

PROJECT

MAPS

Muslims in American Public Square

Spring 2002

Newsletter of the Project MAPS
www.projectmaps.com

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Project MAPS Conducts The First Systematic American Muslim Poll

Poll Reveals American Muslim Community Is Diverse, Affluent, Activist, Religious and Politically Savvy

BY ZAHID BUKHARI

Project MAPS conducted the first-ever systematic poll of American Muslims which covers the following four areas:

1) **Demographics:** gender, generation and ethnicity, U.S. born and immigrant, income and education levels, age and occupation.

2) **Religious practices:** relationship with the mosque, conversion to Islam, importance of religion in their life, and interaction between the mosque and politics.

3) **Opinion and behavior** on social and political issues, party affiliation, voting in the presidential election, foreign policy, and other domestic issues relating to religion and public life.

4) **September 11th and its aftermath:** reaction, backlash, President Bush's handling of the crisis, war against terrorism, and the military action in Afghanistan

The project commissioned the renowned polling firm, Zogby International to conduct the Poll through telephone interviews of a nationwide

representative sample of the American Muslim population during November and December 2001.

Zogby International interviewed 1,781 persons, 18 years and older, nationwide who identify themselves as Muslim. The interviews were conducted November 8 through November 19, 2001, using a telephone list created by matching zip codes of 300 randomly selected Islamic centers, against their respective local telephone exchanges, and listings of common Muslim surnames were then identified from the local telephone exchanges and called.

An additional sample of African-American Muslims was taken in-person December 7-9, 2001 in New York, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, GA, and Detroit, MI. The additional surveys were required to account for African-American Muslims with Anglo-American or non-Muslim surnames who had been left out in the telephone survey. The percentage of African-American respondents was weighted to reflect 20% of the American Muslim population.

The margin of error is 2.4%. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

The American Muslim community is unique in its diversity. Thirty-six per-

INSIDE

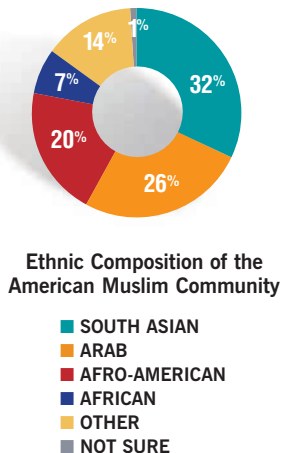
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cent of them were born in the US, while sixty-four percent were born in eighty different countries of the globe. There is no other country on earth that has such a rich diversity of the Muslim population, perhaps the only parallel is the annual Hajj in Saudi Arabia where more than two million Muslims, representing more than 100 countries of the world. Sixty percent of those who were born outside of the US came to this country during the last two decades. One-fourth emigrated during the 1970, while 12 percent came here before 1970.

Three major ethnic groups in the Muslim community are: South Asians (32%), Arabs (26%) and Afro-Americans (20%), while Muslims from various African countries constitute seven percent of the community.

AN AFFLUENT COMMUNITY

The American Muslim community is relatively young, more educated, and finan-



cially well off compared to the American general public. The following comparative table about age, education and family income, shows the results of the Project MAPS American Muslim Poll and a national survey conducted by the Pew Research Center and the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life in February/March 2002 (*Please visit www.pewforum.org for complete results of the*

national survey).

AN ACTIVIST COMMUNITY

The Poll asked several questions to measure the social and political activities of the American Muslims. Over the three quarters (77%) said that they have been involved with organizations to help poor, sick, homeless, or the elderly. Seventy one percent have been involved with a religious organization or a mosque. Over two thirds (69%) told that they have been involved with school and youth programs.

A little over half of the American Muslims (51%) also stated that they have called or written the media or politician on a given issue, or signed a petition. The following two tables show the nature of social and political activism of the American Muslims.

"I am now going to read a list of community activities, please tell me if you have ever donated time, money, or been an officer of any of the following..."

A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

More American Muslims consider that religion is very important in their daily life than the general American public (79%: 63%). Similarly, more American Muslims (55%) attend religious services (go to the mosque for prayers) than the general public (40%).

The question was worded slightly differently, where the American Muslim Poll asked: "How important is religion or spirituality in your daily life? Is it very important, somewhat important or not very important?" Pew Research Center asked, "How important would you say religion is in your own life - very important, fairly important, or not very important?"

