

## Role of Religious Institutions in American to Strengthening Islamic Religion

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### Abstract

The United States possesses a strategically significant geographical location, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. This unique positioning has made the country a destination for immigrants from various nations, including Muslim communities. This study aims to explore the historical foundations and development of Islam in the United States, particularly through the contributions of religious institutions and communities that promote and strengthen Islamic teachings. The research utilizes a library-based methodology with a qualitative approach, drawing from books, journals, and official reports relevant to the topic. The findings indicate that, while Islam remains a minority religion in America, its number of adherents continues to grow. This phenomenon is closely tied to the active roles played by religious organizations such as CAIR, ISNA, MSA, and FIMA, which support education, advocacy, and interfaith dialogue. Furthermore, global incidents, such as the attacks on September 11, 2001, have served as significant turning points in increasing public interest in Islam. These institutions are crucial in shaping a positive image of Islam within America's diverse society.

**Keywords:** American Union; Institution Religious; Community Muslim; Development of Religion

### Abstrak

Amerika Serikat memiliki lokasi geografis yang strategis dan signifikan, berbatasan dengan Samudra Atlantik di sebelah timur dan Samudra Pasifik di sebelah barat. Posisi yang unik ini menjadikan negara ini sebagai tujuan para imigran dari berbagai negara, termasuk komunitas Muslim. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi fondasi historis dan perkembangan Islam di Amerika Serikat, khususnya melalui kontribusi lembaga dan komunitas keagamaan yang mempromosikan dan memperkuat ajaran Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi berbasis perpustakaan (Library research) dengan pendekatan kualitatif, yang diambil dari buku, jurnal, dan laporan resmi yang relevan dengan topik tersebut. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa, meskipun Islam tetap menjadi agama minoritas di Amerika, jumlah penganutnya terus bertambah. Fenomena ini terkait erat dengan peran aktif yang dimainkan oleh organisasi keagamaan seperti CAIR, ISNA, MSA, dan FIMA, yang mendukung pendidikan, advokasi, dan dialog antaragama. Lebih jauh, insiden global, seperti serangan 11 September 2001, telah menjadi titik balik yang signifikan dalam meningkatkan minat publik terhadap Islam. Lembaga-lembaga ini sangat penting dalam membentuk citra positif Islam dalam masyarakat Amerika yang beragam.

**Kata Kunci:** Amerika Serikat; Lembaga Keagamaan; Komunitas Muslim; Perkembangan Agama

## Introduction

The American Union is known as country with majority resident non-Muslims. However, ethnic and cultural diversity makes this country one of the possible places growth community various religions, including Islam. As a country the main destination for global immigration, the United States is home to people from a variety of backgrounds, including Muslims from the Middle East, South Asia and Africa. This condition makes Islam as Wrong one religion which continues growing even though Still have minority status.

The evolution of Islam in America is intricately linked to the active engagement of religious communities and institutions. Muslims have been present in America since the 17th century, initially through the transatlantic slave trade, with a significant increase in immigration occurring in the 20th century. However, the diverse interpretations of the Islamic faith among Muslims often lead to internal differences and present challenges from the broader community, particularly in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001, which contributed to the proliferation of negative stereotypes about Islam (Fatma, 2007).

Islam continues to demonstrate its relevance as a rapidly growing religion. It has been noted that in the wake of the events of September 11, a significant number of Americans have chosen to embrace Islam. This phenomenon indicates that Islam not only endures despite social pressures but also garners sympathy through its universal values (Barrett, 2008).

In this context, Islamic religious institutions play a crucial role in promoting a moderate understanding of Islam, fostering interfaith dialogue, and advocating for the civil rights of the Muslim community. Thus, it is essential to explore the extent to which these religious institutions in America contribute to the strengthening of Islam in the country. In light of this background, the primary aim of this study is to explore the challenges encountered in the development of Islam in the United States. This is particularly relevant as the Muslim community continues to grow, yet it still faces structural and cultural obstacles in a predominantly non-Muslim society.

