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**The Acculturation of Arab Americans in USA post 9/11**

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Requirements for the Master Degree in Culture and Civilizations

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my brothers and sister and most to my dear parents. My special thanks go to my friends whom I consider my second family.

I would like also to dedicate this work to my secondary school substitute English teacher who did not hesitate to underestimate my abilities as a student and who eventually made me what I am today.

To the soul of Doctor Zaim...

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## **Abstract**

The dissertation intends to explore the concept of acculturation in relation to Arab Americans in USA post 9/11. On the one hand, the present study sheds lights on the concepts of “Arab” and “Islam”. The research focuses on acculturation theoretical perspectives; its definition, strategies, models, and acculturative stress. On the other hand, the study investigates the concept of discrimination and stereotypes in relation to acculturation and acculturative stress. The study probes the questions of acculturation of Arab Americans in USA post 9/11. US population, media, and politicians’ discrimination against Arab Americans further marginalize them from the US society. Bush’s administration violates the US constitution and creates policies directed against Arab Americans, most of which targeted Arab Muslim Americans. Bush’s administration treats Arab Americans as an inferior minority stripping them from their rights as US citizens. The discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Americans continue after Bush’s administration and remain an integrated part in US society post 9/11.

## ملخص

يعنى هذا البحث بدراسة مفهوم التثقيف و علاقته بالأمريكيين العرب بعد تفجيرات الحادي عشر من ايول سبتمبر. من جهة، هذه الدراسة تسلط الضوء على مفهوم "العروبة" و "الإسلام". البحث على الجانب النظري للتثقيف، تعريفه، استراتيجياته، نماذجه بالإضافة إلى الضغط التثقيفي. من جهة أخرى، الدراسة تقوم بالتحقيق في مفهوم التمييز و النمطية و علاقته بالتثقيف و الضغط التثقيفي. هذه الدراسة تستقصي الأسئلة المتعلقة بتثقيف الأمريكيين العرب في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بعد أحداث الحادي عشر من ايول سبتمبر. التمييز و النمطية من طرف الشعب الأمريكي، وسائل إعلامه و سياستها الذين استهدفوا الأمريكيين العرب و ساهموا في تهميش هذه الفئة من المجتمع الأمريكي. إدارة الرئيس بوش انتهكت الدستور الأمريكي و أصدرت سياسات مجحفة ضد الأمريكيين العرب، اغلبها استهدفت الأمريكيين العرب المسلمين. إدارة الرئيس بوش عاملت الأمريكيين العرب كأقلية دنيا في المجتمع الأمريكي، حيث جردتهم من حقوقهم كمواطنين أمريكيين. التمييز و النمطية ضد الأمريكيين العرب تواصلت بعد إدارة بوش و تبقى جزء لا يتجزأ من المجتمع الأمريكي، في فترة ما بعد أحداث الحادي عشر من ايول سبتمبر.

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## Introduction

The US is the target of many immigrants to achieve their dreams. The country represents a golden opportunity for comers and attracts different ethnic groups of immigrants to settle in. The US promises all comers to live a more comfortable life, fair, and equal regardless of their ethnicities and culture. Arabs came to the United States for the first time in 19<sup>th</sup> century in sake of better life. Arabs came from several countries in different periods of time. Most of them suffered from social, economic, or religious difficulties that led them to willingly or unwillingly immigrate to the US.

The acceptance of cultural diversity attracts Arabs to the nation. Consequently, Arabs aimed at bringing their unique culture and traditions to their new dream land. Acculturation can occur as a result of a direct contact between Arabs' culture and the American counterpart. Thus, acculturation is an inevitable process that Arab Americans should be a subject to. Acculturation per se is an important field of study; it has different strategies that determine the success of the process. The success of Acculturation is connected with several factors. One of these factors is discrimination and stereotypes. Both factors represent the negative side of acculturation causing acculturative stress to the targeted group. Mental health issues function as reoccurring outcome of acculturative stress. Discrimination, stereotypes, and acculturative stress highly affect the acculturation process.

The 9/11 attacks represent a significant date to US. The attacks by Al Queda are one of the most unexpected incidents in recent history. The attacks led to more than 3000 casualties. The Bush administration reacted impulsively against few Arab countries and extended its power to include particular categories of US citizens in its global war on terror.