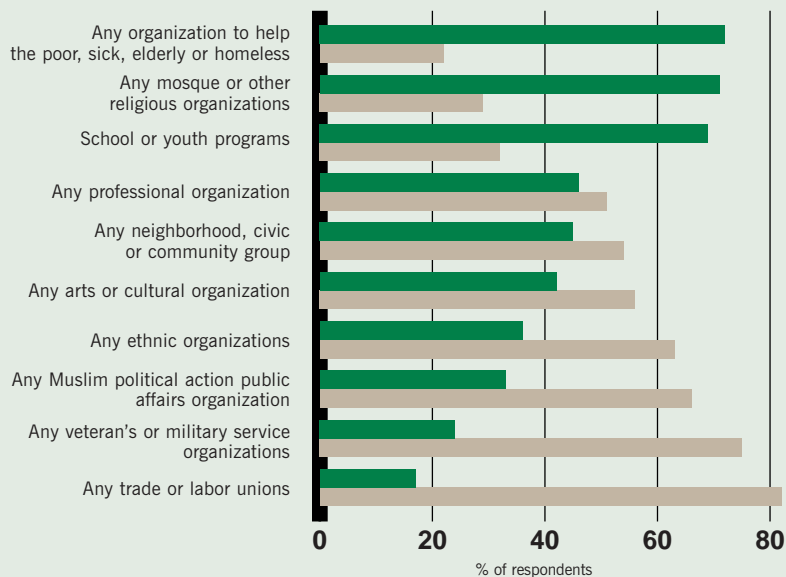
COMPARISON OF AGE, EDUCATION AND FAMILY INCOME

	AMERICAN MUSLIM POLL % OF MUSLIMS	PEW RESEARCH CENTER/PEW FORUM % OF GENERAL PUBLIC
■ AGE GROUP		
18 - 29	23	22
30 - 49	51	39
50 - 64	20	22
65 +	7	17
■ EDUCATION		
< H.S. Grad	6	14
High School Grad	12	37
Some College	24	24
College Grad	58	25
■ FAMILY INCOME		
\$50,000 - \$74,999	22	16
\$75,000 +	28	17

INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

(ranked by highest total participation %)

"I am now going to read a list of community activities, please tell me if you have ever donated time, money, or been an officer of any of the following..."



■ INVOLVED * ■ NOT-INVOLVED **

*Combines those who say they donated time, money, served as an officer or engaged in a combination of these activities.

**Not involved in any of these activities.

American Muslim Poll question was, "On average, how often do you attend the mosque for salah and Jum'ah prayer? Pew Research Center asked, "Aside from wedding and funerals how often do you attend religious services ... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never."

A POLITICALLY SAVVY COMMUNITY:

The Poll results demonstrated a kind of political maturity that the American Muslim community has achieved in its opinion and behavior formation on domestic as well as international issues. The following five examples are important to illustrate this point.

First: More than half of the American Muslims (58%) reported some type of a backlash experience either to them personally or to the community since September 11, 2001. Against all those odds, a vast majority (93%), however, said that Muslims

should participate in the American political process.

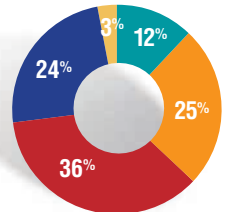
Second: Forty percent of American Muslims describe themselves as Democrats, while 28% say they are independents or members of a minority party, and 23% are Republicans. The Muslim vote, however, was different than the party affiliation during the 2000 elections. Forty-two percent of American Muslims say that they voted for Bush, while 31% chose Gore, and 12% went for Nader. Among Arabs 54% opted to vote for Bush, and 56% Pakistani-Americans also voted for Bush. Although 55% of African Americans went for Gore, 20% voted for Bush. Nader's support was highest among Arabs (17%).

Third: The poll results also suggest that American Muslims favor big government solutions to issues like universal healthcare and poverty eradication but they are conservative on other social issues like the death penalty, gay marriage, abortion, and pornogra-

phy. It would be a futile exercise to label the American Muslim community as liberal or conservative.

Fourth: President Bush earns an overall 58% approval rating from American Muslims on his handling of the terrorist attacks on September 11. Also, two-thirds (66%) agree with the Bush administration's assertion that the war is being fought against terrorism, not Islam. On the other hand, two thirds (67%) also suggest that a change in America's policy in the Middle East is the best way to wage the war against terrorism.