This article aims to describe the dynamics of the development of Islam in America, beginning with the initial arrival of Muslims and progressing to the establishment of Islamic communities and institutions. Additionally, the study analyzes various factors that both inhibit and promote the growth of Islam, addressing internal aspects of the Muslim community as well as external influences from American society at large.

In generally theoretical, study This use approach sociological religious, that is the study of religion in the context of social life. This approach allows us to understand how religion is practiced, disseminated, and transformed in a pluralistic social space such as the United States.

Islam was first introduced to America through slavery, with a small number of Muslims brought from Africa in the 17th and 18th centuries. This was followed by a mass migration of Muslim groups, which led to a cultural fusion that often resulted in complex and sometimes violent conflicts between Europeans and Indigenous Native Americans. Additionally, many Europeans brought infectious diseases such as measles and smallpox, which devastated the original American population, who had no strong immunity to these illnesses. However, the history of Islam in America further developed in the 20th century, as Muslim immigration to the region increased, allowing Islam to enter America more rapidly and comprehensively (Karim, 2016).

American views of Islam are diverse and complex. Some Americans have a deep understanding of the religion, while others have views influenced by stereotypes ignorance. Surveys show that there is significant disagreement among Americans about Islam (Abdillah, 2019). So, not all Americans are Islamophobic. The Growth of Islam in American Union is a phenomenon the important thing. Phenomenon this has impact Which significant to community Muslim And public American overall. Development Islam in American, specifically in American union can seen from several aspects. The number of people practicing Islam in the United States is expected to continue rising in the coming years. American society is progressively gaining a better understanding of Islamic teachings and becoming more accepting of Muslims. Individuals from the Islamic community are increasingly playing significant roles in various aspects of life in America, including politics, economics, social issues, and cultural activities.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Beginning of Islam in America**

Islam was first introduced to America through the transatlantic slave trade, with a small number of Muslims brought from Africa in the 17th and 18th centuries. The subsequent influx of Puritan immigrants led to a complex blend of cultures and frequent violent conflicts between Europeans and Native Americans. Additionally, many Europeans brought infectious diseases such as measles and smallpox, which devastated Native American populations that lacked immunity. The history of Islam in America, however, evolved further in the 20th century, marked by a significant

wave of Muslim immigration, resulting in a more rapid and comprehensive integration of Islam into American society (Abdillah, 2019).

### **The Development of Islam in America Today**

The growth of Islam in the United States is a noteworthy phenomenon that significantly influences both the Muslim community and American society at large. The development of Islam in America, particularly within the context of the United States, can be examined from various perspectives:

- a. The Muslim population in the United States is projected to grow steadily in the coming years
- b. American society is becoming more familiar with the teachings of Islam and is showing greater tolerance towards Muslims
- c. Muslims are also taking on more significant roles across various sectors of American society, including politics, economics, social issues, and culture

### **Research Methods**

The type of research uses a literature study method supported by previous research data. A literature study collects data from written sources such as books, literature, notes, and reports relevant to the problem being studied (Creswell, 2016). Researchers read and record information from these sources in a literature study and process research materials. Data collection techniques used in literature studies are library studies and the internet as a source of information. The use of the internet as a source of information in literature studies is carried out because the internet provides a variety of information related to research and is equipped with a variety of literature from previous research from various parts of the world. Researchers use the literature study research method to obtain more objective data because researchers are not directly involved in data collection and obtain broad and in-depth information about the research topic (Creswell, 2021).

### **Result and Discussion**

#### **Islamic Institutions in American**

The development of Islam in the American Union is evident through the emergence and contributions of various religious institutions that play a strategic role in reinforcing the Islamic identity of Muslims and advocating for their rights within a multicultural society. These institutions also serve as effective vehicles for Islamic preaching and education, addressing the challenges of discrimination and negative stereotypes (Khoiriyah, Kholis, & Nisak, 2022).

A number of institution Islam Which most influential in American Union between other:

a. Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

CAIR, the largest Muslim advocacy organization in the world, was founded in 1994 with the aim of increasing public understanding of Islam, defending civil liberties, and fighting for social justice. The organization is actively involved in handling discrimination cases, conducting civil rights training, and fostering relationships with government agencies and the media.

