Source: U.S. State Department

With continuing waves of immigration and conversion over the past twenty to thirty years, the demographics of Muslims in America point to a community that is largely either first-generation American or first-generation Muslim.[10]

polemical edge to the demography question. American Muslim groups tend to emphasize that Muslims in America either constitute (or are about to become or have been for some time) the second-largest religious group after Christians, a status that has been historically attributed to American Jews. While Muslim groups estimate their population as at least 5-6 millions (at or above the most recent estimate of the American Jewish population of 5.2 million, according to the National Jewish Population Study of 2000 [http://www.jewishdatabank.org]), Jewish-funded studies estimate the Muslim population as being at most three million, and thus below the Jewish population. (see the Tom Smith study in the above reference).

10. According to a poll conducted by Zogby International, Inc. commissioned by the American Muslim Council (August, 2000), 77% of American Muslims are non-U.S. born. [http://www.amconline.org/zogby] Although it is not clear from the statistics, I would venture to say that this figure does not include African-American Muslims or American converts. Studies of African-American Islam cite that half of today's African-American Muslim are themselves converts.

The three largest Muslim groups by ethnicity are South Asians, Arabs and African-Americans; however, each survey alternately weights the three main groups in different size order.[11] It is also important to note that, in most studies, Arabs comprise only one-quarter of the total Muslim population; three-quarters of America's estimated three million Arab-American citizens are Christians.[12]

Beyond these three largest groups, the Muslim community reflects extraordinary diversity with Muslims immigrating from over sixty countries. Since the majority of Muslims are new immigrants, affinity with one's country of origin or ethnic group often takes precedence over affinity with the overarching Muslim community. The heterogeneity of American Muslim society is alternately viewed as a great weakness, especially in developing political consensus, or a

11. See, for example, Bagby, et al (2001), who cite the ethnic breakdown of regular mosque participants as: South Asians 33%; African Americans 30%; and Arabs 25% on page 17 of the above report. According to Zogby, Inc.'s poll (August, 2000), M.E. Arabs comprise the largest group at 26.2%, followed by South Asians at 24.7%, and African-Americans at 23.8%. These are the statistics cited by the State Department in their fact sheet on Islam in America. An AMC Report from 1992 places African American Muslims at 42%, South Asians at 24.4% and Arabs at 12.4%. http://www.islam101.com/history/population2_usa.html

12. According to a February 2000 report conducted by Zogby International, out of three million Arab Americans, 23% are Muslims. The 2000 Census lists 1.25 million Arab American citizens, but Zogby International argues that the population is underreported for various reasons by a factor of three. http://www.aaiusa.org/demographics.htm

source of great strength, as a sign of Islam's capacity to transcend boundaries.[13]

With the maturation of the second generation, the American Muslim community is currently in transition. The second generation youth are grappling directly with issues of identity and the relationship between Islam and the ethnic backgrounds of their immigrant parents. Some second generation American Muslims are engaged in defining an Islamic lifestyle in an American context and see their parents' conservative tendencies as ethnically-based and out of place in America.[14] Other 'next-gens' identify with an Islamic worldview that they regard as counter-cultural to American values. These American Muslims tend to be more observant than their immigrant parents and identify with a pan-Islamic revivalist (and at times, militant) ideology.[15]

13. The relationship between the ideals of unity and diversity are endlessly discussed in Muslim forums. See, for example, the 2001 the annual convention themes of the Zaytuna Institute, lead by Hamza Yusuf, "Unity through Diversity", [http://www.zaytuna.org] and of the Islamic Society of North America, "Islam: Strength through Diversity." [http://www.isna.net/newsletter/2001.pdf]

14. For a lighthearted example of this approach, see Asma Gull Hassan's *American Muslims: The New Generation* (New York, London: Continuum Books, 2001). Hassan, a self-described Muslim feminist cowgirl, conveys this American Muslim ideal by placing a picture of herself and her sister in ski outfits.

15. In her article, "How to put the genie back in the bottle? 'Identity' Islam and Muslim youth cultures in America," Marcia Hermansen understands this trend as the result of the identity dilemma faced by "a Muslim teenager brought up largely in an American environment who has been encouraged by parents, Islamic groups, and extended family to dis-identify with American cultural and political contexts and to imagine himself or herself as being from somewhere else (Pakistan or Palestine, for example) as a critical or oppositional stance. At the same time, this young person is probably never going to make it as an authentic citizen of the imagined homeland... This simultaneous alienation both from American culture and from the culture of immigrant Muslim parents encourages the embrace of a culture-free, global Islamic militancy." In *Progressive Muslims*, ed. Omid Safi (Oxford: Oneworld, 2003), 308

Thus, the generation gap between these American-raised young adults and their immigrant parents is intensely felt by how they identify in relation to the broader American social and political life.

Community Life and Muslim Organizations

The dynamic growth of the Muslim community over the last twenty years has had a major impact on Muslim organizational life. Until the 1990s, most Muslims displayed great ambivalence and even reluctance to enter into political life. Many immigrants refused to admit that they had come to the U.S. to stay; a minority of observant Muslims were sensitive to traditional warnings against participating in a non-Muslim political system. Instead, the first priority of early communities was the creation of religious and social centers often by ethnic groupings, followed by the development of educational institutions intended to preserve cultural identity.

Only in the last fifteen years have a number of Muslim organizations that are dedicated to national political and social policy been established. Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), founded as an offshoot of the Islamic Center of Southern California in 1988, was the first (enduring) organization with national aims to effect social change and public policy. Two years later, the American Muslim Council (AMC) was established to expand Muslim participation in the American political system and to lobby for Muslim interests in Washington. The American Muslim Alliance

(AMA) followed in 1992 in California, with a similar mandate but a stronger focus on grass-roots political consciousness-raising; of the two, AMC is considered by some Muslims to be more effective. Ethnic differences also distinguish the two: AMC's founders are from Arab countries whereas AMA's leadership hail from Pakistan. Finally, in 1994, the Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) was founded to promote a positive Muslim image through social and political activism. Loosely modeled after the Jewish Anti-Defamation League (ADL), CAIR mainly organizes campaigns against the media when they defame Muslims or Islam and against corporations when they discriminate against Muslim employees or customers.

These four organizations coordinate many of their activities as their mandates often overlap. For example, all four run voter registration drives and issue press releases on foreign affairs and domestic events. In particular, MPAC, AMC, AMA and CAIR all consider their primary foreign affairs goal to be changing federal policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Their approaches appear to take three forms. First, Muslim organizations use the language of "a need for balance" and call upon the U.S. government to be "an honest broker" in its dealings with the Israelis and Palestinians.[16] Second, Muslim national organizations decry what they regard as the massive foreign aid received by Israel, and argue for its reduction or at the very least against

16. These and allied Arab-American political groups contend that a more balanced approach by the U.S. government, i.e., more pressure on the Israeli government to negotiate and more support of Palestinian interests, would ultimately have a greater chance of achieving peace in the region. Currently, these political leaders contend that the U.S. Administration's support of Israeli Prime Minister Sharon hurts the U.S.'s reputation in the Arab world and ultimately undermines American interests.

increased aid.[17] Muslim community leaders and activists also have been on the forefront of the current campaigns for universities to divest from companies doing business with Israel. Third, American Muslims cite what they regard as the wildly disproportionate amount of power wielded by the pro-Israel lobbies in Washington. The American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is regarded paradoxically as both the source of what is wrong in current Washington and the model of what the Muslims hope to achieve.[18] In the contested ground of Washington influence, national Muslim public affairs groups describe pro-Israel lobbying and Jewish policy groups as their chief competitors and, simultaneously, source of emulation.

Despite their overlapping agendas, these four public affairs organizations appeal to different constituencies.

17. The websites of the AMC, CAIR, as well as the Arab Anti-Discrimination Comittee (ADC) contain reference material to the billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars given to Israel each year. Since the second Intifada broke out in 2000, these organizations have called for suspending U.S. military sales to Israel and aid for weaponry used by the Israeli army against Palestinian civilians. http://www.amconline.org; http://www.cair-net.org; http://www.adc.org

18. The pro-Israel lobby in Washington is routinely vilified as being an all-powerful machine that intimidates congresspeople into supporting Israeli policies. For example, at the 2002 ISNA convention in Washington, D.C., Hamza Yusuf, the popular Muslim preacher and scholar, spoke against the insidious influence of "foreign lobbies" on our government. [ISNA convention, Washington, DC, August 30, 2002] Nevertheless, AIPAC is also seen as the model lobbying organization. In an article about her experience as an intern in Washington, DC, Laila Al-Arian described a speech by Ralph Nader, of Arab descent, in which he developed the notion that Muslims have much to learn from AIPAC. She remarks, "Though it might be considered ironic that Muslim students should learn from a group whose interests often clash with their own, the point was well taken." Laila Al-Arian, "Muslim Student Network Building Foundations for Tomorrow", *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, October 2001

MPAC is considered by Muslims to be more progressive than the others on both domestic and international issues and is the only one that does not accept foreign donations. CAIR is widely respected for its effective campaigns fighting discrimination and prosecuting hate crimes; their on-line newsletter, announcing action alerts, boasts a large circulation. However, CAIR, AMC, and AMA have drawn criticism from different parts of the Muslim community for focusing overwhelmingly on foreign policy concerns and for representing the narrow ethnic focus of their founders.

In general, these organizations are highly vocal and active but their employee and membership bases are quite small, relative to the defense and advocacy groups of other, more established, ethnic/religious minorities.[19] Despite their prominence, each of the four Muslim organizations highlighted above has a membership base of no more than several thousand individuals each.[20] Muslims are developing their organizational profiles rapidly, but remain relative newcomers to American political and civil discourse.

The primary mode of community organization continues to be the mosque or Islamic center. In keeping with the population growth estimates, a recent CAIR mosque survey traces tremendous institutional growth over the past twenty years.[21] Most mosques tend to be dominated by one ethnic

19. To get a sense of the scope of Jewish organizational life, see for example the directory listings of American Jewish organizations in the *American Jewish Yearbook*, eds., David Singer and Lawrence Grossman (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 2002), 102: 645-722.

20. Mohamed Nimer, *The North American Resource Guide: Muslim Community Life in the United States and Canada* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 175.

21. Of the 1,209 mosques and centers located by the study, 25% were founded in the 1970s, 32% in the 1980s and 30% in the 1990s. Bagby, Ihsan, Paul M. Perl and Bryan T. Froehle, *The Mosque in America: A National Portrait* (Washington, DC: Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2001):23-24.

group, and are organized usually as a corporation with a board of trustees.[22] Mosques tend to serve as the center of *local* religious, educational, social and charitable activity. In fact, 45% of mosques are not affiliated with a national organization, such as the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA). African-American Muslim communities tend to be better organized and more connected regionally and nationally, through networks such as the American Society of Muslims (ASM). Yet, in spite of this growth, the CAIR study contends that the mosque-attending population only stands at between 1/3-1/2 of the Muslim population. In other words, like members of other religious traditions in America, most Muslims are unaffiliated.

In sum, the Muslim community, on the eve of September 11, 2001, was a community diverse in its ethnic, religious, political and cultural affiliations. While subsets of the community had long-standing ties to the United States, the organized Muslim community was relatively young and decentralized.

22. The CAIR-sponsored mosque survey found that 93% of mosques surveyed have members from more than one group. [Bagby, et. al., p. 3] Yet, the study also found that 64% of mosques have one dominant ethnic group, and only 5% claim multi-ethnic membership such that no one ethnic group has a significant percentage. [Bagby, p. 19]

II. American Muslim Responses to 9/11 – A Chronology of the First Year

Early Reactions by Individuals

Like most Americans, most Muslims went through an initial period of shock and disbelief immediately following 9/11.[23] Unlike most Americans, Muslims expressed the complex emotions of anger at the attacks and fear of a backlash. Even American-born Muslims shared their concerns regarding the possibility of a wide scale detainment along the lines of the Japanese Americans' internment during the Second World War.

Although images of American Muslims celebrating the attacks reverberated in the American media, further research suggests that these were minority voices within an otherwise horrified community.[24] In published pieces and in interviews, I identified three recurring perspectives expressed by individual Muslims.

(1) The predominant perspective expressed was public disassociation of the mainstream Muslim community from these lunatics who did not speak for Islam. Muslim writers often argued that it was unfair to implicate all Muslims for the crimes of the radical fringe (when Hindu, Jewish and Christian terrorists are not seen as representatives of their respective traditions).

(2) Certain Muslims immediately depicted 9/11 as a radical response to American foreign policy in the Middle East. While they rejected the 9/11 atrocities, these writers viewed the aftermath of 9/11 as an opportunity for the American government to rethink its unwavering support of Israel and certain Arab dictators.

(3) Other Muslims viewed 9/11 as the consequence of contemporary Islam's tolerance of extremism and immediately called for Muslim internal critique and reform. In numerous editorials, Muslim intellectuals linked 9/11 with the hateful rhetoric in certain mosques around the world, including America.

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, a debate emerged among American Muslims between those who felt the urgency of self-criticism in public and those who argued that any form of self-criticism should occur within Muslim circles. According to Ali Asani, an Islamic studies professor at Harvard University, the contradictory messages emanating from American Muslims was partly an outgrowth of the American Muslim community's reluctance to air its disagreements in public:

> [Muslims] are so sensitive about the perception of Islam...Even when there are disagreements within the Muslim community about extremism, they will project to the outside that we are all monolithic and peaceful.[25]

23. For the most comprehensive list of statements by Muslim individuals and leaders condemning the 9/11 attacks, see: http://www.unc.edu/~kurzman/terror.htm, which includes a long list of quotes followed by a list of further sites.

