O N E

Introduction

Arab Americans and U.S. Racial Formations

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UP UNTIL THE HORRIFIC ATTACKS of September 11, 2001, several Arab American writers used the trope "invisibility" to refer to the place of Arab Americans within dominant U.S. discourses on race and ethnicity. A common theme in this literature was that while most government definitions classify Arab Americans as "white," popular U.S. discourses tend to represent "Arabs" as different from and inferior to whites. Exemplifying this perspective, Helen Samhan referred to the racialization of Arab Americans within U.S. government racial schemas as "white, but not quite" (1999); Joanna Kadi argued that Arab Americans are the "most invisible of the invisibles" (1994); Therese Saliba published the essay "Resisting Invisibility: Arab Americans in Academia and Activism" (1999); and Nada Elia used the trope "the white sheep of the family" to analyze the ways in which Arab American women have been positioned among U.S. women of color feminist movements (2002).

Some scholars have argued that the aftermath of September 11 consolidated the racialization of the category "Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim" as a signifier of

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nonwhite Otherness[1] or that a "racialization of Islam" has underlain the post-9/11 backlash against persons perceived to be Arab, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and/or Muslim. Exemplifying this perspective, Minoo Moallem argues that "In the wake of the horrific events of September 11th, 'Islamic fundamentalism,' a discourse which has been decades in the making, has finally come into its own. The representation of Islamic fundamentalism in the West," she contends, "is deeply influenced by the general racialization of Muslims in a neo-racist idiom, which has its roots in cultural essentialism and a conventional Eurocentric notion of 'people without history.' Islamic fundamentalism has become a generic signifier used constantly to single out the Muslim other, in its irrational, morally inferior, and barbaric masculinity and its passive, victimized, and submissive femininity" (2002, 298).

Alongside the proliferation of hate crimes against persons perceived to be Arab, Muslim, or South Asian after the attacks of September 11, 2001, educational institutions, government officials, and nonprofit organizations fervently reached out to Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities with a series of diversity initiatives. In this sense, the "invisible citizens" became "visible subjects."[2] In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, a series of essays referred to Arab Americans with terms such as "no longer invisible" (Cainkar 2002a) or as having "hypervisibility" (Alsultany 2006). The terms of "visibility" have required that an individual or community be "seen" as a potential victim of racism in order to be "included" in liberal multicultural diversity initiatives. Yet they have promoted "tolerance" through the condemnation of hate crimes while remaining silent on the federal government's targeting of Arab, South Asian, and Muslim immigrants (without evidence of criminal activity). Similarly, within months following September 11, most media coverage of the backlash focused on individual hate crimes that took place in the public sphere while downplaying attacks against those targeted by state violence at detention centers, airports, immigration and naturalization service centers, and the workplace. In this sense, the terms upon which Arab Americans became "hyper-visible" within dominant public U.S. discourses on multiculturalism after 9/11 paralleled the rhetoric of the Bush administration and

1. See Volpp (2003, 147) and Naber (2000), who write about the construction of the category Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim.

2. See Kien Lee (2002) for an analysis of how communities across the United States have initiated activities to build solidarity with Arabs, Muslims, and other Middle Easterners.

the corporate media that distinguished between "good Arabs or Muslims" and "bad Muslims."[3] Mahmood Mamdani argues that within official U.S. discourse after 9/11, "'bad Muslims' were clearly responsible for terrorism . . . 'good Muslims' were anxious to clear their names and consciences of this horrible crime . . . and unless proved to be 'good,' every Muslim was presumed to be 'bad'" (2004, 15). Government policies, such as the PATRIOT Act, special registration, and FBI investigations put the logic of "good Muslim/bad Muslim" into practice by targeting noncitizens as "potential terrorists" or "bad Muslims," and distinguishing them from "citizens" or "good Muslims."[4] Within liberal discourses on tolerance and diversity, the privileging of individual hate crimes over the institutionalization of state violence facilitated official U.S. narratives that sought to reduce the post-9/11 backlash against persons perceived to be Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, or South Asian to the acts of a "few bad apples" and to cover up the systematic institutionalized nature of the violence. The Abu Ghraib torture case is but one example in which the "few bad apples" argument served to overshadow state accountability in promoting violence against persons perceived to be Arab or Muslim. In this case, the Bush administration argued that the abuses were isolated acts committed by low-ranking personnel—even though authorities either ordered or implicitly condoned the abuses (Mayer 2005; Hersh 2004).

The aftermath of 9/11 not only illustrated what critical race scholars have been arguing for decades—that "visibility" is a power-laden project that has the effect of silencing critiques of state violence and the structural inequalities that produce hatred and racism—but also revealed the objectification that often accompanies "inclusion." Moallem and Boal argue that multiculturalism "consistently evades engagement with three pressing issues: the enduring heritage of Eurocentrism, the question of justice, and the connections between national and

3. Here I build on Mamdani (2004) and Alsultany's (2005) analyses of Good Muslim/Bad Muslim.

4. Here I build upon Volpp's analysis of the ways that racism has operated within the context of the post-9/11 backlash in terms of a binary opposition between the "citizen" and the "terrorist" (2003). I also build upon Kent Ono's analysis of "potential terrorist." Ono argues that "'potential terrorists' serves as a useful concept to begin to address political and media discourses that produce a creative, if fictional, 'network' or interconnection along racial, gender, national, sexual, political, and ideological lines. Hate crimes, surveillance by the repressive apparatus of the state, and surveillance and disciplining technologies have erected a powerful discursive barrier to full participation in society by those marked as 'potential terrorist'" (2005, 443).

global domains." Multiculturalism, they argue, "contrives to efface all historicity in its consumption of the present" (1999, 244).[5] After decades of silence on Arab American issues in U.S. academia, September 11 sparked discourses on the "new targeted communities" that framed attacks against persons perceived to be "Arab," "Muslim," or "South Asian" in the public sphere as a "new" crisis—as if September 11 was a dividing line of history; as if the only "targeted communities" were Arabs and Muslims; and as if the Bush administration's anti-Arab, anti-Muslim state policies were not located within complex histories of European colonialism and U.S.-led imperialism in Arab homelands and decades of state-sponsored harassment of Arab American individuals, particularly those who are politically active. Along with discourses on "the new targeted communities" came an increased interest in and funding for Middle East and Islamic studies, partly owing to the intelligence needs of the U.S. war machine. In the 1990s, I learned of several cases in which academic advisors told their Ph.D. students specializing in Arab American Studies that they were committing academic suicide because they would never land academic jobs in this area. Perhaps the heightened interest in Arab American studies on university campuses and the growing number of tenure-track positions in this field has diminished the need for such concerns.

This book transgresses the liberal multiculturalist "add on" approach that has tended to dominate official academic and popular discussions on Arab Americans since 9/11. It highlights the heterogeneity of Arab American histories and the shifting and contradictory historical contexts through which Arab Americans have engaged with immigration, assimilation, and racialization. It also locates the attacks of September 11, 2001, as a turning point, as opposed to the starting point, of histories of anti-Arab racism in the United States. As many essays in this volume demonstrate, September 11 was a turning point in that representations of "terrorism" and "Islamic fundamentalism" have increasingly replaced other representations (i.e., the rich Arab oil sheikh and belly-dancing harem girls) and have become more fervently deployed in anti-Arab state policies and everyday patterns of engagement than ever before.

5. Here I am building on Moallem and Boal's definition of U.S. liberal multiculturalism: "[M]ulticultural nationalism operates on the fault line between a universalism based on the notion of an abstract citizenship that at the same time systematically produces sexualized, gendered, and racialized bodies, and particularistic claims for recognition and justice by minoritized groups" (1999, 245).

The multiple, shifting, and contradictory lenses through which Arabs and Arab Americans have been regarded in the United States before and after September 11, 2001, have sparked significant debate about the importance of "race" to Arab American studies and the place of Arab Americans within racial justice movements.[6] In conversation with these debates, contributors to this book engage with several questions: Is "race" a useful concept for exploring the relationship between U.S.-led war in Arab homelands and the marginalization of Arabs in the diaspora? What are the theoretical and political implications of bringing Arab American studies into conversation with the study of "race" in the United States? Are whiteness studies relevant to Arab American studies? What is the relationship between Islamaphobia and "race" and "racism"? What are the transformative possibilities for organizing around the rubric of racial justice for Arab American scholars and activists?

THE POLITICS OF NAMING

The meaning of the term "Arab" is contested. Commonly used among scholars is the definition of "Arab" as a cultural and linguistic term that includes persons from countries where the primary language is Arabic. Another definition, influenced by the Arab nationalist movements that emerged in resistance to Ottoman rule and European colonization, assumes that Arab is also a national identity and that Arabs share a language and a common cultural and imagined national community. Since 1945, nations for which the primary language is Arabic have combined to form the Arab League, and the members of the Arab League are considered the Arab nations, including Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Although U.S. popular cultural representations often conflate the categories "Arab" and "Muslim," not all Arabs are Muslim and not all Muslims are Arabs. The top six countries with the largest Muslim population are Indonesia (170.3 million), Pakistan (136 million),

6. Between January 2002 and January 2003, I conducted a research study on the increased emergence of Arab- and Arab American–related issues within racial justice, immigrant rights, and anti-war movements. My research demonstrated that efforts to insure the representation of Arab and Arab American activists within these movements substantially increased after September 11, 2001 (Naber 2002).

Bangladesh (106 million), India (103 million), Turkey (62.4 million), and Iran (60.7 million).[7] None of these countries is considered Arab. Arab countries include a diversity of linguistic, ethnic, and religious groups. Religious groups include, but are not limited to, Christians, Jews, and Druze. Non-Arab ethnic minorities include, but are not limited to, Kurds, Amazighs, and Armenians.

Before turning to the issue of Arab Americans and "race," it is crucial to recognize the complexities that come with efforts to classify Arab immigrants and Arab Americans. The religious, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the Arab region gives at least some insight into why the federal government as well as Arab individuals and communities have found reaching a consensus over *who* is an Arab and what constitutes Arabness to be a particularly arduous task. Suad Joseph writes: "There are Palestinians, Iraqis, Kuwaitis, Yemenis, Saudi Arabians, Bahreinis, Qataris, Duabis, Egyptians, Libyans, Tunisians, Moroccans, Algerians, Sudanese, Eritreans, and Mauritanians; there are Maronites, Catholics, Protestants, Greek Orthodox, Jews, Sunnis, Shi'a, Druze, Sufis, Alawites, Nestorians, Assyrians, Copts, Chaldeans, and Bahais; there are Berbers, Kurds, Armenians, bedu, gypsies, and many others with different languages, religions, ethnic, and national identifications and cultures who are all congealed as Arab in popular representation whether or not those people may identify as Arab" (Joseph 1999a, 260).

Ever since the late 1880s, when the first significant group of Arab immigrants came to the United States, the terms of Arab identity have been contested and shifting.[8] The first significant group of immigrants were from the Ottoman provinces of Syria, Mount Lebanon, and Palestine. According to Samhan, the federal government classified them along with other Ottoman subjects as originating from "Turkey in Asia" (1999, 216). Immigration reforms that were passed in 1893 led to the classification of Arabic-speaking immigrants as "Syrians" after 1899 (216). Several scholars have argued that these identity categories diverged from the familial, village, or religious modes of categorization through which early immigrants tended to identify (Majaj 2000, 321). The end of the Ottoman Empire in 1917 and the emergence of distinct Arab nations that are often referred to collectively as the "Arab world" marked another shift in the identity terms deployed by

7. Islamic Web (n.d.).

8. Although Arab immigration to the United States predates the nineteenth century, the first significant group came to the United States in the late 1880s. See Kayyali (2006) for a description of Arab immigration to the United States before 1880.

both the federal government and Arab individuals and communities. For example, Naff argues that for early immigrants from Mount Lebanon, an area formerly located within the Ottoman province of Syria, the term "Lebanese" was given political legitimacy in the 1920s as a national label or identity and was adopted by most immigrants originating in Mount Lebanon (1985, 2).