CAIR envisions itself as a leading advocate for justice on behalf of Muslims. Its mission is to advance the understanding of Islam, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

Since its founding in 1994, CAIR has worked to promote a positive image of Islam and Muslims in America. Through media relations, government engagement, education, and advocacy, CAIR brings Islamic perspectives to the forefront, ensuring that Muslim voices are represented. By offering these perspectives, CAIR aims to empower the American Muslim community and encourage their active participation in political and social spheres.

b. The Federation of Islamic Medical Associations (FIMA)

The Federation Association of Islamic Medicine (FIMA) is an organization comprising 29 Islamic medical societies and 17 member associations from around the globe, representing approximately 50,000 Muslim medical and health professionals. Established on December 31, 1981, FIMA focuses on health and humanitarian issues, providing a platform for Islamic medical ethics for Muslim professionals. The organization is also actively involved in international humanitarian aid programs.

FIMA was officially founded in Indiana on January 18, 1982. Its mission is to offer a platform for Muslim doctors in the areas of medical education, ethics, and humanitarian assistance. FIMA operates as a non-profit, non-political, and non-governmental organization (Manshuruddin, 2022).

FIMA own objective and target as following:

1. To foster the unity and well-being of Muslim medical and healthcare professionals throughout the world.
2. To promote Islamic medical activities including health services, education and research, through cooperation and coordination among member organizations.

3. To promote the understanding and application of Islamic principles in the medical field.
4. For mobilize source Power economy to provide care medical and assistance to affected areas and communities.
5. To promote the exchange of medical information and technical expertise among member organizations.

c. Muslim Students Association (MSA)

The Muslim Students Association (MSA), also known as Set Student Islam, is a nonprofit organization serving students across North America. Its vision and mission focus on facilitating relationships, networking, educating, and empowering students to foster an informed society. MSA aims to support Muslim students within the academic environment.

This organization actively hosts programs such as Islam Awareness Week, Fast-a-Thon, and interfaith dialogues, which aim to introduce Islamic values to the campus community. As an independent student organization, MSA adheres to the rules and regulations of its respective campuses. To achieve its objectives, MSA organizes numerous events and programs each year.

Additionally, MSA National develops tools and resources to enhance information sharing and unite students throughout North America. Some of MSA's most popular campaigns include Islam Awareness Week, Ramadan Fast-A-Thon, and Project Downtown, all designed to showcase the positive social contributions of Muslim students on their college and university campuses (Anam, 2020).

d. Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)

The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) was established in 1982 as a forum created by alumni of the Muslim Student Association (MSA) in collaboration with various Islamic organizations across the country. ISNA plays a significant role in uniting the Muslim community by organizing national conventions, managing mosques, developing Islamic education curricula, and strengthening networks among Islamic organizations in North America (Lestari, 2016).

The Muslim communities above are a place to introduce Islam by taking on many positive roles that can be played by Muslims in America, serving by providing food, providing good media services, building places of worship. And education, do cooperation with leader non-Muslim, and do interfaith dialogue.

With the aim that Islam will slowly no longer be considered a bad religion as it has been so far (Jalil & Hidayatullah, 2022).

In general, the main characteristics of politics in the education system in the United States are adhere to principle decentralization, different with in level national Which formed one department (the Federal Department of Education), so that schools are the responsibility of local governments. In 1636 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard College was founded. The end of the 17th century saw the establishment of the College of William and the College of Mary in Virginia. Then in the following year, the College School of Connecticut was founded, which later became Yale College. In the early stages of its development, there were also many schools organized by religious groups, so that they still stand today (Sahidah, 2019).

However, since the reign of President Ronald Reagan, the Central Government began to reduce services to education (Musfirah & Kamilah, 2024). The government aimed to reduce programs it deemed unnecessary for the public by addressing "waste, fraud, and abuse." Reagan believed that the government was encroaching too much on individuals' lives. As a result, the responsibility and initiative for education policy were delegated to the state (provincial) and local government levels (regency/city). In the United States, there are 50 states and 15,358 districts, all of which were granted the authority and autonomy to manage education (Afandi, 2013). On generally the purpose of system American education is as follows:

1. For reach unity in diversity;
2. For develop ideals and democratic practice;
3. For help individual development;
4. For repair condition social public; and
5. For speed up progress national.