US media has also promoted Anti-Arab discourse neglecting Arab Americans' feelings and rights as US citizens. The discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Americans reached

overwhelming levels after 9/11 attacks. Arab Americans' experience in US post 9/11 was full of discrimination and stereotypes that were promoted by both US politicians and media.

The research paper studies one of the most controversial cultural topics, the acculturation of Arab Americans in US post 9/11. To further explore the concept of acculturation, a case study of Arab Americans is to be analyzed deeply in respect to time frame of 9/11 attacks. The purpose behind the research is to investigate who are Arab Americans? Why Arab Americans are a subject of acculturation? What type of acculturation it is? And what hinders Arab Americans from being fully acculturated to the US society? Furthermore, the research digs deeply to identify the factors that led to Arab American acculturation in post 9/11 era. The dissertation aims to evaluate the outcomes of Arab Americans' acculturation in US.

The concept of acculturation of minor groups in US has been a subject of many researchers over the years. It represents one of the most debatable issues in American cultural studies. The significance of this master research is to question and investigate the acculturation concept in US. In addition, the research provides authentic information about real reasons and objectives behind acculturation of Arab Americans post 9/11.

The study profoundly examines the controversial issue of Arab American acculturation in US post 9/11. To investigate the issue, several questions are to be asked: Who are Arabs? Where did they come from? Are all Arabs Muslims? Why did they come to US? What is acculturation? What are acculturation strategies? What is acculturative stress? What is the relationship between acculturation and discrimination? What is the relationship between acculturative stress and discrimination? How 9/11 attacks affected Arab Americans in US? Were Arab Americans acculturated to US after 9/11? Why Arab Americans were/ not acculturated to US after 9/11? Did the acculturation process succeed? What was the result of Arab American acculturation in US?

The research examines the concept of acculturation in US taking into account the case of Arab Americans. It relies on qualitative research method to go deep into issues of interest providing rich description and explanation of acculturation of Arab Americans in US post 9/11. It aims at examining the concept of acculturation in relation to Arab Americans in the period following 9/11 attacks. To echo hostility against Arab Americans, a case study is important for more insights on acculturation phenomenon. The research data is collected from various authentic sources made by different researchers who are interested in the American cultural studies. In this context, the analytic qualitative method is used in order to identify the effects of 9/11 on the acculturation of Arab Americans in US.

The study aims at evaluating the effects of 9/11 attacks on Arab Americans in US. It focuses on analyzing the concept of “Arab” and “Muslim” and identifying the differences between them. Also, the paper introduces the early Arab culture and Arabs’ immigration waves. Each wave has its own timeframe and causes that led Arabs to come to US. Furthermore, the dissertation introduces the concept of acculturation, its strategies, models, and acculturative stress, as well as, identifying the relationship between acculturation, acculturative stress, and discrimination. Equally, the study attempts to discover the role of politicians and media in reshaping the cultural balance after 9/11.

## Chapter One

### Background of Arab Americans in USA

In this introductory chapter, a brief overview of Arab American in USA is provided. The chapter provides general information about the concept of Arab and its definition; identifying the Arab countries and some of their characteristics and demonstrating the early Arab culture. Also, the chapter analyses the misconception between Arab and Muslim; a description of both terms would be defined in order to distinguish the meaning of the two terms.

Arabs came to US in different periods and under different circumstances. Arabs' immigration to US has been an active process since the nation's creation. However, the study covers Arabs' immigration to US from 1880s till the present day. This period is divided into three waves of immigration. Each Arabs' immigration wave is explained according to its timeframe. Despite the fact that Arabs who immigrated to US; shared the same ethnicity, they did not share the same motives that made them arrive to US. The three waves of Arab immigration to US were unique on their own way, consequently, a wide explanation of each immigration wave is required to understand better the issue in hand.

Arabs' immigration waves were not just a result of a deliberate immigration, at least not for most of them. Arabs who came to US had different reasons behind their arrival to the nation. The reasons of immigrations differ according to the Waves of immigration. To identify whether Arab immigrants deliberately or compulsory came to US, several causes of immigration are deeply discussed.