24. I did encounter several websites and articles denying the possibility that Muslims were involved in the attack. Within this minority opinion, the CIA and Israeli Mossad were often targeted as the leaders of an international conspiracy.

25. Hanna Rosin and John Mintz, "Muslim Leaders Struggle With Mixed Messages," *Washington Post*, October 02, 2001, A16.

Among those who called for an internal community reckoning was Shaykh Hamza Yusuf Hanson, a convert and highly popular preacher who had fulminated against the West from his pulpit. Following 9/11, Yusuf was outspoken in condemning the attacks as "mass murder – pure and simple" and suicide bombing in general. He called 9/11 "a wake up call" to change the way he and others speak about the West. In an interview with the *Guardian*, he said: "I don't want to contribute to the hate in any shape or form. I now regret in the past being silent about what I have heard in the Islamic discourse and being part of that with my own anger."[26] Asani interpreted this surprising move as a realization by Yusuf and others that they are part of the problem, that the 9/11 incident can be the result of this kind of thinking they have been propagating for so many years.[27]

One of the most often-cited individual Muslim responses to 9/11 was a set of two letters written by Muqtedar Khan, an associate professor of political science at Adrian College – one to fellow Muslims and one to the American public.

In his "Memo to Fellow Muslims" dated October 5, 2002, Khan emphasizes the duties of American Muslims to lead the community "in soul searching, reflection and reassessment:"

> Muslims, including American Muslims, have been practicing hypocrisy on a grand scale. They protest against the discriminatory practices of Israel but are silent against the discriminatory practices in Muslim

26. Jack OSullivan, If you hate the west, emigrate to a Muslim country," *The Guardian*, October 8, 2001. http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,3604,564960,00.html

27. Ibid.

> states. In the Gulf one can see how laws and even salaries are based on ethnic origin. This is racism, but we never hear of Muslims protesting against them at International fora Muslims love to live in the US but also love to hate it. Many openly claim that the US is a terrorist state but they continue to live in it. Their decision to live here is testimony that they would rather live here than anywhere else. As an Indian Muslim, I know for sure that nowhere on earth, including India, will I get the same sense of dignity and respect that I have received in the US...
>
> It is time that we faced these hypocritical practices and struggled to transcend them. It is time that American Muslim leaders fought to purify their own lot.
>
> For over a decade we have watched as Muslims in the name of Islam have committed violence against other Muslims and other peoples. We have always found a way to reconcile the vast distance between Islamic values and Muslim practices by pointing out to the injustices committed upon Muslims by others. The point however is this our belief in Islam and commitment to Islamic values is not contingent on the moral conduct of the US or Israel. And as Muslims can we condone such inhuman and senseless waste of life in the name of Islam?...
>
> It is time for soul searching. How can the message of Muhammad (peace be upon him) who was sent as mercy to mankind become a source of horror and fear? How can Islam inspire thousands of youth to dedicate their lives to killing others? We are supposed to invite people to Islam not murder them.
>
> The worst exhibition of Islam happened on our turf. We must take first responsibility to undo the evil it

> has manifest. This is our mandate, our burden and also our opportunity.[28]

In a later "Memo to Americans," written on October 29, Khan addresses the two questions circulating among the American public, colloquially rephrased by Khan as "why are Muslims angry at us?" and "how can Islam permit/incite terror?" In response to the former question, Khan argues that the Muslim world does not hate America because it hates freedom and democracy but – on the contrary – because it holds America responsible for blocking their access to freedom and democracy:

> The purpose of this article is not to condone what happened on September 11th. What happened was horrible, inhuman and unIslamic. But reflection over Muslim grievances can help us understand how even devout people can be driven to commit themselves to terror. Systematic repression dispossesses people of their humanity, inciting them to commit inhuman acts.
>
> Americans must take these grievances seriously and address them in good faith and that, in my opinion, is the best way to fight resentment, anger and the resulting violence. [29]

Regarding the second question, Khan recognizes that there are Muslims, such as the leaders of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, who use a distorted interpretation of Islam as a "rhetorical instrument for mobilization of resistance and justification of their actions."[30] However, he states categorically:

28. Muqtedar Khan, "Memo to Fellow American Muslims" (October 5, 2001) http://www.ijtihad.org/memo.htm.

29. Muqtedar Khan, "Memo to Fellow Americans" (October 29, 2001) http://www.ijtihad.org/memoa.htm.

30. Ibid.

> To my mind there is absolutely no justification and no way of rationalizing what happened on Sept. 11th. I am convinced that Islam does not shape the perpetrators values and their beliefs. Islam is a religion of peace and I pray that good Muslims (Quran 11:116) will rescue Islam from the clutches of those who use it for their political purposes.[31]

He thus concludes:

> Until Americans revisit their foreign policy practices and good Muslims challenge distorted interpretations of Islam consistently we may not come out of the circle of terror and counter-terror.[32]

By juxtaposing Khan's two letters, one can see how 9/11 quickly brought to light a complex set of responses. On the one hand, Khan challenges his community to cease blaming others for the violence of certain Muslim groups and to return to essential Islamic values of peace and diplomacy. On the other hand, he argues that America must recognize the consequences of its actions and policies in the Muslim world and not assess the events of 9/11 in a vacuum.

Early Organizational Responses

Although many individuals stepped forward to publicly reject the 9/11 attacks, the American public looked first to the responses of Muslim organizational and institutional leaders. Ironically, on the morning of September 11, the leaders of several major Muslim organizations were in Washington, D.C., to discuss American Muslim interests with President Bush. When the meeting was canceled, these and

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

other Muslim leaders, representing nine groups, issued an immediate condemnation of the attacks.[33] The letter to President Bush stated:

> American Muslims, who unequivocally condemned todays terrorist attacks on our nation, call on you to alert fellow citizens to the fact that now is a time for all of us to stand together in the face of this heinous crime. [34]

The letter combined a clear condemnation of the act with a call to refrain from premature speculations as to whether Muslims were at fault. It also asked for government protection of U.S. Muslims.

Although these organizational leaders were quick to condemn the act itself, they were slow to accuse Osama Bin Laden and to condemn particular Muslim groups as terrorists.[35] This, combined with a commonly expressed perception that Muslim organizations seemed more concerned about protecting Muslim interests than about reaching out to the rest of the country, led many non-Muslims to feel that the Muslim organizations were neither prominent nor sufficiently vocal in denouncing the attacks. On the contrary, Muslim organizational leaders argued that they did

33. The nine organizations included: American Muslim Alliance; American Muslim Council; Muslim Public Affairs Council; American Society of Muslims; Islamic Society of North America Islamic Circle of North America; Muslim Alliance of North America; American Muslims for Jerusalem.

34. http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/01091232.htm

35. CAIR argued for the importance of hard evidence before blaming al-Qaeda for the 9/11 attacks. CAIR only issued a condemnation of Osama bin Laden in mid-December 2001, following the release of the videotape first aired on Al-Jazira satellite television channel that demonstrated Bin Laden's complicity in the 9/11 attacks.

their utmost to denounce the acts and Islamic extremism, but that the American public was not listening.

Emergence of New Post-9/11 Organizations

Certain Muslims, especially in the younger generation, joined non-Muslims in criticizing the lack of responsiveness from these established organizations. In a *Wall Street Journal* opinion piece entitled, "American Muslims Are Americans. Let's Act Like It," Tarek Masoud decried the lack of leadership emanating from the national Muslim organizations:

> I certainly cannot look to the national leadership of the Islamic community in America for guidance. The American Muslim Council tells us to be careful, to be on the lookout for suspicious and anti-Muslim behavior, presumably by other Americans seeking revenge. The Council on American Islamic Relations even sent out an e-mail with a handy form for reporting hate crimes against Muslims. I wonder if these groups are oblivious to the fact that it is Muslims, with names like Mohammed and Abdullah and, yes, Tarek, who have committed the greatest hate crime in American history?[36]

Many young Muslims felt that the 9/11 crisis necessitated new strategies and a clearer message against religious violence. In the first months following 9/11, several groups of predominantly young American Muslims created new organizations, with the goal of educating both the Muslim and non-Muslim communities about true teachings of Islam. These included:

36. Printed in the *Wall Street Journal*, September 14, 2001. http://www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=95001128

- Muslims Against Terrorism, based in New York, with the following mandate:

> Our goal is to honor the loss of the thousands who were senselessly killed by working to ensure that it never happens again. We stand, as Muslims, against all forms of terrorism in all parts of the world. We seek to increase awareness and understanding about the true teachings of Islam, a religion that preaches peace, love of humanity and service to the community. We are actively engaged in outreach to all individuals and organizations. We seek to inspire other groups and communities to speak up against violence and injustice around the world. Only through dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect can we achieve the peace and justice the world so urgently needs.[37]

- The Center for Understanding Islam, based in New Jersey, with a similar mission:

> We condemn all terrorism everywhere in the strongest possible terms. While most Muslim leaders and organizations have spoken out against the evil terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, some in the media continue to complain about the apparent lack of moderate Muslim voices. It is encouraging to see that the faith communities, in

37. MVP's mission statement currently reads as follows: "To stand against those who preach violence and hatred in the name of Islam and to promote peace and understanding through interfaith and intercultural coalition building." http://www.matus.org/about.asp.

> particular, and non-Muslim Americans, in general, are showing a genuine interest in Islam and Muslims. The challenge for Muslims is to provide spiritual and intellectual guidance for interfaith efforts. More importantly, we must address extremism within the community and take our faith back from extremists everywhere. Although more media outlets are now open to Muslims, we need a credible voice in the media and in circles of opinion leaders.[38]

- The American Islamic Congress, founded in New Haven by Yale Ph.D. students:

> The American Islamic Congress (AIC) is a social organization that is dedicated to building interfaith and interethnic understanding. Our organization grew out of the ashes of September 11. The vicious terrorist attacks made many American Muslims realize that we had been silent for too long in the face of Muslim extremism. We believe American Muslims must take the lead in building tolerance and fostering a respect for human rights and social justice. We have a responsibility to help our country rebuild from this attack, and to our religion to reassert that we are moderate and peace-loving people.[39]

In a *Boston Globe* op-ed, dated January 16, 2002, AIC chair Ahmed al-Rahim declares:

38. http://www.cuii.org

39. http://www.aicongress.org

> American Muslims need to regain control of their destiny, which for too long has been hijacked by fringe elements seeking to impose an extremist vision of Islam, on Muslims and non-Muslims alike. American Muslims are a minority that has prospered in America's climate of religious tolerance and civil liberties. The lessons of our unprecedented experience hold the key for a new American Muslim social agenda. First, we must champion pluralism and condemn all forms of intolerance. As Americans, we must work to guarantee our equal rights and prevent anti-Muslim bigotry. At the same time, we must condemn genocidal rhetoric by Muslims. Those who call for the murder of Christians and Jews are attacking our friends and neighbors. American Muslims should not stand for it any longer. So we must become leading ambassadors to the Muslim world.[40]

These organizations, created by young American Muslims post-9/11, unambiguously rejected violence in the name of religion and insisted on the compatibility of Islam, democracy and pluralism. While MAT, renamed in late 2002 as Muslim Voices for Peace, remains focused on education i.e., inreach to other Muslims and outreach to other communities, the other two organizations are in the process of transitioning to social and public policy centers. The crisis of 9/11 created the space for young American Muslims to step into public roles to shape the future of their community.

Mid-year Responses – Turning Inward

By mid-year, Muslim reactions to the attacks of 9/11 became conflated with their responses to America's international and domestic war on terror. Much of the Muslim community was vocally opposed to an extended war on Afghanistan, and, more recently, to the U.S. military invasion of Iraq.[41] Moreover, Muslim writers and organizations criticized what they regarded as the Israeli government's successful exploitation of 9/11 to gain U.S. support.

40. Printed in *The Boston Globe*, January 16, 2002: A13.

On the domestic front, America's "war on terror" had already alienated immigrant Muslims prior to 9/11. Already in 1996, the federal government's enactment of the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, authorizing the government to detain and prosecute illegal immigrants based on secret evidence, led to the imprisonment of a disproportionate number of Muslim immigrants. A month following 9/11, President Bush signed the U.S.A. Patriot Act (an acronym for "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism"), a mammoth law that greatly expanded the government's capacity to secretly detain and deport non-citizens, investigate financial transactions that might be connected to terrorism, survey personal communications (especially related to e-mail and the Internet), and restrict immigration from certain countries.[42] Since September 11,

41. As the exception to this general rule, the American Islamic Congress issued numerous statements supporting the American invasion and democratization of Iraq. AIC President, Zainab al-Suwaij, is a (former) Iraqi dissident who fled the Hussein regime after the failed Iraqi uprising following the first Gulf war. The recent American invasion often set Iraqi-Americans apart from other Arab Muslims, as the former generally supported the war effort. http://www.aicongress.org/policy.htm

42. As *Washington Post* reporter, Jim McGee, writes: "Known as the U.S.A. Patriot Act, the law empowers the government to shift the primary mission of the FBI from solving crimes to gathering domestic intelligence. In addition, the Treasury Department has been charged with building a financial intelligence-gathering system whose data can

2001, federal agents have detained over 1,200 illegal immigrants, most of whom are Muslim, without specific charges and without releasing their whereabouts.[43]

As a result, national Muslim organizations shifted their focus from reaching out to turning inward to protect what they regarded as community interests. The same nine Muslim organizations that issued the original condemnation of the 9/11 attacks, now issued press releases calling for political action against the government and staged rallies expressing outrage at FBI raids. They also sought to build coalitions with civil rights groups, such as the American Civil Liberties Union and People for the American Way; in the past, most of these conservative groups had not worked extensively with such liberal and secular organizations.