In America, religious studies are not part of the public school curriculum but are introduced in a specific manner in colleges and universities. Religion is primarily taught in private schools that are based on particular faiths. The religious landscape in America is diverse, and many people acknowledge a variety of religions, including Taoism, Quakerism, and Judaism, among others. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the Muslim community faced significant challenges due to a rise in Islamophobia. However, this situation has also led to an increased interest in learning about Islam and a growing number of conversions. In response to these challenges, Islamic organizations are enhancing educational efforts, advocating for legal protections, and expanding interfaith dialogue to combat prejudice and affirm that Islam is a religion of peace (Fauziah, 2013).

According to Ajid Thohir, several factors contribute to Americans' interest in Islam. First, many Americans experience a sense of emptiness in their lives despite having abundant wealth. Second, they perceive Islam as a faith that transcends distinctions such as race, skin color, and occupation. Third, Islam is regarded as a religion that embodies self-respect, a passion for life, a strong work ethic, politeness, and a sense of brotherhood. Additionally, many are drawn to the exemplary conduct of Muslims, which is often reflected in their hospitality, simplicity, and sincerity. Lastly, Islam offers life solutions that resonate with individuals, especially when the advancements in science and technology fail to provide satisfactory answers (Nizar, 2016).

### **Development Islam in American**

#### **a. History Short and Condition Demographics**

The history of America begins with the formation of 13 colonies under British rule, which declared independence on July 4, 1776. Following this, America expanded significantly. The Louisiana Territory was purchased from France, and Alaska was acquired from Russia. During this period, annexation efforts were also made to seize territories owned by Mexico.

The history of the American Union can be traced back to the early human existence in North America, estimated to have begun around 34,000 BC. However, it took thousands of years for these early inhabitants to migrate southwards to the land now known as the United States, with estimates suggesting their arrival around 12,000 BC. This is supported by archaeological evidence, including the discovery of ancient hunting grounds in northern Alaska.

Today, the United States covers an area of approximately 9.83 million square kilometers and has a population of around 309 million people, ranking it as the third or fourth largest country in the world by total area, and the third largest by population (Husin, 2018). This country is a multiethnic and multicultural nation, shaped by the influx of immigrants from around the world. The American Economy Union boasts the largest economy globally, with a gross domestic product (GDP) estimated at \$14 trillion in 2008, accounting for a quarter of the world's GDP based on nominal values and ranking fifth in terms of purchasing power parity. At the onset of colonization, the population of Native Americans in the American Union was estimated to be between two and eighteen million. However, this number declined significantly due to several factors, including the devastating impact of infectious diseases brought from Europe,



particularly the smallpox epidemic, which resulted in substantial loss of life among Native Americans in the 1600s (Indriati, 2017).

The first Europeans known to have arrived in North America were the Norse from Norway, who sailed west of Greenland to establish a settlement around the year 985 AD. In the 1600s, a significant wave of emigration from Europe to North America occurred. Over the next three centuries, population movement and displacement led to growth from just a few hundred Englishmen to millions of new arrivals. When it declared its independence, America adopted principles of government that were consistently aligned with the philosophy underpinning its independence, including the idea of equal standing before the law (Ni'am, 2016). More he explained, the three bases are as follows:

1. The three bodies of government, legislative-executive-judicial, are distinct and separate from one another. others. Power on One body balanced by two other bodies. Each body acts as a check on potential excesses arising from other bodies.
2. Everyone is equal before the law, and has the right to its protection.
3. The people have the right to change the form of national government for the purpose of legally contained in the law.

b. Incident that Happen in American

The phenomenon occurring in America is quite intriguing. It seems paradoxical that, following the September 11, 2001, attacks an event that severely damaged the image of Islam there has been a significant rise in American interest in the religion. The period following 9/11 saw an unprecedented growth in Islam in the United States, a trend rarely seen in history. Today, there are approximately 8 million Muslims living in America, and around 20,000 Americans convert to Islam each year in the aftermath of those events (Elvinaro & Syarif, 2022).