#### 1.1. Arab's History and Origins

Historically, Arabs originate from the Arabian Peninsula; an area that is located in the Southwest Asia at the junction of Africa and Asia (New World Encyclopedia). The Arabian Peninsula consisted of countries such as: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United

Arab Emirates and Yemen. The hot and cruel climate forced the population to be actively travelling for water and food sources (Barakat). As a result, most Arabs settled near water sources or travelled back and forth in the desert. The term “Arab” has been commonly misunderstood and misinterpreted.

### 1.1.1. The Concept of “Arabic”

The word “Arab” is continuously a subject to false interpretation. The term “Arabic” signifies cultural and linguistic characteristics including countries where the primary language is Arabic (Naff). The Arabic language has 2 forms; classical and colloquial. The classic Arabic is used as a formal language used by media in all Arab League countries as well as the language of Quran. While colloquial is a dialect which differs from one area to another (Nashwan 9). Despite the fact that all Arab countries speak Arabic language, they do not speak the same form. The form of language differs according to the situation and even country. Arabic speaking countries, from Middle East to North Africa, are referred to as Arab world or Arab league. The list of countries includes: Lebanon, Iraq, Morocco, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and The United Arab of Emirates (Brittingham and de la Cruz). Arab League countries are situated in two continents as illustrated in the map.

Map of Arab League Members



Source: <http://thumbs.dreamstime.com/z/arab-league-map-surroundings-28727740.jpg>

The Arab world has a large number of inhabitants. The total population across all countries of the Arab World has reached 423 million (World Population Review). In Egypt, the most populated Arab country, population is estimated by 90 million inhabitants. By contrast, Comoros Island has the least amount of population by 795,000 inhabitants. According to World Population Reviews, the Arab world countries cover an area of 5 million square miles. The 2019 statistics show that Algeria covers 919,595 square miles, being the largest Arab country. Bahrain has the smallest area, covering only 293 square miles (World Population Review). The numbers show that the Arab world is diverse especially in terms of population and covered area.

### **1.1.2. The Early Arab Culture**

The Arab culture has many characteristics; Arabs are well-known for having unique cuisines. In the Middle East, they are famous for using spicy food, while in Mediterranean countries; they are famous for using mild food (Nashwan 9). The variety in preferable food shows the various characteristics of each Arab country. Each country has its own food that differs from others. Equally, Arabs are known for being artistic especially when it comes to music. Arabs used poetry as an element to express music (Barakat 25). Poetry and the art of playing with words was a popular craft that early Arabs perfected and used as music. As for clothing, Arabs wear diverse collections of clothing depending on the area, the weather, and religion.

Most Middle East countries wear unique piece of clothing. Generally speaking, for men, they wear long white robe with colored headscarf. As for women, they wear Hijab, Abayah or Jilbob (Arab Cultural Awareness...). Arab countries do not strictly wear these unique cloths, they also wear jeans, T-shirts, or even follow fashion trends much like most people in the world.

### **1.1.3. Arab and Islam Misconception**

Islam is not a synonym to Arab. Before the emergence of Islam in 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D, Arabs were worshipping idols that they made and trade. After the Battle of Bad 624 A.D, Arabs started to spread Islam around the world through military or political tools (Hourani). After the emergence of Islam, Arabs focused on spreading the religion across the world. Arabs used both military and political means in order to promote Islam. The introduction to Islam for these non-Arab people led to a common confusion. Since a lot of people commonly mistake the concepts of “Muslim” and “Arab”. For instance, Berbers, from North African countries, are different from Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula.

Berbers’ conversion to Islam does not make them Arabs. Similar patterns are applicable to citizens of countries such as Turkey, Afghanistan, and Iran. These countries do not belong to the Arab League, consequently, their inhabitants are not considered as Arabs (Helms 7). An Arab does not necessarily mean a Muslim for Islam is not the only practiced religion by Arabs; Christianity, Judaism, and Druze, are among other religions practiced in the area (Naber). There is a strong misconception about Arabs and Islam; the two terms often are used interchangeably. However, being Arab does not necessarily mean being Muslim and vice versa.

