Introduction: Becoming American—Religion, Identity, and Institution Building in the American Mosaic

For most of its history, America has been a Christian nation. Today, however, the reality is an America that is far more religiously diverse and dynamic. While followers of many other religions, such as Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, and Bahais, have emigrated in significant numbers since the 1960s, it is Christianity, Judaism, and Islam that account for the vast majority of Americans. The American religious landscape of the twenty-first century is dominated by the churches, synagogues, and mosques of its three largest faiths.

With the immigration of new ethnic groups, issues of faith, identity, and institution building become critical for immigrant communities seeking to establish themselves as part of the American mosaic. American Muslims today struggle with many of the same kinds of concerns that immigrant Christians and Jews faced earlier in American history. This volume provides a comparative perspective on the religious history and experiences of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and Muslims.

America remains a country in which religion is a dynamic part of life and society. Religion has been a central and often defining force throughout the history of the United States. From the time of the early pilgrims, who fled religious persecution in their homelands and came to America seeking religious freedom, America has been promoted as a haven for men and women from every part of the world escaping religious and political persecution or seeking economic opportunities and a better life.

The same pilgrims who established a colony in Massachusetts where people could practice their religion as they chose were also, it must be acknowledged, prejudiced against Catholics and Jews and intolerant toward other Protestant sects, such as Presbyterians and Baptists. Yet the founding fathers of the United States were men who believed in the separation of religion and state and who wrote into the Constitution the principle of freedom of religion. These tensions continue to characterize American society, often exacerbated as immigrants bring with them a great variety of ethnic, national, and religious identities.

During the early part of the twentieth century, it became popular to define the United States as a "melting pot" where all nationalities and ethnicities could, at least in theory, blend together in one heterogeneous but unified whole. Roman Catholics were in the process of achieving recognition as a legitimate part of the American religious constituency. Jews, whose struggle initially may have been harder, eventually became full participants in redefining America. As the century played out, however, it became increasingly clear that some groups were missing from the melting pot, such as African Americans and Latino Americans, for whom full assimilation never seemed a realizable possibility. After the revocation of the Asia Exclusion Act of 1965, successive waves of immigrants arrived, with the result that the religious demography of the United States changed. A definition of America as Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish was promoted as an alternative to the melting-pot metaphor. Immigrant Muslims, for the most part latecomers to the American scene, have actively sought recognition, some even calling for a definition of America as Judeo-Christian-Muslim. Nonetheless, they find themselves still in the process of discovering whether it is possible for them to be full partners in American society and whether they are willing to pay the price of belonging.

The chapters in this volume are the product of a conference held in Washington, D.C., that attempted to document the relationship between immigration and religion in the United States, focusing on movements in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. At the time it was held, before the trauma of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, it appeared that Muslims were on a trajectory to create a place for themselves in the American kaleidoscope. They were ready to shed some of their own cultural distinctions in the process of becoming American and were also seeking parity in recognition, representation, and influence with other religious communities

in the United States. They had pondered their options, and the majority appeared to have agreed that they would follow the Jewish model of negotiating for full participation in the American system.

The attacks of 9/11, which led to a significant backlash on the Muslim community, seem to have put a damper on the process. Not only has there been an increase in racial profiling, but in some sectors it has become acceptable to demonize Islam and to blame the religion and its American adherents for the acts of violence perpetrated on the country. In the post-9/11 period, the Muslim community increasingly has come to see Islam vilified by some Christian and Jewish public officials and the press, and see themselves targeted as a potential security risk. It seems to many that no matter how often they denounce and renounce violence, the press and the public demand more such renunciation. Some Muslims are seeing parallels between the kind of American mindset that fostered the abuse of German citizens during World War I, Japanese internment during World War II, and the anti-Communist fever of McCarthyism. Regardless of the insistence of the government that the current war is only on terrorism, some Muslims are beginning to wonder whether in fact Americans have not really declared war on Islam itself.