On December 4, 2001, the domestic war on terror led to federal shutdowns of three major Muslim charities, including: The Holy Land Foundation, accused of fundraising for the Islamic Resistance Movement (i.e., Hamas); Global Relief, charged with fundraising for al-Qaeda; and Benevolence International, charged with transferring funds and equipment to Osama bin Laden. The same Muslim organizations immediately rallied around these charities,

be accessed by the CIA. Most significantly, the CIA will have the authority for the first time to influence FBI surveillance operations inside the United States and to obtain evidence gathered by federal grand juries and criminal wiretaps." Jim McGee, "An Intelligence Giant in the Making; Anti-Terrorism Law Likely to Bring Domestic Apparatus of Unprecedented Scope," *Washington Post*, November 4, 2001.

43. ACLU action alerts and various media reports claim that up to 2,000 people have been detained. Since the information surrounding these cases are secret, it is impossible to gather exact data. As of the summer 2003, several hundred detainees remain, according to the MPAC website.

arguing that the charities distributed *zakât* (i.e., religious tithes) only for humanitarian purposes. Federal raids later in the year on mainstream Muslim institutions, such as the International Institute of Islamic Thought, in Herndon, Virginia, led many Muslims to believe that the government was indeed targeting the Muslim community and not just the extremists. Initial Muslim support for the American government's response to 9/11 turned into grave apprehension.

A letter to the editor in the September 2002 edition of *Minaret* magazine, entitled "Damned if We Do, Damned if We Don't," captures this sentiment:

> I, like most American Muslims, would rather be damned in the comfort of my living room than some dingy cell in God knows where with no access to even a lawyer or even the basic right to know the charges filed against me. Forgive me for being human and worrying about the food and shelter for my children, instead of the larger, more honorable aim of reclaiming the moderateness of my religion, Islam. [p. 9]

Much of the post 9/11 self-criticism within the mainstream Muslim community was thus mitigated by a new defensiveness and a focus on protecting Muslim interests.

One Year Later and Beyond

In the weeks leading up to the one-year anniversary of 9/11, numerous speeches and news articles by Muslims articulated the complex emotions of many American Muslims. Muslims publicly joined other Americans in mourning. At the same time, Muslims felt alienated and feared the lasting effects of American scrutiny and suspicion. Many Muslims that I interviewed spoke of

numerous statements by non-Muslim Americans, particularly by Christian evangelical leaders, painting Islam as an evil religion. They expressed a concern that the initial post-9/11 kindness and sympathy had given way to deeper American hatred of Islam and Muslims. On the first anniversary of 9/11, Muqtedar Khan wrote: "Not only has the [Muslim] community lost developmental momentum but most of its hard earned good will has dissipated and now it faces hostility and prejudice as never before."[44] Many organizations spoke of the difficulty of raising money in the Muslim community because people were scared of being prosecuted for contributing to terrorist organizations and confused about where and how to donate legally.

This fear prompted repeated proclamations by Muslim organizations of their loyalty to America as patriotic citizens. For instance, on October 2, 2002, MPAC issued a position paper entitled, "The Islamic Foundations of Patriotism," on the synergy between Islamic and American values, such as the sanctity of life, justice, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.[45] At the same time, the proclaimed patriotism has become the foundation upon which Muslims ground the right to dissent from government policy. The numerous conferences held by Muslim national organizations since then have cast the Muslim struggle against the U.S.A. Patriot act as an American struggle to restore the civil rights of its citizens.[46]

The community has weathered the storm of the first year

44. http://www.ijtihad.org/AM911.htm

45. http://www.mpac.org/popa_article_display.aspx?ITEM=48

46. See, for instance, MPAC's annual convention on December 21-22, 2002, including panels entitled: "Threats to American Democracy, and The Patriot Act and the Silent War on Civil Liberties." http://www.mpac.org/home_article_display.aspx?ITEM=317

after 9/11 and has reoriented its priorities towards participating in American civil discourse in a more comprehensive manner – through forming alliances, emphasizing interfaith understanding and demanding its civil rights as Americans.

III. How Has 9/11 Affected the Muslim Community?

As we have seen, Muslim responses to 9/11 and its aftermath were varied and complex, resulting in new priorities among existing institutions as well as the establishment of new types of institutions. The 9/11 attacks highlighted differences among Muslims and raised questions about who could effectively represent the various Muslim communities. The attacks created the need and conditions for many American Muslims, including those who were not affiliated with established organizations, to enter the public stage. On the one hand, Muslims felt the need to speak out against the sheer magnitude of the violence perpetrated by fellow Muslims or by their perception of their community's failure to do so. On the other hand, by seeking out Muslims to condemn the attacks and Islamic militancy, the American media and public created the conditions for the emergence of progressive Muslim voices.

Moreover, the Muslim community was forced to reckon with the consequences of its previous isolationist tendencies and weakness in political advocacy. In the face of immigration and civil liberties restrictions, American Muslims developed greater consensus on the need for political power and for developing alliances with other like-minded groups.

These changes reflect broader issues of contention with the Muslim community and can be traced to debates that have been brewing for several years. In the next section, I will examine the contested issues of American Muslim

political power, community leadership and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in greater depth.

A. 9/11 and Muslim Political Power

The 2000 Bush Endorsement

During the presidential election of 2000, a number of Muslim political organizations created the American Muslim Political Coordinating Council (AMPCC) in order to form a successful Muslim voting bloc and increase the Muslim political clout.[47] AMPCC, without extensive consultation of other Muslim groups, endorsed George W. Bush for president, based on his statements defending civil liberties and his conservative domestic policies. African-American Muslims and other indigenous Muslim leaders who favored Al Gore's candidacy perceived the Bush endorsement as the final insult in a stream of unilateral decisions by immigrant-oriented groups.[48] This was one of the major impetuses for the formation of the Muslim Alliance of North America (MANA), a network focusing on the needs of the indigenous community (i.e., African-Americans and other converts) and on domestic issues. Moreover, this debate led to a split of the Muslim vote: African-American Muslims voted mostly for Gore.

47. The organizations that comprised the AMPCC include: American Muslim Alliance; American Muslim Council; Council on American Islamic Relations; Muslim Public Affairs Council; and the Council of Presidents of Arab-American Organizations.

48. In recounting the tensions surrounding the episode, Aminah Beverly McCloud commented: "The arrogance displayed in projecting the image that the entire Muslim community favored Bush, discounting indigenous Muslims as if they did not exist, has forever left a mark of distrust." McCloud, "Islam in America: The Mosaic" in *Religion and Immigration*, eds., Yvonne Haddad, et. al. (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003) 172.

Nevertheless, immigrant Muslims considered the bloc a success given that a majority of the immigrant Muslim population voted for Bush and provided critical numbers for Bush to win key states like Florida. At first it seemed that Bush would welcome his Muslim constituents into positions of power. Immediately following 9/11, Bush issued statements defending the Muslim community and, on September 17, invited Muslim leaders to the White House to express his solidarity. However, as the domestic war on terror unfolded, Muslim access to the White House disintegrated, with Republicans shying away from public connections to Muslim organizations. Even more disturbing to Muslim leaders was that the Jewish community, who voted overwhelmingly for Democratic candidate Al Gore, seemed to have complete access to the president. And, President Bush was perceived as granting unilateral support to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon against the Palestinians. In his analysis of the Bush endorsement episode, Muqtedar Khan admitted that the main lesson of the episode was that a one-time endorsement is no substitute for real political power: "Perhaps American Muslims are seeking easy shortcuts to power and influence in America. There is no such thing."[49]

The broad recognition of the need for Muslim political power has been one of the most significant developments catalyzed by 9/11. In years prior, Muslim organizations had to make the case to their constituencies that political participation in the American system, whether by voting or by seeking public office, was religiously permissible.[50]

49. Muqtedar Khan, "American Muslims and American Politics," in *American Muslims: Bridging Faith and Freedom* (Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2002) 42.

50. In response to criticism of its voter registration drives, the American Muslim Council (AMC) submitted a request for a religious opinion (*fatwâ*) from Taha Jaber al-Alwani, Chairman of the North American

Post-9/11, the Muslim political organizations were subjected to harsh criticism by their constituencies that they had not done enough to gain political power to protect the Muslim community. The aftermath of 9/11 has proven to American Muslims, including the reluctant ones, that political participation is necessary to protect community interests domestically as well as internationally.

Similarly, greater consensus has coalesced around the importance of domestic issues, such as healthcare and education, seen by some as a yardstick of Muslim integration in American society. At the Islamic Society of North America annual convention in early September 2002, Muslim political leaders described this shift as "help[ing] ourselves first before we can help others."[51] Moreover, 9/11 has created room for new organizations (as described above), such as MAT, AIC and MANA, who have identified domestic issues as their top priority. For those voices in the Muslim community, the shift of focus from international to domestic priorities is an indication of Muslim integration into American civic life. As Zahid Bukhari, the director of the "Muslims in the American Public Square" project at Georgetown University, stated, the goal of American Muslims should not be to change U.S. foreign policy, but

Fiqh [Islamic Law] Council and President of the Graduate School of Social and Islamic Sciences, regarding the permissibility of Muslim political participation in a non-Muslim land. Critics had argued that participation would divide Muslim interests and lead to alliances with non-Muslims. They also questioned whether Muslims could be part of a secular political system, especially with a Christian majority. Al-Alwani responded that it was the *duty* (not merely the right) of American Muslims to participate constructively in the American political process. [For the full text of the fatwa, see http://www.am-conline.org/fatwa.shtml]

51. Opening plenary, 39th annual Islamic Society of North America convention in Washington, D.C. (August 30-September 2, 2002).

rather, "[o]ur goal should be for social justice in society for every group."[52] That is not to say that Muslims are not deeply concerned about international issues, especially when it comes to the Muslim world. However, many in the community have learned the need for a strong Muslim participation in American civil, social and political life.

Muslim Philanthropy and Financial Contributions

One of the key obstacles to political empowerment is that American Muslims still have not developed a culture of contributing to political and civic causes as well as financing their own large-scale institutions. While American Muslims do have a practice of charity-giving based on the religious requirement of *zakât* (usually an annual tithe of 2% of one's wealth), they tend to give at their local mosques and usually earmark the funds for international Muslim relief campaigns. However, significant funding has not materialized for domestic political and social campaigns nor for large-scale community institutions.[53] This partly stems from the

52. Comments from Bukhari's lecture, American Muslims after September 11th: New Ways of Being Citizens at the 31st annual convention of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (October 25-27, 2002) in Washington, D.C. http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20021028-27312221.htm

53. Little data exists on annual totals of American Muslim philanthropy. Regarding political contributions, according to the Center for Responsive Politics - which describes itself as a non-partisan, non-profit research group based in Washington, D.C., that tracks money in politics, and its effect on elections and public policy - virtually all of the Arab and Muslim communities' political money has come from a small group of PACs, which have contributed nearly $297,000 to federal candidates and parties from the 1989-90 election cycle through the end of 2002. Two-thirds of the funds came from the Arab American Leadership PAC, the political arm of the Arab American Institute, which is headed by Dr. James Zogby (an Arab-Christian). For

prevalence of foreign, and particularly Gulf, donations in funding American Muslim community buildings and institutions. Until recently, domestically-financed mosques and Islamic centers were the exception rather than the rule. However, over the last few years, and particularly following 9/11, American Muslims have begun to examine the consequences of Gulf state donations, such as relinquishing the right to critique their actions. On a recent discussion on AMILA-net, an on-line network for young American Muslim professionals, Sarah Eltantawi, MPAC's communications director, stated:

> Saudi Arabia is a corrupt, dictatorial, fascist state that is an embarrassment to Islam and Muslims... [Accepting foreign donations from such regimes] could set us back decades, or keep us in the 'straddling the fence' posture vis-à-vis Muslim dictators and oppressors that we seem to be shamefully stuck in today.[54]

Among second generation Muslims, rejecting foreign funds is becoming a litmus test for how American is an institution. The political success and integration of the American Muslim community greatly depends upon its ability to financially support its own institutions as well as contribute to political and civic causes.

comparison's sake, the Center reported that pro-Israel interests contributed $41.3 million in individual, PAC, and soft money contributions to federal candidates and party committees during that same period. http://www.opensecrets.org/industries/indus.asp?Ind=Q05

54. Teresa Watanabe, "U.S. Muslims Divided Over Saudi Aid", Sunday, December 01, 2002. http://www.mpac.org/popa_article_display.aspx?ITEM=297.

B. Who Speaks for the Muslim Community?

In response to the widespread demand for Muslim leaders to condemn, explain and contextualize the 9/11 attacks, a variety of Muslim voices have emerged. Immediately following 9/11, journalists, government officials, and interfaith groups first turned to *imams* (mosque leaders), as the equivalent to priests and rabbis, to condemn the acts, but found many of them to be inclined towards rote formulations. Next, they turned to leaders of Muslim organizations, who received much of the media spotlight. However, many of these leaders would resort to vague condemnations of terrorism and would often fall short of admitting that certain contemporary interpretations of Islam justify militancy. Fueled by the American public's desire to hear from 'moderate Muslims,' the national media actively sought out and gave voice to Muslims who spoke directly to the contemporary phenomenon of violence in the name of Islam. More often than not, these Muslims were university professors in Islamic studies or political science.