The events of 9/11 carry an unexpected mystery. The attacks were universally condemned, particularly in America, where they were labeled as barbaric acts associated with "terrorist Islam." In the aftermath, many Muslims in the United States, especially those of Middle Eastern immigrant backgrounds, experienced significant psychological distress. They faced suspicion, fear, harassment, and were often unfairly linked to terrorism (Asrori, 2020). The same situation occurred for Muslims in England, France, Germany, and other European countries. George W. Bush's administration rapidly implemented stricter immigration policies and increased surveillance of Muslim immigrants.

In a weekly show titled “In Focus,” Fox News Channel hosted a discussion with six speakers on the topic “Stop All Muslim Immigration to Protect America and the Economy.”

Islam appears to have evolved in a unique way that challenges modern notions of common sense. It is perplexing how a group of individuals can commit heinous acts against innocent people in the name of religion, yet soon after, thousands embrace that same faith and find solace within it. The events of 9/11 have become an emblem of this illogical and surprising trajectory in history. In fact, since that incident, approximately 20,000 Americans convert to Islam each year, alongside many others from non-American countries such as Europe, China, Korea, and Japan who also choose to embrace the religion. Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, the U.S. launched military action in Afghanistan to dismantle the Taliban regime there, and in 2003, it initiated the Second Gulf War to overturn Saddam Hussein's government in Iraq. America's role as the world's police often stirs resentment among Muslim nations (Sambang, Prasetya, & Hidayah, 2022). For radical groups, America's role in the global political landscape often resembles that of a police force, with the overarching goal of maintaining state control in the face of terrorism. It's important to recognize the teachings of Islam, which provide a foundation for defending the faith against perceived threats, and the concept of jihad is integral to this defense. The conflict that many Muslims feel has been exacerbated by America's actions, particularly in relation to its support for Israel, which has left little room for strategic partnership in the region (Mashuri & Fakhrurrozi, 2014).

c. War Bay 2nd

The Iraq War began in March 2003 and is also referred to as Persian Gulf War II. The primary goal of this conflict was to dismantle Saddam Hussein's regime and compel his exit from Iraq.

Prior to the invasion, the United States had become a target of terrorism in the wake of the attacks on September 11, 2001. Although these attacks did not directly trigger the Iraq War, they significantly influenced decision-making within the U.S. government. The events of 9/11 emphasized the need for changes in various regimes and in the governance of countries perceived to have potential links to terrorism.

In response to emerging threats, the U.S. aimed to redefine the power dynamics in several Middle Eastern countries, focusing particularly on leaders believed to have connections to terrorist networks. A significant illustration of

this strategic shift was the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime, which was alleged to possess weapons of mass destruction, had formerly invaded Kuwait, and was thought to encourage terrorist activities.

Following the September 11 attacks, President Bush labeled the event an act of international terrorism and declared war on its mastermind, Osama bin Laden, along with his Al-Qaeda associates. The Bush administration further asserted its authority to detain individuals linked to Al-Qaeda or those suspected of posing risks to national security (Shafa Alistiana Irbathy & Mukminin, 2024). The US also determined several countries that were considered the axis of evil (Axis of Evil) And suspected own potential terrorism, countries the among others are Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Cuba.

The war on terrorism, commonly referred to as the War on Terror, can be understood as a campaign that encompasses a nearly boundless array of targets. Its primary objective is to eradicate terrorism, as exemplified by the actions of groups like Al-Qaeda. Specific countries in the Middle East, notably Iraq and Afghanistan, have been targeted for distinct reasons. Iraq was deemed a threat to the United States due to Saddam Hussein's regime and allegations that it possessed weapons of mass destruction. In contrast, Afghanistan was targeted because the Taliban regime had connections to terrorist networks such as Al-Qaeda at that time (Sutopo, 2010).