A number of themes surface throughout the chapters of this volume. Among them are the following:

1. Discrimination on the part of those who are already citizens of the United States toward newcomers representing new religions and new cultures.
2. The heritage of Western colonialism and its effects on the ways in which those who were formerly colonized choose to adapt to American society. This theme plays itself out in the experiences of Hispanics, African Americans, Jewish victims of the Holocaust, and Muslims.
3. The challenge of moral equivalency, that is, the tension over whether one group's ethnicity, culture, or religious expression is more acceptable than another in the fabric of religious America.
4. The expectation that immigrants should assimilate as quickly as possible, shedding their cultures and ideologies, at the same time that they themselves are blamed when assimilation is not immediately achieved.

Thus, the following chapters serve as the backdrop for considering what current patterns of immigration mean for the American religious context and

how new religious communities are responding to the reality of living and practicing in America.

A defining characteristic of Western and certainly American culture is an emphasis on individualism, which often contrasts with the more communal orientation of the traditional societies from which many immigrants come. The experiences of members of immigrant communities in America demonstrate the often-difficult balance between the needs of the individual and expectations of the community. In chapter 1, David J. O'Brien examines several pairs of concepts that inform current thinking about religion and society. He notes that individualism is probably the single most important aspect of American religious culture. Surveys consistently confirm a sturdy independence, personal faith and piety, and suspicion of religious institutions in general as characteristic of immigrants as well as of the American middle class. The quest for community is especially evident among virtually all immigrant groups as people look for others who share their experience and/or convictions and with whom they can find a sense of belonging based on a common faith.

Another major challenge facing most religious groups has been balancing the diversity of believers within the uniformity of faith. The issue, as O'Brien notes, is how to preserve the integrity of the faith in the midst of the bewildering pluralism that characterizes the American religious milieu. Local congregations and national denominations struggle to welcome newcomers, attempting to be sensitive to their distinct needs while ensuring a sense of common fellowship with more established members. This process can be seen in recent years in the example of the Catholic Church's incorporation of the Latino/Hispanic community in the United States. O'Brien maintains that while labels such as liberal and conservative, modernist and fundamentalist, have been defining orientations in the past, today more and more people within particular congregations, especially among the younger generation, are eschewing these traditional divisions and trying to capture the best of both extremes. At the denominational level, such divisions serve to deepen the chasm between congregations and the transcongregational life of religious denominations, with serious consequences for the unity, integrity, and cultural impact of religion. O'Brien questions whether denominations will even have a place in the future of American religion, especially if they are unable to unite people around shared beliefs and a common mission.

A third issue of concern to religious communities today is the balance between the public and the private. It is commonly noted that Americans tend to restrict religion to private life, leaving a barren public square without religious meaning or moral guidance. O'Brien believes that many communities continue to reflect this high degree of privatization. Nonetheless, there are signals of the effort to maintain the unity and coherence of particular religious groups within American pluralism. Catholicism presents an interesting example in the American context. On the one hand, it is still organized, or at least portends to be, as a single entity. The Church is unified by the bishops who represent some blend of common belief, doctrine, morality, and discipline. To some real extent, that unity was facilitated precisely because of the anti-Catholicism that has prevailed for much of the history of America. Now, perhaps because the religious basis of anti-Catholicism has all but disappeared with the decline of the organizational strength of so-called mainstream Protestantism and the diffusion of resurgent evangelical Christianity, Catholic leaders are having difficulty maintaining the former unity and integrity of the Church. Recent scandals within the priesthood itself have made the task of Catholic unity even more difficult.

SOME CHRISTIAN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN AMERICA

American Catholics provide a full-blown example of an immigrant church and community that after a long struggle has moved from the margins of American society to its center as both a religious and an economic presence. Yet, as Chester Gillis demonstrates in chapter 2, since colonial times Catholics have faced discrimination and exclusion. Prejudice did serve, however, to galvanize the Catholic community and encouraged members to form organizations designed to serve their particular social and professional needs. After decades of growth and development, the Catholic "ghetto," which served as a means of preserving religious identity while Catholics struggled to become part of the American melting pot, peaked in the 1950s and has gradually dissolved in the post–Vatican II (Second Vatican Council) period.

