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Backlash against Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans

Tuesday, September 11, 2001, stands as one of the darkest days in modern U.S. history. It will long be remembered by the millions of Americans who witnessed the collapse of the Twin Towers over and over on their television screens. For Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans, "9/11" likewise signifies a shocking and sad day, but it also marks the beginning of a new era in which they became the victims of backlash. For many, the tragic events ushered in a period of hate crimes, profiling, and discrimination. Though stereotypes and discriminatory actions were not new to these minorities, the post-9/11 backlash was overwhelming and relentless.

Immediately after the attacks, individuals who appeared Middle Eastern or had Arabic- or Islamic-sounding names became the scapegoats of Americans' anger and vengeance. Balbir Singh Sodhi was the first murder victim of the backlash because his traditional Sikh looks—*dastaar* (turban) and *kesh* (unshorn hair)—were confused with Osama Bin Laden's *kaffiyeh* (male headdress) and beard. Ironically, Sikhs are neither Arab nor Muslim.[1] Hate crimes and bias incidents spiked immediately. According to the organization South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow (SAALT 2001), 645 bias incidents were reported in metropolitan newspapers across the country in the week after 9/11. The *New*

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York Times put it most succinctly: "Since the attacks, people who look Middle Eastern and Muslim, whatever their religion or nation of origin, have been singled out for harassment, threats and assaults."[2]

More seriously, a few weeks after 9/11, the U.S. government generated a series of initiatives and policies that targeted Middle Eastern and Muslim immigrant populations, especially men. Ostensibly, these decrees, administrative rule changes, executive orders, and laws aimed to stop terrorism; however, they legitimized the backlash in the eyes of the American public. From the perspective of Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans, it seemed as if the government was condoning stereotyping and scapegoating.

Given the enormity of the 9/11 backlash, one would assume that the targeted populations would go into hiding. Instead, Middle Eastern and Muslim American advocacy organizations representing these populations urged their constituents to claim their rights as Americans, to raise their voices, and to fight back against hate crimes, bias incidents, prejudice and discrimination, and governmental abuses of power. They responded in typical American fashion—through political activism and legal challenges. Their ultimate goal was civic engagement and political integration into the mainstream of American society. However, the relatively rapid mobilization of the affected groups was unusual from a historical perspective. Several Muslim American organizations shepherded a campaign to make Islam one of the core religions in America. The push to change the characterization of America's religious heritage from "Judeo-Christian" to "Abrahamic faiths" illustrates their seriousness and determination to sink deep roots in America.[3]

The populations affected by the post-9/11 backlash trace their ancestry to the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia. The pioneers immigrated at the turn of the twentieth century from present-day Syria and Lebanon. Mostly Christian, they intermarried and assimilated within a couple of generations. A new wave of immigrants coincided with the repeal of restrictive immigration laws in 1965 and social and political turmoil in the Middle East. This time around, the newcomers were overwhelmingly Muslim; many came to pursue university educations and stayed. In the final decades of the twentieth century, immigration from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh has increased.

In the days immediately after 9/11, there were four confirmed cases of hate-motivated murders. On September 15, 2001, Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh, was shot in Mesa, Arizona, at the gas station he owned. Also on September 15, 2001, Waqar Hasan, a Pakistani, was shot dead

in his grocery store by Mark Anthony Stroman, a white supremacist in Dallas, Texas. On September 19, 2001, a U.S. citizen of Yemeni descent, Ali Almansoop, was shot in the back while escaping from his attacker, who had broken into his home in Lincoln Park, Michigan. Finally, on October 4, 2001, Vasudev Patel, a gas station owner from India, was killed during an armed robbery in Mesquite, Texas. This was Mark Anthony Stroman's second homicide in less than a month. Another seven murder cases are suspected to be motivated by hate (see Ibish 2003, 69–70).

Here, we offer a sample of hate crimes.

- In the days following September 11, 2001, many Arab and Muslim American organizations received threatening phone calls and slanderous e-mails. The American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) has published some of these messages: "I now enjoy watching Arabs and Muslims die"; "You F****** ARABS go to hell. You will pay"; "You should start acting like Americans and not terrorists"; "MAY YOU BURN IN HELL" (Ibish 2003, 85).

- On September 21, 2001, three Arab Americans were not allowed to board a Northwest Airlines plane in Riverside, California. They were told that passengers were not comfortable traveling with Middle Eastern men (Council on American-Islamic Relations [CAIR] 2002b, 18).

- Around Thanksgiving 2001 a Muslim man's gas station in Pennsylvania was shot at by a Caucasian male who shouted, "Towel heads!" The bullet shattered glass that went into the man's face and eyes (CAIR 2002b, 25).

- In Sunrise, Florida, on December 26, 2001, an "Arab American applied for a mortgage through a real estate company. Afterwards, his real estate agent informed him that his home loan application had been rejected, disclosing that the reason for the rejection was an allegation coming from the company's underwriting manager that the Arab American applicant was a 'terrorist.' . . . [He] had previously applied for a loan from the company and it had been approved" (Ibish 2003, 91).

- In its first anniversary issue (July 10–July 25, 2003), *Aramica,* an Arab American bimonthly newspaper serving metropolitan New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, reported virulent anti-Arab

sentiments on a Web site in Bay Ridge. This Brooklyn neighborhood, which has been home to a large and complex Arab American community for several generations and which weathered the post-911 backlash without any major incidents, ironically became home to a hate-monger's Web site (www.bayridge.com). It posted the following message: "There are too many Arabs in Bay Ridge. . . . Our beautiful neighborhood has changed dramatically. . . . Instead of making 5th a one way street I would just firebomb the entire thing because of its grotesque nature. That would be a good way to get rid of most of the filthy Arabs who stink up our neighborhood." Eventually, *Aramica*'s publisher solicited the cooperation of leaders, politicians, and the local police, and the Web site was shut down.[4]

Immediately following the terrorist attacks, the government initiatives, a component of the "War on Terror," set the standard for the treatment, or rather the mistreatment, of Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans. These policies have been criticized for disregarding civil rights. Some scholars have gone so far as to call them "state-sponsored terrorism" (Minnite 2005, 182). The targeted immigrants hail from countries where the government is not to be trusted. Instead of earning the confidence of these new Americans, policies ended up crystallizing their views. To identify and capture homegrown terrorists one needs the cooperation of the targeted communities, a commitment that the community leaders have expressed repeatedly. The Migration Policy Institute's report concurs: "The U.S. government's harsh measures against immigrants since September 11 have failed to make us safer, have violated our fundamental civil liberties, and have undermined national unity" (Chishti et al. 2003, 7).

The Appendix lists in chronological order the government initiatives enacted to fight terrorism and strengthen the security of the United States in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks. Their frequency and intensity increased immediately after 9/11 but subsided after 2003. While the federal government mandated most of these policies, state and local governments also engaged in targeting. The policies have particularly affected men from Arab and Muslim countries who were in violation of their nonimmigrant visas. The Appendix also includes a sample of actions by the government, such as the Census Bureau's sharing of aggregated population statistics on Arab Americans with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the State Department's

denial of a visa to a prominent Swiss-born Islamic theology scholar, preventing him from assuming an academic position at the University of Notre Dame in 2004. Though strictly speaking these actions cannot be classified as initiatives, the affected populations experienced them as a continuation of the backlash.