The vast majority of Arab countries follow the instructions of Islam that were passed on by Prophet Mohamed. However, this does not mean that all Arab countries follow the exact same set of Islamic instructions. Sunni people follow the instructions of the Prophet Mohamed and his successors in Caliphate, while Shia people pursue the instructions of the Prophet Mohamed and exclusively his family after his death. The split between Sunni and Shia was made after the Prophet’s death 632 A.D (Shuster). A split occurred after the death of Prophet Mohamed led to the emergence of two Muslim parties: Shia and Sunni. The religious

diversity varies from one Arab country to another, despite the fact that most Shia and Sunni share the same religion of Islam.

Being a Muslim does not mean being an Arab. In fact, Arabs account for 18% of all Muslims (Jackson). Also, almost 10% of Arabs are not Muslims but rather Christians or members of other faiths (Abudabbeh). In the same geographic area, there are Arabs from different religions that practice their religions freely within the Arab world. The peaceful coexistence of Arab Muslims and other religions is the best example to prove that Arab Muslims are far from internal conflicts and disputes.

## **1.2. Arab Americans' Arrival to USA**

Arabs arrived to the USA from different geographical areas carrying different religious, cultural, and social circumstances. The American dream was the main catalyst of Arabs. For this sake, various waves of immigrants came to the United States. Each of these waves had its own unique background and circumstances. Arabs came from all over the 22 Arab League countries either willingly or unwillingly. Most of them wanted to find better life conditions that they could not get in their homelands (Ferguson). Arabs arrived to US aiming to ameliorate their lives conditions and achieve more stability in the newly formed country.

### **1.2.1. Waves of Arabs' Immigration**

Arab immigrants came to US throughout different periods in history. Several Arab immigration waves have been classified by researchers. However, the most prominent classification of Arab Immigration waves to US includes three waves. The classification of Arab immigrations waves takes into consideration the different historical events and immigration policies that took place throughout the years

#### **1.2.1.1. First Wave (1880s – 1924)**

The first wave of Arab immigrants to the US is dated back to 1880s. The list of countries includes Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan. At that time, Arabs were not seen as a



distinctive unique group, they were introduced as immigrants from “Turkey in Asia” (Hitti). This inclusion was due to the fact that Ottoman Empire was a recognized ethnic group. The Ottoman Empire did not just consist of Turkish ethnicities; it also, included Mediterranean, Greek, Armenian, and Arabs who were combined into one category (Suleiman). The diversity in ethnicities of the Turks generated an even more diverse multiethnic Arab community.

During this period, the majority of Arab immigrants to the US were Christians who came from Great Syria. The latter, includes countries like Syria, Lebanon, parts of Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia. The first Christian comers did not want to settle in the USA; they wanted to immigrate to the country and collect money to eventually return back home (Hitti). Despite the fact that early Arab immigrants did not plan to stay in USA, they enjoyed life there. They were fascinated by the lifestyle in USA and their appreciations were interpreted in their constant writings to their families. First wave immigrants’ writings about extraordinary life in USA made more Arabs interested in immigrating to the US.

At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, early attempts of Arab women immigration emerged. Single Arab women wanted to immigrate to the US in order to live adventurous life far from the hard life in their homelands (Kayyali). Female Arabs who came to the US at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were single women who wanted to freely live in US away from the tough life they had in their home countries. Women rushed to get a husband and to settle down in the country leading Arab immigrants men to leave shared houses with their fellow colleagues, and instead, living with their wives (Kayyali). Arab Women wanted to settle down in US to marry Arab men there. However, Arab men were not fully independent; they shared houses with their colleagues, as a result, Arab immigrants’ men were forced to move on from shared houses and get new house for their women.

In this wave of immigration, Arab Christians’ number was overwhelmingly higher than that of Muslims. The number of Arab Muslim immigrants, along with fewer Druze, made

only 5% of the total Arab immigrants' population in USA. As for Christians, they were the vast majority of Arab immigrants in US with 95% (Haddad, *The Development of Arab-American Identity*). USA started to build more churches so that Christian immigrants practice their religion freely in the country. Christians were more welcome to come to the US, unlike Muslims, who were uncertain of their settlement in the country. They feared losing their culture and not being able to practice Islam properly.