Gillis provides an overview of the development of American Catholicism as it moved from the periphery to the center. From 1940 to 1960, the Catholic population doubled, partly because of the postwar baby boom. The 1950s witnessed the largest expansion of Catholic schools and churches since the mid-nineteenth century. Catholic culture reached its apex, and Catholics began to

establish themselves in the political sphere. Catholics were assimilating into American society, becoming wealthier, more educated, and more geographically diversified. Over the past forty years, this Catholic subculture—which provided security and identity for the immigrant community—has declined as Catholics have become increasingly assimilated. Vestiges of subculture remain (some still vibrant, others dwindling), now joined by a new crop of post–Vatican II Catholic organizations, including the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, Catholics for Free Choice, and the Conference for Catholic Lesbians.

One component of the decline of Catholic subculture, Gillis notes, is the changing attitude toward Church authority since disobedience to Church practices is less costly now than a generation ago. For many Catholics today, compliance is seen as voluntary. The Church remains important but must compete with social, cultural, and economic forces that pull in other directions. In recent years, a significant Catholic minority has begun to voice discontent with the assimilation process that began with Vatican II, claiming that many Catholics too easily follow cultural trends that at their core represent values inconsistent with Catholic teaching and tradition. The price of assimilation, they say, is loss of identity.

Catholics of European ethnicity today no longer constitute a mainly immigrant community; their levels of education and economic status have risen significantly. However, some fear that as Catholics assimilate, they will suffer a fate similar to mainline Protestant churches that have been losing members steadily since the second half of the twentieth century. Traditionalists and conservatives mounting a campaign to revive the Catholic subculture are rebelling against Vatican II reforms. Many conservative Catholic groups now support a return to traditional Catholic practices and liturgy and are clear in their opposition to such innovations as the ordination of women and recognition of gay marriages.

This conservative mood is also reflected in the growth of evangelical Protestantism both domestically and internationally. Despite the significant decrease in proselytization among mainline churches, Christianity continues to spread through the global activities of its missionaries. As Randall Balmer notes in chapter 3, the patterns of the late twentieth century reveal the extent to which evangelicals enjoy the level of success once achieved by Catholic missionaries. The initial evangelical invasion of Latin America was caricatured as

American cultural imperialism, fueled by massive amounts of money and conveyed by "anglo" missionaries. Today, evangelicalism, especially Pentecostalism, has become an indigenous Latin American movement with enormous popular appeal, primarily among the poor and marginalized. Despite the efforts of liberation theologians, for many Latin Americans, Roman Catholicism is still associated with elite Latin culture, which for them implies their own poverty and colonization by the Spaniards.

Evangelical Christians, missionized in Latin America, Africa, India, and Southeast Asia, began arriving in the United States in the late twentieth century and have been welcomed by the evangelical churches. Part of the appeal of these churches in America is their theological emphasis on egalitarianism and spiritual upward mobility and the assistance they provide to new immigrants in such mundane matters as finding affordable housing, employment, and day care facilities. They also offer access to the evangelical "subculture," including church congregations, publishing houses, seminaries, mission and relief societies, and Bible camps. The function of the evangelical subculture is essentially the same as that traditionally offered by the Catholic Church: shelter, nurture, and the safety of a like-minded community. Nonetheless, two-thirds of Hispanics identify themselves as Roman Catholic.

For the majority of Hispanic Americans, as Ana María Díaz-Stevens observes in chapter 4, culture, language, and religion continue to be the mainstays of Hispanic identity. More Hispanics identify themselves as being religious than any other groups (only 5 percent say they are nonreligious). However, as Díaz-Stevens reminds us, not all Hispanics/Latinos are immigrants. Indeed, including Puerto Ricans, nearly 70 percent of all Hispanics have been born as U.S. citizens.