Fifth: On foreign policy issues, the American Muslim community showed a balanced and matured behavior. A vast majority (84%) agrees that the US should support a Palestinian state. Seventy percent agree that the US should reduce its financial support to Israel. Three-fifth (61%) agrees and one fifth (22%) disagrees, that the US should reduce its support of undemocratic regimes in the Muslim world. Almost two third (63%) agree with the Secretary of State's description that the Kashmir issue is the central issue between India and Pakistan, but one-fifth (21%) has no opinion on the issue. ♦



Year Emigrated to USA



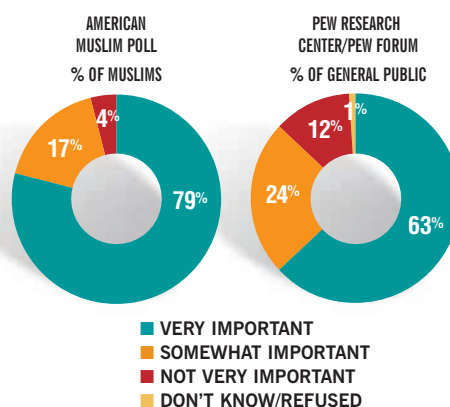
POLITICAL ACTIVITY

(ranked by highest "Yes" %)

■ "Have you ever..."	YES %
Called or written the media or politician on a given issue,	
Or have you signed a petition	50
Changed your lifestyle in support of a cause, like the environment	45
Attended a rally in support of a politician or a cause	40
Visited a political web site	34
Given a contribution or volunteered your time or services to a	
political candidate	33
Participated in a boycott of a product or a business	30

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION IN YOUR LIFE

The question was worded slightly differently, where the American Muslim Poll asked: "How important is religion or spirituality in your daily life? Is it very important, somewhat important or not very important?" Pew Research Center asked, "How important would you say religion is in your own life - very important, fairly important, or not very important?"



ATTENDING THE MOSQUE/ RELIGIOUS SERVICES

	AMERICAN MUSLIM POLL % OF MUSLIMS	PEW RESEARCH CENTER/PEW FORUM % OF GENERAL PUBLIC
More than once a week	15	22
Once a week (for Jum'ah)	24	25
Once or twice a month	10	17
A few times a year (especially for the Eid)	14	18
Seldom	9	15
Never	11	9
Don't know/Refused	0	1

American Muslim Poll question was, "On average, how often do you attend the mosque for salah and Jum'ah prayer? Pew Research Center asked, "Aside from wedding and funerals how often do you attend religious services ... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never."

American Muslim Poll 2001

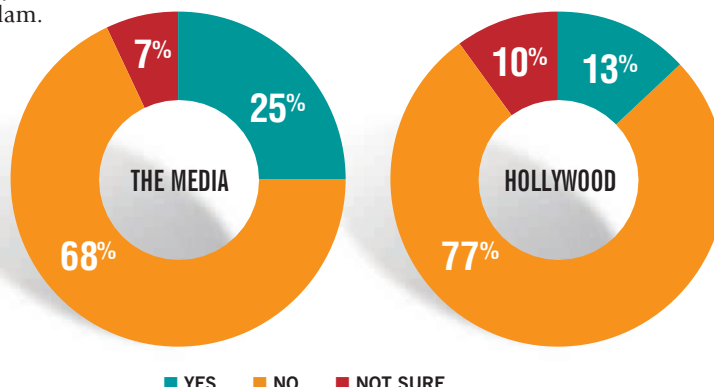
More Highlights

THE UNFAIR PORTRAYAL OF MUSLIMS AND ISLAM

Most American Muslims say that Hollywood (77%) and the media (68%) do not fairly portray Muslims and Islam.

Fairness of Muslim Media Portrayal

“Do you think the media... Hollywood is fair in its portrayal of Muslims and Islam?”



FAVOR/OPOSE DOMESTIC ISSUES

(ranked by favor ability %)

“Now I am going to read you a list of issues that are being discussed in this country today. Please tell me if you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose each issue.”

	FAVOR*	OPPOSE*	NOT SURE
Eliminating all forms of racial discrimination	96	2	2
Providing universal health care for citizens	94	4	2
Providing more generous government assistance to the poor	93	5	2
Stricter laws and regulations to protect the environment	92	6	3
Increasing foreign aid for poorer countries	87	10	3
Stronger laws to fight terrorism	84	10	6
Making it more difficult for people to buy guns	79	18	3
More cuts in the income tax	74	21	5
Allow religious institutions to apply for government funding to provide social services	73	22	5
The death penalty for persons convicted of murder	68	27	7
Providing vouchers to families for tuition in private schools, including religious schools	68	25	7
Banning the public sale and display of pornography	65	60	5
Allowing public schools to display the 10 Commandments	59	33	8
Making abortions more difficult to obtain	57	35	8
Allowing non-denominational prayers to be read in the classroom	53	38	9
Allowing more research using stem cells	52	28	21
Eliminating affirmative action programs that give some consideration to minorities in hiring and entrance into college	42	49	9
Making it legal for doctors to give terminally ill patients the means to end their lives	33	61	7
Racial profiling to combat crime	28	63	9
Allowing research related to human cloning	27	63	10
Allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally	20	71	9