This concern slowly faded away, after Muslims started to build mosques and use them as a tool to preserve their culture and religion. Both Muslim and Christian Arabs built mosques and churches near each other, as neighbors, displaying a high level of harmony in the Arab American community (Elkholy). Arab Muslims and Christians lived in solidarity and worked collaboratively together to create a unified Arab American community.

#### **1.2.1.2. Second Wave (1925-1965)**

In the second wave, the number of Arab immigrants coming to US decreased. The immigration process slowed down in the US after Congress passed series of laws to limit the number of immigrants from non-Western and non-Northern European countries (Naff). The laws that were adapted by US Congress dropped the number of Arab immigrants. Despite limiting the overall number of immigrants coming to the US, wives and children continued to join their family members in the country (Naff). Barriers imposed on Arab immigration to US did not affect wives and children.

The post World War I timeframe changed the views of Arab immigrants to US in many ways. Early Arab immigrants could not return to their homelands since most of their countries were divided (Jaradat 29). They felt that they had no homes to return to, especially after the major changes in geographical, political, and social standards that their homelands were subject to. Furthermore, laws restricting immigration to the US made Arab immigrants afraid of getting back to the US. Unlike early Arab immigrants, the second wave of Arab immigrants

was more open to assimilation in the US society (Jaradat 30). The political tension in their homelands, as well as immigration quota laws made Second Wave of Arab immigrants more assimilated to US culture and lifestyle.

Second Wave of Arab immigrants were made up from different nationalities. People from Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Egypt, and fewer from Jordan presented the majority or Arab immigrants during the Second Wave of Arabs' immigration to the US (Orfalea). The US Congress passed several immigration acts to decrease the number of Arab immigrants entering the country. These acts, however, excluded Palestinians. Despite the restrictions of immigrations that occurred in US during post World War I, there was a change in the percentages of religious affiliation among Arab immigrants.

Contrary to the First Wave, the Second Wave of Arab immigrants was mostly made of Muslim intellectuals, professors, doctors, poets, and highly educated students who came to the US in order to finish their studies at American universities (Jaradat 30). Second wave Arab immigrants were well-educated and had impressive professions. They came to US on a mission to finish their education in US universities. However, most of those students chose to stay in the US instead of returning to their homelands. A large number of Second Wave Arab immigrants were politically active particularly during the campaigns against US recognition of Israeli State (Haddad, "The Development of Arab-American Identity"). They stood together as a unit to prevent the creation of Israeli state. It is understandable since Palestinians represented the majority of Arab immigrants to US at this era. All the Arab immigrants collaborated not only to show support to their fellow Palestinians but to show their solidarity with Egypt and Iraq's journey to overthrow their unjust monarchies as well.

### **1.2.1.3. Third Wave (1965-Present Day)**

The Third Wave of Arab immigrants to the US is not just the longest period compared to the previous two waves; it is also the most intriguing phase. There are important differences

between Second and Third Wave migrants. On one hand, both Second and Third Waves shared similar educational levels, professional trainings, and skills. On the other hand, religious affiliations of the Third Wave differed from other waves (Orfalea). Third Wave of Arab immigration to US was special because it had a majority of distinctive religious groups rather than a single religion.

The Third Wave is 13 times larger than the Second Wave (Orfalea). This difference in numbers is related to the rise of the Islam in Politics that occurred between the two last periods. These Islam-oriented regimes increased the number of the non-Muslim Arab immigrants to the US. Non-Muslim groups, mostly presented by Christians, did not feel comfortable adapting to Islam-affected regimes. Religious groups like Copts in Egypt and Palestinian Christians migrated to the US in search of more religious freedom. The Christian population in Palestine dropped from 15% -20% in 1944 to a mere 2% in recent years (Orfalea). The results confirm the dissatisfaction of Christian Palestinians towards the adapted Islamic regime.

The immigrants of the Third wave had more inclinations to self-determination. The awareness of cultural capacities as well as the desire for political representation is an essential tool for self-determination either individually or collectively (Naber). The Third wave wanted to voice its opinions and views as a unique and self-determined group. Immigrants did not want to be affiliated as a small part of a larger group as to be referred to as individual or collective Arab Americans.