Common language, shared cultural traits, the history of Spanish colonization, and in most cases shared religious tradition have facilitated the fostering of a common identity as members of a larger Latin American community inclusive of different national groups. Unlike most European immigrants, Latinos have been distinguished from the English-speaking population through the continued use of Spanish, facilitated by churches that operate bilingually. Marriage within the community, language, culture, and certain commonalties in the history of Latin American and the Hispanic Caribbean have made it possible for this pan-identity to be stronger for Hispanics/Latinos than for most other immigrant groups. Religion has aided in the maintenance of Latino ethnic identity.

The fact that Hispanics have not integrated as quickly as many other immigrant groups has been blamed on the Hispanics themselves. Díaz-Stevens, however, maintains that the history of U.S. colonization and the invasion in Mexico and Puerto Rico rendered Hispanics strangers in their own land, depriving them of social progress and economic prosperity. The subsequent encounters that Mexicans and Puerto Ricans have had with America in their own homeland and their identification of religious, cultural, and social traits in America that they feel are undesirable or detrimental to their own identity have been the real reasons for their lack of integration in America. Increased Latino/Hispanic immigration since the 1965 reform of immigration laws has added to the enclaves of U.S.-born Latinos, nearly doubling the population between 1970 and 1990, and along with it the number of Hispanic churches and associations. Hispanics are projected to make up 15 percent of the total U.S. population by 2020.

Another major constituent group of the American religious mosaic is the African American community. In chapter 5, Anthony B. Pinn explores the religious ramifications of migration as they relate to the development of a complex sense of African American religious identity. Pinn observes that the religious diversity in African American communities is mainly the result of three major movements: the slave trade, the Great Migration, and late twentieth-century immigration from the Caribbean. Although many English colonists saw slavery as an opportunity to convert Africans, he says, testimonies of slaves and former slaves speak to alternate forms of religious expression. Many enslaved Africans maintained rich ties to African religious thought and rituals. When these could not be explored openly, they were celebrated and remembered in more subtle ways, such as through the decorative arts, such as quilting.

Expressions of black religious diversity continued through the twentieth century. Following the Great Migration, many migrants were not welcomed into the established black churches. While some did assimilate into existing black denominations, others became members of black branches of mainly white denominations or joined Pentecostal churches. This period also witnessed the growth of "extrachurch" religious organizations, such as the Moorish Science Temple. This push away from the Christian church, which was seen as the symbol of black enslavement, often entailed a movement into African-based forms of religious practice.

Pinn maintains that despite strong evidence supporting a plethora of religious forms within African American communities, the vast majority of scholarly attention has been biased toward the black Christian church. It treats the Christian faith as the true center of black religious experience and anything non-Christian as simply external. He feels that this is too narrow a depiction of African American religious identity and that the religious experience and the religious identity it fosters cannot be adequately described through attention to doctrine and other elements that are bound to a particular tradition.

JEWS IN THE AMERICAN CONTEXT

The American Jewish experience highlights many of the issues faced by a non-Christian community trying to establish itself in an overwhelmingly Christian majority context and culture. In chapter 6, Jacob Neusner traces patterns of religious identification and practice over successive waves of Jewish immigration, using his own story as an example.

Early small groups of Sephardic communities (Jews from North Africa) did not last in America, perhaps because their numbers were too small to start rabbinical schools. Sizable numbers of German Jews migrated in the middle of the nineteenth century. With their presence came the organization of Judaism in many American cities through the establishment of synagogues. Neusner rejects as simplistic the popular theory that the orthodox first generation gave way to conservative Judaism in the second generation and to reform in the third, with a final stage of de-Judaizing especially through intermarriage with non-Jews. He maintains that in reality, Jewish immigrants undertook the task of acculturation by adjusting the received faith to the requirements of American life and that their children have continued the process. The second generation of Jews, wanting their children to become American and believing that society was hostile to difference, thought it best to blend in. The third generation came to consciousness during and after World War II, determined both to accept what cannot be changed (anti-Semitism) and to reconnect with practices of the first generation that the second generation had tried to forget.