Alongside the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and particularly during the 1950s and 1960s, Arab nationalism emerged as a framework for resisting European colonization and intervention in the Arab region. While Arab nationalist tendencies proliferated among Arab immigrants for decades, widespread in Arab American studies literature is that the 1967 Arab-Israeli war marked a watershed for members of the Arab American community who were "dismayed and extremely disappointed to see how greatly one-sided and pro-Israeli the American communications media were in reporting on the Middle East" (Suleiman 1999, 10).[9] Michael Suleiman adds that this war "reinforced and strengthened their sense of an Arab identity" and sparked the emergence of a pan-ethnic Arab American identity (ibid.).

On the level of federal government racial categories, a 1978 classification scheme located Arabs within the broader rubric of "persons originating in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa" (Samhan 1999). In 1997, the Office of Management and Budget, based on a collaboration with various Arab American community organizations, noted a lack of consensus about the definition of an Arab ethnic category and suggested that further research be done to improve data on this population group. Census 2000 added the classification "Arab ancestry" within a separate part of the census to obtain specific information about persons from the Middle East and North Africa who identify an Arab ancestry. The federal government and the major national Arab American community organizations have yet to reach a consensus on the appropriate term for naming

9. Hani Bawardi (2006) critiques dominant narratives in Arab American studies that have argued that no Arab American political organizations existed before 1967. Bawardi argues that an Arab American national identity existed ever since the first period of early immigration to the United States in the late 1880s and early 1900s, particularly through the involvement of Arab immigrants within transnational Arab organizations that were unequivocally anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, and anti-Ottoman. Davidson argues that a "determined lobbying and educational effort on behalf of the Palestinians" did arise "after the issuance of Balfour Declaration and sought to organize around, persuade about, and debate the issue of Palestine within the Arab-American community and American society at large" (1999, 229).

immigrants from Arabic-speaking countries. Within the field of Arab American Studies, scholars have tended to refer to immigrants from the Ottoman province of Syria before 1920 as Syrian and the post–World War II immigrants as Arabs or Arab Americans.

Some Arab and Arab American activists have contested the terms "Arab" or "Arab American" as rubrics for organizing identity. They have argued that these terms are nationalist in scope and therefore exclusionary toward non-Arab minorities in the region.[10] Feminist and queer activists in particular have proposed the geographic-based term "Southwest Asian and North African" (often referred to as SWANA) as an alternative that includes non-Arab minorities, transcends patriarchal and homophobic nationalisms, and opens up possibilities for alliance building between people from Arab nations and other nations in the region, such as Iran, who share a similar history in the context of U.S. imperialism and war in the region. This perspective also contends that SWANA is a useful alternative to the term "Middle East," a Eurocentric term produced in the context of European expansion and conquest. Others have privileged religious identities such as "Muslim" or "Muslim American" over the nation-based label "Arab American" on the grounds that their primary loyalty is one rooted in faith and the divine. In some contexts, scholars have documented an interplay between an increased relevance of a "Muslim American" compared to an "Arab American" identity alongside the post-1980s rise of global Islamic movements as mechanisms for resisting Western imperialism (Naber 2006; Cainkar 2004c). While these examples are not exhaustive, they represent the diversity and historically and politically specific ways in which identity categories are imagined and performed.

Scholars have tended to study Arab immigration to the United States in two periods, pre- and post–World War II, and have argued that the first large influx of Arab immigrants were predominantly Christians from Mount Lebanon and came from Greater Syria at the turn of the twentieth century (Naff 1985; Suleiman 1999; Shakir 1997; Aswad 1974; Elkholy 1969). In this literature, a general consensus is that early migrants came to the United States out of economic necessity and for personal advancement. Repeatedly cited within accounts of Arab American histories are two economic setbacks of the mid-1800s in Mount

10. The organization SWANABAQ (South West Asian and North African Bay Area Queers) based in San Francisco exemplifies efforts to create more inclusive rubrics for organizing identities based on shared cultural and political histories that are not nationalist in scope.

Lebanon, coupled with the demographic pressures of an exploding population that tended to inspire the early migration: the opening of the Suez canal, which sidetracked world traffic from Syria to Egypt so that Japanese silk became a major competitor to the Lebanese silk industry, and the invasion of Lebanese vineyards by the phylloxera pest, which nearly destroyed the vineyards (Khater 2001, 59; Suleiman 1999, 2). The more contentious debates within the study of early migration are over the extent to which Christian oppression under Ottoman rulers and the concomitant presence of Western missionaries ignited Arab Christian migration in the early years.[11]

The majority of historical accounts argue that before World War II most migrants were poor, uneducated, unskilled workers who were illiterate in Arabic and English and that the most common occupation among early migrants was pack peddling, although mill work and factory work were also common among early immigrants (Shakir 1997; Naff 1985; Khater 2001; Hooglund 1987). Naff argues that in some cases, pack peddling became a means toward eventually owning a dry-goods store and that peddling routes also led to established settlements of Syrians. Hooglund has added that industrial cities in the eastern and midwestern states, such as Fall River, Massachusetts; Pittsburgh; Detroit; and Michigan City, Indiana, attracted large numbers of Syrian immigrants to work in steel mills and textile factories, and on the railroads. Although early immigrants tended to identify as sojourners who hoped to acquire wealth and return to their country of origin, the majority eventually became permanent U.S. residents (Abraham 1995; Suleiman 1994).[12]

11. Alixa Naff (1985), Albert Hourani (1992), Najib Saliba (1992), Charles Issawi (1992), Samir Khalaf (1987), Michael Suleiman (1999), Barbara Aswad (1974), Evelyn Shakir (1997), and Akram Khater (2001) list demographic pressures in Mount Lebanon, economic setbacks such as the declining silk industry, the newly developed intellectual class's distaste for Ottoman rule, the presence of American Protestant missionaries, and the looming conscription of Christians into the Ottoman army among the causes of increased emigration. Several scholars have labeled the idea that religious persecution was a major factor in the decision to emigrate a "myth" that can be traced to "mainly . . . the post–World War II studies on Arabs in America" and the rhetoric of advocates for a "French-ruled, Maronite-dominated Lebanese entity" (Naff 1985, 86–88). Khalaf (1987) and Shakir (1997) contend that the missionary presence influenced emigration, while Khater (2001) and Naff (1985) do not emphasize the Protestant missionaries' role in emigration.

12. It is estimated that by 1916, 100,000 Arabs had immigrated to the United States (Naff 1985, 2), and by 1924, the Arab population in the U.S. reached 200,000. Scholars approximate

Post–World War II immigration and displacement to the United States was more diverse than in the early years. As Michael Suleiman explains, immigrants came from nearly every Arabic-speaking country and included nearly equal numbers of Christians and Muslims (1999, 9). While early Arab immigrants were primarily Christian and from Greater Syria, post–World War II immigrants have included Arabs from Gulf States and from North Africa as well as a greater number of Muslim immigrants, adding a greater variation in appearance and skin color, cultural patterns, and religious groupings. Post–World War II immigrants and refugees have also been more diverse in terms of socioeconomic class. Moreover, post–World War II immigration has included more individuals and communities who have come to the United States because of displacement by war, colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism than before.[13] Increasing U.S. economic and military intervention in the Arab world since World War II has underscored a deepening continuity between U.S.-led war in the Arab region, processes of immigration and displacement from the Arab region to the United States, and the escalating targeting of Arab immigrants and Arab Americans. This book asks: How have these diverse histories mapped onto a society like the United States, which has been obsessed with organizing social difference along the lines of "race"?

THE EMERGENCE OF RACIAL CLASSIFICATION IN THE UNITED STATES

While there is no consensus among scholars about the meaning of race before European colonization in the Western hemisphere, there is a consensus that a significant shift in the concept of race took place between the fifteenth and

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that 195,000 were Christians and 5,000 were divided between Muslims and Druze—of this Christian population, the Maronites claimed 90,000, the Greek Orthodox 85,000, the Greek Catholic 10,000, Protestants 5,000—and 5,000 were unaccounted for (Hitti, cited in Ansara 1958, 12).

13. See McAlister (2001) for an overview of U.S. expansion in the Middle East and the capitalist search for new markets abroad after World War II, in which she refers to Lebanese immigration in the context of the Lebanese civil war, Palestinian displacement to the United States in the context of Israeli occupation, the displacement of Iraqi refugees in the context of U.S.-led war on Iraq, Yemeni immigration in the context of civil war in Yemen, and general worsening of economic conditions in the region during this period and beyond. There is also a note on U.S. interests in the region before World War II.

eighteenth centuries (Rodriguez 2000, 34; Baker 1998, 1). This perspective contends that efforts aimed at racial classification that were based upon scientific racism emerged in Western Europe and the United States during this period. Attempts to categorize humans into different varieties or types developed in the context of the rise of biology, anthropology, and other sciences in their Western European form; late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century European "Enlightenment" concepts of observation, classification, progress, and romanticism; the rise of capitalism; and European expansion and colonialism.[14] Baker argues that between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, the term "race" consisted of folk classifications that were interchangeable with concepts like nation, type, variety, or stock, which were perceived to reflect inherent natural, biological differences that were not malleable and "merged with the Anglican and Puritan belief in the sacredness of property rights and the individual" (1998, 11). The idea that religious and cultural differences were based upon biological differences helped to justify the colonization of Native American land and the reduction of African Americans to chattel slavery. Rana argues that as "Catholic Spain . . . undertook the benevolent role of sending missionaries to spread the work of a Christian God to heathens in the Americas. . . , notions of race were being consolidated through ideas of nation and religion" (Rana 2007, 153). He adds that the Spanish, who developed a schema for distinguishing between Christians and "infidel Muslims" after having just finished a war driving Muslims out of the Iberian peninsula, transferred the concept of "religious infidel" onto what they defined as "heathen Indians" in their conquest on the other side of the Atlantic (154).

Ideologies of religious difference inherited from Spain thus shaped racial ideologies in the United States and the concomitant efforts to destroy Native American land and people (Shohat and Stam 1994, 60–91). As the significance of slavery to the capitalist economy increased, religion was used to justify the classification of Native Americans and African Americans as "pagan" and "soulless." In the eighteenth century, amid the institutionalization of slavery and the diminished legitimacy of religion as a justification for racism, biological, zoological, and botanical scientific theories became essential to the formation of racial thinking. By the second half of the eighteenth century, scholars formed "an elaborate system to classify races into a rigid hierarchical scheme" (Baker 1998, 14). A North American scientific system, coupled with the colonizers' popular thinking

14. See Bernal (1987) and Baker (1998, 11).

about racial hierarchies, coincided with political goals and economic interests. This process institutionalized racial inferiority and socially structured racial categories as well as the idea that "negroes and Indians were savages not worthy of citizenship or freedom" (Baker 1998, 14). By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the construction of race reached its full development within the legal apparatus of the United States, and various state governments conspired with science to legitimize structural inequality by sanctioning it in law. Colonialism thus produced the conditions for social and political institutions, such as slavery, that were justified through racial theory (Gossett 1997, 17).