Concurrently with federal policies, President George W. Bush condemned all vigilante acts of revenge and retribution. Visiting a mosque in Washington, D.C., on September 17, he proclaimed, "The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That's not what Islam is all about. Islam is peace. These terrorists don't represent peace. They represent evil and war."[5] Initially, the government's actions supported the affected communities. The U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division was vigilant in its prosecution of the perpetrators of hate crimes and discrimination. A five-member jury in Mesa, Arizona, convicted Frank Roque in October 1, 2003, for the murder of the first 9/11 hate crime victim.[6] The government ordered the Civil Rights Division and the FBI to prosecute vigilantism. In June 2002 Ari Fleischer, a White House spokesman, reiterated President Bush's belief that the U.S.-led battle against terrorism was not a war against Muslims: "Islam is a religion of peace. And that's what the president believes."[7]

Airline profiling of Middle Eastern and Muslim American passengers has led to the settling of discrimination suits. In June 2004, upon allegations that Delta Air Lines had discriminated against travelers appearing to be of Middle Eastern, Arab, or South Asian descent, the airline opted for a settlement. This agreement stipulates that the airline must spend at least $900,000 on civil rights training for flight attendants, pilots, and passenger service agents. The Delta negotiations represented the fourth discrimination-centered settlement against airlines since 9/11, with earlier settlements having even higher monetary settlement values. As the Wall Street Journal reported about a suit against American Airlines, "In February 2004, the airline, while denying guilt, settled the action for $1.5 million, to be spent on yet more 'sensitivity training.'"[8]

Nonetheless, the impact of the USA PATRIOT Act (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act) and post-9/11 policies dominated the public discourse and muffled the occasional goodwill proclamations of the president and other high-ranking officials. Although Arab and Muslim American communities appreciated the initial outreach by the government, they felt that not enough had been done. Many observed that after the initial mosque visit the White

House was almost silent. There was surely a contradiction in the government's messages.

RESEARCH ON 9/11

Americans have begun to mark time with reference to the terrorist attacks. They talk of "pre-9/11" and "post-9/11." Understandably, these events have garnered a lot of research attention, and no doubt more will follow. Publications cover a wide range of topics, genres, and authors—established and new scholars—from many disciplines, ideologies, and perspectives.[9] *The 9/11 Commission Report* (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States 2004) stands in a class by itself. Within the social sciences, for example, sociologists have contributed to knowledge on urban settings (Sorkin and Zukin 2002), gender and terrorism (Kimmel 2003), the PATRIOT Act (Etzioni 2004), and the response of Muslim college students to 9/11 (Peek 2002, 2003). *Sociological Theory* published a symposium entitled "Theories of Terrorism" (Senechal de la Roche 2004). The *American Anthropologist* devoted an entire volume to 9/11 (Mascia-Lees and Lees 2002).[10] Psychologists have examined the impact of terror on individuals (Pyszczynski, Greenberg, and Solomon 2003), and those working in the field of disaster research have mostly addressed psychological trauma and individual recovery.[11] Sociologists of disaster have addressed risk perception and communication, the effectiveness of new technologies in management, and the effect of disasters on businesses.[12] Neil Smelser acknowledges that 9/11 was a typical case of cultural trauma: shock, numbing, mourning, the recognition that the event could not and should not be forgotten, and conscious efforts to commemorate the event (2007, 158).

Surprisingly, the interest of social scientists in the post-9/11 backlash against Middle Eastern and Muslim American communities has been rather limited. The edited volume by Elaine Hagopian (2004) and Louise Cainkar's chapter (2004a) on the impact of the government initiatives on Arabs and Muslims were the first scholarly publications. Hagopian's book includes eight essays on post-9/11 legislation, the demonization of Arabs and Muslims, and their criminalization. Cainkar's piece provides an overview of "special registration," reduction in nonimmigrant visas to Arab nationals, anti-Arab/Muslim stereotypes in the media, and their impact on the Arab and Muslim communities. She concurs with our

findings that civic and political participation increased after 9/11 in the affected communities (see also Cainkar and Maira 2005). Tram Nguyen (2005), editor of *Colorlines* magazine, has published a collection of vignettes depicting the lives of individuals and their families caught in the dragnet of government initiatives. In *Mecca and Main Street: Muslim Life in America after 9/11,* journalist Geneive Abdo argues that after the terrorist attacks many "moderate" Muslims "felt an urgent need to embrace their beliefs and establish Islamic identity as a unified community" (2006, 3).

The Russell Sage Foundation has published three edited volumes on the economic, political, and social impact of 9/11 on New York City, out of which three chapters deal with the backlash. Jennifer Bryan (2005) conducted an ethnographic study of the Muslim immigrant enclave in Jersey City. Monisha Das Gupta (2005) surveyed taxi drivers, whose ranks contain a large proportion of Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Egypt, and Lorraine Minnite (2005) analyzed the political incorporation of New York's new immigrants, including Middle Easterners. A handful of research projects funded by the Russell Sage Foundation (e.g., Cainkar 2008; Read and Oselin 2008), and analyses of data from the Detroit Arab American Survey (DAAS), conducted in 2003 (e.g., Jamal 2008; Shryock 2008), have been published.[13]

Legal scholars have been comparatively more prolific. David Cole (Cole 2003; Cole and Dempsey 2002; Cole and Lobel 2007) has been most prominent, but others (e.g., Akram and Johnson 2004; Akram and Karmely 2005; Brown 2003; Motomura 2006; Volpp 2002) have also contributed to the raging legal debates over security and civil rights after 9/11. Additionally, various civil liberties organizations, government agencies, and policy think tanks have issued reports on the post-9/11 backlash. To date, over forty reports have been issued, including about a dozen by Middle Eastern and Muslim American advocacy groups.

Yet since the "Attack on America" there has been no systematic analysis of the impact of the events on the targeted populations or their responses. Our book is an attempt to fill this significant gap. We have been following the post-9/11 backlash since that tragic morning in September 2001. Our analysis concerns Middle Eastern and Muslim American organizations that play a critical role in mediating between their constituents and the larger society. Our nationwide study is based on seventy-five in-depth interviews conducted with leaders and officials of organizations representing the affected populations, as well as civil

liberties agencies and government institutions, and on analysis of their Web sites and listserv messages.

While legal scholars have been the most vocal in critiquing the various government initiatives, they generally do not study the affected populations. The scope and methods of our discipline, sociology, are ideally suited to the study of ethnic/religious communities. We have attempted to contribute to sociological theory by conceptualizing backlash for the first time and connecting the study of social movements with the study of immigration and with ethnic and racial studies. This book should be of interest not only to scholars but also to advocates in the fields of immigration and civil rights/liberties by providing a historically grounded context. We hope that Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans will find our study helpful in making sense of their individual and collective travails and experiences. It should provide them with the bigger picture and allow them to make educated choices about their future in America. Given the dearth of publications on Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans, even after 2001, it is our wish that this book will become a resource for those who want to learn more about these populations.[14] Finally, we hope that this book will bring to the attention of the American public the neglected perspective of the victimized Middle Eastern and Muslim communities.

It is necessary to state a couple of caveats here. First, as groups, African American Muslims and other converts have not been targets of government initiatives; thus they do not fall within the purview of our study. Second, our treatment of Sikhs is limited. Sikhs suffered inordinately from the hate crimes that followed the terrorist attacks because of mistaken identity. Hate-mongers tend to be not only violent and cruel but also ignorant. Sikhs were likewise victimized after the Iranian Revolution and the Iranian Hostage Crisis, since they were confused with the turbaned images of Ayatollah Khomeini shown on television. Nonetheless, Sikhs were not the targets of the post-9/11 government initiatives. They had mobilized before 9/11 to combat stereotypes and discrimination, and they stepped up their advocacy afterwards. They have been working through the courts and Congress to gain accommodations such as the right to wear the turban at work and to carry the ceremonial *kirpan* (ceremonial dagger) on an airplane. Although they are a newly prominent religious group in the United States fighting discrimination, there is no political agenda against them. Therefore, Sikhs are included in this volume only in relation to hate crimes and their visible presence in civil rights coalitions.