The U.S. stance on weapon ownership initially stemmed from concerns regarding the chemical and nuclear capabilities of Iraq, particularly towards the end of 1999. During that period, U.S. Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen, who served under President Bill Clinton, contended that Iraq continued to seek nuclear materials. He advocated for oversight and investigations by the United Nations in Iraq as a preventive measure (Wahyuni, 2021).

Bush's views or claims regarding Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) are not new. The potential threat posed by Iraq's chemical and nuclear arsenal had already been acknowledged and continues to be a concern. The investigation into the existence of these weapons was not only undertaken by the United States but was also supported by a specialized investigative body established by the United Nations—the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). This commission was created in accordance with resolution 1284, which mandated the examination of materials and sites suspected of being sources of weapons of mass destruction.

On March 17, 2003, after concluding that diplomatic efforts to resolve the situation had proven futile, President Bush made the decisive move to sever diplomatic relations and issued an ultimatum to Saddam Hussein, demanding his departure from Iraq within 48 hours. This ultimatum marked a significant turning point, as the United States prepared for military action. The decision enjoyed the backing of several key nations, including the United Kingdom, Poland, and Australia, all of whom supported the use of military force against Iraq. Their collective stance was grounded in the belief that assisting the U.S. in addressing the crisis was vital for maintaining global stability.

Temporary opposition to the war in Iraq emerged from two prominent European nations: France and Germany. Their primary concern centered on the belief that resolving the conflict between the United States and Iraq would be more effective through diplomatic means rather than military intervention. Unfortunately, the war in Iraq ultimately became inevitable, with military operations commencing on the night of March 19, 2003. The United States signaled the start of the war with an operation called "Operation Iraqi Freedom."

d. History Beginning Arrival Islam in American

There is no official source that conclusively addresses the beginnings of Islam's arrival in America. However, there are circulating claims that Columbus's successful landing on the American continent was influenced by the guidance of a Moroccan national, for whom his services were supposedly obtained. A Muslim geographer noted that long before Columbus, eight Muslim navigators embarked on a series of voyages from Lisbon, during which they reportedly explored areas around the Atlantic. It is said that these eight Muslim adventurers eventually navigated the Atlantic Ocean and landed in regions surrounding South America. This information was then purportedly used by Columbus in his quest to cross the Atlantic and reach what is now known as America.

However, this claim is contested by many historians who argue that it lacks a solid historical basis. The primary evidence supporting the migration of Muslims to America is further reinforced by the assertion that the first Muslim populations began to arrive around 1875 to 1912 from remote parts of Syria. These early Muslim migrants significantly influenced the local indigenous populations, both directly and indirectly. The contact between the indigenous inhabitants and the migrants impacted various demographic factors in America, as well as its political, economic, and trading landscapes.

The following description at least provides information on migration factors and the effects they cause, including:

1. Migration took place from 1875 to 1912. The individuals who migrated were mostly uneducated and unskilled village youths from Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon, who were living under the declining Ottoman government. They left their home countries due to poor economic conditions and sought greater financial opportunities in the United States, where they typically found work in factories and shops.
2. Migration occurred in 1918 to 1922, after World War I. They were generally educated intellectuals from urban areas. They were generally relatives, friends or acquaintances of immigrants who had been in the United States before.
3. Migration occurred from 1930 to 1938, which was conditioned by policies American immigration Union Which give priority to they Which his family had previously settled in the United States.
4. Migration occurred from 1947 to 1960. The immigrants who came to the United States during this period not only originated from the Middle East but also from India, Pakistan, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union. They arrived in America as refugees or to seek better lives, pursue higher education, acquire advanced skills, and secure specialized employment.
5. Migration began in 1967 and continues to this day. Those who came to the United States during this wave were driven not only by economic factors but also primarily by political reasons. The Arab world at that time experienced significant suffering due to confrontations with Israel and various other conflicts. Generally, the migrants were educated individuals.

There is a unique aspect of Islamic development in America that can be observed in the various streams of Islam that are conducive to growth. This is particularly evident in the Shiite sect, which is currently expanding significantly in Iran and the broader Middle Eastern region. The Shia population is notably large in Western countries, especially in the United States. According to John L. Esposito, the Shia community has gained recognition among resident Muslims and is easily identifiable through the numerous mosques located in cities like New York, Detroit, Washington, Los Angeles, and Chicago, as well as in several major cities across Canada.