That the racial categorization of Native Americans and African Americans took on contrasting form illustrates that the terms upon which racial categories have operated are malleable and shifting, depending on historical and political circumstances. In the nineteenth century, for example, a minimum "blood quantum" was required to be granted racial classification as Native American. Prior to this period, membership in Native American tribes did not require a particular degree of "blood." Moreover, in 1860, the census first began counting untaxed Indians. According to Rodriguez, until 1940, the federal government classified Native Americans as "Indians." The federal government used the term "American Indians" for the next twenty years and the term "Indians (Amer.)" between 1970 and 1990 (Rodriguez 2000, 88). Native Americans who paid taxes were counted as white until all Indians were first counted separately in the 1860 census. They were then classified as a "not-white, not-Negro group within the 'other races' category, along with the Chinese" (88). Since the 1970s, Indians have been classified along with Eskimos and Aleuts in a separate "race" category, "Native American Indian." The 2000 census used the category "American Indian" or "Alaska Native" (88). Annette Jaimes uses the term "bureaucratic racism" to refer to the federal and state process that determines who may or may not be recognized as Indian. She argues that such federal policies are a result of the five-hundred-year heritage of colonialist ideological and legal constructions of American Indians and the U.S. government's treatment of indigenous populations as a colonized people in their own homelands. By determining how the government classifies American Indians, bureaucratic racism makes it increasingly difficult for an individual of intertribal descent to claim recognition as Indian. Such policies, Jaimes argues, have been designed to break up communal land, co-opt indigenous land for non-Indian usage, and sustain the process of colonization (1996, 49–53).

In the context of the Jim Crow laws of the South that were established in the late nineteenth century after reconstruction and lasted until the 1960s, African Americans were classified according to "blood" ancestry.[15] In the early 1900s, the "one-drop rule" was adopted as a written law in several states. This law determined that a single drop of "black blood" makes a person black and sought to facilitate segregation and prevent miscegenation. Despite the extent of racial mixing, one drop of "black blood" rendered a person "black," whereas for Native Americans, racial mixing had the effect of excluding a person from classification as Native American. As Jack Forbes puts it, "with any mixture of blood, the 'Indian' is supposed to disappear. . . . White North Americans are always finding 'Blacks' and they are always losing 'Indians,' or so it would seem" (1990, 2). Andrea Smith explains that while white supremacy equates blackness with slaveability as a justification for the commodification of blacks as property in a capitalist system, it requires that Native Americans must "always be disappearing, in order to allow non-indigenous peoples rightful claim over this land" (2007). Thus classification of those who did not qualify to be Native American and were classified as white did not necessarily signify privilege or a decrease in their vulnerability to racism, but it facilitated erasure by contributing to efforts aimed at denying Native Americans claims to their indigenous ancestry and to their land.

Within the context of immigration to the United States, "race" has been a central framework for locating immigrants along a continuum from black to white and thereby determining the degree to which they deserved or did not deserve citizenship (Ong 2003, 11). The classification of diverse communities with a shared language, birthplace, or geographic origin within a fixed, homogenous identity category has intersected with and facilitated restrictive immigration

15. See Finkleman (2006) for more information on the "black codes" that were enforced from 1865 to 1866. For African Americans, the end of the nineteenth century entailed an intensification of racist laws and racial violence. In states such as Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Kansas, elected, appointed, or hired government authorities began to require or permit discrimination. The following forms of racism were crucial during this period: *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1986), which upheld racial segregation; voter suppression in the southern states; the denial of economic opportunity; and private acts of violence and mass racial violence against African Americans, often encouraged by government authorities. "Jim Crow" was the term used to refer to the interplay between law, public and private acts of discrimination, the denial of economic opportunity, and antiblack violence in the southern states.

policies and racial exclusion. The United States passed its first nationalization law in 1790, granting naturalization to aliens who were classified as "free white persons." This "racial prerequisite to citizenship endured for over a century and a half—remaining in force until 1952" (Rodriguez 2000, 1). In every census thereafter, the U.S. population was racially classified, even though the racial categories used and the terms upon which they were deployed were constantly changing. At the turn of the twentieth century, the U.S. racial classification system and decisions about whether or to what extent particular individuals should be granted the right to citizenship were based upon scientific racism, or the deployment of science to explain differences and hierarchies between perceived racial groups. Scientific racism emerged in continuity with centuries of colonization of Native American land and the enslavement of African Americans that were justified through constructed racial hierarchies. Scientific racism was also invoked to rationalize the exclusion of Asian immigrants and the colonization of the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico, among other territories.[16]

Although the census is not the only site for defining the rules through which race and racism operate, it provides a useful example of how "race" can often appear to reflect some underlying scientific reality and how the meaning of "race" in the United States has changed depending on historical and political circumstances. In 1790, the census divided the population into the racial categories "free whites," "slaves," and "all other free persons" (American Indians) (Prewitt 2002, 7). In 1820, the census added "free colored persons" to the racial scheme. After the Civil War, the census used the categories mulatto, quadroon, and octoroon, based on the proliferation of interest in "shades of color"; these categories were dropped in the early 1900s. During that period, the census included Asians within its racial categories. This practice often entailed a conflation of race and nation or meant that race would be determined according to one's nation or country of origin. In 1890, the census distinguished between Japanese and Chinese. The census added Hindus, a religious group, to be counted as a racial group in 1920 through a conflation of religion and race. The census first used the term Mexican in 1930 but dropped it shortly after, when the Mexican government contested the classification of Mexicans as a "race" (Prewitt 2002, 7). During this

16. For research on the relationship between racism and legislation limiting the opportunities for citizenship for particular immigrant groups, see Hing (2004); Ono and Sloop (2002); and Ngai (2004).

period, classification separated those entitled to civic participation from those whose classification was cause for exclusion. As Prewitt argues, "the slave system, the relocation of Indians to reservations, implementation of the separate but equal doctrine, denial of citizenship to Asians, racist immigration quotas in the 1920s, and Japanese-American internment are familiar chapters in this story. From 1790 until the civil rights movement, policy designed to protect the numerical and political supremacy of Americans of European ancestry used a classification system that assigned individuals to a discrete racial group" (2002, 8).

The early 1900s were characterized by intensified nativism in which racism permeated nationalism in the form of anti-immigrant sentiment that distinguished between "Americans born in the United States" and "immigrants."[17] Anti-immigrant nativism took shape in the context of white supremacist reactions to the increase in the number of new immigrants and those who had been brought to the United States through conquest, territorial expansion, and exploitative labor policies as well as the desire to protect the numerical, political, and economic supremacy of Americans of European ancestry.[18] Groups classified as non-European (such as Mexicans, Caribbean Islanders, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, Native Alaskans, and Asians) were added to the landscape of U.S. racial and immigrant politics through conquest, imperial war, territorial expansion, and the need for cheap immigrant labor.[19] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, public officials had instituted a policy that required immigration officers to document the "race" of new immigrants. According to Roediger, "they used a supplemental form providing information on 'color,' 'country and province of birth,' 'mother tongue,' and 'religion' to define the 'race' of those arriving." For example, Roediger explains, "Russian birth plus Yiddish mother tongue plus Jewish religion equaled 'Hebrew race'" (2005, 16).[20] In 1903, the racial classification process privileged "stock or blood" over language,

17. See Hingham (1994) for an analysis of anti-immigrant nativism in the early 1900s.

18. Anti-immigrant sentiment took on different forms in different parts of the U.S. Anti-immigrant nativism was intensified in places that included larger numbers of new immigrants (Hingham 1994).

19. For example, between 1850 and 1880, in the context of American expansion into Asia and Asian immigration to the United States, the Chinese population in U.S. increased fifteen-fold.

20. Roediger adds, "The resulting data were sometimes grouped under the heading 'Race' and sometimes under 'Race or People.' In 1903, new passenger lists added a 'Race or People' heading 'to be determined by the stock from which they spring and the language they speak'" (2005, 16).

though the process for how to arrive at such a determination remained uncertain (Roediger 2005, 16). Yet what remained clear was that white state actors had the power to make such decisions.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, previous racial thinking and patterns of white supremacy had inspired a related attack on European newcomers. The increase in anti-immigrant sentiment, including anti-Semitism, at this time was inspired, in part, by the increase in immigration from Europe that was Mediterranean, Slavic, and Jewish, which placed whiteness more easily into question than it had for German, Irish, and Scandinavian immigrants. Anti-immigrant nativists who had targeted those who were unquestionably considered nonwhite, such as Japanese, were working toward attaching similar provisions to immigration measures that would affect those with questionable ancestry, which in the early 1900s included southern Europeans. According to Roediger, "[I]n 1898, just as the Spanish-American War and the validation of segregation in *Plessy v. Ferguson* helped solidify Deep South–style white supremacy nationally, collecting 'race' statistics among European immigrants took a decisive step forward." Roediger explains that "Powderly, the U.S. commissioner-general of immigration, along with AFL veteran Edward F. McSweeney, devised a new system of enumerating by race" between 1898 and 1902 (2005, 15). This system classified new immigrants by race and gave "clues to their characteristics and their resultant influence upon the community of which they are to become members."[21] At this time, Southern Europeans were classified as belonging to a semi-Asiatic ancestry and were therefore deemed "questionable."

Roediger explains, "the division of European immigration into Teutonic, Iberian, Celtic, and Slavic 'races or peoples or more properly subdivisions of race' during critical years was, as Perlmann puts it, 'partly political' in that it 'provided a way of distinguishing racially the old [mostly northern and western European immigration] from the new immigration'" (2005, 17). Roediger suggests that the term "new immigration" was remarkable for its ability to describe recent arrivals as racially different. In his view, it was a term encompassing history and biology, culture and stock. The division between Europeans into "races" (from superior Nordics of northwestern Europe to the inferior southern and eastern races of Alpines, Mediterraneans, and Jews) was based on intersections between class and

21. This statement was made by Joel Perlmann in his important study of "'federal race classifications' from 1898 to 1913" (cited in Roediger 2005, 15).

race in that southern and eastern European immigrants tended to be workers or "the lower classes" who were also considered to be the "lower races" among Europeans (and the upper classes, mostly northern and western Europeans, were considered "racially pure" and therefore, superior) (Sacks 1994, 80–82).

In the early twentieth century, scientific racism coupled with eugenics, or the idea of "breeding for a 'better' humanity" (Sacks 1994, 80), rationalized the hierarchical ranking of the human population. It also rationalized legislation supporting racial segregation, miscegenation, and the restriction of immigration from Asia, Africa, and southern and eastern Europe. Between 1907 and 1920, the federal government began collecting data on naturalization. While over one million people obtained citizenship under racially restrictive naturalization laws that required northwestern European ancestry for whiteness and therefore citizenship, many others were rejected (Haney-López 1996, 1). This racial prerequisite requirement emerged from the histories of African slavery, the colonization of Native Americans, and the exclusion of Asian immigrants in which exclusion from citizenship was explained in racial terms. By the 1920s, eugenics consolidated the process by which questions about immigration and citizenship became questions about biology and solidified the notion that "real Americans were white and real whites came from northwest Europe" (Sacks 1994, 81). Scientific racism inspired the process that excluded and expelled Chinese in 1882, for example, and then closed the door to immigration by virtually all Asians and most southern Europeans in 1924 (Sacks 1994). Bill Ong Hing argues that after Chinese exclusion, the demands of agricultural labor in Hawaii and California inspired efforts to attract Japanese workers, yet by the turn of the century, there emerged a proliferation of adverse sentiment toward Japanese laborers (2004, 41). This adversity emerged in the context of Japan's victories over China in 1895 and Russia in 1905 and the concomitant perception of Japanese as potential enemies (42). Filipinos came to the United States in the context of a process of U.S. colonization that was justified by the notion that "they are unfit for self-government" and "in need of Christianizing." This colonialist rhetoric translated into the notion that "they are unfit to become American" upon immigration to the United States. As the Philippines became a U.S. colony, Filipinos thus became noncitizen nationals of the United States. Efforts to exclude Filipinos proliferated, particularly after World War I, when they began immigrating in significant numbers (2004, 44). Between 1911 and 1917, two thousand Asian immigrants immigrated to the United States, and over seventeen hundred

were denied entry on the grounds that they were classified as nonwhite (45). Although lower courts classified them as whites under the citizenship laws of 1790 and 1890, the 1923 Supreme Court case *United States v. Bahgat Singh Thind* (261 U.S. 204) entailed the reversal of this racial stance and determined that "Indians, like Japanese would no longer be considered white persons—and are therefore ineligible to become naturalized citizens." In this context, the 1917 act of Congress extended Chinese exclusion laws to all Asians, and only Filipinos and Guanamanians, persons whose homelands were colonized by the United States and under U.S. jurisdiction, were exempt for this exclusion (Hing 2004, 46).