The Limited Role of Imams as Muslim Leaders

In the aftermath of 9/11, the near absence of Muslim religious leaders from public discussions led to broad American suspicions that Islamic law did in fact condone the attacks.[55] The perceived silence of many imams also led to criticism by American Muslims that most mosque leaders are ill-equipped to thoughtfully address the pressing issues of living in America:

> I have lived in the America for more than two decades and as a practicing Muslim have rarely

55. Notable exceptions include Hamza Yusuf, discussed earlier, Imam Talal Eid of the Islamic Center of New England in Quincy, and Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf of Masjid al-Farah in New York.

missed the Jum'ah (congregational Friday) prayer. I have visited mosques from sea to shining sea. There have been occasions when I listened to sermons that were deeply moving and instructive, but they were exceptions rather than the rule. In most cases, the imams preach the obvious and the irrelevant, or worse, resort to incendiary and opportunistic political rhetoric that engages neither the intellect nor the imagination... A reason for this unhappy situation is that many of the imams, educated in religious institutions abroad, have little or no knowledge of American history and how the government works. Comfortable in their cocoons, they have a limited view of the world and cannot frame the salient issues of the day in the light of Islamic principles of tolerance, justice, freedom, and equality.

In the wake of the Sept. 11 atrocity, it is clear that board members must learn to take this responsibility with utmost seriousness. In particular, they should favor imams educated in America who are fluent in English and are voices of moderation, who can talk to the media on issues ranging from education and the environment to threats of global terrorism, and who can sustain a constructive dialogue with Americans from all walks of life not just during a crisis, but also in peaceful times.

When enlightened imams lead mosques and inspire their congregations to actively promote what is right and oppose what is wrong, the risks of some deviants pulling off malevolent deeds are either minimized or made easier to identify and thwart. Only then will America and the world begin to appreciate the true, peaceful message of Islam.[56]

56. Hasan Zillur Rahim, "Silence of the Imams - Muslim Clerics Must Challenge Extremist Views," *Pacific News Service*, October 11, 2001. http://www.pacificnews.org/content/pns/2001/oct/1011silence.html

Not only did many imams fail to meet the needs of the post 9/11 demand for authoritative Muslim responses, but some were accused of contributing to the problem by promoting a hateful attitude towards other religions.

With few exceptions, most American imams do not fulfill pastoral and representative functions as do American Christian and Jewish clergy. Not unlike the rabbis who were 'imported' to America from Europe in the early 20th century, most imams are trained in the Middle East and South Asia and arrive in America with poor English language skills and an underdeveloped cultural sensitivity. Like the early immigrant rabbis, many of these imams cannot relate to the American values of their mosque attendees, and often use incendiary rhetoric when preaching about other religions and groups. Almost every Muslim leader whom I interviewed spoke of the critical need for an American religious seminary to train imams to be Islamic- and Western-educated, as well as culturally sensitive.[57]

Academics as Public Intellectuals

Since 9/11, numerous Muslim academics gained national prominence by writing and speaking in both American Muslim and non-Muslim forums. With their knowledge of both Islamic and Western culture and history, these scholars have been more successful at conveying the richness of Islamic heritage and more willing to publicly critique

57. Plans have begun to build a new university that combines excellent general studies as well as Islamic studies. Although the plans are in their infancy, the Foundation for Crescent University is seeking campus grounds in upstate New York and plans a phased opening beginning in September 2005/6. http://www.crescentuniversity.us

contemporary trends in Islam in public. Hailing from a spectrum of religious and scholarly backgrounds, Khaled Abou El Fadl, Ali Asani, Abdulaziz Sachedina, Muqtedar Khan and others share the view that Islam, in its original sources and in the development of its legal and philosophical schools, accommodates a diversity of interpretations. Sober-minded about the challenges they face in a contemporary community that often favors apologetics over serious inquiry, these scholars actively promote what they regard as the Islamic values of pluralism and democracy.

Pluralism as a Islamic Value

In his article, "Pluralism, Intolerance and the Quran," Harvard Professor Ali Asani locates the source for pluralism in the Quran but acknowledges that anti-pluralist interpretations have emerged in different periods of history:

> With regard to the issue of peace and violence, my contention is that the Quran essentially espouses a pluralist worldview, one that promotes harmony among nations and peoples. Through the centuries, however, it has been subjected to anti-pluralist, or exclusivist, interpretations in order to advance hegemonic goals, both political and religious.[58]

Quranic notions of pluralism are based on the idea that God's message is universal but its manifestations are plural, and humankind was intentionally created to be heterogeneous. However, Asani identifies two impetuses for an exclusivist reading of Islam, namely, the idea that Islam superseded previous revelations and that it legitimized political hegemony and imperialist expansion.[59] According

58. Ali S. Asani, "Pluralism, Intolerance and the Quran", *The American Scholar*, 71/1 (Winter 2002), 53.

59. Ibid., 57.

to Asani, Saudi Arabia's state version of Islam is founded on the exclusivist doctrine of Quran interpretation, violently intolerant of both non-Muslims and Muslims who uphold different ideas. This approach, based on "the hegemony of Islam over non-Islam and that employs a rhetoric of hate and violence to attain such goals, [is] outdated in a global society in which relations between different peoples are best fostered on the basis of equality and mutual respect – a basic principle underlying the Quranic worldview."[60] Asani insists that for Muslims to participate in the multireligious and multicultural world of the 21st century, it is essential that they fully embrace Quranic teaching on pluralism.[61] Hence, Asani is actively engaged in interfaith work and, together with Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf and others, is spearheading the establishment of an academic institute geared towards developing an American Muslim school of thought, founded on the principle of religious pluralism.

Professor Khaled Abou El Fadl of the UCLA School of Law grounds the Islamic value of pluralism in classical Islamic law, which accommodated diverging approaches to theory and practice. Abou El Fadl argues that the classical model of Islam espoused by Islamic law is a continuous quest for truth and beauty, in which the sanctity of all life is paramount.[62] Rather than accept apologetic attempts to distance violent acts by Muslims from an idealized notion of Islam, Abou El Fadl insists that the only way for Muslims to uphold the integrity of the Islamic religion is "to critically evaluate the prevailing systems of belief in Islam and reflect

60. Ibid., 60.

61. Ibid.

62. See Khaled Abou El Fadl's essay collection, *The Conference of the Books: The search for beauty in Islam* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001).

upon the ways these systems might have contributed to, legitimated, or facilitated the tragedy."[63] In Abou El Fadl's assessment, "a supremacist and puritanical orientation in contemporary Islam shoulders the primary responsibility for the vast majority of extreme acts of ugliness that are witnessed today in the Islamic world."[64] He sees this orientation as the cornerstone of Wahhabi Islam exported from Saudi Arabia under the guise of a return to the pristine Islam of the first community of Islam (Salafism); this theological orientation (which he calls "Salafabism") has shaped the widespread Muslim approach of textual literalism, a disregard for the history of Islamic interpretation (and thus pluralism) and a superiority and hatred of others. Abou El Fadl attributes the success of these movements to their ability to fill the vacuum of religious authority wrought by the collapse of traditional institutes of learning and to counter Muslim feelings of extreme disempowerment brought on by Western colonialism. Militant groups, such as al-Qaeda and the Taliban, are extremist offshoots of this widespread approach. In Abou El Fadl's view, the heavy burden upon Muslim intellectuals is to marginalize these orientations (as previous generations of scholars did to extremist sects of their time) and reclaim the beautiful in the vast and rich moral tradition of Islam.[65] In pursuit of these goals, Abou El Fadl continues to speak and write prolifically, including his essay, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam," published with eleven Muslim and non-Muslim scholarly responses and *Reasoning with God: rationality and thought in Islam*.

63. Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Ugly Modern and the Modern Ugly," in *Progressive Muslims*, ed., Omid Safi (Oxford: Oneworld, 2003), 42.

64. Ibid., 42-43.

65. Ibid., 62.

Abou El Fadl belongs to a network of Western-trained Islam specialists that is developing a compelling response to extremism through an open and serious engagement with the whole of Islamic tradition. Omid Safi, Professor of Islamic Studies and Comparative Religion at Colgate University, spearheads this collaborative effort, which began with a conference in 2003 followed by the publication of a collection of fifteen essays. [66] Safi attributes the real genesis of this group of Muslim intellectuals and activists to the aftermath of 9/11 "in what we saw as the urgent need to raise the level of conversation, and to get away from the standard apologetic presentations of Islam."[67] In introducing the purpose of the collection, *Progressive Muslims*, Safi writes:

> Our aim has been to envision a socially and politically active Islamic identity that remains committed to ideals of social justice, pluralism, and gender equality. The aim here is not to advocate our own understanding as uniquely "Islamic" to the exclusion of the past fourteen hundred years of Islamic thought and practice. This is not a tyrannical attempt to insist that standing here at the threshold of the twenty-first century, we finally "got it right!" No,

66. The Progressive Muslim Project began with a conference in Washington, D.C., held April 4-6, 2003. The conference included progressive-style prayers, including the rare if unprecedented setup of women leading co-ed prayers in a public session: "All prayers will be conducted in accordance with progressive ideology. Men and women will line up side by side, in separate rows, and members of both sexes will have the opportunity to lead prayer. Those uncomfortable with the arrangement will have the opportunity to form their own congregation for prayer." http://www.geocities.com/pmndc/conference_program.htm

67. Omid Safi, "Introduction" in *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*, Ed., Omid Safi (Oxford, UK: Oneworld, 2003), 18.

> warts and all, from its glorious nobility to misogyny, there has always been a spectrum of interpretations in Islam. We seek to locate ourselves as part of that broader conversation, not to collapse the spectrum.[68]

The fifteen Muslim contributors to the volume are committed to values that others would call "modern" or even "postmodern," such as religious pluralism or gender justice. However, they are not interested in merely applying postmodern critiques to puritanical forms of Islam or in crafting utopian visions of social justice. Rather, through a combination of vision and activism, they are committed to changing existing social realities.[69]

Democracy as an Islamic Value

One of the most promising projects currently underway is the group of Muslim academics engaging Islamic sources and history to locate grounds for Islamic principles of democracy. Abdulaziz Sachedina, Professor of Religious Studies at University of Virginia, Muqtedar Khan and others are founding directors of the Center for Islam and Democracy, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank dedicated to "studying Islamic and democratic political thought and merging them into a modern Islamic democratic discourse."[70] These scholars locate a precedent for democratic rule in the historical division between religious and political realms within Muslim society, and seek to develop an Islamic notion of democracy without accepting secularism as the only prerequisite for democracy.

In his pioneering work, *The Islamic Roots of Democratic*

68. Ibid., 6

69. Ibid., 6-7

70. CSID was founded in 1999. [http://www.islam-democracy.org]

Pluralism, Sachedina explores Quranic and Islamic jurisprudential concepts of the divine-human relationship as well as the principles guiding human relationships, and compares them to ways in which the Muslim community has historically interpreted and applied these concepts and principles. In Sachedina's view, these sources provide fresh opportunities to develop a new theology of interreligious and intrareligious relations in working towards a social and political system that regards human dignity as the sole criterion for equal membership in Muslim political society.[71] In his speech, "Why Democracy and Why Now?" Sachedina speaks of the post-9/11 imperative for Muslim academicians, who are engaging in new scholarship on Islamically-rooted concepts of democracy, gender equality and pluralism, to reach out to the religious scholars (*ulamâ*) in the U.S. and the Muslim world. Otherwise, he acknowledges that, for all its sophisticated and groundbreaking work, the academic work will remain marginal and irrelevant to peoples lives.

> In the aftermath of September 11, we discovered to our horror the kind of antagonistic worldview that was preached in a number of Muslim organizations that depended for their knowledge on Islam as taught by the imported 'native' preachers from the Middle East. With all due respect to their breadth of traditional Islamic knowledge, they engaged in teaching their communities ways to protect their 'pure' religion that was threatened by the so-called Muslim academicians and the 'enemies' of Islam in universities. [72]

71. Abdulaziz Sachedina, *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 102.

72. Sachedina, "Why Democracy and Why Now?," Center for the Study

While recognizing the uphill battle of this approach, Sachedina and his colleagues are committed to making their work relevant to Muslim religious scholars and laypeople.