THE STATE OF KNOWLEDGE ON BACKLASH AND MOBILIZATION

The literatures on social movements, immigration, and ethnic and racial studies are most relevant to this book. Social movement scholars in the United States have overlooked ethnicity and religion as the bases of collective action, and immigration and ethnic and racial studies scholars have paid little attention to mobilization. The social movement literature offers more detailed theoretical explication of the concept (e.g., components of claims making). Little effort has been made to merge these two fields (for exceptions, see Koopmans et al. 2005 and Okamoto 2003). At the end of this section we introduce our model, which connects backlash to mobilization and claims making.

First, however, we review the traditional literatures in sociology on intergroup conflict and solidarity and the more recent competitive ethnic relations model and middleman minority theory. We intentionally do not use the term *ethnic* in conjunction with *mobilization* because the post-9/11 response entailed more than one national-origin group (Arabs from the Middle East and North Africa) as well as a religious group (Muslims from the Middle East and South Asia). Therefore, we problematize the ethnic dimension of ethnic mobilization by reexamining the essence of ethnic groups via a brief review of the reemerging relational theory of ethnicity. Along these lines, we review pan-ethnicity and pan-ethnic mobilization as they relate to supranational categories of Arab, Middle Eastern, and Muslim.

THEORIES OF INTERGROUP CONFLICT, HOST HOSTILITY, AND GROUP SOLIDARITY

Analyzing the post-9/11 backlash against Middle Eastern and Muslims Americans continues a long sociological tradition. Since the turn of the twentieth century, when the United States was trying to integrate the large numbers of immigrants that had arrived from eastern and southern Europe and the Levant,[15] American sociologists have been advancing theories on intergroup relations and conflict. Robert Park, Everett Hughes, and Louis Wirth focused on the natural laboratory of Chicago to study how the immigrant masses were assimilating. In his classic race relations cycle theory, Park (1950) postulated a four-step process between groups—contact, competition, accommodation, and assimilation. Competition was emphasized as the cause of conflict and violence and therefore was a fundamental component of intergroup relations. Writing in 1932, Donald Young likewise noted: "Group antagonisms

seem to be inevitable when two people in contact with each other may be distinguished by differentiating characteristics, either inborn or cultural, and are actual or potential competitors" (1932, 586). Half a century later, Stephen Steinberg reiterated: "If there is an iron law of ethnicity, it is that when ethnic groups are found in a hierarchy of power, wealth, and status, then conflict is inescapable" (1989, 170). Yet conflict is not constant; it can be subtle or controlled for long periods (e.g., Redfield 1939).

It has been established that intergroup "clashes" are positively correlated with increases in ethnic solidarity. Georg Simmel (1955) was the first to observe that antagonism with an external foe has a positive integrative effect within the unit. He wrote: "Conflict may not only heighten the concentration of an existing unit, radically eliminating all elements which might blur the distinctions of its boundaries against the enemy; it may also bring persons and groups together which have otherwise nothing to do with each other" (98–99). Lewis Coser (1956, 95) has elucidated Simmel's concepts: "Conflict with another group leads to the mobilization of the energies of group members and hence to increased cohesion of the group. Whether increase in centralization accompanies this increase in cohesion depends upon both the character of the conflict and the type of group. Centralization will be more likely to occur in the event of wartime conflict."

Also, conflict with an adversary will result in associations and coalitions with other groups (Coser 1956, 155). Sociologists have found ample empirical evidence to support the Simmel-Coser propositions. For instance, in lobbying the U.S. Congress to recognize the Armenian genocide of 1915, Armenian Americans stand united against the persistent denial of the Turkish government. This is remarkable given that their communal institutions are divided into two contentious political/ideological factions (Bakalian 1993). While we find the Simmel-Coser theorem to be highly relevant to our case study, we are more concerned with mobilization than with group cohesion.

Theories of intergroup relations have attributed the cause of conflict to competitive minority-majority relations in the host society. For example, the structural theory of ethnic competition deals with some form of economic or political contest between groups (Olzak and Nagel 1986; see also Okamoto 2003). Susan Olzak (1992) has argued that ethnic conflict is caused by increased rivalry when inequalities between groups diminish. This would explain the rise of hate crimes in the 1980s as new immigrants attempted integration into previously white-majority neigh-

borhoods and institutions, threatening whites' privileged position and access to scarce societal resources (Olzak, Shanahan, and McEneaney 1996). Taking globalization into account, Olzak (2006, figure 1.1) has expanded the competitive ethnic relations model by adding several levels of analysis—world, country, and group. This reformulation improves the static nature and U.S. focus of the original model. Still, it does not question the nature of the relationship between sending and receiving societies and the role of the state vis-à-vis minorities. The competitive ethnic relations model is silent on the state's repressive policies and practices as a source of conflict and violence, a central concern of ours.

The transnationalism literature has improved the explanatory power of intergroup relations by stressing the positive connections between transnational migrants and their homelands—for example, remittances and reinforcement of ethnic ties. Because of global forces, economic cycles, shifting patterns of immigration, new political conflicts such as the resurgence of ethnic nationalism, and terrorist acts or threats, the level of strife and violence may escalate in any given society even after years of harmonious coexistence. When the sending and receiving societies experience international tension and conflict, the receiving society tightens its control of immigrants, thereby militating against transnationalism (Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004). Still, the literature on transnationalism does not go far enough in addressing the types of oversight and restrictions that the government imposes on minority populations.

Edna Bonacich and John Modell (1980) have argued that middlemen minorities—small business owners who straddle producers and consumers in modern economies—face host hostility because of their visible concentration in niche markets. Their economic success can provoke hostility in the majority population and envy in disadvantaged minority groups. This host hostility, in turn, reinforces the middleman's ethnicity and group solidarity. Pyong Gap Min (1996) distinguishes *ethnic solidarity* from *ethnic attachment,* terms used interchangeably in the middleman minority literature (see also Min 2008). While ethnic attachment is "the degree to which members are culturally, socially, and psychologically" connected to their ethnicity, ethnic solidarity "is the degree to which members use ethnic collective actions to protect their common interests" (5). Members claiming a given ethnicity must first feel attachment to enact their solidarity. For Min, "Collective goals and ethnic mobilization [are] the central components of ethnic solidarity" (5). Like the competitive ethnic relations model, middleman minority theory focuses on economic factors and thus is not applicable to our case study.

In their reading of U.S. immigration history, Kathleen Conzen and her associates assert that ethnicity is a "process of construction or invention which incorporates, adapts, and amplifies preexisting communal solidarities, cultural attributes, and historical memories. That is, it is grounded in the real life context and social experience" (1992, 4). It is now widely accepted that ethnicity is dynamic, socially constructed, and fundamentally relational in nature, involving the binary "us" versus "them" categories. This often means that there is no ethnic minority without a majority. The very definitions of ethnicity and nationality presuppose an "institutionalized relationship between delineated categories whose members consider each other as culturally distinct" (Eriksen 1993, 18). Dichotomies or contrasts, as well as complementarization or shared discourse and interaction, are inherent in systems of majority/minority classification (28). This dialectical process of competition, conflict, and contestation changes both the immigrants and the host society.

Frederick Barth (1969) argues that boundaries, whether imposed objectively by outsiders (e.g., state, majority population) or subjectively determined by insiders, are a more powerful gauge of ethnicity than the "contents" of a culture or other inherent qualities of the collectivity. When boundaries are not maintained, they become porous, allowing for traffic in and out. This may eventually lead to the obliteration of boundaries and the demise of the collectivity. Extending Barth's concept of ethnic boundary formation, Rogers Brubaker (2004), in *Ethnicity without Groups,* takes on the vast literature on ethnicity and race for reifying "groups," whether national, communal, ethnic, religious, or other. He recommends an analytical perspective that focuses on group-making projects rather than groups per se. Ethnic categories are often "backed by political entrepreneurs and entrenched in governmental and other organizational routines of social counting and accounting" (Brubaker 2004, 20). For instance, the Office of Management and Budget is responsible for the classificatory system that prevails in the United States. The "ethnoracial pentagon" is a cultural product that provides "standardized cognitive maps over categories of relevant others" (Eriksen 1993, 60).[16] Likewise, "the notion of a universally acknowledged 'core culture' has lost all its plausibility since the late 1960s" (Brubaker 2004, 126; see also Conzen et al. 1992). We use *American* or *mainstream* here not as monolithic but as relational, oppositional terms.