The broader U.S. context of anti-immigrant nativism following World War I produced the conditions for greater prohibitions on immigration. The Immigration Act of 1924, or the National Origins Act, Asian Exclusion Act, or Johnson-Reed Act, limited the number of immigrants who could be admitted from any country to 2 percent of the number of people from that country who were already living in the United States in 1890, according to that year's census. It excluded immigration to the United States of Asian laborers, specifically Chinese immigrants who did not agree to work, and Chinese prostitutes, and had the effect of preventing Japanese Americans from legally owning land. It superseded the 1921 Emergency Quota Act. The law was aimed at further restricting the southern and eastern Europeans who had begun to enter the country in large numbers beginning in the 1890s, as well as East Asians and Asian Indians, who were prohibited from immigrating entirely. It set no limits on immigration from Latin America. The act halted "undesirable" immigration with quotas. It barred specific origins from the Asia-Pacific Triangle that included Japan, China, the Philippines, Laos, Siam (Thailand), Cambodia, Singapore (then a British colony), Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, Burma (Myanmar), India, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and Malaysia. It barred these immigrants because their "race" was deemed undesirable. Among the arguments advanced in support of this act were those that stressed the racial superiority of Anglo-Saxons and the unassimilability of foreigners (Hing 2004, 46). The quotas remained in place with minor alterations until the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965. For eugenicists, "admitting 'degenerate breeding stock' seemed one of the worst sins the nation could commit against itself"; "environment could never modify an immigrant's germ plasm"; and "only a rigid selection of the best immigrant stock could improve rather than pollute endless generations to come" (Hingham 1994, 151). Early Arab immigration to the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s

thus emerged within a broader context in which definitions of "race" assumed that differences in moral character and intelligence between social groups were based in biology and nature (Banton 1977). In the 1930s, the U.S. census distinguished southern and eastern Europeans from northwestern Europeans also on the basis of the eugenicist racial distinctions of this period (Sacks 1994, 82).

Many scholars have compared the backlash against Arab immigrant communities after the attacks of September 11, 2001, to Japanese internment during World War II, particularly in terms of the similar processes by which Japanese and Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians have been targeted within the United States in the context of U.S.-led war in their homelands and the similarities between state and media discourses that represented them as culturally degenerate, menacing and sinister, and threatening to the nation in the process of legitimizing war and racism. In the case of Japanese internment, on December 7, 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Proclamation 2525, which was directed at Japanese "alien enemies" and legitimized the interment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans and the separate incarceration of Japanese aliens according to the Alien Enemy Act. Four years later, another proclamation, 2655, justified "alien removal," which provided that subjects deemed dangerous to public peace and safety would be subject to an order to depart or deportation (Hing 2004, 221).

Several scholars of Latino/a and Asian American studies have contended that assumptions about national origin have figured into histories of anti-Asian and anti-Latino/a racism. A prominent perspective within Asian American studies is that for Asian Americans, racial formation has been "defined not primarily in terms of biological racialism but in terms of institutionalized legal definitions of race and national origin" (Lowe 1996, 10). In their analysis of immigration legislation that has specifically targeted Latinos (such as Proposition 187), Ono and Sloop argue that a "racist discourse emerges that uses suspicion of the other as a strategy for the preservation of the self" (2002, 41).[22] This discourse, they argue, constructs a binary between citizens and documented immigrants versus those who are not, producing an intensified sense of "fear" of the undocumented other

22. Ono and Sloop argue that such laws are constructed as "the proper mechanism to stem the tide of criminality intrinsic to undocumented immigrants and to protect the citizen against 'others' who are either potentially or already criminal." They add that the biologistic racialization of Mexicans and Mexicanos and Chicanas and Chicanos in this discourse focus on them as more prone to criminality and violence than other groups (2002, 34).

(2002, 41). In her comparison between Asian and Mexican engagements with "race," Ngai argues that the legal racialization of these ethnic groups' national origin casts them as permanently foreign, unassimilable to the nation and ultimately, alien in the eyes of the nation (2004, 8). The divergent contexts through which various immigrant communities have engaged with European and U.S. constructs of "race" illustrate that "race" has operated as an unquestionable facet of virtually all immigrant histories in the United States and that "race" operates according to multiple, shifting logics depending on the context. How then, have dominant U.S. racial schemas positioned "the Arab" and how have Arab immigrants and Arab Americans been required to engage with "race" and "racism"?

"RACE" AND ARAB AMERICANS IN THE EARLY YEARS: 1880–1940

Several scholars have analyzed the position of Arabs and Arab Americans within U.S. racial schemas in terms of what Edward Said (1978) has termed "Orientalism," or the academic, political, and literary discourses on Arabs, Islam, and the Middle East originating in England and France and appearing later in the United States. Said argues that Orientalism constructs a binary opposition between East and West and attributes an immutable "essence" to the East or Orient. Orientalism, according to Said, continues to permeate Western media, government policies, and academia and operates as a discursive, ideological justification for Western colonial and imperial projects in the Middle East. Said's framework is useful for conceptualizing the ways in which Arabs and Arab Americans have been positioned within U.S. racial schemas.

On the level of immigration policy, the multiple and shifting terms for categorizing immigrants from Arabic-speaking countries have coincided with and facilitated a complex and contradictory process through which Arab immigrants have been brought into the U.S. racial classification system. In 1909, in the context of Jim Crow segregation laws of the southern and border states and the first significant period of Arab immigration to the United States, a federal court case in Georgia granted Syrian Costa George Najour the right to naturalization on the basis that he was considered to belong to the white or Caucasian race (Hassan 2002). Judge Newman, presiding over the case, explained, "I consider the Syrians as belonging to what we now recognize and what the world recognizes, as the white race. . . . The applicant comes from Mt. Lebanon, near Beirut. He is not particularly dark, and has none of the characteristics or appearances of

the Mongolian race, but so far as I can see and judge, has the appearance and characteristics of the Caucasian race."[23] In 1914, in a South Carolina case, a Judge Smith denied Syrian immigrant George Dow a petition to become a U.S. citizen on the basis that "'Syrians might be free white persons, [but] not that particular free white person to whom the act of congress had donated the privilege of citizenship' in 1790—a privilege he ruled was intended for persons of European descent" (quoted in Samhan 1999, 217).[24] In the case of George Dow, the judge argued that whiteness is not a matter of physical appearance, linguistic, or ethnographic racial classifications but is one of geography. Since Dow was perceived to be "Asiatic," the judge argued that he was not European and, therefore, not white. This decision, although it affirmed the notion that "race" is a social construction and that particular actors have created what "race" is, was reversed in 1915 on scientific, congressional, and legal grounds.[25] The cases of Najour and Dow took place in a broader U.S. context in which anti-immigrant sentiment and nativism were not only rampant but were justified by a concept of "race" that operated to legitimize the classification of the human population in terms of beliefs about biological and civilizational evolution.

Other immigrants also participated in public debates over the racial identity of the Syrians.[26] Kalil A. Bishara, for example, representing a particular perspective among Maronite Christian immigrants in *The Origin of the Modern Syrian* (Bishara 1914), carefully detailed the genealogy of Syrians in ancient history, arguing that no group that was not Caucasian "had ever pitched a tent or set up a pillar" in Syria (Bishara 1914, 24). In this treatise, Bishara attempted to demonstrate that Syria has been "the rendez-vous of world powers . . . and they all were Caucasians" (39). In the conclusion of this piece, it becomes clear that Bishara identified Christianity as a key feature contributing to Syrians' whiteness and

23. See Haney-López (1996).

24. For further discussion of this case, see Hassan (2002); Suleiman (1999); Majaj (2000); Joseph (1999a).

25. See Haney-López (1996, 206) for further analysis on the reversal of this case.

26. While these debates tended to be highlighted in scholarly discussions about early Syrian immigrants and "race," less cited are examples of individuals who expressed less secure relationships to whiteness, those who were targeted by anti-immigrant sentiment. Also less visible in dominant scholarly discourses are the narratives of those who were critical of European and U.S. foreign policy, particularly those who were involved in transnational alliances organized around a commitment to the liberation of Palestine (Bawardi 2006).

hence their eligibility for American citizenship. Bishara also concedes that although Syrians are geographically "Asiatic," as Syria lies in the "near East," the "'Asiatic exclusion laws' [were] clearly meant to be a synonym of 'Mongolians' . . . who have a peculiar type of civilization of their own so radically different from our Christian civilization" (40). Bishara agreed that Syrians may be technically "Turks" or "Asiatic," but not so much as to "debar the Syrian" from American citizenship. In this case, historical conflations of religion, civilization, geographic origin, and "race" operated to justify the "whiteness" of early Arab immigrants.

Yet the association between racial superiority and a European origin inspired further investigation into Syrian origins, leading to the eventual appeal of the Dow case based on a report that said, "'they belong to the Semitic branch of the Caucasian race and are widely different from their rulers, the Turks, who are in origin, Mongolian'" (quoted in Naff 1985, 257). Although this case was appealed and established the "legal precedent that 'Syrians' meet the racial prerequisite for naturalization," it did not mark an official shift in the racial classification of Syrian immigrants during this period (Hassan 2002). In 1923, the Supreme Court denied a Syrian petition for naturalization on the grounds that Syria fell under a 1917 restrictive immigration act—which bars immigration for natives from most countries east of the Persian Gulf. Later, it was proven that Syrians do not fall within those wartime restrictions (Samhan 1999, 217).

Lisa Majaj explains that Arab American studies scholars have tended "to view the prerequisite controversy as an anomalous period in a relatively straightforward Arab American history of assimilation" (Majaj 2000, 323). However, Majaj argues that while connections between non-European, non-Christian, and non-white identity persisted within official U.S. policy and popular discourses, so too did the potential exclusion of Arabs, particularly those who were not Christian. To illustrate this point, Majaj turns to two naturalization cases from this period, including the 1942 case of the Yemeni Muslim applicant Ahmed Hassan, who was denied naturalization based on his non-European and non-Christian heritage, and the 1944 case in which an Arab applicant was granted naturalization based on the idea that Arabs could be considered white because they have been "*transmitters* of western civilization" (Majaj 2000, 324). On the one hand, "while the credibility of whiteness was periodically called into question by government authorities and public opinion," on the other hand, Arab American proximity to whiteness facilitated efforts to qualify for citizenship (see chapter 5 by Sarah

Gualtieri). In this sense, I use the term "racialization of ambiguity" to refer to the position of early Arab immigrants on the level of the federal government until the 1940s, when the U.S. Census Bureau took the position that "Arab-Americans were to be treated like Italian-Americans, Greek-Americans and some other European immigrant communities" (Hassan 2002, 4).