### **1.3. Reasons of Immigration**

The Waves of Arab immigration to US has been a topic of discussion to researchers. The waves' classifications were based on several historical events that shaped both Arab and US scene. Each waves of Arab immigration was affected by an event, or series of events that led

Arabs to come to US. Consequently, reasons of Arab immigration differ from one wave to another.

### **1.3.1. Reasons Leading to First Wave (1880s-1924)**

First Wave of immigration was the early attempt that Arab made in order to arrive to US. Arab immigrants were new to the nation and wanted to arrive to US and experience it for the first time. Thus, Arab immigrants did not know what to expect from USA. However, for many Arab immigrants US was a better option, and sometimes the only option, for them to live a stable and comfortable life, either economically or religiously.

#### **1.3.1.1. Economic Reasons**

Economic struggle had risen after the creation of the Suez Canal which facilitated the trade of goods between nations. This competition led to the fall of formally Arab dominated goods especially silk. The Lebanon Mount was well-known for silk production; it was the first source of income in the area. The competitive silk market caused Lebanon silk's prices to decline, thus leading to economic crises. Arab men had no other option but to go to the US in a trip looking for money and economic stability (Khater). Arab Americans were famous for the silk production especially Lebanese. Silk production was the main source of income for Lebanese. However, after the rise of completion in the silk Market, Arab men had to go to US in order to get new jobs and new sources of income.

First wave of Arab immigrants settled in different areas in USA and worked different jobs. Half of them worked as farmers in Southern states, however, only 25% settled in the East Coast while the remaining 25% settled in Midwest working in auto and steel industry or started their own grocery and dried food stores (Elkhouly). Arab Immigrants settled in areas where various jobs opportunities were available. They worked in different fields such as: agriculture, steel industry or just opened their own stores.

### **1.3.1.2. Religious Reasons**

The most practiced religions by Arabs are Islam and Christianity. However, these two religions include a number of sects such as Druze for Islam and Maronite for Christianity. During the Ottoman reign in the Great Syria in 1860s, Druze assaulted the Maronite in Mount Lebanon with a support of the Ottomans. The fast-paced events led the powerful nations at that time France and Britain to side with Maronite and Druze respectively. A civil war started after the Turks gave asylum to Maronite only to disarm them and send them back to face their oppressors (Orfalea). About 20,000 Maronites were killed in the sectarian massacre in 1860. The number could have been raised if it was not for the American missionaries who helped Maronites to immigrate to the US (Jaradat 20). The war left about twenty thousand casualties from Maronite Christians. The aftermath of the war highlighted in Maronite immigrating to US after the massacre that they were subject to. US missionaries helped in convincing Maronite to arrive to US.

The Ottoman Empire dominated the Great Syria area since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. By 1908, the Ottomans authorized Christians to serve, alongside with Muslims, in the Turkish army. The Arabs denied the Turkish abuse and expressed their complaints about the decision. However, the Ottomans reacted fast and furious by hanging 14 Muslim and Christian in Beirut and 7 men in Damascus on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1916 (Orfalea). The series of Ottoman oppressions, executions, and ignoring freedom of speech led Arabs to rebel. These events pushed Arabs to immigrate in order to survive from Ottoman's wrath. Many Arabs saw the US as a last resort for their own safety and freedom.

### **1.3.2. Reasons Leading to Second Wave (1925-1965)**

In the Second Wave of Arab immigration to the US, most Arab nations were politically unstable. The political circumstances were the major reason for Arabs immigrating to the US in Second Wave. The US was the last resort for Arab immigrant to run away from political

hardship that their countries were suffering from at that period. A huge number of Arab immigrants were welcomed by US in order to live a comfortable life away from political turmoil.

### **1.3.2.1. Political Reasons**

Many Arab countries were dictatorships and were led by corrupt regimes which intentionally limited the freedom of their citizens. Meanwhile, European powers abused the land and committed massacres against citizens; the British in Egypt, Italians in Libya, and French in Algeria. Regimes like monarchies in Egypt and Iraq deliberately abused their power against their citizens and shutdown any voice that opposed them (Jaradat). As a consequence, many of those citizens immigrated to the US in order to give their opinions and point of views freely without being under the radar of the dictatorship authority.