In the case of Middle Easterners and Muslims after 9/11, the "us" versus "them" has gone beyond minority/majority relations to include the U.S. government. Thus the relational dimension here is above all

political. Political circumstances, at home and abroad, have transformed immigrants and their descendants from the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia into suspicious aliens or noncitizens in the United States. They struggle to find a place for themselves and their children in American society in the face of governmental targeting, popular stereotypes, and scapegoating.

THEORIES OF PAN-ETHNICITY AND PAN-ETHNIC MOBILIZATION

The theoretical literature on the mobilization of Asian Americans shortly after the civil rights movement and the subsequent development of Asian American pan-ethnicity provides yet another framework for our case study. *Pan-ethnicity* is defined as "the development of bridging organizations and solidarities among subgroups of ethnic collectivities that are often seen as homogenous by outsiders" (Lopez and Espiritu 1990, 200). This requires similarities in culture, such as language and religion, or certain structural conditions, such as social class, race, generation, and geographical dispersion. Yet David Lopez and Yen Espiritu argue that "structural factors, not cultural commonalties, better explain the emergence and success of panethnicity" (218).

The structural factors that were instrumental in developing Asian pan-ethnicity include (1) targeted violence, (2) outsiders' perception that Asian ethnics are "foreigners" (Espiritu 1992; Tuan 1998), (3) racial lumping (Min 1999, 29), which is a result of the government's classification of Asians as a minority population, and consequently (4) entitlement to affirmative action and other programs. Moreover, (5) as professionals of Asian descent have realized the benefits of set-aside programs, they have been fighting to sustain these advantages. Asian American umbrella organizations have participated in electoral politics, engaged in activism, and established social service organizations (Espiritu 1992).

More recently, Dina Okamoto (2003, 813) has defined "pan-national mobilization as the public action of people from two or more national-origin groups who express grievances or claims on behalf of the collective, pan-national group. These collective efforts are often directed at local, state, or federal government agencies, other public institutions, or the general public." She further points to the shifting and layered nature of pan-ethnicity due to external structural factors. The "layering" of identity, which implies the multiplicity of possible affiliations and identities an individual can claim (e.g., Druze, Lebanese, Arab, Middle Easterner, or Sunni, Muslim, Egyptian, Arab, Middle

Eastern), allows for the contraction and expansion of ethnic boundaries of organizations.

Although the terrorists in the 9/11 attacks originated from different nation states, they had a common ethnicity (Arab) and religion (Islam). Consequently, the U.S. government targeted Arabs and Muslims. Like the Chinese, who originate from several countries, Arabs are a supranational ethnic group; and like Asians, Middle Easterners are a pan-ethnic group. Though there was no emergence of Middle Eastern Americans as a pan-ethnic group, Arab and Muslim Americans crystallized as pan-ethnic/pan-religious groups in the aftermath of the events.

American Islam is a post-9/11 "invention" as a distinct new category in the nation's classificatory system. Ironically, Islam is not an ethnic category, so it cannot be codified into laws. In the post-9/11 era, the label has been used awkwardly alone and/or in conjunction with Arab Americans, as in phrases like "Arabs and Muslims." As a religion, Islam encompasses a broad range of sects, nationalities, ethnicities, languages, generations, and political ideologies. Additionally, *Islam* implies religiosity. Like American Christians and American Jews, a significant proportion of Muslim Americans are secular in their outlook and, if asked to identify themselves, may not give "Muslim" as a first response. Islam is both a religion and a cultural tradition. Many immigrants from the Middle East (the Arab world, Iran, and Turkey) identify more strongly with their national origin than with their religion.

A MODEL OF BACKLASH AND MOBILIZATION

Figure 1 illustrates our general theory of backlash and mobilization, resulting in civic and political integration. Figures 2 and 3 lay out the specific components of backlash and mobilization.

TYPES OF BACKLASH

After an extensive search of the social science literature, we realized that the term *backlash* has not been conceptualized, though it has been widely used in both scholarship and the popular media.[17] Generally, backlash consists of harassment and hate crimes, but it may also subsume a state's actions that unjustly target a minority population or "outgroup."[18] Therefore, we define backlash as an excessive and adverse societal and governmental reaction to a political/ideological crisis against a group or groups.

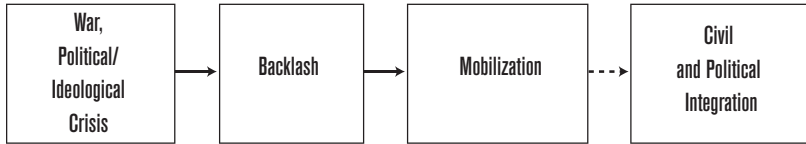| War, Political/ Ideological Crisis | → | Backlash | → | Mobilization | ⇢ | Civil and Political Integration |

Figure 1. A model of backlash and mobilization.

We argue that during times of war or political/ideological crisis, populations that share the same ethnic and/or religious background as the "enemy" of the state are subject to backlash. This backlash may take several forms (figure 2). First, members of the majority population may engage in acts of intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, and physical violence against persons or property of members of the targeted population. More extreme forms of such behaviors are categorized as hate crimes, although scholars have not agreed on what constitutes a hate crime. Violent behaviors motivated by hatred and bias, such as vandalism, destruction of property, assault, arson, theft, rape, and murder, were criminalized in the United States in 1990 (see chapter 5).

Second, the state may respond to threats to the nation's security and sovereignty by singling out the targeted ethnic and/or religious group(s) within its borders for policed scrutiny, suppression, and repression. Governmental reprisals in American history have included internment, detention, deportation, mandatory identification cards, surveillance, and prosecution. While the state may not condone citizens' vigilante actions, its own policies are likely to send a different message. In chapter 2, we draw on Michael Mann's work to elucidate the types of violence that the state inflicts on "outgroups" or minority populations when they are deemed undesirable. This violence is often disguised as preventive or in the interest of the state. In its extreme form, the mistreatment of an "outgroup" may be considered ethnic cleansing. Moreover, governments may control minority populations—those contending for power or seeking a larger share of benefits—through a variety of repressive measures such as "institutional coercion," "policed repression," or "violent repression" (Mann 2005). In the 9/11 case, Arab, Iranian, and Muslim immigrant men suffered inordinately from detention, deportation, special registration, and profiling. The affected populations also experienced FBI monitoring and surveillance, largely made possible by the PATRIOT Act.

While political scientists have studied the state's role in immigration, the state has not been examined as a repressive agent. For example, in his *magnum opus,* Zolberg (2006) details the U.S. government's long

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│      Scapegoating       │
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│  (Stereotype, Prejudice,│
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│    State/Government      │
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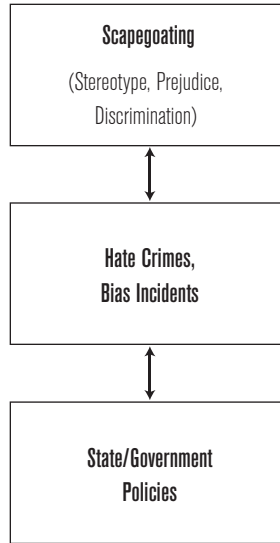
Figure 2. Types of backlash.

history of determining the extent to which immigrants were allowed into the country and the countries from which they came. He argues that the United States was a "nation by design," challenging popular assumptions that until 1924 the gates were completely open. Nonetheless, his focus is on the receiving state's role as gatekeeper, whereas we concentrate on its repressive, punitive domestic tendencies.