In addition to the Shia community, there are other groups present in America, such as the Ismaili Shia. This group has formed a vibrant community comprising

around 80,000 followers in Canada, particularly in Vancouver and Toronto, along with smaller communities spread throughout the United States, especially in New York and California. The Ismaili Shia place a strong emphasis on education and boast a robust organizational structure that effectively develops their institutions in the United States.

Muslims continue to face challenges in navigating life in America. On November 16, 2023, students at George Washington University experienced a riot linked to the current global focus on the Palestinian state, particularly Gaza. "A student was banned from campus for a year due to inappropriate behavior and threatening remarks directed at a Muslim student." This incident arose after a student was accused of removing an Israeli hostage poster from within the Jewish student center. In the context of rising reports of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia on a national scale—including alarming acts of violence—many young people in America are feeling increasingly afraid.

The development of Islam in the United States shows a continuous upward trend, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Islam has now become one of the fastest-growing religions in America. This growth is largely due to the contributions of Muslim immigrants from various countries, including Syria, Pakistan, India, Palestine, and several nations in Africa, as well as an increasing number of converts. According to various studies, the expansion of the Muslim community in America is driven by local interest in Islamic values such as social justice, spirituality, simplicity, and community solidarity. In the aftermath of 9/11, despite heightened discrimination, there was a significant increase in curiosity about Islam, leading to a surge in religious conversions.

Geographically, the Muslim population is distributed across different regions, with the highest concentrations found in large cities such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Detroit. These communities have flourished through the establishment of mosques, Islamic study centers, Islamic-based schools, and active social and religious organizations. The development of Islam is also evident in the involvement of Muslims in politics, education, economics, and the media. More Muslim figures are gaining visibility in the public sphere, including academics, doctors, activists, and politicians. This trend signifies that Islam is increasingly accepted as an integral part of the social and cultural landscape of America.

### **Influence to Condition of Islam in American**

Muslim immigrants to the United States have historically come from a variety of countries and ethnic backgrounds, bringing with them a strong Islamic influence.

The introduction of Islam into the United States was motivated by a mix of political, economic, and social factors. In the early stages, before World War II, the number of Muslim immigrants was relatively small. The first significant wave of Muslim immigrants began in the early 19th century, coinciding with the abolition of the slave trade and migrations from regions heavily influenced by Islam, including America and Canada. Although Muslims represented only a small fraction of the immigrant population, many were driven by economic motivations, seeking financial opportunities. Most of these immigrants hailed from rural areas of the broader Syrian region, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire, encompassing territories such as Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon.

The initial wave of immigrants primarily consisted of young villagers who lacked work skills, education, and had limited proficiency in English. Consequently, many of these immigrants hailed from Arab countries, leading to the belief that the earliest American Muslims were Arab immigrants rather than African Americans. Some of these newcomers returned to their homelands in the Middle East after achieving success, while others chose to settle in the United States and began establishing Muslim communities.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire during World War I triggered a significant wave of immigration from the Middle East to the United States. This flow of immigrants continued until the end of the war. It was a time characterized by Western colonial rule in the Middle East, structured under a mandate system that was intended to govern the Arab Peninsula. The war caused severe destruction in Lebanon and several other countries in the region, prompting many residents to flee in search of safety. During this period, Muslim immigrants were primarily motivated by political reasons.

In 1924, the United States government enacted immigration regulations that imposed restrictions on immigration from Asia and other regions. The new law established a quota system based on national origin, setting a maximum limit on immigrants according to the country of origin of foreign-born residents in the United States as of 1890. This regulation significantly restricted the number of Muslim immigrants allowed to enter the country.

The third major period of immigration occurred during the 1930s. During this time, U.S. immigration policy prioritized individuals who had family or acquaintances already settled in the United States. While this policy did permit the entry of Black individuals and Muslims, the numbers remained limited and did not significantly increase until after the end of World War II.