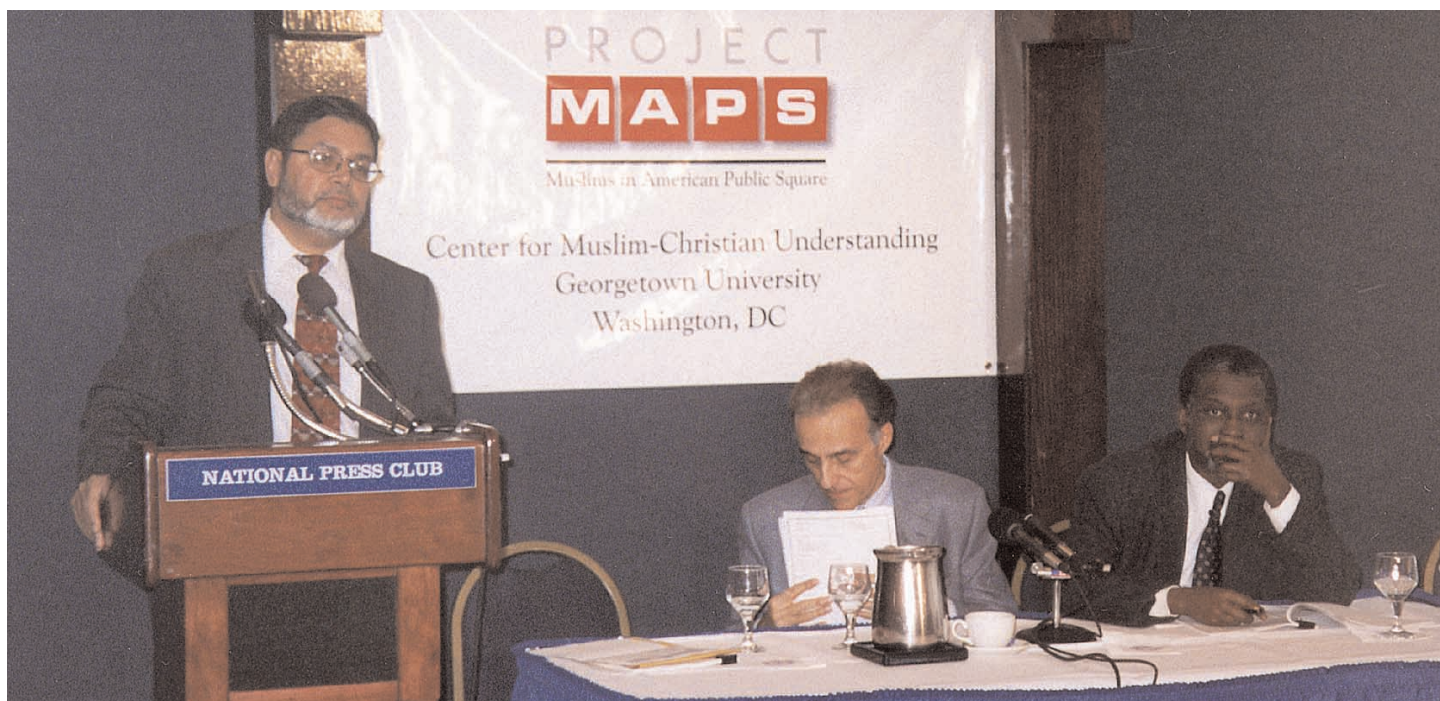
*Favor combines strongly and somewhat favor; oppose combines strongly and somewhat oppose.

BACKLASH

“Which of the following best describes anti-Muslim discrimination you have experienced personally or that has been experienced in your community”.