Third, hate crimes and government initiatives are mediated though deeply rooted prejudices and stereotypes. Stereotypes are culturally constructed, crystallized, and perpetuated by "moral entrepreneurs," consisting of the political, cultural, and business elite, and are facilitated by the media (Cohen 2002). Thus preexisting negative stereotypes of Middle Easterners and Muslims fuel the actions of the hate-mongers, thereby resulting in more bias incidents and hate crimes.[19] A feedback loop invariably reinforces the various forms of backlash, often resulting in renewed cycles of violence against the targeted ethnic or religious group(s).

COMPONENTS OF ETHNIC MOBILIZATION/CLAIMS MAKING

Olzak offers the most succinct definition of ethnic mobilization: "Collective action based upon ethnic claims, protests, or intergroup hostility that makes reference to a group's demands based upon one or more cultural
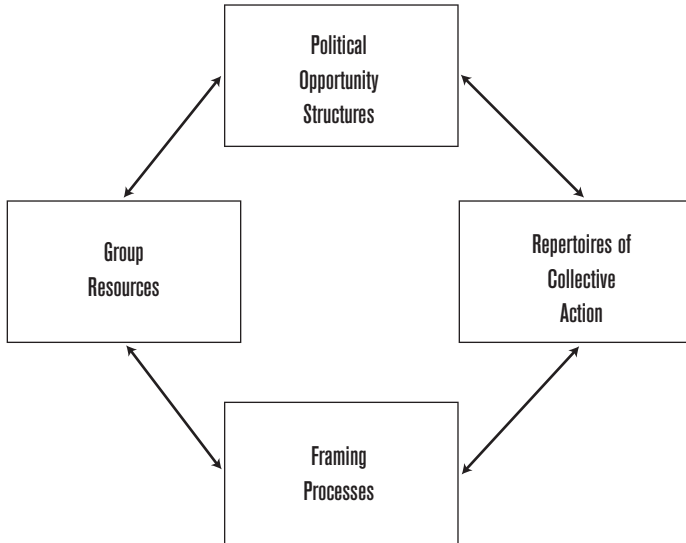
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┌─────────────┐
│  Political  │
│ Opportunity │
│ Structures  │
└─────────────┘
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┌──────────┐        ┌──────────────┐
│  Group   │        │ Repertoires of│
│Resources │        │  Collective  │
│          │        │   Action     │
└──────────┘        └──────────────┘
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┌──────────┐
│ Framing  │
│Processes │
└──────────┘
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Figure 3. Components of mobilization/claims making.

markers" (2006, 4–5). We go beyond this definition, however, to describe the components of mobilization. For this we have consulted the general social movement literature, whose central concept has been "contentious politics" (Tilly and Tarrow 2006; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Any contention involves interactions between actors making claims that almost invariably impinge on someone else's interests, including governments and third parties. According to Ruud Koopmans and his associates, claims making is "a unit of strategic action in the public sphere. It consists of the purposive and public articulation of political demands, calls to action, proposals, criticisms, or physical attacks, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors" (2005, 254). In this volume, we use the two terms interchangeably.

We contend that backlash promotes mobilization/claims making in the short or long term, depending upon favorable structural and cultural conditions, namely political opportunities, resources, repertoires of collective action, and framing processes. These conditions, while affecting each other, as well as the form and content of the mobilization, are in turn influenced by collective action, resulting in a continuously modified feedback loop. Ethnic mobilization/claims making is a dynamic, circular process, so our model (figure 3) cannot be reduced to a linear, discrete representation.

POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE

The literatures on social movements, immigration, and ethnic and racial studies demonstrate that political opportunity structure is a key component in mobilization/claims making. Susan Olzak and Emily Ryo theorize that "movement mobilization is a function of changes in the political climate that make collective action more likely to succeed, such as an increase in the level of elite receptivity to protestors or a restructuring of existing power relations" (2004, 2). In other words, the "institutional structure[s] and ideological dispositions of those in power" must be sufficiently open to the demands of the group of claimants (McAdam and Snow 1997, 3).

While some studies of immigration in Europe have addressed issues most pertinent to our case (Koopmans et al. 2005; Statham 1999), these works precede the terrorist attacks in Europe and thus are not applicable to the post-9/11 situation. It is imperative that claimants be able to influence and manipulate those in power and state policies; otherwise they will not achieve their objectives. Policies on citizenship, a component of institutional contexts, vary significantly among the European host states, thus affecting the outcome of immigrant mobilization in each case. Also relevant here are policies regarding religious accommodation in Europe's liberal democratic societies. As the use of religious symbolism in public places is excluded, Muslim immigrants have been forced to make "exceptional" demands on the state that have led to heightened opposition in the "native" population. Examples of exceptionalism include not only wearing the *hijab* (head covering) at work, amplifying the *azaan* (call to prayer) from minarets, and offering *halal* (permissible) food in school cafeterias but also pushing for *sharia* (Islamic) divorce, polygyny, and female circumcision (Koopmans et al. 2005, 148–49; Statham 1999).

Major changes in a society give birth to mobilization/claims making on the part of disenfranchised groups who see opportunities opening up or disadvantages to maintaining the status quo. Collective action in response to different levels of repression tends to follow the form of a bell curve (Benford 1992). Medium levels of oppression tend to motivate mobilization, but extreme forms of despotism make the costs of struggle too high. Historically, acts of war, like the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and perceived threats from political ideologies, like the threat of communism in the Red Scare of 1917–20 and then McCarthyism, have led to extreme forms of repression by the U.S. government.

We contend that in the post–civil rights era state-sponsored backlash has been tempered by the law and the belief of the American public in the principles of civil rights. Therefore, lower levels of government subjugation have triggered mobilization and activism by the targeted populations. Leaders of preexisting community-based and advocacy organizations have galvanized their constituents to seize the moment. To maintain the status quo, to do nothing or to accept the backlash, would have been detrimental for the reputation of the leaders and the longevity of their organizations. Thus they moved forward with the goal of political integration.

FRAMING MECHANISMS

To achieve success in contentious collective action, movement leaders must "frame" their demands in language, symbols, and forms that are likely to be understood by their opponents and their general audience. Erving Goffman was first to introduce the term in *Frame Analysis.* Frames are "schemata of interpretation" (1974, 21) that selectively control human perception by identifying and labeling cognitive structures and providing meaning. Social movement scholars have adapted the concept to attribute cognitive, cultural, and historical beliefs and ideologies to actors. According to Steven Buechler, "Framing means focusing attention on some bounded phenomenon by importing meaning and significance to elements within the frame and setting them apart from what is outside the frame. In the context of social movements, framing refers to the interactive, collective ways that movement actors assign meanings to their activities in the conduct of social movement activism. The concept of framing is designed for discussing the social construction of grievances as a fluid and variable process of social interaction" (2000, 41).

Robert Benford and David Snow (2000) emphasize that frames have to be "culturally resonant" and morally justifiable if a claim is to be accepted and supported by the larger society. In other words, framing processes must garner a sympathetic audience in the mainstream and, just as important, must win concessions from those with political power (Buechler 2000). According to Douglas McAdam and David Snow, those who articulate frames are "not merely . . . carriers of existing ideas and meanings, but . . . signifying agents actively engaged in producing and maintaining meaning of their constituents, antagonists, and bystanders" (1997, 232). This implies that frames must be shaped and

reshaped continually so that they remain relevant to contemporaneous sensitivities.