Providing a survey of the histories of U.S. popular representations of "the Arab" is beyond the scope of this chapter. Yet a brief account of a few key moments within these representational histories illustrates that images of Arabs in U.S. popular culture are numerous, constantly changing, and predate the first significant period of Arab immigration to the United States. It also demonstrates the ways in which government discourses have tended to overlap with or parallel popular representations. Some scholars have argued that images of "the Arab" are rooted in images of the "Muslim" as a dark and evil Other that were transposed from the Byzantines to western Europeans and European colonists during the period of the rise of Islam and, later, to the Americas (Suleiman 1989, 257). Others have contended that an analysis of the historical fascination with the Holy Land is critical to understanding representations of the "Arab" in U.S. popular culture (Little 2002; McAlister 2001). One perspective is that the Puritan fascination with the Holy Land entailed "a profound ambivalence about the 'infidels'—mostly Muslims but some Jews" (Little 2002, 9). Rana contends that this fascination has permeated U.S. popular imagination ever since the early days of European colonization in the United States four centuries ago, when representations of Native Americans paralleled representations of Muslims and Jews (Little 2002, 9; Rana 2007). He adds that Native Americans were interpellated through stereotypes of Muslims that proliferated during the Spanish contact and configured Indians as Muslims. He argues that this stereotype served as part of an ideological justification for holy war and imperial expansion (Rana 2007; Matar 2000, cited in Rana).[27]

27. According to Junaid Rana, "Throughout the sixteenth century into the seventeenth and eighteenth, ideas of racial difference were encapsulated through religious difference, and in the case of Native Americans and Muslims, sexual difference. In this configuration Muslims and Native Americans were classified as racially other—that is, barbaric, depraved, immoral, and sexually deviant. The stereotype of the Muslim as represented in literary and theological documents imagined the 'Turk' as 'cruel, tyrannical, deviant, and deceiving,' and the 'Moor' as 'sexually overdriven and emotionally uncontrollable, vengeful, and religiously superstitious'" (Rana 2007, 154).

In the eighteenth century, biographies of the Prophet Mohammed that depicted the "Islamic messenger of God as the founder of a wicked and barbarous creed that had spread from Arabia to North Africa by offering conquered peoples a choice between conversion and death" proliferated in the United States (Little 2002, 10). Little contends that "the revolutionary statesmen who invented America in the quarter-century after 1776 regarded the Muslim world, beset by oriental despotism, economic squalor, and intellectual stultification, as the antithesis of the republicanism to which they had pledged their sacred honor" (10). Literary representations of Muslims as polluted, autocratic Orientals who had fallen from grace continued throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[28] Nineteenth-century representations of Arabs and Muslims were shaped in part by missionaries, tourists, and merchants who sailed from America into the eastern Mediterranean who perceived Arab governments and societies through the Eurocentric lenses of backwardness and inferiority (10). In their travel writings, some missionaries represented Islam as inferior to Protestantism and the Orient as a place ruled by despots, prone to cruel displays of power and self-indulgence, barbarism, and captivity and closely associated with tyranny and slavery. McAlister argues that by the end of the nineteenth century, "the Holy Land images were the most popular subject for the more than five million stereographs produced in the United States" (2001, 17). She adds that representations of the Holy Land "saturated the culture, combining Orientalist themes of exoticism with the complex nexus of adoration and appropriation that most Protestant Americans felt for the land they claimed as spiritual heritage" (18).

In the antebellum period and early decades of the nineteenth century, Orientalist imagery proliferated in the United States in the form of "paintings, prints, decorative arts, advertisements, photographs, films, fashion, and a variety of performing arts" (Edwards 2000, 16). Within the first few decades after

28. Little (2002) argues that "No one probably did more to shape nineteenth-century U.S. views of the Middle East than Mark Twain, whose darkly humorous account of his calamitous tour of the Holy Land sold nearly one hundred thousand copies in the two years after it was published in 1869." In *Innocents Abroad* Twain homogenized the local population as "Muslims" and referred to them as "a people by nature and training filthy, brutish, ignorant, unprogressive and superstitious." He also called the Ottoman Empire, "a government whose three graces are tyranny, rapacity and blood." The Arabs of Palestine, according to Twain, were "mired in dirt, rags, and vermin," and "do not mind barbarous ignorance and savagery" (1984, 516, 106, 431, 433).

the Civil War, particularly through Holy Land imagery, while "the Orient" was conceived as a traditional and monolithic culture, it also emerged as a place upon which "Americans" could project a Protestant narrative. Yet by the end of the nineteenth century, the Orient was "remodeled for new consumers" (Edwards 2000, 16). Representations of the Orient at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, where the Orient was constructed "as different and exotic, complete with mosque, bazaar, harem, and belly dancers to titillate Victorian Americans" are indicative of this shift (Little 2002, 13).[29]

Representations of an exotic and exceptionally different and mysterious Orient reinforced dominant discourses that constructed the categories "East" and "West" in the binary terms of civilized Americans versus a belittled, demeaned, and sexualized Orient (Edwards 2000, 16). In the early twentieth century, the Orient was increasingly represented in terms of sexualized imagery in U.S. popular culture. In the entertainment industry in general, and in Hollywood films in particular, the Orient emerged as an exotic site for the fulfillment of Western desires that could not be enacted in "America"—where a restrictive Production Code forbade "scenes of passion" and policed through camouflage, restriction, and the denial of the free flow of energy (Edwards 2000, 39; Shohat and Stam 1994, 158). The "recurrent figure of the veiled woman" emerged as a central representation within mid-twentieth-century U.S. popular culture as a symbol of "mysterious inaccessibility" that has come to "allegorize the availability of Eastern land for Western penetrating knowledge and possession" (Shohat and Stam 1994, 148–49).[30] Also critical within early-twentieth-century Hollywood imagery of the Orient was the "rape and rescue trope," by which virginal white women, and at times dark women, are rescued from dark men. For Shohat and Stam, the 1921 film *The Sheik* exemplifies representations of Arab women who "quite literally fight over their Arab man while the white woman has to be lured, made captive, virtually raped to awaken her repressed desire" (156). The rape-and-rescue fantasy, they argue, "catalyzes the narrative role of the Western liberator as integral to the colonial rescue fantasy. In the case of the Orient, it also carries theological overtones of the inferiority of the polygamous

29. Also see Timothy Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt* (1988) for analyses on representations of Arabs in the context of World Fairs.

30. See Amira Jarmakani (2004) for further analysis of representations of the "veil" within U.S. popular culture.

Islamic world to the Christian world as encapsulated by the celibate priest or the monogamous couple" (156). In this sense, religion coupled with civilizational discourses support the construction of "the Arab" as different from and inferior to white Americans.

Images of Arabs in Hollywood in the early twentieth century were often reified in popular magazines such as *National Geographic* (Steet 2000; Little 2002). According to Little, not only did *National Geographic*, a magazine that reached millions of homes by the late 1920s, represent a heightened binary between "East" and "West," it also represented Muslims as fanatics who are radically anti-Western and misogynistic, and simultaneously exotic, erotic, and mysterious (Steet 2000). Perhaps the trajectory of "the Arab" in U.S. popular culture until the mid–twentieth century set the stage for the contradictory reactions that the first significant group of Arab immigrants encountered upon immigration to the United States in the late 1800s and the gradual intensification of anti-Arab racism in the decades that followed.

CHANGING CONCEPTS OF "RACE" IN THE UNITED STATES

Shifts in the meaning of "race" in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s have had important implications for racial classification on the level of the federal government that "were felt well beyond the arena of demographics into the civic, political and economic life of the country" (Samhan 1999). The 1950s marked a fundamental shift in core anthropological and sociological theories and ideas about "race" that illustrated that race is a social construction and is not scientifically meaningful. Many civil rights scholars and activists who agreed with this position in principle rejected the idea of doing away with the "race" concept altogether.[31] Such concerns reflected the view that while democratic principles adopted as a consequence of the civil rights movement were meant to apply equally to all citizens, racial discrimination obstinately continued. These shifts paralleled the emergence of a general liberal consciousness in the United States that "supported the opinion that racial segregation . . . had no objective

31. Shifts in dominant U.S. meanings of "race" developed in continuity with centuries of resistance against racism and a watershed moment in the fields of anthropology and sociology in which several scholars demonstrated that race cannot be biologically determined but is socially determined and constantly changing (Sanjeck 1994, 6).

scientific basis" (Sanjeck 1994, 7). Yet despite repeated refutations of biological definitions of "race," race and racism have continued to permeate institutionalized structures for organizing difference in the United States. Faye Harrison captured this contradiction between scientific arguments and the realities of racism by stating that while "race" no longer exists, "racism" persists (1995, 47). Harrison argues, "despite its uneven development and varying systematization, racism is characterized by an international hierarchy in which wealth, power and advanced development are associated largely with whiteness or 'honorary whiteness'" (50).

The civil rights movement produced a period of intense conflict in which the "very *meaning* of race was politically contested" (Omi and Winant 1994, 2). Controversies over race during this period opened up new possibilities for exploring racial discrimination (as opposed to biological races) as measurable and institutionalized and embedded in unequal social and economic structures, such as patterns of segregation, rates of income, and university admissions. As principles of nondiscrimination were translated into affirmative action, one approach for advancing the goals of the civil rights movement was to compare the percentage of the population that had access to particular jobs, higher education, or desirable housing. Because statistical proportionality cannot be assessed without a count of how many members of various racial and ethnic groups live in the United States, the census had a central role to play in such efforts. Pointing to the significance of census categories, Helen Samhan explains that "these categories also permeated most record-keeping and application procedures in the public sector, and private sector activity subject to federal state or local statutes to monitor civil rights. Forms used by schools, health professionals, social service agencies and most businesses eventually conformed to the federal standards" (1999, 214–15).

Inspired by the civil rights movement, a new period of racial measurement was institutionalized in the 1950s and 1960s that purported to respond to the persistence of racism. Affirmative action is but one example of policies that relied on racial classification as a mechanism that would guarantee civil rights and equal access to social and economic resources. Samhan argues that "the new impetus for racial classification as a civil rights check transformed dramatically the role of the census, which acquired a political importance that it never had in the past" (1999). According to this later-twentieth-century deployment of "race," racial classification, a tool previously deployed to deny rights, emerged

as a mechanism for measuring the representation of various groups within civil society and their access to social and economic resources. Disproportionate representation implied "a glass ceiling or other racially based barriers to full access that had to be eliminated" (Prewitt 2002).

Since the civil rights era, the U.S. census has continued to rely upon racial classification as a mechanism for counting various populations, producing knowledge about the relationship between particular groups and their access to social and economic resources and monitoring the health and welfare needs of a diverse population. While evaluating the civil rights–based approach to racial discrimination is beyond the scope of this introduction, it is important to note its alleged benefits and drawbacks. Since the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the alleged purpose of deploying civil rights–based categories is to create the "ability to monitor the health and welfare needs of a diverse population, protect civil rights, and attempt to narrow the socioeconomic gaps among the citizenry" (Samhan 1999, 215). Affirmative action reflects the deployment of a civil rights framework. Supporters of affirmative action argue that it rectifies the effects of past discrimination by providing opportunities for groups historically discriminated against. Some opponents (with right-wing, liberal, and even leftist political leanings) have argued that race-based preferential treatment toward "unqualified" racial minorities and women causes "reverse discrimination." Other critics who have defended the continuation of affirmative action have argued that while it has assisted a small percentage of people of color, particularly those from middle- and upper-class backgrounds, economic conditions have increasingly excluded people of color from productive jobs and universities. This position contends that affirmative action alone cannot adequately address the enduring legacies of slavery and colonization and that affirmative action should not replace efforts to create alternatives to government programs and regulations. An alternative, although often overlapping position has been that the use of racial categories to safeguard civil rights often ignores the intersection between racism and colonization and assumes that racial discrimination is a distinct axis of oppression that operates separately from colonialism. Several Native American scholars and activists have argued that racism and colonization are inseparable and that the affirmative action–based approach had the effect of disregarding Native American struggles for racial justice and sovereignty over indigenous land. As Andrea Smith contends, "many Natives would argue that the affirmative action–based paradigm does not apply to them because it collapses Natives into the category of

race while occluding colonialism. For instance, it implies that Natives want citizenship when in fact, some would argue that citizenship has been forced upon them" (2007). Similar debates have been taken up in Arab American studies. Some have argued that Arab American marginalization and exclusion from the national body are the problem and that citizenship and inclusion are the solution. Yet others have contended that many Arabs are "here" because the United States went to war "over there," and therefore ending U.S.-led imperialism should be part of the solution.