I am not aware of any discrimination	38%
Verbal abuse	25
Racial profiling by police resulting in a stop, search or arrest	8
Physical abuse or assault	6
Destruction of property	6
Denial of employment	3
Boycott of Muslim- or Arab-operated businesses	2
Combination of above choices	6
*Other	2
Not sure	4

*Other: Threatening phone calls (6); Negative looks (5); The media has been very offensive (3); Ignorance (3); Bad attitudes towards Muslims; Courts issued a court appearance after 1 1/2 years — I thought it had been dropped; Kicked out of clubs; Not accepting students into medical school; People handing out discriminatory pamphlets about Muslims



Sharing the Poll With America

Project MAPS released the results of the first American Muslim Poll at a press conference on December 19, 2001, held at the National Press Club, Washington D.C. "The Poll clearly shows the determination of the Muslim community," said Project MAPS director Dr. Zahid Bukhari of Georgetown University's Center for Muslim Christian Understanding (CMCU). "Although it took the heat after September 11, more than 50% experienced incidents of backlash, the community is yet very much eager to fully participate in the American Public life. The American Muslims have great potential to become a moral voice in the society."

John Esposito, University Professor and director of the CMCU, told the press conference that this poll provided important new insights into the demographics, voting habits, and participation of Muslims in American public life. "We now have some basic information with regard to Muslims demographically, their attitudes on issues. We now have a reputable study that has been done", said Professor Esposito. Dr. Sulayman Nyang, co-director Project MAPS and professor of African Studies at Howard University, observed that the poll would allow those who write and



(top, left to right)
Dr. Zahid Bukhari, Prof. John Esposito, and Prof. Sulayman Nyang at the National Press Club, Washington, DC.
(left) **Prof. John Esposito;**
Prof. Sulayman Nyang

speak about Muslims in American to be more scientific and authoritative since they now have credible data to rely upon.

The Poll was widely reported in the national and international electronic media, newspapers and journals. CSPAN showed the complete press conference in its different transmissions while NPR reported it into its Morning Edition. Among national daily newspapers and journals, the Washington Times, the Star Ledger, the Denver Post, the Jerusalem Post, Christian Science Monitor, Weekly Muslims New York and Weekly Mirror reported the survey. Subsequently, the daily Dawn of Pakistan, The Chunichi Shimbun of Japan and daily Saudi Gazette and daily Riyadh of Saudi Arabia also covered the survey. The report on survey can also be found at

the websites of US State Department, Islamicity.com,

beliefnet.com, the American Muslim Council, Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) on December 19, 2001, and Iviews.com. The full survey report can be obtained at the Project MAPS website: www.projectmaps.com.

A Note of Thanks

Prof. Sulayman Nyang has recovered from a three-month struggle with health problems, Alhamdulillah. The Project MAPS team would like to express its deepest thanks to Allah (swt) for blessing Prof. Nyang with complete health. We are also thankful to all of our well-wishers who have called, emailed, and visited us during this time of trial to inquire about Prof. Nyang's health, and offered prayers for him and his family.

Religion and Public Life in the Global Epoch

BY LAYLA SEIN, AMSS CONFERENCE COORDINATOR

The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) 30th annual conference, held in collaboration with the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) at the University of Michigan - Dearborn campus from October 26 - 28, 2001, was cosponsored by Project MAPS: Muslims in American Public Square. Other cosponsor were the University of Michigan, Dearborn campus - Center for Arab-American Studies, and Georgetown University, Washington, DC.

The conference theme "Religion and Public Life in the Global Epoch" was outlined a year earlier, however, the debate on religion in the public sphere became the focus of the international media and academia, after the September 11 attacks on America. AMSS President Dr. Mumtaz Ahmad, professor of political science at Hampton University, in his opening remarks underscored the need for Muslim scholars and professionals to educate the public on Islam and to work with people of different faith groups to influence the development of a global social order based on justice, morality and God-consciousness. His remarks drew attention to the importance of establishing a better understanding of Islam and creating an awareness of our common humanity. His remarks also set the tenor of

the conference by establishing a secondary theme based on peace and goodwill towards mankind

Eighty-five conference panelists examined the many aspects of this theme in twenty panels, seven roundtable discussions, two plenary sessions, and a keynote address at the annual banquet. Students, academicians and activists were among the participants who took an active role in the discussions on sub-themes such as: Women and Muslim Family Law; Status of Muslim Women Across the Muslim World; Islamic Philosophy and Intellectual Traditions; Globalization and Civil Society; Communications and Media; Religious Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue; Human Rights and Cross-Cultural Variations; Educational Reform; and Islam and Secularism. In fact, with several panels highlighting women issues, gender participation was



equally represented.