Ultimately, the way a group of claimants frames or constructs its grievances and demands will affect its ability not only to gain a wider membership base among the populations of concern and reach its goals but also to sustain the interest of its own rank and file. As Olzak notes, "Ethnic markers (such as skin pigmentation, language, religious distinctions, dialect, cultural practices, or regional/homeland identification) delineate a potential membership pool, which may or may not be activated" (2006, 4–5). Mobilization does not occur ex nihilo, as it were—not unless group membership is sustained even among the "natural" base of co-ethnics or co-religionists. This point is evidenced in this book in the differences in the degree of mobilization among the various subgroups that are subsumed under the "Middle Eastern" category. Advocacy organizations and their leaders must use frames that win the hearts and minds of potential recruits; otherwise they will remain bystanders.

REPERTOIRES OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

Whether framing processes can be "translated" into action depends on whether the group can identify and effectively use social movement repertoires. In his seminal book *From Mobilization to Revolution* (1978), Charles Tilly describes repertoires as the political action tactics that are recognized within a culture as legitimate forms of claims making. In the Western world, the current repertoire or "ensemble of performances" consists of a wide array of methods, used alone or in combination with others. They include forging coalitions or forming special-purpose organizations; distributing press releases; and holding public meetings, rallies, demonstrations, strikes, petition drives, conferences, solemn processions, and vigils (Tilly 1978, 1986; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Traugott 1994). We have also found that Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans in the post-9/11 era have used interfaith projects, plays, films, songs, stand-up comedy, and other artistic venues as powerful, though indirect, methods of claims making. Though kidnappings, blowing up of symbolic buildings or structures, targeted murders, and other forms of terrorism may be tactics of protest, they are obviously not considered legitimate for groups playing by the rules.

According to James Ennis, repertoires have two features: breadth and structure. "Breadth consists of the number and variety of options available. Groups with long and active histories of resistance will have wider

repertoires of conceivable action, as will those with cosmopolitan rather than sectarian outlooks. Ample resources and effective organization will yield broader tactical repertoires" (1987, 522). Clearly, then, there is a strong relationship between repertoires and resource mobilization, a structural influence in determining the outcome of mobilization.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1977), among others (e.g., Tilly 1978; Oberschall 1973; Zald and McCarthy 1979), have established that the success of a collective movement depends on the organizational resources available to aggrieved claimants and not on the grievances themselves. Resources shape the very form and content of mobilization. According to David Cress and David Snow (1996, 1094), resources can be "moral, material, informational [or] human." First, an organization gains moral "credits" if it endorses causes that are considered socially worthy, such as caring for the injured. Likewise, social legitimacy, or "symbolic resources of a legitimate and officially recognized 'status'" (Statham 1999, 601), may be considered moral resources. Second, material resources comprise "tangible goods and services" such as (1) finances (including levels of affluence among leaders/members); (2) facilities and space for meetings and offices; (3) equipment and supplies; and (4) access to transportation. Third, informational resources include (1) strategic "know-how" of lobbying and claims making in general; (2) technical support; and (3) referrals. Fourth, human resources include (1) captive audiences; (2) leaders or spokespersons; (3) a cadre of committed volunteers and supporters with the ability to recruit more members; (4) group cohesion or internal solidarity, on McCarthy and Zald's assertion that those who "are highly organized internally (either communally or associationally) are more likely to spawn other organized forms" (1977, 1218); (5) access to elites, communication media, and expertise in using these media as resources; and (6) preexisting coalitions with outside groups, labor, organizational/social networks, and political connections (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 216; Statham 1999).

In summary, our model of backlash and mobilization makes the following points. First, we attribute a large repressive role to the host state in dealing with immigrant/minority populations during times of war or political/ideological crises. We argue that the backlash consists of scapegoating and hate crimes perpetrated by members of the host society, as well as by government initiatives. Second, theories of intergroup relations,

host hostility, and solidarity focus primarily on economic issues, leaving out political issues, which are central to our model. Third, we go beyond the usual explanations of group solidarity and group cohesion in response to hostility and analyze the mobilization of the groups affected by the backlash. Four, our analysis of mobilization involves an investigation of political opportunity structures, resources, repertoires, and framing processes. Last but not least, our model of backlash and mobilization bridges the literatures of immigration, ethnic and racial studies, and social movements.

CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISONS

Since 9/11, terrorist attacks and civil unrest involving Muslims in Europe have added a comparative dimension to our study. Although the circumstances and contexts are different, these incidents and their repercussions are worth a closer look. On March 11, 2004, simultaneous bombs exploded in three Madrid train stations, killing 191 persons and leaving more than 1,500 injured. Within a few days of the events, the electorate voted for a new socialist government, breaking away from the pro-Iraq war policies of its predecessor.[20] Surprisingly, few incidents of backlash were reported in Spain. The low incidence of hate crimes in Spain may be attributed to Spaniards' anger regarding the ruling party's alleged politically motivated misidentification of the terrorist group responsible for the bombing.[21]

On July 7, 2005, three British citizens of Pakistani descent and a fourth Jamaican-born British resident detonated three bombs in as many underground trains in London, and a fourth one blew off the top of a double-decker bus. Fifty-five individuals died and about seven hundred were wounded. These blasts were immediately followed by a higher incidence of hate crimes,[22] and soon thereafter there were reports of suspects being rounded up for interrogation and detained beyond the mandated period. Radical clerics in the United Kingdom were jailed and deported.

On October 27, 2005, young people of mostly North African descent began rioting in the suburbs of Paris. The riots were triggered by the visit of then-interior minister Nicolas Sarkozy, who had described the inhabitants of their run-down neighborhoods as "rabble" and as "gangrene" deserving to be "cleaned with a power hose."[23] The violence peaked on November 7, affecting 274 communes. Official tallies indicate that 8,973 cars were torched, 2,888 youth were arrested, and 126 police officers were injured. A state of emergency was declared, and

subsequent restrictions were imposed on immigrants and minorities, especially Muslims.[24]

On August 10, 2006, British authorities revealed that they had thwarted a terror plot to blow up as many as ten airplanes over the Atlantic Ocean heading to the United States. Twenty-four Muslim men, once again all born in the United Kingdom, were arrested after several months of surveillance. They had planned to smuggle liquids in drink bottles and mix them as explosives on board. Though the British believed they had arrested the key conspirators, they imposed extra security measures in case some of their associates were still at large. The British Muslim extremists alarmed authorities on both sides of the Atlantic,[25] leading to comparisons of Muslims in the United States, the United Kingdom, and the rest of Europe.[26]

The arrest of seventeen Muslim men of mostly South Asian origin in Toronto in June 2006 revealed how close Canada had come to an attack.[27] They were charged with plotting to bomb targets in southern Ontario. Five of the accused were under eighteen years of age, although most were in their twenties. The leader, forty-three-year-old Qayyum Abdul Jamal, was a reputed "fiery figure," the imam (cleric) of the mosque in Missisauga. Tarek Fatah of the Muslim Canadian Congress was quick to denounce the terrorists, saying: "Law enforcement agencies have done a great service to the Muslim community by busting this terrorist cell."[28] The reaction of the Canadian government and citizenry did not follow the U.S. example.