This reversion to religious life could be measured by the extensive building of new synagogues and a vast increase in institutions of faith. Religion became the medium of ethnic assertion. It resulted in the idealization of immigrants

and especially their places of origin, a process that Neusner calls the "sentimentalization" of Jewish existence. The third generation turned an otherworldly religious culture into an ethnic identity, making the survival of the Jews as a group an end in itself. Ethnic Judaism then built on what came before and focused on a Judaism of the Holocaust and Redemption, an effort that turned a catastrophe into the defining moment of history and center of life for many in the Jewish community.

As Neusner looks at the twenty-first century, he projects four major characteristics of American Judaism: 1) renewed interest in religious observance, such as reform Jews adopting traditional practices; 2) paradoxically, more Jews marrying outside the faith; 3) the increased influence of feminist movements that have led, for example, to the opening up of the rabbinate to women; and 4) continued engagement with the state of Israel as an important medium of Jewish self-expression in the United States and Canada. Despite differences in religious practices, Neusner believes that all American Jews find their identity first and foremost as Americans.

In chapter 7, Jonathan D. Sarna also sees American Judaism at a crossroads and identifies some of the major characteristics or transformations that he believes will affect American Jewry in the twenty-first century. Demographically, the American Jewish community will shrink both absolutely and relative to the population as a whole, continuing the decline that has been evident for half a century. As a result, he says, it is likely that American Jewry will shrink in significance both nationally and internationally. The decline in the American Jewish population means a decline in its status as an American religion. Where it was once viewed as the "third American faith," Judaism is quickly becoming one of many American "minority faiths."

Sarna also believes that Jews will come to view the diaspora differently than they view it today. The combined forces of persecution and Zionism have redrawn the map of world Jewry. The diaspora has shrunk by more than 40 percent since 1939. Jews are more concentrated than ever before, with more than 95 percent living in just fourteen countries. At the same time, however, Jews now occupy more economically affluent, politically stable, and socially attractive environments than ever before. Sarna predicts that American Judaism is likely to come to resemble the Protestant denominational structure even more closely, with burgeoning pluralism, greater focus on the individual than the

group, more permeable denominational and even interfaith boundaries, and greater emphasis on the value of consent.

Significant questions about the future of American Jews persist. Will assimilation or revitalization mark the twenty-first century? As Sarna observes, signs of assimilation abound: intermarriage, disaffiliation, and ritual laxity. Yet at the same time, there are also strong elements of revitalization and renewal within the community. Jewish educational institutions and programs are flourishing, synagogue attendance is increasing, and there is a perceptible return to religion among youth. A critical question in the years ahead is whether most Jews will become increasingly religiously polarized or whether they will return to the "vital center" in Jewish life, isolating extremists on both sides. Although conflicts between orthodox and reform Jews make schism seem a possibility, there are also signs of movement back to the center, especially at the lay level.

The great causes that once energized American Jewry—immigrant absorption, saving European Jewry, creating and sustaining a Jewish state, and rescuing Soviet, Arab, and Ethiopian Jews—have now been successfully completed. Today, for the first time in historical memory, no large community of persecuted Jews exists anywhere in the world. Thus, Sarna's final question is whether American Jews in the twenty-first century will be able to identify a mission compelling enough for the community to embrace with passion.

Judaism and Catholicism in America have shared some similarities as minority communities seeking to assimilate and yet preserve their distinctive identity. One of the ways in which both communities have attempted to do this is through the process of institution building, including hospitals. In chapter 8, Alan M. Kraut reminds us that there is a long tradition, dating back to the earliest Jewish immigrants to America, of Jews "taking care of their own," fulfilling spiritual needs, and providing economic support. Until the early twentieth century, hospitals in the United States were seen mainly as charitable institutions where those who had no families could receive care from strangers or where poor people went to die. In the early and mid-nineteenth century, hospitals became fertile grounds for evangelical Protestants seeking Jewish as well as Catholic converts on their deathbeds. Both Catholics and Jews responded by building hospitals of their own, and this played a central role in the assimilation of newcomers to the United States.