Beyond the realm of official government racial classification, government policy and official public discourse on "race" have also been malleable and constantly shifting, depending on the historical and political moment. Omi and Winant explain that the racial minority movements of the 1960s began to diminish in power and that the 1970s brought a period of racial quiescence (1994, 12). They also state that in the 1970s, "while racial oppression had hardly vanished, conflicts over race receded as past reforms were institutionalized" (2). These shifts paralleled new patterns in fields such as anthropology, where "'ethnicity' came to center stage, and the realities of race and racism were pushed aside" (Sanjeck 1994, 8). Although the term "ethnicity" has taken on various meanings in different historical moments, ethnicity paradigms that emerged after the 1960s are rooted in early-twentieth-century critiques of racial biologism (Omi and Winant 1994, 15), which emerged out of the fields of anthropology and sociology. Although early-twentieth-century approaches defined ethnicity in terms of the "result of a group formation process based on culture and descent," later ethnicity theory questioned the validity of primordial notions of identity and argued that concepts such as "culture" and "descent" were social constructs (Omi and Winant 1994, 15). One of the most salient critiques of ethnicity theory is that it is strictly based in the experiences of European (white) immigrants and privileged the experiences of migration, cultural contact, and assimilation, or the incorporation and separation of ethnic minorities, and turns a blind eye toward the historical experiences of minority groups who are classified or treated as nonwhite, for whom experiences of cultural contact and engagements with assimilation and Americanization are not only struggles over culture but are constituted by racism and racial exclusion (Omi and Winant 1994, 15–16). By ignoring institutionalized racial inequality, the ethnicity paradigm of the 1970s promoted a "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" model that assumed that climbing the economic ladder was simply a matter of hard work

and dedication. Furthermore, Omi and Winant argue that in the 1980s, issues of race were revived once again "in the form of a 'backlash' to the political gains of racial minority movements of the past. Conservative popular movements, some academics, and the Reagan administration have joined hands to attack the legacy and logic of earlier movement achievements" (1994). The significance of such movements is that they have the effect of evading the realities of racism and their complicity in racist policies by appealing to the notion of a "colorblind society" (Omi and Winant 1994, 2).

Approaches to Arab American studies that refer to Arab Americans as an "ethnic/cultural" group while ignoring the realities of anti-Arab racism and the structural inequalities that shape Arab American experiences illustrate the limitations of ethnicity theory. Operating simultaneously with the structures of "race" that shape government discourses and practices are those that operate in the context of civil society and popular culture. Several scholars have argued that "concepts of race structure both state and civil society" and that "race continues to shape both identities and institutions in significant ways" (Omi and Winant 1994, vii; Lipsitz 1998). Moreover, many scholars have gone beyond analyzing "race" only in terms of experiences of racial discrimination, exclusion, and marginalization and have focused on how "race" also operates to grant access to social and economic privileges, advantages, and opportunities. This analysis has often emerged within the field of whiteness studies. Writing on "whiteness," George Lipsitz argues that "white supremacy is an equal-opportunity employer; nonwhite people can become active agents of white supremacy as well as passive participants in its hierarchies and rewards" (1998, viii). Whiteness studies have opened up important possibilities for conceptualizing the multiple, contradictory ways that Arab Americans have tended to self-identify vis-à-vis U.S. racial categories. As several essays in this volume illustrate, some Arab Americans have passed as "white," others have not had the privilege of passing, yet others have self-identified according to explicit nonwhite racial/ethnic categories.

ANTI-ARAB RACISM AFTER WORLD WAR II

The period in which the meaning of "race" shifted in the United States was also a period of growing anti-Arab discourses and policies coupled with an escalation in pan-ethnic Arab American political activism. Whereas several scholars use the term "racism" to explain the logic underpinning Arab American marginality

(Salaita 2006; Naber 2000; Stockton 1994; Abraham 1989), others contend that terms such as political exclusion are more accurate for describing the marginalization of Arab Americans after World War II more generally and after September 11 more specifically (see chapter 3 by Andrew Shryock). I use the term anti-Arab racism to locate Arab American marginalization within the context of U.S. histories of immigrant exclusion (e.g., the history of Asian exclusion, anti-Mexican racism, and Japanese internment) in which the racialization of particular immigrants as different than and inferior to whites has relied upon culturalist and nationalist logics that assume that "they" are intrinsically unassimilable and threatening to national security (Naber 2006). I would argue that anti-Arab racism represents a recurring process of the construction of the Other within U.S. liberal politics in which long-term trends of racial exclusion become intensified within moments of crisis in the body politic, as in the contexts of World War II and the aftermath of September 11, 2001. Anti-Arab racism after World War II emerged in an interplay of U.S. military, political, and economic expansion in the Middle East, anti-Arab media representations, and the institutionalization of government policies that specifically target Arabs and Arab Americans in the United States. Since World War II, the proliferation of anti-Arab government policies and perceptions of "the Arab" as nonwhite Others within U.S. popular culture has coincided with the increasing significance of oil as a commodity to the global economy and the United States' expanding interest in military and economic intervention in the Middle East. After 1945, U.S. policy makers and oil companies joined forces in exerting pressure on the Arab world in a political strategy that Douglas Little refers to as "What was best for Exxon and Texaco seemed also what was best for America, and vice versa" (Little 2002, 4). These geopolitical interests set the stage for the 1970s U.S.-Arab oil wars that contributed to the production of the image of the "greedy Arab oil sheikhs" within the United States and the strengthening of the United States' alliance with Israel in geopolitics. At that time, McAlister argues, the United States was vying to consolidate its position of superiority in global politics, particularly in terms of attaining control over the world's oil resources.[32] The U.S.-Arab oil wars took place in the aftermath of the 1960s, when the U.S. government was

32. McAlister refers to four contending forces, or "primary interests," that informed both foreign policy and public discussion of the Middle East: U.S. attempts to achieve control over oil, American support of Israel, religious loyalties, and a strategic position in global politics (2001, 35).

intent on building allies in the Arab region (e.g., Iran and Saudi Arabia) in a two-fold, interconnected struggle against the Soviets in the context of the Cold War, and pan-Arab nationalist regimes under leaders such as Nasser in the Arab world who were connected to the Soviet Union's hegemony in the region. The American conflict with Arab nationalists took shape post-1945 when the U.S. government saw Arab nationalists as similar to the National Liberation Front in the context of Vietnam and supported Israel's attempt to defeat them. Moreover, as U.S. involvements abroad had expanded dramatically, the 1967 Arab-Israeli war signified a turning point in the impact of U.S. involvement in the Arab region on Arab diasporas in the United States. The 1967 war marked the U.S. state's confirmed alliance with Israel as well as an intensification of U.S. military, political, and economic intervention in the Arab region, anti-Arab media representations, and anti-Arab discrimination and harassment within the United States. According to Said (1978), it also marked the intensification of representations of Islam as a signifier of evilness and Otherness, which was exacerbated in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution, when hegemonic discourses on the "Arab Other" in the United States increasingly deployed the assumption that all Arabs are Muslim and that Islam is an inherently backward and uncivilized religion.[33] In the aftermath of the Iranian revolution (post-1979) in particular, the process by which "Islam" had gained an increasingly global appeal as a framework for expressing political sentiments took on local form in the United States. Government policies that were directed at individuals who were associated with a constructed "Arab enemy" came to be directed at a constructed "Arab Muslim" enemy. Thus particularly since the 1970s, government and media discourses on "the Arab" tended to be constituted by a conflation of the categories "Arab" and "Muslim" and a refashioning of European discourses that portrayed Islam as homogenous, uncivilized, and culturally backward, and violently misogynistic toward women.

33. Said argues that throughout the Middle Ages and in the early part of the Renaissance in Europe, "Islam was believed to be a demonic religion of apostasy, blasphemy, and obscurity" and Mohammed was believed to be a false prophet and an agent of the devil (Said 1981, 5). He also points out that since the end of the eighteenth century, Orientalist thinking has reduced Islam to a monolith that belongs to the Orient and is constituted by a "very special hostility and fear" (4) and that for hundreds of years, "only Islam seemed never to have submitted completely to the West; and when, after the dramatic oil-price rises of the early 1970's, the Muslim world seemed once more on the verge of repeating its early conquests, the whole West seemed to shudder" (5).

The 1960s and 1970s inspired among many Arabs and Arab Americans the sense that the state and media had waged a war against them.[34] Arab American activists and scholars responded by establishing several Arab American organizations, many that were pan-ethnic in character, such as the Organization of Arab Students in 1967; the Arab American University Graduates (1968); and the National Association of Arab Americans (1972).[35] In particular, the 1967 Arab-Israeli war ignited an "Arab American awakening."[36] Pan-Arab American activism during this period emerged within a broader context of the civil rights movement and third-world liberation movements in the United States. The following quote by Gary Awad (1981) captures a sentiment that many Arab American activists expressed in the late 1960s and 1970s: "The shock for Arab Americans was not so much the defeat of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in 1967, but the way it was received in the West and especially in the United States, where strong, derogatory racial overtones in the media toward the Arab contributed significantly, for the first time, to a growing political and ethnic awareness in the American Arab community."[37]

From the 1970s to the 1990s, several events, coupled with an increasing convergence between U.S. and Israeli policy, further facilitated the expansion of U.S. control in the Arab world: the 1970s U.S.-Arab oil wars; the 1980s Iranian

34. Community activist Abdeen Jabara, quoted in an *Los Angeles Times* article, expressed a similar view: "In 1967, the view in this country was that the United States had won a war against the dirty Arabs."

35. Other organizations included Najda: Women Concerned about the Middle East (1960); Pal-Aid International (1967); U.S. Organization for Medical and Educational Needs (1961); and the American Arab Association (1961).

36. In the 1970s, a series of newspaper articles on Arab Americans reflected this sense of a "community awakening," including a *Los Angeles Times* article, "Mideast War Spurs Unprecedented Formation of Arab Groups in the U.S." (Nelson 1973). Arab American efforts to counter European and U.S. support for European Jewish settlement in Palestine did not begin in the aftermath of 1967 but have persisted since the turn of the twentieth century (Bawardi 2006).