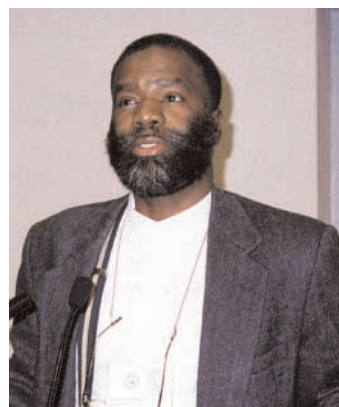
This year's conference opened with the plenary session "Secularism, Desecularization and Religious Consciousness," chaired by Dr. Chandra Muzaffar, president, International Movement for a Just World, Malaysia. The Islamic response to secularization and various parts of the process of secularization and its impact on the moral, psychological and social aspects of modern life was discussed by Farid Esack, visiting professor, Auburn Theological Seminary, Columbia University, NY, Antony Sullivan, University of Michigan; and Mumtaz Ahmad, Hampton.

The second plenary session, "Islam in the American

(from left to right)
Prof. Sulayman Nyang, Dr. Abdulhamid Abusulayman, and Dr. Robert Crane;
(bottom)
Prof. Sherman Jackson; Dr. Zahid Bukhari speaking at the conference

Public Sphere," which was chaired by Dr. Zahid Bukhari, director, Project MAPS, examined the interaction between the Muslim community and the larger American society by highlighting the significance of the Islamic presence in the United States. The panelists were Dr. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman, IIIT, VA; Dr. Sherman Jackson, University of Michigan; Dr. Robert Crane, Center for Policy Research, VA; and Dr. Sulayman Nyang, Howard.

The seven roundtables organized in this conference, addressed concepts on interfaith dialogue, grant writing, Islamic contribution to civilizations, and issues pertaining to Afghanistan and its neighboring countries before and after the September 11 tragedy. In the three roundtables held on issues pertaining to September 11, all Muslim and non-Muslim



social scientists condemned the attack as an attack on humanity and Islam. The roundtable entitled "After the Attacks: Strategic, Cultural and Civilizational Predicament of Muslims" analyzed the challenges that Muslims are facing in the public square in the wake of the September 11 tragedy. The changing aspects of Muslims living in the West were also examined. In the roundtable "Afghanistan and its Neighboring Countries: Before and After September 11," panelists examined the shifting balance of power and the new alliances between the major actors of that region: Afghanistan, China, India, and the American coalition.

The roundtable on "The role of Muslim Intellectuals in the Wake of Terrorist Attacks against the US: Combating Prejudice, Ignorance and Racism," examined how the Muslim intelligentsia can be instrumental in addressing the concerns of Muslim and non-Muslim communities, and how stereotypes and prejudice can be countered in the public arena. AMSS Vice President and Conference Chair Dr. Louay Safi underscored the importance of having both scholars of Islam and activists debate the role of Muslim participation in developing a vision that ensures world peace in which the possibilities of terrorism would be greatly diminished.