During the peak period of Jewish immigration at the turn of the twentieth century, Jewish hospitals allowed patients to continue religious observance in traditional ways as they negotiated the transition from alien to American. Many Jews also felt that they needed separate hospitals as places of training and practice for Jewish physicians facing discrimination by the American medical establishment. In the 1960s, the barriers in medical schools and hospital residencies began to fall, with the result that Jewish hospitals lost one of their reasons for being. Today the number of Jewish hospitals is dwindling, and those that still exist serve primarily inner-city patients, many African American or Latino, and far fewer Jews.

MUSLIMS AS CITIZENS OF AMERICA

Of the three major monotheistic religions, Islam has experienced the most accelerated growth in America in recent decades and is fast becoming the religion with the second-largest representation in the United States. Although Islam is often portrayed as a recent addition to America's religious landscape and primarily the product of immigration, the reality of Islam in America is far more complex.

The formation of the Muslim community in the United States began with early Muslims who were African slaves brought to the United States in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It picked up again with the arrival of immigrant Muslims in the mid- to late nineteenth century who were mainly Arabs from greater Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine hoping to earn money and return home. Arab immigrants were joined in the latter half of the twentieth century by Muslims from virtually all over the world, the largest numbers coming from the Indian subcontinent, Iran, Afghanistan, and Africa and a smattering from Southeast Asia. The Muslim community in the United States is unique in the world both by virtue of its heterogeneity in representing every Muslim country in the world and because a major part of its constituency is made up of African Americans, some of whom are orthodox (Sunni and Shiite) and others sectarian.

As Aminah McCloud observes in chapter 9, actual community building began in the twentieth century within two major and distinct groups: immigrants and converts. The small Arab immigrant community in the early twentieth century practiced their faith in private if at all, downplaying any affiliation with what would be perceived as a "non-American" religion.

Many sought complete assimilation. After the opening up of immigration in 1965, many Muslim students and professionals, especially in the sciences, medicine, and engineering, came seeking employment. They were better educated, better off financially, and more competent in English than earlier Muslim immigrants, and they fairly quickly joined the American middle and upper middle classes. Arabs and South Asian Muslims began to build mosques, schools, and community centers in suburbs and major urban areas. Meanwhile, the various ethnic divisions within Muslim American communities, whether cultural, racial, or sectarian, had to face the reality of different kinds of stereotyping on the part of American citizens.

Muslims who wanted permanent residence assimilated by adopting Anglicized names and marrying non-Muslims. Many have felt torn by trying to hold on to their Islamic culture at the same time that they wanted the "American Dream" of the educational and financial opportunities that America provides. Second-generation Muslims, schooled in America and acculturated to a significant degree, generally accept American values, though they are keenly aware of their Islamic heritage and often experience extreme tensions when they feel that aspects of American culture or policy are at odds with that heritage.

Interaction between indigenous and immigrant Muslims has always been a sensitive issue. McCloud argues that for the most part, the immigrant community, proportionately far wealthier and with access to greater resources than African Americans, has focused on Muslims overseas and that little or no attention has been paid to the racism or financial problems faced by African American Muslim communities. In addition, she says, immigrants often do not consult African Americans about their political preferences, as, for example, in the 2000 presidential election, when immigrants projected the image that the entire Muslim community favored the election of George W. Bush.

Regardless of the challenges, McCloud sees hopeful signs for the future. One clear marker of the extent to which a group has successfully "Americanized" is the number and quality of institutions that it has been able to establish. The Muslim community has built mosques, Islamic centers, schools, and other institutions, including facilities for immigrant refugees, each with its own ethnic flavor and Islamic overlay. She notes that as second- and third-generation Muslims increasingly find their identity as Americans, ties to home countries weaken. The result is that many Muslim youths are rejecting their

parents' and grandparents' efforts to define Islam in culture-specific terms and are working to create an American Islam that meets the challenges of its own egalitarian ideology.