These and other Muslim intellectuals are developing an introspective and responsive form of Islam, which confronts the exclusivist and intolerant stream in contemporary Islam and actively interprets Islamic principles to fit the multi-cultural societies of the 21st century. Some of these scholars, such as Muqtedar Khan and Harftord Seminary Professor Ingrid Mattson (see below), situate themselves as change-makers within or on the edge of mainstream Muslim organizations. Others, such as Ali Asani or Khaled Abou El Fadl, function as outside critics and/or have established their own organizations. Although these voices constitute a minority within the American Muslim community, their work has been amplified by the similar goals expressed by new next-gen organizations (discussed earlier in Section II) as well as by electronic journals, such as the *American Muslim*, which has created a public forum for self-critical Muslim discussion.[73]

In addition to the work of Muslim intellectuals, mainstream organizations have also tried to respond to the American media's search for "the moderate Muslim." The Muslim Public Affairs Council held a winter 2001-02

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of Islam and Democracy, Fourth Annual Conference, Washington, DC, May 16, 2003. http://www.islam-democracy.org/4th_Annual_Conference-Sachedina_address.asp

73. The *American Muslim* was first published as a monthly journal from 1985-1995, and then began its publication anew after 9/11. Musaji renewed the journal on the Internet as a forum for strengthening the voices of those Muslims interested in building a self-critical, open and pluralistic Muslim society. [http://www.theamericanmuslim.org/about.htm]

conference on "the rising voice of the moderate Muslim" in an effort to reclaim the label and define it in Muslim terms. Even the leadership of the Islamic Society of North America spoke of the role that American Muslims can play in shaping a Muslim way of discussion based on tolerance, respect and democratic values. The impact that the American media has had on the way that Muslims describe themselves is an intriguing subject, and beyond the scope of this paper. However, for the alternate Muslim leaders that have risen to national prominence over the past two years, 9/11 has been nothing less than a catalyst for changing contemporary Islam.

C. 9/11 and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

In this final section, I will examine the effects of 9/11 on American Muslim attitudes towards Palestinian suicide bombing and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and their influence on American Muslim-Jewish relations.

After the 9/11 suicide attacks, many American Muslims felt compelled to articulate their general opposition to suicide bombing and acts of political violence against civilians. In particular, the new Muslim organizations and progressive Muslim intellectuals (discussed in previous sections) were most vocal about the Muslim obligation to condemn violence in the name of Islam, including Palestinian suicide bombing. However, the growing willingness of American Muslims to publicly oppose Palestinian suicide bombing has not led to a greater acceptance of Israeli perspectives. Even vociferous critics of Muslim attacks on civilians maintain strong sympathy for the Palestinian struggle and sharp censure of Zionism and Israeli policies. Yet, 9/11 has motivated some parts of the Muslim community to espouse a pragmatic and diplomatic end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

9/11 and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

On the first anniversary of 9/11, the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID) issued a "Statement Rejecting Terrorism" signed by the board of CSID, representatives of various Muslim organizations and centers, and numerous Muslim academics. The statement read:

> As American Muslims and scholars of Islam, we wish to restate our conviction that peace and justice constitute the basic principles of the Muslim faith. We wish again to state unequivocally that neither the al-Qaeda organization nor Usama bin Laden represents Islam or reflects Muslim beliefs and practice. Rather, groups like al-Qaeda have misused and abused Islam in order to fit their own radical and indeed anti-Islamic agenda. Usama bin Laden and al-Qaeda's actions are criminal, misguided and counter to the true teachings of Islam. We call on people of all faiths not to judge Islam by the actions of a few.
>
> We believe in justice and peace for both Israelis and Palestinians. We are convinced that security for Israel can only be achieved by justice for Palestinians. Today, a modicum of justice requires the establishment of an independent Palestinian state through the exercise of Palestinian self-determination. We believe that the continued occupation of Palestinian territories, and Israel's repeated disregard of international law, have made life in the occupied territories unbearable. We say most clearly, however, that the killing of innocent civilians, whether Christian, Muslim, or Jewish, is always wrong and is forbidden in Islamic law and ethics. Illegitimate means can never be justified by a desirable or noble goal.
>
> On this first anniversary of the tragedy of September 11, we call on all people of conscience to denounce violence and to work peacefully for the creation of a better world. We also urge our government leaders to work for peace, justice, liberty, and democracy around the globe.[74]

The statement is compelling not only for its clear condemnation of al-Qaeda and terrorism in the name of Islam, but also as an attempt to use Muslim consensus regarding the 9/11 attacks to carve out consensus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Some Muslim groups attempted to link the 9/11 attacks to U.S. support of Israel. Ironically, post-9/11 public pressure has yielded some tempering of American Muslim positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

How do American Muslims perceive Israel and the Middle Eastern conflict? This question has become the linchpin in assessing the growing voice of American Muslims and the state of Muslim-Jewish relations. Since the collapse of the Oslo Accords, and perhaps earlier, Muslim-Jewish relations have been overwhelmingly dominated by political differences over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In his article, "The Impact of 9/11 on Muslim-Jewish relations," columnist and MPAC board member Nayyer Ali describes the difficulties of maintaining Muslim-Jewish dialogue groups in the current environment:

> These questions have troubled Muslim-Jewish contacts all across the country, and Los Angeles has been no exception. Many who have been part of this dialogue have dropped out, some in a formal and public way, while others have just stopped coming. If our conversations were restricted to understanding the rules governing Halal and Kosher, this would not be a

74. http://www.islam-democracy.org/terrorism_statement.asp

> difficult dialogue. But Muslims and Jews cannot be in the same room without having to deal with the 800 pound gorilla seated in the corner, and of course we all know that is the issue of Palestine and Israel...[75]

Despite the diversity of opinions that this paper has highlighted within the Muslim community, American Muslims have demonstrated near unanimous sympathy for the Palestinian struggle for independence and criticism of Israeli policies. Nevertheless, a substantive distinction can be drawn between those Muslim groups who are willing to accept the reality of the state of Israel and support a diplomatic resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and those Muslim groups that are committed to a continuation of the conflict.

American Muslim Attitudes towards Suicide Bombing

Although, privately, many Muslims expressed frustration with the Palestinian leadership and the choices that it made, until 9/11 most refused to criticize Palestinian actions in public. However, since the suicide attacks of 9/11, more Muslim figures have publicly condemned Palestinian suicide bombings along with a general rejection of violence against civilians. Statements of these kinds have readily emanated from second-generation organizations as well as from Muslim intellectuals. For example, ISNA Vice President and Hartford Seminary Professor Ingrid Mattson publicly acknowledged her previous failure to speak out on the subject and explicitly condemned all violence by Muslims against innocent non-Muslims:

75. Nayyer Ali, "Impact of 9/11 on Muslim-Jewish Relations," posted on September 12, 2002 to the MPAC website. http://www.mpac.org/popa_article_display.aspx?ITEM=73

> I had not previously spoken about suicide attacks committed by Muslims in the name of Islam. I did not avoid the subject; it simply did not cross my mind as a priority among the many issues I felt needed to be addressed. This was a gross oversight. I should have asked myself, "Who has the greatest duty to stop violence committed by Muslims against innocent non-Muslims in the name of Islam?" The answer, obviously, is Muslims.[76]

In Mattson's view, the prosperity and freedom of American Muslims obligates them to speak out against all injustice, perpetuated by Muslims and non-Muslims. She thus concludes:

> So let me state it clearly: I, as an American Muslim leader, denounce not only suicide bombers and the Taliban, but those leaders of other Muslim states who thwart democracy, repress women, use the Quran to justify un-Islamic behavior, and encourage violence.[77]

In condemning suicide bombing, these voices cite both religious grounds, i.e., that Islam expressly forbids suicide and the murder of civilians, and political reasons, i.e., that it harms Muslim (and Palestinian) causes. More common has been indirect condemnations of Palestinian suicide bombings in the context of general rejections of violence against civilians and violence as a means for achieving political ends; the CSID-initiated "Statement Rejecting Terrorism" is a prime example of this trend.

76. Ingrid Mattson, "American Muslims' Special Obligation," in *Taking Back Islam*, eds., Michael Wolfe and the producers of Beliefnet (Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2003), 2-3.

77. Ibid., 3.

While members of CAIR, MPAC, AMC and ISNA signed the CSID statement against terrorism, only the Muslim Public Affairs Council has issued a formal position statement on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and has stated categorically that it condemns Palestinian suicide bombings:

> MPAC recognizes, along with the Geneva Convention, the right of an occupied people to resist occupation, and applies this same principle to the Palestinians. In short: the Palestinians have the moral and legal right to resist the Israeli occupation and MPAC supports that right. MPAC recognizes that there are and should be Islamic limitations to various forms of resistance, and has therefore taken a stance against the targeting of innocent civilians and non-combatants for several years. In particular, we have consistently opposed suicide bombers, both on the grounds that they target civilians, and on the traditional understanding of our religion, which prohibits suicide.[78]

The post-9/11 pressure on Muslim groups to clarify their stances on terrorism has led to at least a rhetorical shift in editorials and public speeches. In response to a *New York Times* insinuation of CAIR's ties to terrorist groups, Ibrahim Hooper, National Communications Director of CAIR issued what was probably the organizations first unequivocal condemnation of terrorism and suicide bombing in the name of Islam, in a letter to the editor:

> CAIR, a mainstream national Muslim organization, has issued statements condemning terrorism in all its forms. We condemned the 9/11 attacks, suicide

78. MPAC Position Paper, issued on June 27, 2002. http://www.mpac.org/popa_article_display.aspx?ITEM=20

> bombings in the Middle East, the killing of the journalist Daniel Pearl, church bombings in Pakistan, the murder of missionaries in Yemen, as well as other terrorist incidents perpetrated by those claiming to act in the name of Islam.[79]

At an October conference calling for university divestment from companies that do business with Israel, Hussein Ibish, a spokesman for the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (AADC) called suicide bombings "horrible." He continued and said: "It has been a catastrophe for the Palestinian national movement that people have been engaging in that foul practice."[80] These statements derive from individuals, such as Ibish and Hooper, who have frequently expressed vehemently anti-Israel sentiments and rarely if ever have condemned Palestinian actions in public. Whether or not this is an indication of the current political climate in which Arabs Muslims feel compelled to hide their views, what is clear is that the external pressure to reject suicide bombing has succeeded in overriding Muslim internal pressure to vocally support all Palestinian actions.

Rejection of Zionism

As is evident from the context of these statements, most

79. Ibrahim Hooper, "We Condemn Terror," *New York Times*, February 4, 2003. http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/04/opinion/L04MUSL.html?tntemail1. Although both Hooper and MPAC frame their condemnations of terror as consistent with past declarations, I was unable to locate such statements.

80. Second National Student Conference on the Palestine Solidarity Movement at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Cited in David Crumm, "Protests continue at U-M disinvestment conference," *Detroit Free Press*, October 13, 2002. http://www.freep.com/news/mich/pmx11301_20021012.htm

of those who condemn suicide bombing are also highly critical of Zionism and of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. In my interviews, and even more so in published articles, few American Muslims expressed sympathy for Zionism as an ideology. In articles, speeches and conference proceedings, Zionism is usually portrayed as a racist, colonialist ideology that is used to justify the destruction, expulsion and continued subjugation of the Palestinian people. In defending their views against the charges of anti-Semitism, Muslim proponents of anti-Zionism point to alliances with Jewish groups who are either anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox groups or left-wing Jewish groups who are highly critical of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. In particular, the members of the Neturei Karta, a radically anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox Jewish sect, have been regular invitees to a wide array of Muslim forums, from publishing articles against Zionism in Muslim journals to serving as the Jewish representative on interfaith panels.[81]

Muslim Views on Solving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

While there is consensus regarding the roots of the problem, I found more diversity of opinion regarding the solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Three approaches to the State of Israel predominate within American Muslim writings. First, there are Muslims who view the conflict in strictly religious terms, and refuse to countenance the recognition of a Jewish state in the midst of the Muslim and Arab world. This perspective is generally iterated in militant revivalist circles and among immigrants who have

81. See, for example, the articles published by Neturei Karta members in the *Minaret* magazines special 2001 issue on "Zionism is Racism." For examples of Neturei Karta's joint participation with Muslim groups in anti-Israel rallies, see the Neturei Karta website: http://www.nkusa.org.

pan-Islamist leanings. Second, there are a minority of Muslims who recognize the Jewish (religious/historical) claim to Israel as a parallel claim to those of the Palestinians. This minority view is usually found within Sufi circles, such as the Islamic Supreme Council and its leader, Shaykh Hisham Kabbani.[82] Finally, there are Muslims who recognize Israel as a historical and contemporary reality despite their perceptions of its injustice towards the Palestinians. Of these three perspectives on Israel, the majority of Muslim writings and interviews examined advocate this third position, i.e., the recognition of Israel's existence but not its ideological basis.

Within this majority view, proponents advocate one of two solutions: a two-state solution with a shared capital in Jerusalem; and a bi-national democratic one-state solution. The predominant position found is a pragmatic call for a two-state solution, which can be traced either to Muslim recognition of the reality of American support of Israel and/or to a belief that peace will come only through compromise. As MPAC's Nayyer Ali elaborates in his commentary on Muslim-Jewish dialogue in the wake of 9/11:

> But it is important to see that the existing dialogue has a fair amount of consensus in it. It is fair to say that no one in the dialogue accepts ethnic cleansing as legitimate, of either Jews or Palestinians. And most in the dialogue, including myself, accept that a two-state solution is the only realistic solution. This leaves wide room for disagreement on many areas, but on at least this much there is common ground.
>
> I think it is also important to recognize that neither Israelis nor Palestinians are happy about a two-state solution. If either party were to wake up one day and

82. http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org

> find the other had left the Holy Land, there would not be many tears shed. It is unfair to ask the other to not only accept you, but to want you.[83]

Ali explains his espousal of a two-state solution as a pragmatic realization of the only way to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The CSID statement argues in that same direction, albeit with loftier language invoking security and justice.

Among the more progressive voices within the Muslim community, there has been a recent attempt to downgrade the rhetoric of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from a religious struggle or a struggle for justice to a political conflict over land that requires a negotiated settlement.[84] The politicization of the conflict, as opposed to its escalation in religious terms, seems to be a necessary precursor for Muslim willingness to accept a two-state solution. In other words, the more the conflict is cast in religious terms of Muslim vs. Jew, the less likely the possibility for pragmatic compromise.