The immigration wave following the war saw a marked improvement in the number of Muslim immigrants arriving in the United States. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1953 was amended to allocate specific quotas for immigrants from each country annually. Generally, Muslim immigrants during this period primarily came from Eastern Europe, including countries like Yugoslavia and Albania, as well as the Soviet Union. Many also came from the Middle East and various parts of the world, such as India and Pakistan.

Most of these immigrants consisted of Muslim students from Arab and South Asian countries, typically hailing from affluent families with solid educational backgrounds and proficiency in English. They came to the United States to pursue higher education at universities and undergo technical training in various fields. The motivations for Muslim immigration during this period varied widely; some sought refuge and a better life, while others aimed to further their education, receive advanced technical training, and secure specialized job opportunities, with some immigrating for ideological reasons.

During this period, particularly among immigrants who settled in the United States, Muslim communities began to form with the goal of fostering cooperation and friendship among their members. These American Muslims went on to establish official organizations focused on advocating for their interests. Some of the early organizations founded during this time include the Nation of Islam (American Muslim Mission), the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), the Federation of Islamic Organizations (FIO), and the Muslim Student Organization (MSA). At this stage, American Muslims began integrating into American society, working to build positive relationships and collaborations with their non-Muslim neighbors.

The fifth wave of immigration represents the last significant wave and is still ongoing today. The flow of immigration during this period has been influenced by various internal decisions within the United States and events occurring in parts of the Islamic world. In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed an immigration act that repealed quotas based on the ethnic diversity of the U.S. population. This new law marked a significant milestone in American history, as it allowed individuals to enter the United States without regard to their country of origin for the first time since the early 20th century.

Following the 1965 act, immigrants from the Middle East and Asia increased dramatically, making up a substantial portion of the total immigrant population. Numerous factors, such as political chaos and wars, have contributed to this influx. Key events include the military defeat of Arab countries by Israel in 1967, the



Lebanese Civil War, the Iranian Revolution, which forced many Iranians to leave their homeland, the Iran-Iraq War, the civil war in Pakistan, the movement against Muslims in India, and military coups in Afghanistan. Collectively, these events have significantly shaped the presence of Muslim communities in the United States today (Nizar, 2016).

The condition of Muslims in the American Union is significantly influenced by the dynamics of migration, media, and policies from their countries of origin. The wave of migration from predominantly Muslim countries has introduced a rich diversity of culture, language, and sects within the American Muslim community, ultimately leading to the formation of a distinct and context-driven Islamic identity. However, social factors such as negative discrimination and Islamophobic sentiments present major challenges for this community. On the other hand, these issues have also sparked the emergence of internal movements that advocate for civil rights through legal avenues and public advocacy.

Significant events such as the September 11, 2001 attacks and the Iraq War have greatly influenced public perception of Islam. However, the reactions from the Muslim community in response to these situations have demonstrated an open, educational, and peaceful attitude, which underscores the positive contributions of Islam to American society. Additionally, the increasing number of converts among white and African American populations highlights that Islam is capable of providing relevant spiritual values and a sense of justice that resonate with modern life. This serves as an important indicator that Islam in America is not only enduring but also emerging as a moral force within a diverse society.

## **Conclusion**

Islam, as a minority religion in the United States, has demonstrated significant presence and growth through the active engagement of its religious communities and institutions. Despite encountering various challenges, including negative stereotypes, discrimination, and social pressures following 9/11, Muslims have managed to preserve their identity and continue contributing to the social fabric of American society.

Islamic organizations such as CAIR, ISNA, FIMA, and MSA play a vital role in promoting a better understanding of moderate Islam, fostering internal solidarity among their communities, and facilitating dialogue with interfaith groups and state institutions. The existence and initiatives of these organizations illustrate that Islam

in America is not merely surviving but is thriving and helping to shape a more pluralistic, tolerant, and inclusive society.

This research highlights that Islam can flourish peacefully and constructively within Western society, provided that it is supported by adaptive outreach strategies, inclusive education, and progressive social approaches. These findings aim to enrich the study of religious dynamics and serve as a foundation for further exploration of the interactions between Islam and the global community.

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