In chapter 10, M. A. Muqtedar Khan argues that the classification of American Muslims into two main communities—immigrants, who tend to see themselves as "Muslims in America," and indigenous, whom he says can usually be described as Americans who are Muslim without prejudice toward either American or Muslim identity—is being challenged by a rapidly emerging third identity, that of American Muslim per se. The interplay between American values and Islamic values and the mutual reconstitution of each are leading to a liberal understanding of Islam more in tune with dominant American values, such as religious tolerance, pluralism, multiculturalism, and multireligious coexistence.

Khan feels that to participate in American life, Muslims have been forced to develop a conception of what it means to be an American. Two clear images of America seem to characterize (and divide) Muslim attitudes: "America the democracy" and "America the colonial power." That is, some see America primarily as liberal, democratic, tolerant, and multicultural, while others perceive it as an evil force, using its power to dominate foreign nations, stealing resources, and depriving other countries of their right to self-determination. Those who adopt the latter view often continue to look to their country of origin as home, tend to be more focused on U.S. foreign policy, and are resentful and distrustful of America. Those who view the United States as their home are more concerned with establishing Islam in America.

Muslims who wish to make America their home are prominent among the American Muslim leadership and have been successful in establishing their view as the prevailing norm. Consequently, those in the United States who take the "America as colonial power" viewpoint have become marginalized. The fact that immigrants since the mid-1960s were mainly better educated and intellectually sophisticated has provided the community with a Muslim leadership capable of articulating enlightened self-interest and formulating a far-reaching vision for the revival of Islam and Islamic values. Muslim leaders have created a variety of social, political, and educational organizations to promote this agenda. These groups hold in common the single most important goal: that Muslims are not to assimilate but rather are to defend and consolidate Islamic identity. Their secondary goal is developing intellectual and

political resources capable of making significant social and political changes in the Muslim world.

Key challenges to these goals exist. Among the more important is prejudice against Islam in the American mainstream and resistance to adjustment within the community itself that would pose a major barrier to engagement with the American mainstream. Because of discrimination, pressure to assimilate remains high. Among the major developments of the 1990s are the growth and success of CAIR (Council on American Islamic Relations), the outward focus of the MSA (Muslim Student Association), and the explosion of Islamic media on the Internet. Three social forces can be identified as having shaped the American Muslim identity. First is the shift in the understanding of America from a melting pot to a multicultural milieu, which has helped American Muslims maintain their particularities. Second is the historical force of Islamic resurgence, which has energized American Muslims to build mosques, Islamic centers, and schools. Third is the creative thought and activism of the American Muslim elite, who have educated the Muslim community in new ways to think about the West and Islam, helping construct a liberal Muslim self that affirms both its Islamic and its American identity.

In chapter 11, Ingrid Mattson agrees that many factors determine the ways in which Muslims interpret and define America. Among them are level of education, proficiency in English, level of access to modern communication technology, exposure to American military might in the home country, and the different ways in which Muslims are influenced by the messages of their home governments. Mattson proposes that Muslim views of the relationship with America can be grouped into three general categories. First are "paradigms of resistance," which view the United States as a *jahili* (a polytheistic environment that existed in pre-Islamic Arabia) society—pagan, hedonistic, and irreconcilably opposed to the Islamic premise that society should be based on obedience to God's commands. This results in a strong sense of isolationism and resistance to participation in American politics and society, which are viewed as void of morality. Second are "paradigms of embrace," in which the United States is perceived as the new home/adopted country. Advocates point to stories in the Qur'an justifying Muslim participation in the ruling apparatus of a non-Muslim country. Such stories try to show that the constitutional democratic structure of America is almost equivalent to the political structure of an ideal Islamic state and that the American Constitution is concordant

with Islamic principles. Third are "paradigms of selective engagement," adopted by the majority of Muslims who are striving to define their place as religious minorities in a country that they acknowledge does in fact allow great religious freedom.