83. Nayyer Ali, 2002.

84. For one of the most constructive stances on this subject, see the American Islamic Congress position on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict: "We do not advocate a specific policy toward this conflict, but we embrace the principle that only a negotiated settlement can bring peace to Israel and Palestine. Creative, courageous people on both sides are needed to sit down at the negotiating table and come to a just settlement of the conflict. 50 years of war and bloodshed have led to nothing. Regardless of how these negotiations proceed, we extend the hand of friendship to all religious and ethnic communities in the United States, including the Jewish community. We also favor a proportional focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in the greater context of problems that Muslims and Arabs face in their individual countries. We should care about all people who are suffering, even if they are not Palestinians or Israelis." http://www.aicongress.org/about/faq3.htm

Nayyer Ali concludes his commentary with this conciliatory note:

> Finally, Muslims and Jews in Los Angeles should be aware that the Israeli-Palestinian struggle is not a Muslim-Jewish struggle, and does not arise from centuries of conflict. It is a struggle of two nationalisms over the same piece of land, and two competing histories, in which each side finds moral legitimacy to its actions. But one day this secular struggle over land and nationhood will end, and a peace will be born. On that day, Muslims and Jews in Los Angeles and throughout the United States will find that we have much in common, not just theologically or in our dietary laws, but in our real world political agenda as two monotheistic minorities in the American tapestry.[85]

Although the Israeli-Palestinian conflict currently looms large over Muslim-Jewish relations in America, Ali concludes with his long-term interest in developing closer ties between the communities. A common thread throughout the interviews I conducted was the recognition by American Muslims of the potential for Muslim-Jewish cooperation as two ethnic-religious minorities in America. Imam Both Feisal Abdul Rauf, a New York-based religious scholar and Sufi, and Harvard Professor Ali Asani, showed a keen awareness of American Jewish history and actively have sought to learn from the Jewish experience about how to succeed as an American minority.

Can Muslim-Jewish Relations Improve in the Current Political Climate?

Several American Muslims spoke of the need to 'agree to

85. Nayyer Ali, 2002.

disagree' with Jews with regard to Israel/Palestine in order to improve Muslim-Jewish relations. Others expressed doubt that broad cooperation could occur unless a new peace process emerged. A third view, expressed by Salam Marayati, executive director of MPAC, strongly advocated dialogue specifically on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, not with the goal of solving the Mid-East crisis but in order to develop a framework for how to speak to each other.[86] My research indicates a direct correlation between those Muslims who are intent on formulating an independent American Muslim voice and those Muslims who seek to de-escalate the tension with the Jewish community. The more American a Muslim identified the more he or she was willing to invest in Muslim-Jewish relations, either by agreeing to disagree or by investing energy in dialogue on this very issue.

86. Interview, Friday, August 30, 2002 in Washington, D.C.

Conclusion

The Muslim community is undergoing a fascinating process of transition. The process of Americanization that has brought about profound changes in the Jewish and Catholic communities shows strong indication of leading to significant changes in Islam. The events of these past two years have demonstrated the Muslim community's potential as well as its limitations. While Muslims sense the pressure and the benefits of speeding up the process of community development and Americanization, the Muslim community still has a long way to go.

The challenges of political power and community representation reflect crucial stages along the steep learning curve towards becoming a successful American minority group. Unlike Jewish immigrants to America, most Muslims come from majority cultures. It is no coincidence, in my view, that a disproportionate number of Muslims in the vanguard are from minority cultures, such as Muqtedar Khan, an Indian Muslim, or Ali Asani, an Ismaili Shi'i Muslim.[87]

By analyzing trends, voices and debates within the American Muslim community over the past two years, this study has identified three major developments:

87. Khan explicitly refers to the Muslim situation in India as a potential model for Muslims in America in his article, "Immigrant American Muslims and the Moral Dilemmas of Citizenship." http://www.islam-fortoday.com/khan04.htm.

(1) The political awakening of the American Muslim community, whereby Muslims now recognize the vital need for broad Muslim participation in American politics, in order to protect their domestic as well as international interests, and the urgency for reaching out to form alliances with other groups.

(2) The rise of a new generation of young leaders, who share an affinity of values with their American peers, and accept as given the compatibility of Islam, democracy and human rights. These next-generation activists feel more confident in their capacity to effect change in American society, both socially and politically. Some of these individuals, such as Ingrid Mattson, have chosen to work within established organizations to effect change, while others, such as Ahmed al-Rahim, have created new forums within the Muslim community

(3) The emergence of an intellectual vanguard keen on developing progressive approaches to Islam, embracing religious pluralism and rejecting violence as a political means.

Despite the headlines of continuous Jewish-Muslim conflict, these trends leave room for cautious optimism regarding the future of Jewish-Muslim relations in America. The crisis following 9/11 has created a window of opportunity – Muslims in America are looking to enter into American political and civic positions of power and they recognize that they cannot do it alone. New progressive voices from young professionals and intellectuals are challenging the conservative and insular tendencies of their parents' generation, as they advocate serious and constructive engagement with other groups. Yes, American

Muslims continue to demonstrate near unanimous support of the Palestinian struggle for independence and vehement criticism of Israeli policies. And, yet, a growing number of Muslim leaders are distancing themselves from the radical tactics of extremist Muslim groups by denouncing violence against noncombatants. It is in the Jewish community's interest to seek out American Muslims who espouse these viewpoints and to expand its connections with diverse members of the American Muslim community.

Appendix A: Major Muslim organizations in the United States

In addition to more than 1,200 mosques and Islamic centers, there are currently hundreds of Muslim organizations located throughout the United States. The following is a brief description of the most prominent Muslim organizations in America; small or new organizations that are cited in the report are described as well. The organizations are chosen for their prominence in terms of activity, membership base, and/or media coverage, and representing different types of organizations that pervade American Muslim society. Local mosques and ethnic organizations, such as the Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee or Council of Presidents of Major Arab Organizations, are not included. Please note that many of these organizations are in transition, and contact information and organizational leaders may change.

I. Political/Public Affairs Organizations

American Muslim Alliance

Contact Information:
39675 Cedar Boulevard
Suite 220E
Newark, California 94560

Phone: (510) 252-9858
URL: http://www.amaweb.org/

Year founded: 1992

Leadership: Dr. Agha Saeed – National Chairman

Description: AMA's stated mission is to increase political participation from Muslims in America, by increasing voter registration, facilitating Washington internships and encouraging Muslims to run for public office. AMA functions primarily as a grass roots organization, with 7,000 members and 98 chapters in 31 states. In February 2001, AMA merged with the National Council on Islamic Affairs, one of the oldest Muslim public affairs Muslim organization. AMA is a member of the American Muslim Political Coordinating Council.

American Muslim Council (AMC)

Contact Information
1212 New York Avenue, NW; Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202)789-2262; Fax: (202) 789-2550
E-mail: amc@amconline.org
URL: http://www.amconline.org

Founded: 1990

Leadership: Eric Erfan Vickers, Esq. – Executive Director
Dr. Yahya Basha – President, Board of Directors

Description: AMC's stated mission is to increase the effective participation of American Muslims in the political and public policy arenas. Its main activities include voter registration drives, encouraging Muslim candidates for public office and lobbying Washington law and policy makers for a

conservative Muslim legislative agenda on international and domestic issues. AMA is a member of the American Muslim Political Coordinating Council.

American Muslim Political Coordinating Council (AMPCC)

Contact Information:
no independent office
housed at its member organizations

Founded: 2000

Leadership: currently in rotation; Dr. Maher Hathout – former Chair

Description: The AMPCC links the leaders of the American Muslim Alliance, American Muslim Council, Council on American Islamic Relations, Muslim Public Affairs Council, and Council of Presidents of Arab-American Organizations. AMPCC's mission is to coordinate Muslim consensus on political and social issues and to create Muslim voting blocs for endorsing candidates through MPCC-PAC. AMPCC is most active prior to elections, but its organizations will occasionally organize forums and issue press releases under the AMPCC name.

Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

Contact Information:
453 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20003-4034
Phone: (202) 488-8787
Email: webmaster@cair-net.org
URL: http://www.cair-net.org

Founded: 1994

Leadership: Mr. Nihad Awad – Executive Director; Mr. Omar Ahmad – President; Mr. Ibrahim Hooper – Communications Director

Description: CAIR is a Washington-based Islamic advocacy group for Muslims in the U.S., with 11 chapters nationwide. CAIR views its primary role as providing an Islamic perspective on media watch and civil rights. CAIR is best known as for its anti-discrimination campaigns against individuals and corporations that denigrate Islam or Muslims. The organization also organizes rallies and lobbying efforts on international issues in Middle East and South Asia. CAIR is a member of the American Muslim Political Coordinating Council.

Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)

Contact Information:

3010 Wilshire Boulevard	994 National Press Building
Suite 217	529 14th Street, NW
Los Angeles, California 90010	Washington, DC 20045
Phone: (213) 383-3443	Phone: (202) 879-6726

URL: http://www.mpac.org

Founded: 1988

Leadership: Salam al-Maryati – Executive Director; Aslam Abdullah – Spokesperson; Hassan Zeennie – Chair, Board of Directors.

Description: MPAC seeks to effect positive change in American public opinion and public policy according to Muslim concerns. Originating as a committee within the Islamic Center of Southern California, MPAC opened its

second office in Washington, DC, in 2001. MPAC organizes frequent events to promote interaction between Muslims and political, ethnic and religious leaders. The organization issues position papers to promote its social and political positions, and press releases to promote a more accurate portrayal of Muslims in the media. MPAC is a member of the American Muslim Political Coordinating Council.

II. Public Policy Organizations/Think Tanks

American Islamic Congress (AIC)

Contact Information:
1770 Massachusetts Avenue, #623
Cambridge, MA 02140
Phone: (617) 621-1511
Email: info@aicongress.org

Founded: 2002

Leadership: Zaynab al-Suwaij – Director; Ahmed al-Rahim – Chair

Description: AIC was founded following 9/11 to promote Muslim voices who reject extremism and uphold the principles of pluralism, democracy and social justice. AIC is a social and public policy organization that is dedicated to building interfaith and interethnic understanding. The organization produces scholarly work on current events, social and public policy, as well as handbooks on Islam for teachers.

Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID)

Contact Information:
1050 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20036
Phone/Fax: (202) 772-2022
URL: http://www.islam-democracy.org/

Founded: 1999

Leadership: Radwan Masmoudi – President; Ali A. Mazrui – Chair

Description: CSID is a research center dedicated to studying Islamic and democratic political thought and merging them into a modern Islamic democratic discourse. The Center aims to produce scholarship for two audiences: first, to critically analyze Western ideas and principles for the Muslim community; and second, to counter prejudices about Islam and improve the mainstream American community and policymakers' understanding of Islam's approach towards individual freedom, civil rights, and political pluralism. CSID regularly hosts conferences on subjects related to Islam and democracy.

Center for Understanding Islam (CUI)

Contact Information:
19 Claremont Road, Suite 2B
Bernardsville, NJ, 07924.
Phone: (908) 696-0004; Fax: (908) 696-1118
URL: http://www.cuii.org

Founded: 2001

Leadership: Dr. Robert D. Crane – Chair; Dr. M. Ali Chaudry – President

Description: CUI was founded in the aftermath of 9/11 to advance a clear Islamic message of rejecting religious and political violence and to emphasize the common humanity of all peoples of faith. CUI focuses on education, interfaith work and policy research. The Center conducts seminars on Islam, publishes articles and discussion guides, organizes retreats for Muslim and non-Muslim youth and community leaders, and maintains a speakers bureau for lectures and interfaith programs.

Islamic Free Market Institute (aka Islamic Institute)

Contact Information:
1920 L Street, NW
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202)955-7174
URL: http://www.islamicinstitute.org/index2.htm

Founded: 1998

Leadership: Khaled Saffuri – Chair

Description: The Institute's stated purpose is to inspire and facilitate the development of grassroots Muslim political movements that are economically conservative. IFMI seeks to establish a network of advocacy groups, think tanks, political organizations and local community centers to expand activities and engage American Muslims. The Institute's main activities include: promoting Muslim political activism and participation; sponsoring policy research that

provides an Islamic perspective on social and fiscal issues, such as free trade, monetary policy, banking, abortion, the death penalty and crime; and cultivating relationships between the Muslim community and like-minded policy and law makers.

III. Professional/Womens Organizations

Karamah: Muslim Women Lawyers For Human Rights

Contact Information:
The T.C. Williams School of Law
University of Richmond
Richmond, VA 23173
Phone: (202) 234-7302/3; Fax: (202) 234-7304
Email: karamah@karamah.org
URL: http://www.karamah.org

Founded: 1993

Leadership: Dr. Azizah al-Hibri, Esq. – President; Irfana Anwer – Executive Director, Washington, D.C., office

Description: Through education, grassroots organizing and advocacy, Karamah is committed to supporting the human rights of Muslims in the United States of America and internationally. While it works to defend civil rights of all Muslims, Karamah focuses on improving the treatment of women within Islamic communities and ensuring that women take an active part in governing their lives. Current projects include: an anti-bias project with the University of Richmond; a summer leadership development program for young Muslim women; and a conflict resolution assessment

project within the Muslim community in Washington, D.C. Karamah also cultivates relationships with Washington public officials and lawmakers.