The main differences between the British and North American cases can be summarized as follows. First, while the 9/11 terrorists were foreign-born visitors (Zolberg 2002), the instigators in the U.K. incidents were home-grown, second-generation immigrants. Second, Muslim immigrants in Britain tend to come from former colonies in Asia, and their children tend to harbor anticolonial sentiments. Third, the U.K. terrorism plotters have been generally marginalized youth with few prospects for social mobility, compared to the relatively more economically advantaged and upwardly mobile American Muslims (see chapter 3 of this book and the cover story in *Newsweek* for July 30, 2007).[29] This profile, however, may be changing, for the terrorists who plotted the bombing of London's West End and Glasgow Airport in July 2007 included foreign-born suspects with professional degrees and credentials.[30]

A leadership change in the United Kingdom in June 2007 produced new policies. Prime Minister Gordon Brown parted ways with his predecessor by eschewing the divisive phrase *war on terror;* with the goal of

reaching out to the Muslim communities, he mandated that public officials call the perpetrators of violence simply "criminals." Writing in the *New York Times Magazine,* David Rieff observed: "So far, it seems, Brown has had more success in getting influential Muslim groups to denounce terror than Blair did. . . . Particularly in light of the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center's recent report that Al Qaeda is as strong today as it was before 9/11, Gordon Brown's bet on the criminal model, however risky, seems the more sensible course."[31]

No doubt colleagues in Spain, England, France, and elsewhere will be examining governmental reactions to the attacks, riots, and alleged terrorist cells. We hope that in the future, when studies have been conducted, there will be opportunities for comparative analysis. Meanwhile, we hope that our work will provide a benchmark for research on backlash against Arabs and Muslims after terrorist attacks in Western societies.

METHODOLOGY

This study was initiated by a Request for Proposals sent out by the National Science Foundation (NSF) a week after the events of 9/11. Coincidentally, our center, the Middle East and Middle Eastern American Center (MEMEAC), had just received official approval from the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York. Given our interest in Middle Eastern Americans and our concern about the hate crimes reported in the media, we sent out a proposal to examine empirically the backlash that had been triggered by the terrorist acts.[32]

We considered a number of options in studying the backlash. The first was to examine the attitudes of the general American public toward Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans for the purpose of understanding stereotypes and biases. Another option was to explore the experiences and perceptions of Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans themselves. Both of these projects required the use of surveys, which the NSF's budget constraints prohibited. A third option was to monitor incidents of hate crimes through a content analysis of newspapers. However, this type of research could be carried out later, and we sought to tap information that was time sensitive. We wanted to gather the data as events unfolded, an approach that in hindsight turned out to be critical with the shift from hate crimes to government initiatives. We decided to focus on the responses of community-based organizations (CBOs) to the backlash, since such organizations mediate between their

constituencies and the larger society. We believed that by interviewing the officers or leaders of national and grassroots organizations we could collect rich and insightful data, not accessible otherwise, in the most cost-effective, rapid, and feasible manner given our constraints.

We wrote the proposal in about three days, and the NSF responded in less than twenty-four hours—an unprecedented turnaround, yet understandable given the urgency demanded by the nature of the events. We were given a Small Grant for Exploratory Research for one year. Initially, we aimed to interview the national Middle Eastern and Muslim American advocacy organizations in Washington, D.C., and the bulk of the social service and grassroots organizations in metropolitan New York. We chose those two cities because they were the sites of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon as well as the sites of national CBOs.

At first, we were concerned mainly with hate crimes and bias incidents. But as the Bush administration churned out one initiative after another, we shifted gears to account for the impact these directives were having on the targeted populations. By the beginning of June 2002, we realized that a study of governmental backlash warranted a wider scope and the inclusion of organizations in other parts of the country. Through their reports and public appeals, civil liberties organizations had also taken the lead in informing Americans about the backlash and the erosion of civil liberties allegedly in the interest of improving security. Additionally, we decided to include in our sample representatives of civil liberties groups, legal experts on immigration, and government officials who could inform us on the situation as "knowledgeable sources." In summary, we have been closely following the post-9/11 backlash against Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans from its inception to the present.

RESEARCH DESIGN

We have conducted seventy-five in-depth interviews—sixty of them with high-ranking representatives of Middle Eastern and Muslim American organizations and fifteen with knowledgeable sources. In collaboration with the September 11 Digital Archive, we conducted seventy-two additional interviews with Arab and/or Muslim Americans about their personal experiences following the terrorist attacks.[33]

We first developed a list of organizations across the country by ethnic/religious groupings of the Middle East. Our initial source was a "Curriculum Guide" of Middle Eastern American philanthropies (Bozorgmehr and Baron 2001). We also checked the Internet and used

snowballing to generate information about new and little-known organizations. Several of the organizations on our master list existed only on paper or had a very narrow focus (e.g., an annual ethnic parade organized by one man). Additionally, we discovered disconnected telephone numbers and mailing addresses with no forwarding destination. We contacted almost all the organizations on our list at least twice by phone, e-mail, or letter.

We were persistent in our efforts to reach and interview the leaders of the most prominent organizations. The national organizations were professional in granting us interviews and generous with their time in spite of their very hectic schedules after 9/11. We did not encounter any refusals among those we managed to contact, though a handful of small grassroots organizations did not respond to our repeated phone messages, letters, and e-mails. However, the cause of nonresponse may have been a defunct organization or mislabeling, as in the case of an Arab American corporation that we mistook for a CBO.

We interviewed sixty Middle Eastern and Muslim American leaders, but our sample consists of fifty organizations. This is because in five organizations we interviewed at least two representatives and in two of the largest national organizations we conducted three interviews at different times (at one organization with the same person all three times). We conducted sixty-nine out of the seventy-five face-to-face interviews ourselves, either together or individually. The interviews were mostly held in the offices of the organization, or occasionally at a place designated by the respondent, such as a café or a park bench. In a few cases, respondents chose to come to MEMEAC's offices in midtown Manhattan. Outside New York and New Jersey, both of us visited Washington, D.C., twice (in 2002 and again in 2003) and took a trip to Dearborn (Michigan) in October 2002. Bakalian visited Chicago, and Bozorgmehr went to Los Angeles and again to Washington, D.C. To ensure that our sample would represent most of the ethnic/religious/national groupings in the Middle East, one of our research assistants conducted six interviews over the phone with spokespersons of groups that we had missed.

In April 2005 we presented our preliminary findings at an immigration workshop at the Baldy Center of the State University of New York at Buffalo. We took advantage of our visit to upstate New York to talk to several Arab and Muslim representatives in the area.[34] Our pressing concern was to discuss a border-crossing incident that had involved several members of the local Muslim community in December 2004. When these individuals attempted to return to their homes in Buffalo after

attending a convention in Toronto, the border police detained a number of them for several hours despite their presentation of U.S. passports. Our conversations confirmed what we had read in the press.[35] We also wanted to visit Lackawanna, the home community of six Yemeni American men who had received training in an Al Qaeda camp in Pakistan,[36] but it was impossible. The community had become even more closed to outsiders after all the media attention, making us doubt that our short visit would have permitted access and yielded much significant information. Time is needed to gain the trust of such a wounded community. Also in January 2006, Bakalian attended the four-day convention of the National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC) in Dearborn, Michigan, where about a dozen CBOs were represented.

In addition to interviewing, we have been engaged in participant observation of the Middle Eastern and Muslim communities in New York City since September 2001. This is partly because of our professional affiliation as directors of a center whose mission is to promote the study of the Middle East and its diaspora, and partly because of Bakalian's volunteer service on three Middle Eastern nonprofit boards in New York City. We have also observed fourteen "know your rights" forums, town hall gatherings for community members, and meetings of advocacy groups in greater New York and Washington, D.C., between 2001 and 2003. We have kept abreast of research on the affected communities by collecting a large amount of documentation issued by Middle Eastern and Muslim CBOs. Since 9/11, we have subscribed to ethnic publications and listservs and have monitored their coverage continuously, selecting relevant articles and messages for subsequent use in the book.[37] The bulk of our evidence on mobilization comes from the Web sites and listservs of the Middle Eastern and Muslim CBOs, since our interviews predated this stage. While our last formal interview was in November 2003, we have continued to consult some of the leaders in our sample. Curiously, since embarking on this project, we have ourselves become a resource for foundations, journalists, and filmmakers seeking to learn more about Arab and Muslim American organizations. We can certainly say that as researchers we have not been sequestered in the proverbial ivory tower.

All interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed verbatim. In a couple of cases respondents did not want us to record the conversation, so we took extensive notes instead. Two graduate student assistants coded all the transcribed interviews using the qualitative software program N-Vivo.[38] Though this process was labor intensive and time

consuming, it was essential for managing the voluminous amount of data we amassed. Searches for recurring themes and patterns in the data set yielded extensive quotes from respondents. We painstakingly read these quotes, organizing them into sections and subsections in the chapters. Our goal was to present the perspective of Middle Eastern and Muslim American leadership on the post-9/11 backlash. To validate our interviews, we cite corroborative evidence whenever possible.

THE CASE FOR INTERVIEWING LEADERS OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Social scientists have documented the pivotal historical role that pioneering immigrant CBOs or ethnic voluntary associations played in helping newcomers adapt to life in America (e.g., Breton 1964; Handlin 1973; Mirak 1983; Thomas and Znaniecki 1918–20/1958; Warner 1963). However in recent decades, analysis of immigrant/ethnic organizations has fallen out of favor (see chapter 4). The main reasons for this waning interest are probably shifts in methodology and a preoccupation with sample representativeness. Sociologists are discouraged from collecting information from organizational leaders because arguably they are not "typical" community members.

We are cognizant of the pitfalls of attributing authority to community leaders. We agree with Brubaker that "rarely is a single 'leader' recognized as authoritatively entitled to speak in the name of the group. As a result, ethnic groups generally lack what states ordinarily possess, namely a leader or leaders capable of negotiating and enforcing settlements" (2004, 104). Since the 1980s, interest in nonprofit organizations has brought back attention to differences among organizational actors. It has become increasingly evident that disregarding the input of organizational and community leaders results in loss of knowledge on important topics that the average member cannot possess. Leaders can inform researchers about an organization's social context, institutional memory, relations with other organizations, organizational culture, and funding streams, as well as the political climate that helps or hinders their work. Caroline Nagel and Lynn Staeheli concur that "leaders are easier to find, at least initially, and they are more likely to respond to questions about websites, organizational goals . . . and the politics of citizenship the organization and its members may pursue" (2004, 11).

Leaders of CBOs have a unique vantage point as knowledgeable and articulate persons. When the terrorists attacked, the media were totally unaware of the Middle Eastern and Muslim American communities and

thus had to educate themselves quickly by seeking out visible CBOs and their leaders. Given the crisis-driven nature of our study, we too found the organizational representatives most informed and communicative. They were uniquely positioned to answer questions not only about their communities but also about the larger picture—the government, the civil rights networks, the media, the justice system, and the American public.

Indirect evidence for interviewing leaders as opposed to rank-and-file members comes from the September 11 Digital Archive. Between June 2002 and March 2003, we collaborated with the archive in recruiting, training, and supervising three interviewers charged with finding Arab and/or Muslim individuals in New York City who would be willing to talk about their experiences on 9/11 and its aftermath. Initially, convincing people to be interviewed in the aftermath of the attacks was difficult, but assurances of complete anonymity resulted in seventy-two interviews (September 11 Digital Archive 2002–3).[39]

There was much overlap in the type of questions we asked the organizational leaders and the respondents in the September 11 Digital Archive project. We had hoped that the latter would provide insights about what members of the affected communities felt on the day of the attacks and what their experiences were afterwards. The yield from the individual interviews was very low. The vast majority of respondents did not experience backlash but had heard of such cases. There were a couple of interviews with persons who formed organizations in reaction to the attacks, which we have quoted from in this volume. The nonprobability sample of the September 11 Digital Archive makes it even more difficult for us to generalize the results to a larger population. In hindsight, this confirmed our decision to interview organizational leaders to learn about the backlash.

PLAN OF THE BOOK

This book consists of eight chapters. In chapter 2, we compare and contrast the post-9/11 backlash with watershed cases in American history when the U.S. government targeted minorities or outgroups during times of political crises. We begin with the case of the Germans during World War I; next we analyze the Palmer Raids or Red Scare of 1918–20, when the rise of Bolshevik power in Russia was believed to pose a threat to the United States. The internment of the Japanese during World War II is no doubt the best-known example and the most egregious, having targeted all Japanese Americans, including the U.S.

born. During the Cold War, McCarthyism ignited many Americans' fears and imaginations of a communist threat and unfairly discriminated against individuals who had once been party members or sympathizers. A less-known episode is the mistreatment of Iranian foreign students in the United States during the hostage crisis in Iran (1979–81).

Chapter 3 examines the immigration patterns as well as the demographic and social characteristics of Middle Eastern, North African, and South Asian immigrants, since the foreign born were especially targeted. Unlike other minority groups such as Asian Americans or Hispanics, Middle Easterners are not considered an official minority. Individuals who trace their ancestry to the Middle East and North Africa are categorized as white. Sociologically, it makes sense to group Middle Easterners and North Africans from various countries in one category because they share many cultural, religious, historical, and political characteristics; the same applies to South Asians. The lack of accurate statistical data on these populations is a major handicap. They are too small to be included in most nongovernmental surveys. Even though it is possible to extract data from the open-ended ancestry question in the 1980, 1990, and 2000 censuses, the number of Middle Eastern Americans is believed to be undercounted. We are on firmer footing in identifying the foreign born through census data on country of birth. Arab Americans are "not quite white," and some have even argued that this supranational ethnic group has been "racialized" since 9/11, so we conclude with a brief discussion of identity politics.

In chapter 4 we review the sociological literature on CBOs as it applies to our study. We analyze how the structure and capacity of the organizations in our sample were transformed by the crisis. In particular, we focus on changes in their mission, personnel, and funding sources. We conclude by sampling a handful of new organizations that emerged after 9/11.

Next, we examine the impact of the post-9/11 backlash against Middle Eastern and Muslim American communities. In chapter 5, we begin with an exploration of hate crimes, profiling, bias incidents, discrimination in the workplace, and responses to women's wearing of the *hijab*. We also discuss how media biases and their inflammatory anti-Islamic rhetoric fuel hatred against the targeted populations and perpetuate stereotypes. Chapter 6 focuses on government initiatives. Though Arab and Muslim immigrant men have been most affected by the policies, their families, who depended on them for their livelihood, have also suffered. We conclude with a discussion of the repercussions of the back-

lash on the communities, namely their fear, anxiety, and growing mistrust of the government.

Chapter 7 examines the mobilization of Middle Eastern and Muslim American organizations. We analyze each of the components of their mobilization or claims making. We argue that with the passage of the civil rights laws new political opportunity structures opened up for Middle Eastern and Muslim groups, who were able to mobilize relatively rapidly. Framing mechanisms used by the CBOs in our sample included distancing from and condemning the terrorist attacks, demonstrating allegiance to the United States, and educating their fellow Americans about Islam and the Middle East. The CBOs relied on standard tactics in claims making, whereas the repertoire of the second generation included various cultural productions such as theater, comedy, and poetry. We analyze coalition building and political socialization as forms of resource mobilization. We conclude by exploring the three types of coalitions we identified—coalitions based on identity politics, situational alliances, and social justice alliances—and by discussing conflict within coalitions, which in our case means disagreements over domestic and foreign policy.

The final chapter centers on integration, since it has been the ultimate goal of mobilization for Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans. We begin by exploring the accommodations Muslim immigrants have to make to practice their faith in America. We devote the remainder of the chapter to civic engagement and political incorporation. We examine how the respondents in our study defined and envisaged integration: as a call to leave the "ghetto," become proficient in English, and engage in the civic and political life of the society, particularly voting and electoral politics, even at the risk of assimilation. We conclude this chapter with the summary and conclusions of the book.