37. Civil rights lawyer Abdeen Jabara's 1977 Community Day Speech in Dearborn, Michigan, exemplifies this perspective about aniti-Arab attitudes. He states, "These attitudes frequently govern how people act in employing Arab Americans, promoting Arab Americans, renting or selling homes or apartments to Arabs, or in characterizing Arabs in the local media. . . . It was the July 1967 war in the Middle East that had the effect of galvanizing what had been a dormant giant. Second and third generation Arab Americans were confronted with a historic challenge to their self-identification."

revolution; U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1982; the U.S. bombing of Libya in 1986; the 1990s Gulf War; the U.S. bombing of Sudan and Afghanistan in 1998; and continued U.S. support of Israel and the bombing of Iraq.[38] U.S. political, military, and economic expansion in the region paralleled a rise in the institutionalization of government policies and law enforcement that specifically targeted Arabs and Arab Americans. In 1972, Nixon's Operation Boulder marked the beginning in a series of FBI policies that entailed the harassment of individuals of Arab descent in general and Arab students in particular, who were targeted by the state and denied their constitutional rights, specifically those related to free speech. Based on presidential directives, it authorized the FBI to harass individuals of "Arabic speaking descent" with phone calls and visits without evidence of criminal activity, based on the assumption that they might have a relationship with "terrorist activities" in Palestine and Israel (Akram 2002, 5).[39] According to Susan Akram, "Later investigations, both by the press and by organizations in the Arab-American community, confirmed that 'Operation Boulder' was initiated as a result of pressure from Zionist groups both within the U.S. and from Israel to silence Arab-Americans from voicing opposition to U.S. and Israeli policies in the Middle East" (5). Operation Boulder specifically targeted Arabs with U.S. citizenship, resident aliens of Arab descent, non Arab Americans sympathetic to Arab causes, as well as the relatives, neighbors, friends, and employers of Arab individuals (American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee 1986). Also during the 1970s, several government agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Justice Department, and the Immigration Department, carried out a wide-ranging campaign of investigation and surveillance of Arab Americans through tactics such as spying and wiretapping that were ordered from the White House under the guise of uncovering the activities of persons potentially involved in sabotage (Hussaini 1974). A consensus among Arab American activists and scholars is that the purpose of such government policies has been to intimidate, harass, and discourage Arab American resistance to U.S. policies in the Arab world. As Susan Akram put it, "One of the factors with the greatest impact on the targeting of Arabs and Muslims is what might best be termed 'institutionalized racism' in government

38. See Rashid Khalidi (2004) for further analysis of U.S. expansion in the Middle East.

39. Writing on Operation Boulder, Susan Akram argues that, at that period of time, no acts of terrorism conducted by a person of Arab descent had been committed in the U.S. (2002).

and law enforcement, in collaboration with institutions and think-tanks having a specific ideological or foreign policy agenda driven by anti-Arabism" (Akram 2002, 5).

In 1978, Operation Abscam, in which FBI director William Webster had agents pose as rich Arabs and try to bribe politicians and elected officials, sought to create the impression that Arabs are a threat to American politics. In the 1970s, the Department of Energy (DOE) printed thousands of bumper stickers stating: "The Faster You Drive, The Richer They Get . . . Driving 75 Is Sheik; Driving 55 Is Chic" (Shehadeh 2000). The titles of a series of newspaper articles published in the 1970s illustrate a perceived rising anti-Arab sentiment during this period, including a *Los Angeles Times* article, "Mideast War Spurs Unprecedented Formation of Arab Groups in U.S." (Nelson 1973); a *Washington Post* article, "Arab Americans Sue Marriott Corporation Alleging Job Discrimination" (Valente 1977); and a *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* article, entitled, "Arab American Fed Up with Situation Here" (Oct. 28, 1973, 1E). The significance of organized efforts by pro-Israeli groups in shaping public opinion and facilitating the targeting of Arab and Arab American activists and their allies cannot be underestimated. Some pro-Israeli groups have adopted a strategy that seeks to maintain a unified pro-Israel position and to quell criticism of Israeli state policy by demonizing its critics. The myth that any criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic has been integral to these concerted efforts (Marshall 1993). Hatem Hussaini argues that since 1968, several pro-Israeli groups have pressured Congress and the White House to take action against Arabs and Arab Americans critical of Israel (1974, 216).

The case of the L.A. 8 exemplifies the government's deliberate unconstitutional targeting of Arab American activists and the process by which the social construction of "the Arab" as a potential terrorist and the unsubstantiated conflation of Arab American activists and terrorism have legitimized violations of Arab and Arab American rights. The L.A. 8, seven Palestinians and one Kenyan, were targeted for removal, technically a civil proceeding, on grounds that they allegedly had raised money for the PFLP, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, in 1987. The initial charges involved their distribution of *Al-Hadaf,* the PFLP magazine—a publication available in public libraries, on college campuses, and even at the U.S. Library of Congress. Since the beginning of this case, the government admitted none of the L.A. 8 had committed a criminal or terrorist act. The L.A. 8 case epitomizes the

government's deliberate unconstitutional targeting of Arab American activists and the process by which the social construction of "the Arab" as a potential terrorist has legitimized U.S. imperial ambitions in the Arab world and violations of Arab and Arab American rights in the United States. Since January 1987, when the eight were arrested, the case has bounced from immigration court, through federal district courts, up to the U.S. Supreme Court and back again, with side visits to individual immigration status hearings.[40] During the L.A. 8 court proceedings, a Justice Department contingency plan was revealed that provided a blueprint for the mass arrest of ten thousand alien terrorists and undesirable Arabs within the United States.[41] Several scholars and activists have argued that it "is doubtful that the contingency plan and mass arrest of the [L.A. 8] would have occurred if not for the provocation of B'nai Brith's Anti-Defamation League (McDonnel 1987, 7). In this case, the ADL admitted that it provided names of the defendants to the FBI early in 1985, stating that they were distributing "Arab propaganda." According to the ADL, anyone speaking out in support of Palestinians is a terrorist and should be arrested by the FBI and deported by the INS. As ACLU attorney Mark Rosenbaum put it,

40. Peter King (2005) wrote that one event in particular sparked their arrest. "The event—a night of ethnic food, folk dances and political speeches delivered in Arabic—would be attended by an estimated 1,200 men, women and children, most of them immigrants from the Middle East. It had been promoted as a festival to celebrate the 18th anniversary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a Marxist-oriented faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The underlying purpose, organizers said, was to generate donations for 'the homeland,' in particular to provide medical care and schooling in Palestinian refugee camps." According to King, "The charges against the L.A. 8 have been reworked at least three times since, reflecting changes in immigration and anti-terrorism laws, some of which were tailored to be applied retroactively to this case. . . . Two of the eight, Khader Musa Hamide and Michel Ibrahim Shehadeh, are scheduled for trial in immigration court in July of 2005 with the government seeking to deport them under a provision of the PATRIOT Act that forbids giving material support to terrorist organizations."

41. See *Sacramento Bee* (Jan. 24, 1991, cited in Joseph 1999a). Suad Joseph explains that the *Sacramento Bee* carried a story, reproduced in little of the national press. This story reported that U.S. Representative Norman Mineta "pointed to a 1978 contingency plan the FBI and the Immigration and Naturalization Service drew up to detain Arab Americans at a camp in Oakdale, Louisiana, in the event of war with certain Arab states. Mineta said that the plan could still be initiated to 'round up' Arab Americans" (1999a).

"'What the U.S. government is saying to Arabs is Shut Up or Get Out of This Country'" (quoted in McDonnel 1987, 7).[42]

Historical shifts in U.S. imperial ambitions in the Middle East paralleled shifts in corporate media representations of "the Arab." Jack Shaheen's research has demonstrated that since the 1970s, the corporate media has increasingly portrayed persons associated with the category "Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim" as not only culturally backward, uncivilized, exotic, or potentially dangerous, but also as potential enemies of the U.S. nation (1984, 2001). For example, the 1970s brought images of rich oil sheikhs threatening the U.S. economy alongside images of harems and belly dancers and the 1980s brought cartoons that portrayed Palestinians as "rats malevolently entering a house or caught in a trap, or as fleas infesting a region and being exterminated" (Stockton 1994, 133). The 1980s and 1990s brought an intensification of images of Arab terrorists, as in the films *True Lies* (1994), *The Siege* (1998), *Back to the Future* (1985); and *GI Jane* (1988). Elsewhere, I have argued that three media types have reinforced the idea of an "Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim" enemy of the nation (Naber 2000). The first media type associates a constructed image of "Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim" men with violent misogyny. The second media type associates "Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim" women with passivity and victimhood in comparison to white American women, who are idealized to represent equality, democracy, and justice. The third media type is what Therese Saliba refers to as the "absent Arab women" (1994), which juxtaposes excessively patriarchal Arab men and white women who were once victimized by Arab men—but are now "free," leaving Arab women completely absent from the scene. These media types illustrate the significance of gender to media representations that operate to legitimize the binary "us vs. them"/"Americans vs. Arabs" that proliferates within dominant U.S. discourses.

President Clinton's counterterrorism bill of 1994 further legitimized the federal government's targeting of Arabs in the United States. This bill called for the federal government's deportation of noncitizens based on evidence known only to the government. In some cases, defendants and defense attorneys did not receive a summary of the evidence. A 1998 *New York Times* article stated that there were more than two dozen immigrants around the country who were

42. Also see Hasso (1987) for more information on the implications of this case for Arab Americans.

facing deportation or exclusion from the United States largely on the basis of secret evidence that they were not permitted to see and that came from people who were unidentified. The article added that all twenty-five men accused in these cases are of Arab descent or are Muslims (Smothers 1998).

The history of anti-Arab hate crimes documented by several Arab American organizations illustrates the ways in which popular cultural discourses have taken on local form in the public sphere (ADC 1992). The unsettled murder of Alex Odeh, the West Coast regional director of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) in 1986, when a pipe bomb exploded as he unlocked and opened his office door, and the 1986 murder of Ismail al-Faruqi, a Palestinian American Islamic scholar who was outspoken in his views about Palestine, and his wife, Lois Lamya al-Faruqi (ADC 1986), exemplify the multiple registers through which anti-Arab racism has operated.

THE AFTERMATH OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

The aftermath of the September 11 attacks against the Pentagon and the World Trade Center consolidated the conflation of the categories "Arab," "Middle Eastern," and "Muslim" and the notion of an "Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim" enemy of the nation (Volpp 2003). Right-wing, neoconservative think tanks coupled with Washington-based opinion and policy makers have covered up historical and political realities such as the United States' imperial ambitions in the Middle East by constructing the "war on terror" as a "clash of civilizations" that "will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world" (Said 2002, 571). In this sense, Americans are constructed to be on the side of good and persons perceived to be "Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim" (and/or South Asian) are positioned on the side of evil.

Discourses such as the "clash of civilizations" have justified U.S.-led war in Muslim majority countries and the racial profiling, detentions, deportations, and torture of Arabs and Arab Americans (as well as other individuals perceived to be associated with "potential terrorists") without evidence of criminal activity. According to Louise Cainkar, "the US government's domestic legislative, administrative, and judicial measures implemented after September 11th have included mass arrests, secret and indefinite detentions, prolonged detention of 'material witnesses,' closed hearings and use of secret evidence, government eavesdropping

on attorney client conversations, FBI home and work visits, wiretapping, seizures of property, removals of aliens with technical visa violations, and mandatory special registration" (2003, 1). Cainkar adds that "at least 100,000 Arabs and Muslims living in the United States have personally experienced one of these measures" and that "of thirty-seven known US government security initiatives . . . twenty five either explicitly or implicitly target Arabs and Muslims in the United States" (1).

The case of Maher Hawash is an acute example of the intensified institutionalization of anti-Arab violence in the United States after 9/11. Hawash is a U.S. citizen originally from Palestine. On March 20, 2003, FBI agents and members of the Portland Joint Terrorism Task Force arrested him in the parking lot at Intel Corporation, where he worked, under the material witness law, a law the U.S. Department of Justice has deliberately used to secure the indefinite incarceration of persons it planned to interrogate as potential terrorist suspects without probable cause after September 11 (ACLU 2003). According to the ACLU, at least seventy Muslim men have been arrested based on this law "for little more than attending the same mosque as a September 11 hijacker or owning a box-cutter." Federal agents have arrested these men at gunpoint, held them in solitary confinement, and subjected them to the harsh and degrading conditions of high-security prisons where they have been verbally harassed and in several cases, physically abused. In cases such as these, federal government discourses have rendered men perceived to be Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim (and/or South Asian) as "potential terrorists."