Muslim Women's League (MWL)

Contact Information:
3010 Wilshire Blvd. Suite #519
Los Angeles, CA 90020
Phone: (626) 358-0335
Email: mwl@mwlusa.org
URL: http://www.mwlusa.org

Founded: 1984

Leadership: Semeen R. Issa – President; Laila al-Maryati – Spokesperson

Description: MWL's stated mission is to implement the values of Islam and thereby reclaim the status of women as free, equal and vital contributors to society. MWL sponsors spiritual retreats and study groups for women, and provides grants for the professional development of young Muslim women. The organization also hosts conferences and publishes position papers and articles to effect public opinion and policy. MWL networks with other women's organizations both domestically and internationally. Key issues include: economic and legal rights of women and women's rights over their bodies (e.g., genital mutilation).

The North American Council for Muslim Women (NACMW)

Contact Information:
P.O. Box 942

Great Falls, VA 22066
Phone: 703-726-1072; Fax: (703) 726-1073
Email: nacmw@aol.com

Founded: 1992

Leadership: Ms. Sharifa Alkhateeb – President

Description: NACMW was created by 150 diverse Muslim women as an educational, advocacy, and legislative organization dedicated to improving the knowledge of Muslims about Islam and about North American society. The organization teaches Muslim women about their Islamic and international rights, particularly in the area of domestic violence and marriage. Through networking with the media and the government, NACMW strives to improve the image of Muslim women in the U.S.

IV. Community/Umbrella Organizations

American Society of Muslims Ministry of W.D. Mohammed

Contact Information:
929 W. 171st Street
Hazel Crest, Illinois 60429
Phone: (708) 798-6750
Email: wdministry@aol.com
URL: http://www.themosquecares.org (under construction)

Founded: 1934 as Nation of Islam; 1975 as American Muslim Mission.

Leadership: Warith Deen Mohammed – National leader

(recently retired); E. Abdulmalik Mohammed – Assistant to the National Leader

Description: ASM is considered the largest and best organized indigenous Muslim community. Since 1985, ASM has functioned as an umbrella organization with affiliated organizations and mosques, fulfilling religious, educational, social and economic needs. The main affiliates include: the Clara Mohammed School system of elementary and high schools; The Mosque Cares, a network of Islamic centers; American Society of Muslims Business Association, a network of community businesses and commercial development concerns; philanthropic/community service organizations such as the International League of Muslim Women; ASM National Young Adult Association for local and regional youth activities; *Muslim Journal*, a weekly publication; New Africa radio a radio station and website; and an annual convention.

Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)

Contact Information Headquarters:
P.O. Box 38
Plainfield, Indiana 46168
(317)839-8157
URL: http://www.isna.net

Founded: 1981 as a spin-off of the Muslim Students Association

Leadership: Dr. Sayyid Muhammad Syeed – General Secretary and CEO; Shaikh Muhammed Nur Abdullah – President; Dr. Ingrid Mattson – Vice President, U.S.

Description: ISNA is the largest association of American

Muslim organizations, primarily serving immigrant Muslims and their children. The main affiliates include: youth organizations, such as the Muslim Students Association (see below); communal organizations, such as the Muslim Communities Associations; professional organizations, such as the Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers; financial institutions, such as the North American Islamic Trust; educational institutions, such as Council of Islamic Schools of North America, and religious bodies, such as Fiqh Council of America. Each constituent organization has its own board and committees, but administrative, financial and legal affairs are centralized in general secretariat of ISNA, under the executive council. The national organization hosts an annual convention of up to 40,000 participants, in addition to regional conventions. ISNA also publishes a number of periodicals, including *Islamic Horizons*, a bi-monthly magazine.

Muslim Alliance in North America (MANA)

Contact Information:
P.O. Box 1446
New York, NY 10026
Phone: (212) 932-8546; Fax: (212) 932-8548
E-mail: info@mananet.org
URL: http://www.mananet.org

Founded: 2001

Leadership: Siraj Wahaj – Amir (President); Dr. Ihsan Bagby – General Secretary

Description: MANA's stated purpose is to pursue an agenda that reflects the points of view and experiences of the indigenous Muslims of North America (defined as non-

immigrants) and addresses their needs and aspirations. MANA aims to establish a full-service network of mosques and community centers dedicated to community and economic development, outreach and education to non-Muslims and Muslims; and support for Islamic legal scholars. MANA is particularly interested in reaching out to prison inmates and training chaplains; MANA leaders have been outspoken in defending Jamil al-Amin (formerly H. Rap Brown), a controversial Muslim leader who was convicted of murdering a police officer in 2002.

Muslim Student Association (MSA)

Contact Information:
P. O. Box 18612
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: (703) 820-7900; Fax: (703) 820-7888
Email: info@msa-natl.org
URL: http://www.msa-natl.org

Founded: 1963

Leadership: Altaf Hussein – President; Lubaba Abdallah – Vice President US.

Description: MSA is the most active Muslim organization in the United States, tightly organized into four regional zones and chapters on most college campuses. On the national level, MSA maintains the activist spirit of its founders, upholding a revivalist interpretation of Islam and a conservative attitude towards practice and gender issues. At the same time, each MSA chapter differs according to its campus leadership. General activities include: Ramadan prayer, study and breakfast groups; Islam Awareness Week; political action on international issues; helping Muslim

international students come to the US. The national office publishes its own handbooks and literature, and runs annual and regional conventions.

V. Religious Organizations

Imam al-Khoei Foundation

Contact Information:
89-89 Van Wyck Expressway
Jamaica, NY, 11435
Phone: 718-297-6520; Fax: (718) 658-5530
Email: comments@al-khoei.org
URL: http://www.al-khoei.org

Founded: 1985

Leadership: Fadhel Al-Sahlani – Vice President and Director

Description: As a branch of the London-based organization, the Foundation is the largest Shi'i center in the United States center. The Foundation hosts a mosque, library and cultural center, and runs elementary school and supplementary school programs. It has informal ties to major Shi'i centers throughout the country, sharing religious and charitable activities. The Foundation also publishes *al-Huda*, a bi-monthly periodical.

Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA)

Contact information:
166-26 89th Ave.
Jamaica NY 11432

Phone: (718) 658-1199; Fax: (718) 658-1255
Email: info@icna.org
URL: http://www.icna.org

Founded: 1971

Leadership: Muhammad Naeem Baig – Secretary General; Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Shah – President and head of Executive Council

Description: Originally a workers' organization established by Muslims from South Asia, ICNA engages in religious and educational activities to spread Islam to non-Muslims and to encourage Muslims to increase their level of religious observance. ICNA's main activities includes outreach and proselytizing in mosques, prisons and campuses, as well as fundraising and community relief work. ICNA publishes and distributes copious literature and publishes *The Message*, a monthly magazine. The organization maintains eight regional chapters and numerous local chapters, and hosts annual as well as regional conventions. Recently, ICNA has co-hosted conventions with the Muslim American Society and there has been talk of an eventual merger. Following 9/11, the two organizations convened the National Leadership Summit, to enable its 15 member organizations to speak with one voice to the American public.

Islamic Supreme Council of America

Contact Information:
Washington, D.C. Office:
1400 Sixteenth Street NW, #B112
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 939-3400; Fax: (202) 939-3410

Email: staff@islamicsupremecouncil.org
URL: http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org

Founded: 1990 – conceived as an organization; 1997 – incorporated as ISCA

Leadership: Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani – Chair; Dr. Hedieh Mirahmadi – Executive Director

Description: ISCA is a religious and advocacy organization as well as the center for Naqshbandi Sufism in America. The Council aims to be a scholarly resource for American Muslims trying to resolving contemporary issues affecting the maintenance of Islamic beliefs in a modern, secular society. In addition, ISCA works closely and proactively with non-Muslim individuals and organizations to present Islam as a religion of moderation, tolerance, peace and justice; ISCA leader, Shaykh Kabbani, lectures frequently in government and NGO forums. The organization maintains a number of affiliates, including: a women's assistance organization (Kamilat), organizations promoting Sufi approaches (As-Sunnah Foundation of America and Naqshbandi Sufi Way), and *The Muslim* magazine.

Muslim American Society (MAS)

Contact Information:
P.O. Box 1896, Falls Church, VA 22041
Telephone (703) 998-6525; Fax (703) 998-6526
E-mail: mas@masnet.org
URL: http://www.masnet.org

Founded: 1992

Leadership: Shaker Elsayed – Secretary-General; Suhail al Ganouchi – President.

Description: Founded by an ISNA break-off group, MAS's stated mission is to present the message of Islam to Muslims and non-Muslims and promote understanding between them. The organization focuses its activities on religious education to youth and adults through its network of Islamic schools, curriculum development, and quarterly publication, *The American Muslim*.[88] MAS is the parent organization of the Islamic American University, founded in 2002 to provide courses in Islamic studies and to train teachers and missionaries. Post 9/11, MAS has developed a media watch department.

VI. Institutes for Higher Learning/Academic Institutes

Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences

Contact Information:
750-A Miller Drive S.E.
Leesburg, VA 20175 USA
Phone: (703) 779-7477; Fax: (703) 779-7999
Email: school@siss.edu
URL: http://www.siss.edu

Founded: 1996

Leadership: Dr. Taha Jaber Alalwani – President; Ahmed Alalwani – Executive Dean

Description: GSISS is the first Muslim-governed, campus-based institution of Islamic graduate studies in the United

88. This publication is distinct from the one published by Sheila Musaji and described earlier.

States, providing master's degrees in Islamic studies and Religious Practice (MRP). The MRP program serves students who wish to prepare for a career of service as Muslim chaplains in the U.S. armed forces, veterans administration hospitals, colleges and universities, correctional facilities, and elsewhere in the Muslim community. The institute seeks to train qualified scholars, educators, and chaplains that will meet the needs of American society and of the Muslim community, while supporting American Muslims in their effort to integrate with the wider society of the United States without losing their own identity and culture.

International Institute for Islamic Thought

Contact Information:
500 Grove Street
Herndon, VA 20170
Phone: (703) 471-1133
Email: iiit@iiit.org
URL: http://www.iiit.org

Founded: 1981

Leadership: Dr. Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman – President; Dr. Jamal Barzinji – Vice President

Description: The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) is a private academic and cultural institution, dedicated to the revival and reform of Islamic thought and its methodology. The Institute promotes academic research on the methodology and philosophy of various disciplines, focusing on the development of Islamic scholarship in contemporary social sciences. IIIT has conducted more than 150 conferences, seminars and training courses. The

Institute has also produced several hundred books in Arabic, English and other languages. IIIT sponsors the Association of Muslim Social Scientists, which publishes the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*.

Zaytuna Institute

Contact Information:
631 Jackson Street
Hayward, CA 94544
Phone: (510) 582-1979
Email: info@zaytuna.org
URL: http://www.zaytuna.org

Founded: 1996

Leadership: Shaykh Hamza Yusuf Hanson – Director

Description: Zaytuna Institute and Academy is a non-profit, educational institute and school dedicated to teaching the traditional Islamic disciplines of law, theology, Quran, rhetoric, logic and syntax. Currently offering classes and summer programs to children, youth and adults, the Institute aims to expand into a full-time academy. Zaytuna also hosts an annual conference of international Muslim scholars in Santa Clara, California.

Project MAPS

Contact Information:
Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding
Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service
Georgetown University
37th & O Streets, NW Washington, D.C. 20057
Phone: 202-687-0291; Fax: 202-687-6001

E-mail: info@projectmaps.com
URL: http://www.projectmaps.com

Founded: 2000

Leadership: Dr. Sulayman Nyang and Dr. Zahid Bukhari – Directors and Co-Principal Investigators; Dr. John Esposito – Coordinator

Description: Project MAPS is a three-year initiative funded by the Pew Charitable Trust to fill in the gaps of knowledge regarding the emerging Muslim community in America. The project has gathered research on the participation, contribution and role of the Muslim community in American civic life, and intends to produce a two-volume work based on the contributions of thirty Muslim scholars. Project MAPS is also coordinating research for two reference tools: a directory of Muslim civic organizations and centers/mosques; and a "Who's Who Among American Muslims," including 1,000 American Muslim civic leaders in diverse fields. The project periodically hosts leadership conferences on related subjects.

VIII. Educational Organizations

Council on Islamic Education

Contact Information:
P.O. Box 20186,
Fountain Valley, CA 92728-0186
Phone: (714) 839-2929; Fax: (714) 839-2714
Email: info@cie.org
URL: http://www.cie.org

Founded: 1990

Leadership: Munir Shaikh – Executive Director; Shabbir Mansuri – Founding Director

Description: CIE is a educational resource organization dedicated to improving the way Islam is taught in the American K-12 education system. Rather than lobbying at the political level, CIE cultivates relationships with school textbook publishers, state education officials and policy-makers, curriculum developers, and teachers. The Council sponsors workshops for teachers, develops resources for schools, works with textbooks writers and facilitates visits to schools by experts in Islamic studies and traditions.

VIII. Local Initiatives

American Muslims Intent on Learning and Activism (AMILA)

Contact Information:
PO Box 2216
Los Gatos, CA 95031
http://www.amila.org/

Founded: 1992

Leadership: Moina Noor – Director, Steering Committee (all volunteer leadership)

Description: AMILA organizes religious, educational, social and political events for its members as well as for the broader Bay Area community. AMILA's main objective is to build a San Francisco Bay Area based Muslim community that would advance Islam as a viable social and ethical force

in the U.S. and contribute to the social and moral growth of American society. The organization was founded by young Muslim students and professionals who felt that there was no forum for men and women to study together and promote social justice activities.