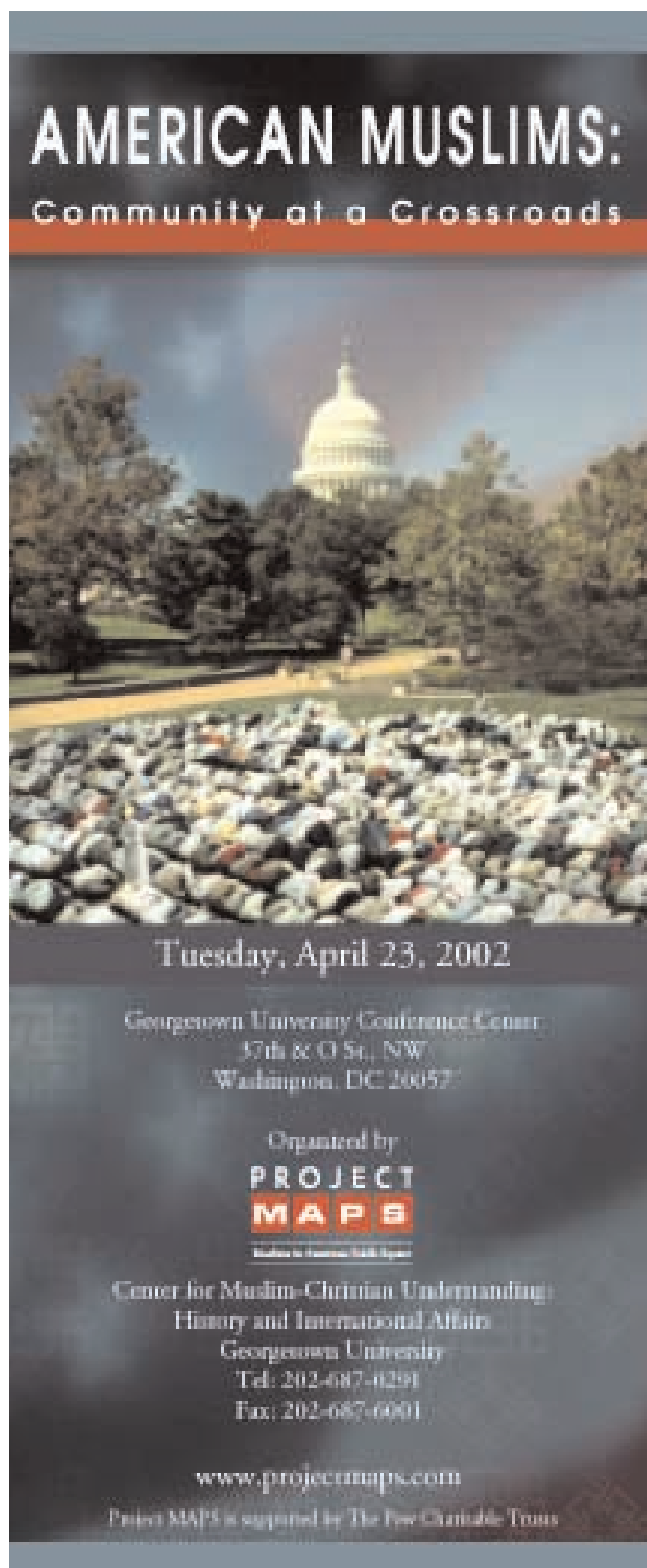
As a conference cosponsor, Project MAPS organized a roundtable on "Muslims Share in the Interfaith Movement" under the direction of Dr. Zahid Bukhari. In this session, the future role of Muslims in interfaith dialogues and various institutional arrangements that

have already been promoted through dialogue in different parts of the world were highlighted. Dr. Bukhari stated that by "finding common ground in different religions and highlighting shared core values, religious pluralism can be promoted through interfaith dialogue."

Dr. Chandra Muzaffar in his keynote address at the annual "Ismail al-Faruqi Memorial Lecture" stated that "new attitudes and approaches should be adopted vis-à-vis religion so that it will emerge as the foundation of a collective moral ethic." He injected hope in the role of religion in public life in the 21st century.

The need to introduce a moral code according to which political affairs and/or ethics can be moderated is becoming a necessity due to the political malaise in today's global society. Since the topics and issues addressed during AMSS three-day conference show that the September 11 attacks have added a new cultural and moral dimension to the challenges facing Muslims living in the West, scholars and students of Islam need to participate in forums that address the growing cultural and political implications of Sept 11.

AMSS, by establishing the "Best Graduate Paper Awards" for papers submitted and/or presented by graduate students participating in the annual conference, has added another channel through which Islamic scholarship can be encouraged through an academic forum. The four doctoral students who received this year's "Best Graduate Paper Awards" were the recipients of cash prizes that were announced at the annual banquet. ♦



AMERICAN MUSLIMS:
Community at a Crossroads

Tuesday, April 23, 2002

Georgetown University Conference Center
37th & O St., NW
Washington, DC 20057

Organized by
**PROJECT
MAPS**
Initiative for Muslim-Christian Understanding

Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding
History and International Affairs
Georgetown University
Tel: 202-687-0291
Fax: 202-687-6001

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Directory of Muslim Civic Organizations and Islamic Centers:

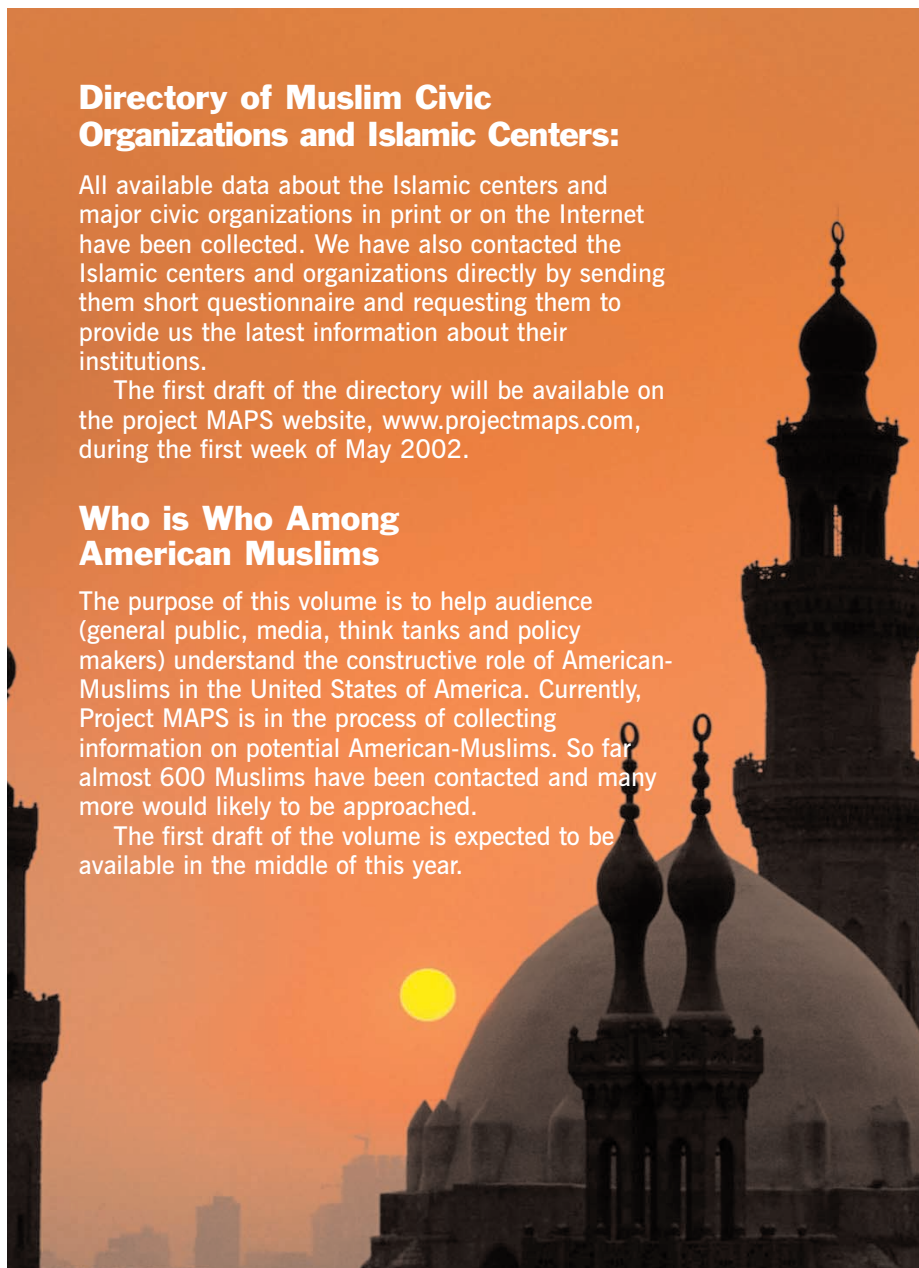
All available data about the Islamic centers and major civic organizations in print or on the Internet have been collected. We have also contacted the Islamic centers and organizations directly by sending them short questionnaire and requesting them to provide us the latest information about their institutions.

The first draft of the directory will be available on the project MAPS website, www.projectmaps.com, during the first week of May 2002.

Who is Who Among American Muslims

The purpose of this volume is to help audience (general public, media, think tanks and policy makers) understand the constructive role of American-Muslims in the United States of America. Currently, Project MAPS is in the process of collecting information on potential American-Muslims. So far almost 600 Muslims have been contacted and many more would likely be approached.

The first draft of the volume is expected to be available in the middle of this year.



Muslims in American Public Square

Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding
Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service
Georgetown University
37th & O Streets, NW
Washington, D.C. 20057

MAPS TEAM

Sulayman S. Nyang

Director & co-principle,
investigator
202-238-2311
Fax: 202-238-2326
snyang@fac.howard.edu

Zahid H. Bukhari

Director & co-principle,
investigator
202-687-2947
Fax: 202-687-6001
zhb@georgetown.edu

Ayub Alam

Project Coordinator
202-687-0291
Fax: 202-687-6001
aa28@georgetown.edu

Faisal Islam

Project Assistant
202-687-1125, Fax: 202-687-6001
fi5@georgetown.edu

ADVISORY BOARD

Taha Jaber alalwani

President, School of Islamic and
Social Sciences (SISS), Leesburg, VA

Vincent Cornell

Director of King Fahd Center for
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University Professor and Director,
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Akbar Muhammad

Professor, Department of History,
State University of New York,
Binghamton, NY

Seyyed Hossein Nasr

University Professor of Islamic
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University, Washington, DC