The difference between the 1914 case of George Dow (who was marked as nonwhite and eventually became "white") and the 2003 case of Maher Hawash (a U.S. citizen who eventually became "a potential terrorist") represents the process by which state discourses have transformed "the Arab" over time, from proximity to whiteness to a position of heightened Otherness. While this trajectory in no way captures the experiences of *all* Arabs living in the United States during the early years or more recently, it reflects a pattern within dominant U.S. discourses such as corporate media and federal government discourse, and the process by which the "Arab," who was once positioned as white, but not quite, has come to signify Otherness more than ever before. Whether and to what extent the framework of "race" or "racism" is useful for explaining this trajectory is one of the questions explored in this book.

THE IDEA to develop this project emerged after we attended the annual meetings of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) in 2002. Historically, Middle East studies have been dominated by an area-studies approach that constructs an undeniable link between seemingly fixed and authentic cultural patterns, peoples, and specific places of origin and elides the histories and experiences of communities stretched across national borders (Lavie and Swedenburg 1996, 1).[43] Reproducing an area-studies logic, MESA's agenda and conference programs have historically positioned discussions on Arab diasporas in general, and Arab Americans in particular, as marginal to "real" Middle East studies. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, however, the Bush administration's unrelenting repetition of the concept of absolutely evil terrorists who know no borders or boundaries and are to be found anywhere and everywhere in the world required Middle East studies to take the fluidity of national boundaries seriously. At the MESA 2002 meetings, the number of papers presented on Arab American issues was significantly greater than in previous years. Moreover, while dominant trends within Arab American studies before September 11 tended to avoid theorizations of the significance of "race" to Arab Americans, several papers at MESA's 2002 meetings highlighted the multiple ways that Arab Americans have engaged with "race." This shift within Arab American studies paralleled the disproportionate increase in hate crimes and U.S. government violence against Arab immigrants and Arab Americans (and persons perceived to be Muslim) after September 11. This book was inspired by previous scholarship on "race" within Arab American studies and a panel organized by Sara Gualtieri entitled, "Arab American Engagements with Race" at the MESA 2002 meeting. It seeks to expand the possibilities for comparative research and teaching on "race" that take the specificities of Arab American histories and experiences seriously and to place research on Arab homelands into conversation with research about Arab diasporas. We intentionally included diverse perspectives to provide readers with a glimpse into some of the central debates on "race" that we have encountered within Arab American studies.

43. See Moallem (2005, 16–20) and Ella Shohat (2001) for a critique of Middle East studies from a transnational feminist post-colonial studies perspective. Also see Howell and Shryock (2003) for an analysis of the limitations of transnational identity among Arab Americans after September 11.

Focusing on various historical moments and social locations, this book puts a variety of analytical possibilities on the relevance of racial formation theory to Arab American studies into conversation with each other and seeks to open up more spaces for future research and discussion in this area. One of the themes that our contributors take up involves whether and in what ways "race" matters (or does not matter) to conceptualizations of Arab immigrant exclusion and Arab American marginality. Contributors writing on this theme agree that Arabs and Arab Americans have been increasingly marginalized since 9/11, yet they theorize the significance of "race" to this trajectory differently.

Louise Cainkar, in her essay, "Thinking Outside the Box," contends that "the exclusion of Arabs in the United States is a racial project with global goals." She argues that "Arab inferiority has been constructed and sold to the American public using essentialist constructions of human difference in order to manufacture public consent for global policies." Cainkar's analysis is based on ethnographic research on the impact of 9/11 on Arabs and Muslims in Chicago. Her research demonstrates a relationship between racialization and the imposition of collective guilt on Arabs and Muslims and the impact of racialization on the process of self-identification among Arab and Muslim interviewees.

Andrew Shryock's essay, "The Moral Analogies of Race," is based on findings generated by the Detroit Arab American Study (DAAS), a face-to-face survey of more than a thousand Arabs and Chaldeans. He effects a "tactical retreat from the domain of activist rhetoric and critical race theory" on the grounds that the language of "race" does not capture the reality that "almost all government policy pertaining to Arabs in the United States, be it positive, neutral, or negative, is based on identifications rooted in nationality, religion, institutional affiliations, and a set of complex (usually stereotypical and fantastic) assumptions about the political behaviors of people who can be identified in these ways." He adds that the language of race is ahead of, behind, or at odds with trends prevalent "in the [Arab American] community."

Amaney Jamal's essay, "Civil Liberties and the Otherization of Arab and Muslim Americans," also uses data gathered in the Detroit Arab American Study. From her perspective, the racialization of Arab Americans involves an interplay between domestic politics and geopolitical realities that relationally justify arguments for denying Arabs and Muslims in the United States their civil rights. She adds that in this case, racism deploys an "us" versus "them" logic that

transcends racism based on phenotype toward a racism based on the representations of culture and values as inherently inferior and, ultimately, evil.

Another theme our contributors explore is the relationship between Arab American studies, ethnic studies, and whiteness studies. Several authors destabilize the dichotomy often reproduced within Arab American studies that assumes that either Arab Americans are assimilable ethnics for whom "race" does not matter or Arab Americans are vulnerable to racism and therefore "race" matters.

Using a "critical whiteness framework," which places whiteness at the forefront of her analysis, Sawsan Abdulrahim, in her essay "'Whiteness' and the Arab Immigrant Experience," argues that whether Arab Americans identify as white or nonwhite, they are engaging in racial formation. Focusing on the local contexts of Detroit and Dearborn, Michigan, she investigates how Arab immigrants engage with whiteness. For Abdulrahim, this approach requires abandoning the "race-neutral language of assimilation" and "resisting the tendency to situate Arab Americans solely as racialized victims."

Sarah Gualtieri, in "Strange Fruit?" also explores the significance of whiteness to Arab American studies through a historical interrogation of Syrian-Arab whiteness at the beginning of the twentieth century. She focuses specifically on the lynching of Syrian immigrant N. G. Romey in 1929 and contends that on the one hand, Arab American identification with whiteness in the early years provided them the privilege of distinguishing themselves from blacks and Asian Americans. On the other hand, she explains, it did not settle the question of Arab American racial status because whiteness, for Arab Americans, was unstable and ambiguous at best.

In "Grandmothers, Grape Leaves, and Kahlil Gibran," Michelle Hartman traces discourses on race and ethnicity within three leading Arab American anthologies. She argues that these anthologies explicitly or implicitly locate themselves in relation to one of three canons: the "mainstream American canon," largely white to this day, consisting of figures like Whitman, Longfellow and Frost; other racialized or "ethnic" literatures such as African American, Latino, and Native American; and the Arabic literary canon, including such lionized figures as Mahmoud Darwish, Taha Hussain, and Nazik al-Mala'ika.

The theme of the racialization of religion is also central to this book. Several contributions illustrate that conceptualizing Arab American engagements with "race" necessitates an analysis of the intersections between race and religion.

For Evelyn Alsultany, in "The Prime-time Plight of the Arab Muslim American after 9/11," the conflation of the categories Arab, Muslim, and terrorist is a racial configuration in that it assigns derogatory meaning to particular bodies distinguished by ethnicity, nationality, biology, or geography, as well as legitimizing discourses. Alsultany examines the ways in which TV dramas that portray Arab Americans after 9/11 participate in the process of legitimizing racism against Arabs through story lines that support exceptionalism. It is through this process that the categories Arab and terrorist came to be conflated, consolidated, and interchangeable. Thus racism toward Arabs and Muslims is configured as legitimate and racism toward other groups illegitimate.

In "Arab Americans and Muslim Americans in the *New York Times*," Suad Joseph, Benjamin D'Harlingue, and Alvin Ka Hin Wong examine the racializing effects of representations of Arab Americans in the *New York Times* in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. They argue that racialization entails a process by which Arabs and Muslims are represented in "collective," essentialized identities that are characterized by intersections of race, religion, and nation in ways that are mutually constitutive. According to Joseph, D'Harlingue, and Ka Hin Wong, these intersections produce "a thin veil separating the hearts and heartbeats of Arab and Muslim Americans from globalized Islamic fanaticism and terrorism, making Arab Americans and Muslim Americans high-risk citizens and subtly justifying indiscriminate violation of their civil rights."

My essay, "Look, Mohammed the Terrorist Is Coming!" is based on ethnographic research on the impact of the aftermath of 9/11 on Arab Americans in San Francisco, California. I argue that federal government discourses and policies on the "domestic war on terror" have constituted particular persons as enemies within the nation. Yet at the same time, a wide range of identities have been associated with terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism, including Arab Christians, Iranian Jews, Latinos/as, and Filipinos/as, among others, illustrating that dominant U.S. discourses on "Islam" and "Muslims" are not only malleable and fluid but are arbitrary, fictional, and imaginary at best. I contend that the post-9/11 backlash has been characterized by an intersection between two racial logics, cultural racism and nation-based racism. I also call for an intersectional approach to the study of anti-Arab racism that takes the linkages between multiple axes of oppression such as class, gender, and sexuality seriously.

Jen'nan Ghazal Read, in "Discrimination and Identity in a Post-9/11 Era," compares the racial and ethnic identities of Muslims and Christians and their

experiences of discrimination after 9/11. She argues that despite the varieties of racial identifications among Arab American Christians and Muslims, Arab American Muslims are more likely to experience racial discrimination. Her data are derived from a survey questionnaire she administered to 355 Arab American congregants at an Arab church and an Arab mosque in central Texas in 2002.

SIX YEARS have passed since the attacks of September 11, 2001. Although the Bush administration has lost much of its credibility in the context of the disastrous war on Iraq, the endless "war on terror"—characterized, in part, by an intensification of anti-Arab/anti-Muslim (and anti-South Asian) racism and acts of hatred and violence in the public sphere—continues to expand. By opening up new conversations on Arab American engagements with whiteness, racialization, immigration, and citizenship, we hope this book will also contribute to expanding the possibilities for social justice and transformation during these times of enduring violence and war. While many of the contributors take up the issue of "race" and racism out of a shared sense of concern and urgency regarding the realities of the post-9/11 environment, we do not share a consensus on whether and to what extent the targeting of Arabs and Arab Americans can and should be referred to as a form of "racism." Some argue that "race" is a useful concept for conceptualizing Arab and Arab American experiences of marginalization and discrimination, and they illustrate that racism can be signified by multiple, shifting, and overlapping axes of difference, such as culture, religion, or nation, depending on the context. Others contend that "race" is not the appropriate framework for understanding this experience at all.

Several contributors point to the significance of "race" as a framework for conceptualizing not only Arab and Arab American experiences of marginalization, but also Arab and Arab American experiences vis-à-vis whiteness and the social and economic privileges associated with whiteness. In placing Arab American studies in conversation with the field of whiteness studies, these authors illustrate that "race" does not only operate to structure anti-Arab discrimination, exclusion, or marginalization but also provides many Arabs and Arab Americans with the "rewards of whiteness" (Lipsitz 1998, 4), including access to social and economic privileges and opportunities. Moreover, the essays in this book privilege different (yet often overlapping) sites of analysis, ranging from a focus on state policies and the reproduction of official state discourses in the

public sphere to a focus on the corporate media and the realm of subjective, individual engagements with "race." The range of viewpoints expressed in this book are shaped in part by the different ways in which each author conceptualizes the concepts of "race" and "racism" and the different theoretical lenses about "race" through which we see the world. In this sense, this book presents multiple approaches to and conclusions about "race," and "race" reemerges as a site of contestation where no one has the final word.