The main issue facing American Muslims today, Mattson maintains, is how to correct wrongs within American society generally without compromising their beliefs and allegiance to Islam. The areas of engagement most comfortable for these Muslims are social causes, grassroots activism, and "alternative" forms of activism, such as environmentalism, social justice movements, and neighborhood associations. Although engagement in the American political system beyond the local level has, until recently, been considered undesirable by many Muslims, the past few years have witnessed increased political participation on a national level, due in part to the growth of organizations such as the Muslim Political Action Committee and the American Muslim Council.

Mattson believes that the Muslim community may be unique in demonstrating concern for articulating the religious justification for participation in national politics. Some Muslim leaders are now beginning to propose a fuller embrace of America, while at the same time other Muslims have become disillusioned and highly skeptical of their ability to bring about anything but superficial change in the American political system.

Immigration patterns in the twenty-first century reveal the extent to which change remains part of the American religious experience. For the first time, we have the results of a pioneering pilot study providing a random sampling of recent immigrants that includes their religious affiliation. We can now expect to have a more scientific way of determining how immigrations impact the overall religious scene in America. In chapter 12, Guillermina Jasso, Douglas S. Massey, Mark R. Rosenzweig, and James P. Smith discuss how the religious preferences of the new immigrants are changing the religious profile and ethnic landscape of America.

Only 65 percent of new immigrants are Christian, as compared to 82 percent of native-born Americans. Because the immigrant concentrations are from Mexico, Latin America, and the Philippines, most of them are Catholic. The largest single group of Roman Catholics, however, comes from Poland. The proportion of faiths outside the Judeo-Christian tradition represented in

the new arrivals is constantly growing. Muslims represent some 8 percent of these immigrants, and together with Buddhists and Hindus make up 15 percent. The largest Muslim immigration (18 percent of the total) is Pakistani. Most of the Jews and Eastern Orthodox coming to America are from the Soviet Union. Educational levels among immigrants vary remarkably, especially among women. In general, Catholic and Protestant as well as Muslim women have relatively low levels of schooling. Many of the most educated immigrants are from newer religions—men representing Buddhist, Muslim, and other Eastern religions and Hindu and Christian Orthodox women.

The next survey of the new immigrants according to their religious preferences will have to take into account the changes in government policies incurred as a result of the events of September 11, 2001. It is possible that new figures will represent a decrease in the numbers of Muslims, reflecting the fact that the Immigration and Naturalization Service is currently in the process of tightening immigration procedures and restricting immigration from Muslim countries as well as the number of Muslim students who are allowed to study in the United States. At the end of chapter 1, David J. O'Brien concludes that the two major questions facing religions in America today are the balance between deep commitment to one's faith and one's relationship to others in a pluralistic society and how to reconcile differing religious beliefs with the need for serious commitment to one another and our earth. For some immigrants today, including Arab Christians as well as Muslims, a third question must be the extent to which they are able to survive in a society in which the ramifications of a frontal attack on America are still unfolding.

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have been religiously and politically intertwined throughout history. They represent a rich array of religious, ethnic, and racial groups. Whatever the ensuing immigration restrictions, it is clear that in the course of the twenty-first century, members of the three religious traditions will continue to encounter one another not only in the Middle East but also in America. The Muslim, Christian, and Jewish experiences presented here reflect shared struggles of faith and identity (integration and assimilation), institution building, and acculturation. In diverse ways, all represent minority experiences. And in becoming American, all have faced the challenge of constructing an identity that incorporates their faith and values within America's melting pot or, more recently, its multicultural society. This transformation has challenged everyone to face a new world in his or her own unique ways.

It is still too early to predict how the process of the Americanization of these new citizens will proceed. The answer, however, may have deep ramifications for the self-understanding of a society that has struggled to define itself as the model of religious inclusion and tolerance and as a welcoming venue for persons of all faiths and ethnic identities.