Muslims Voices for Peace (formerly, Muslims Against Terrorism (MAT)

Contact Information:
PO Box 226
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Phone: (646) 536-8946
URL: http://www.mvp-us.org

Founded: 2001

Leadership: Aasma Khan – founder; Sana Fadel – volunteer coordinator

Description: An education and advocacy group, MVP was founded immediately following 9/11 by a group of young American Muslims with the goal, to honor the loss of the thousands who were senselessly killed by working to ensure that it never happens again. The all-volunteer group trains its members to go into public schools and teach students and teachers about Islam and its principles of peace, love of humanity and service to the community. MVP participates in dialogue groups with other traditions, and promotes activities to mobilize other Muslims to speak out against terrorism and violence in the name of Islam. Finally, MVP provides information to various media agencies to promote a more nuanced conception of Islam.

Appendix B: Brief descriptions of Muslim individuals mentioned

Feisal Abdul Rauf is the imam of Masjid al-Farah in New York City and founder of the American Sufi Muslim Association (ASMA) Society, a non-profit, non-political, educational and cultural organization dedicated to creating bridges between the American public and American Muslims. Born in Kuwait, Abdul Rauf is a member of the board of trustees of the Islamic Center of New York, and Islamic advisor to the Interfaith Center of New York. He is the author of *Islam: A Search for Meaning,* and *Islam: A Sacred Law, What Every Muslim Should Know About the Shariah.*

Khaled Abou El Fadl, Ph.D., is the Omar and Azmeralda Alfi Distinguished Fellow in Islamic Law and Professor of Law at the University of California Los Angeles Law School. Born in Kuwait and educated in the Middle East and the U.S., Abou El Fadl has become one of the leading authorities in Islamic law in the United States and Europe. He works with various human rights organizations, such as Human Rights Watch and the Lawyer's Committee for Human Rights. Abou El Fadl's books include: *Conference of the Books: The Search for Beauty in Islam*; *Rebellion in Islamic Law*; *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women*; *And God Knows the Soldiers: The Authoritative and Authoritarian in Islamic Discourse,*

and *The Place of Tolerance in Islam,* with contributions by others.

Taha Jaber Al-Alwani, Ph.D., is president of the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences and occupies the Imam Al-Shafi'i Chair in Islamic Legal Theory. He is also president of the Fiqh Council of North America, and was previously the president of the International Institute of Islamic Thought in Herndon, Virginia. Born in Iraq, Al-Alwani did his graduate work at Al-Azhar University in Cairo and taught Islamic legal theory for eleven years at various universities in the Muslim world. Particularly interested in the social implications of Islamic law, he is a major participant in the activities of Muslim social scientists, publishing works such as his *Ethics of Disagreement* and *The Rights of the Accused in Islam.* Since coming to the United States in 1984, Dr. Al-Alwani has been a regular contributor to the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* and a keen observer of intellectual trends throughout the Muslim world.

Dr. Nayyer Ali is a board member of the Muslim Public Affairs Council. A medical doctor, Ali is also a newspaper columnist in California.

Ahmed al-Rahim, Ph.D., teaches Arabic language and literature at Harvard University and serves as Chair of the American Islamic Congress. Born in Iraq, Al-Rahim's family arrived in Texas in 1978. Dr. al-Rahim received his Ph.D. in Arabic and Islamic Studies from New York University.

Ali Asani, Ph.D., is Professor of the Practice of Indo-Muslim Languages and Culture at Harvard University. Born in Kenya, Asani has undergraduate and graduate degrees from Harvard University. His books include *Celebrating Muhammad: Images of the Prophet in Popular Muslim Poetry*; *The Bujh Niranjan: An Ismaili Mystical Poem*; and *al-Ummah: A Handbook for an Identity Development Program for North American Muslim Youth.*

Zahid Bukhari, Ph.D. is the director of Project Muslims in the American Public Square (MAPS), housed at the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. A Pakistani-American, Dr. Bukhari has a master's in Economics from the University of Karachi and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Connecticut. He was one of the founders of the National Islamic Shura Council, a representative body of the American Muslims consisting of four national Islamic organizations. Dr. Bukhari also worked as Secretary General of the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) from 1990 to 1995. Since 1996, he has also been the chairman of ICNA Relief, a not-for-profit relief organization, which operates national and international projects.

Talal Eid is the religious director of the Islamic Center of New England. Born in Lebanon, Imam Eid graduated from al-Azhar University in Cairo, and completed a Master's of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School, where he is presently a doctoral candidate. A well-known Muslim scholar, activist and lecturer on Islam in interfaith settings, Imam Eid also serves as Muslim chaplain at Children's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

Sarah Eltantawi is the communications director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC). Born and raised in the U.S., Eltantawi received her M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard University and her B.A. in English and Rhetoric from the University of CA, Berkeley.

Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, Ph.D., is Professor of History, Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. Haddad, a Christian of Arab descent, is one of the foremost authors on Islam in America. In addition to her works cited in the bibliography, she was written *Contemporary Islam and Challenge of History*; *Gender and Social Change*; *Islamic Values in the United States* (with A. Lummis); *The Muslims of America*; *Mission to America* (with J. Smith); *Muslim Communities in North America*, among others.

Ibrahim Hooper is national communications director for the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). Hooper is a Canadian-born convert to Islam with extensive background in media relations.

Hussein Ibish, Ph.D., is the communications director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), a lobby group. Ibish also serves as Vice-President of the National Coalition to Protect Political Freedom (NCPPF). Born in Lebanon, Mr. Ibish has a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. A long-time secular activist, Ibish is a frequent contributor to works on civil liberties and Palestinian advocacy.

Shaykh Hisham Kabbani is chair of the Islamic Supreme Council of America. Born in Lebanon, Kabbani graduated from the American University of Beirut in Chemistry, and received a medical degree in Belgium. He then received a degree in Islamic law from Damascus. Kabbani arrived in the United States in 1991 and has since established 13 Naqshbandi Sufi centers throughout the U.S. He is an internationally renowned speaker and Sufi leader.

M.A. Muqtedar Khan, Ph.D., is assistant professor of Political Science and Director of International Studies at Adrian College. Currently a fellow at the Brookings Institute, Khan is vice president of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists and also serves on the boards of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy and the American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences. Born in India, Khan received bachelor's and master's degrees in India and a Ph.D. in Political Science from Georgetown University. In

addition to his on-line magazines, Khan is the author of several books, including: *Jihad for Jerusalem: Identity and Strategy in International Relations* (forthcoming); *Rethinking* US Foreign Policy in the Muslim World; and *American Muslims: Bridging Faith and Freedom.*

Salam Al-Marayati is the director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC). Born in Iraq, Al-Maryati was raised and educated in the U.S.; he received a B.S. degree in Biochemistry from the University of California Los Angeles, and then an M.B.A. from University of California of Irvine. Al-Marayati has held leadership positions in a number of Muslim and civic entities, including as a board member of the American Committee to Save Bosnia; a commissioner of the Human Relations Commission in Los Angeles; co-chair of the Interfaith Coalition to Heal Los Angeles (post 1992); and a member of the Executive Committee of the California Democratic Party.

Tarek Masoud is a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science at Yale University. Born in Wisconsin to Egyptian immigrant parents, Masoud spent most of his childhood in Saudi Arabia. He earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Brown University, where he was editor-in-chief of the *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. After Brown, he served as an editorial intern at *Foreign Affairs*, a foreign affairs and defense reporter on the *Newshour with Jim Lehrer*, and a research fellow at the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs.

Ingrid Mattson is director of the Islamic Chaplaincy program and professor of Islamic studies at the Macdonald Center for Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary. Mattson, a Canadian convert to Islam, earned her Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from the University of Chicago in 1999. From 1987-1988 she lived in Pakistan where she worked with Afghan refugee women. In 2001, Dr.

Mattson was elected Vice President of the Islamic Society of North America. She is a prolific public writer and speaker on Islam in America, Islamic law, and womens issues.

Warith Deen Mohammed is the recently-retired leader of the American Society of Muslims, the largest indigenous Muslim community in America. Since his succession as leader of the Nation of Islam from his father, Mohammed has transformed his community from a separatist group to a part of the mainstream Sunni Muslim community. In addition to his role as preacher and teacher in his community, Mohammed is an internationally renowned religious leader. He is member of the World Supreme Council of Mosques, the Peace Council, and an international president of the World Conference of Religion and Peace. Mohammed officially retired from his position in September 2003, but continues to serve as spiritual leader and the head of The Mosque Cares.

Roy Mottahedeh is chairperson of the Committee on Islamic Studies at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies and the Gurney Professor of History at Harvard University. His books include *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (1980) and *The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran* (1985). He is the faculty adviser of *The Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review.*

Sheila Musaji is the founder and editor of *The American Muslim* quarterly journal which was in print from 1989 to 1994 and is now a monthly email publication. She is on the Saint Louis U.S. Attorneys' Hate Crimes Task Force. Musaji is a member of Women in Black, Interfaith Partnership and Women of Faith in Saint Louis and has been actively involved in interfaith dialogue for 20 years. She is the Director of the Islamic Speakers Bureau of St. Louis and speaks often at churches, schools, service organizations and synagogues about Islam.

Mohamed Nimer, Ph.D., is the research director for the Council of American-Islamic Relations and the principal investigator for the CAIR-sponsored American Muslim Databank Project. Nimer is the author of *The North American Muslim Resource Guide: Muslim Community Life in the United States and Canada.*

Sulayman Nyang teaches at Howard University in Washington, D.C., where he serves as Professor of African Studies. He also serves as co-director of Muslims in the American Public Square, housed at the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. From 1975 to 1978 Nyang served as Deputy Ambassador and Head of Chancery of the Gambia Embassy in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1978 and returned to academic life at Howard University. He has served as consultant to several national and international agencies, as well on the boards of the African Studies Association, the American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies and the Association of Muslim Social Scientists. His books include *Islam in America*, *Islam, Christianity and African Identity*, and *A Line in the Sand: Saudi Arabias Role in the Gulf War* (with Evan Heindricks).

Hassan Zilur Rahim is a commentator for the Pacific News Service and a contributor to several California newspapers. Born in Bangledesh, Rahim is the former editor of *Iqra*, a national Islamic magazine published by the South Bay Islamic Association of San Jose, CA.

Abdulaziz Sachedina is professor of religious studies at the University of Virginia. Born in Tanzania, he has B.A. degrees from Aligarh Muslim University in India and Ferdowsi University in Iran, and completed his graduate degrees at the University of Toronto in the 1970s. Sachedina is a core member of the "Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism" project in the Center for Strategic &

International Studies Preventive Diplomacy Program and a key contributor, along with Rabbi Marc Gopin and Reverend David Steele, to the programs efforts to link religion to universal human needs and values in the service of peace-building. He also serves on the board of directors of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy. Sachedina is the author of numerous books, including *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism.*

Shaykh Hamza Yusuf (Hanson) is the founder and director of the Zaytuna Institute. Born in Washington, Yusuf converted to Islam in 1977 and spent the next ten years studying in the U.A.E., Saudi Arabia, North and West Africa. He received teaching licenses in various Islamic subjects from several well-known scholars in various countries. After a ten years of studies abroad, he returned to the U.S. and took degrees in religious studies and also in health care. He is an internationally renowned public speaker on Islam.

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http://www.theamericanmuslim.org – An on-line monthly (and, at times, bi-monthly) journal of articles by Muslims and non-Muslims on contemporary Islam and interfaith dialogue. The American Muslim was originally published as a printed journal from 1985-1995. Founder and editor, Sheila Musaji, renewed the journal on the Internet after 9/11 as a forum for strengthening the voices of those Muslims interested in building a self-critical, open and pluralistic Muslim society.

http:// www.islamfortoday.com (aka www.muslimresource.com) – A significant collection of articles and links about Muslim history and civilization, Islam in the West today, the rights

of women in Islam plus Muslim schools and family life. Post 9/11, this website has become one of the main web forums for Muslim voices opposing Muslim extremism and the politicization of Islam.

http://www.islamicfinder.org – A national directory of mosques, organizations and Muslim-owned businesses. One may search by city, state or zip code. The website also provides prayer times and calendars.

http://www.islamicity.com/ – One of the most popular websites used by American Muslims to gain a broad range of news and information.

http://www.islamonline.net – A website dedicated to providing information on Islamic practice, theology and law, in addition to news articles on issues of relevance to the Muslim world. The website content and perspectives align with the approach of Dr. Yusuf Qaradawi, a famous Egyptian-born Islamic legal scholar who at times reflects a moderate tone and at other times reflects an extremist approach (particularly for being the first mainstream scholar to condone suicide bombing in Israel). Dr. Qaradawi and other scholars answer religious queries on line, either live or by email.

http://www.pluralism.org/directory/index.php – A national on-line directory of religious centers, including Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism among others. The website contains articles and other information about these minority religions in America. The website is a project of Harvard Universitys Pluralism Project.

http://www.muslimwakeup.com – A new on-line magazine for progressive Muslims. The magazine discusses contemporary problems in the Muslim world, yet maintains a whimsical and self-mocking tone. The Hug a Jewbecause Jews and Muslims are not the axis of evil campaign is a good reflection of the attitude and message of the website.