The US granted higher level of education in its universities which attracted a lot of highly educated people from Arab countries to finish their studies at American universities. For British former colonies, inhabitants were already familiar with the English language. Mastering the language definitely facilitated the process of education in USA (Jaradat). Being formal colonies of Britain definitely helped Arabs to come to the US and finish their studies. Arabs from the formal Britain colonies were familiar with English which helped them in studying in US universities.

The US Congress made it clear that the US restricts immigration for Non-northern and Non-European citizens. However, it excluded Palestine from the equation. The Palestinians were subject of Israeli abuse. Almost 6,000 Palestinian lost their homes and land to Israel in 1948 (Kayyali). The list of Palestinian refugees kept on increasing as Palestinian had to seek refuge first to nearer countries like Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, since only few of them could seek refuge first to US. Only 4,385 Palestinian refugees were registered in US immigration services. As a matter of fact, this calculation is only concerned with Palestinian

refugees who were registered from Palestine. The number of the overall Palestinian refugees, counting refugees from other Arabic countries, is estimated to nearly 1.3 million (Orfalea). Palestinian refugees had an overwhelming increase in US migration. Many of Palestinian saw US as a last resort escaping from Israeli abuse.

### **1.3.3. Reasons Leading to Third Wave (1965- Present Day)**

In the Third Wave of Arab immigration to the US, most Arab immigrants were familiar with the US, especially after the First and Second Wave experience. As a result, Third Wave Arab immigrants built a set of expectations from their arrival to US. They wanted to reach certain goals from coming to US. In Third Wave era, Arab immigrants came to US on basis of political, social, and religious causes.

#### **1.3.3.1. Political Reasons**

Arabs' territories had always been under fire of wars among which the most notable war in this era was the 6 days Arab-Israeli War. The war ignited after Israel attacked three Arab countries; Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1967 (US Department of State). Israel neglected all the international treaties and challenged the international committee invading three countries and taking parts of each country. The Israeli army seized control of Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, West Bank in Jordan, Golan Heights in Syria, as well as Gaza strip and East Jerusalem (US Department of State). Israel withdrew its forces from the invaded territories after reaching an agreement and signing the Camp David Accords with Egypt in 1979. The Israeli occupation of Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and West Bank isolated the citizens of these territories. Consequently, any Palestinian citizen who was in Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and West Bank, was marked as an immigrant. Nearly a million Palestinians were not welcomed in their host countries (Malek). To cope with the situation, the US stepped up and accepted few thousands of Palestinian immigrants to come to the country. Palestinians considered the US as a very good alternative in which they could survive.



### **1.3.3.2. Social Reasons**

The US quick development in economy opened new job opportunities for the most qualified people. Third wave of Arab immigrants owned distinguished capacities since most of them mastered skilled profession and had high education levels (Jaradat). Third waves of Arab immigrants were skillful and well-educated. They could not get job opportunities in their homelands due to the weakness of their native economy. Many of Third Wave Arab immigrants had high education and intellectual professions. “Half of all Arab science and engineering Ph. D’s left the Arab World” (Orfalea189). The number of the immigrated educators was overwhelming. Arab countries had a number of high level educational institutes. However, they were not even close to that of the US figuratively and literally. No matter how hard they attempted to imitate the educational programs, Arab countries were struggling to reach the level of success that US universities’ students reach.

### **1.3.3.3. Religious Reasons**

Arab countries attempted to follow a new regime model that was popular between 1970s up till present day. The Muslim Brotherhood emerged to the international scene. The newly adapted model focused on the use of Sharia law and attempted to use Islamic ideas as a source of social norms (Haddad, “Becoming American?”). Non Muslim minorities in Muslim Brotherhood societies felt that they were handcuffed and striped from their religious freedom; consequently, their departure from their nations to the US was more than necessary. The immigrants make-up was not strictly composed of Christians; it also included Iraqi Chaldeans, Egyptians Copts, and even moderate Muslims (Jaradat). All these groups aimed at enjoying more religious freedom in US than that in their homelands

The concept of “Arab” has been mistaken to be interchangeable with “Muslim”. The two terms represent different concepts which are ethnicity and religion accordingly. The Arab world is widely diverse in both culture and religion. The diverse cultural background made it

an interesting subject for researches. However, not so many studies have been conducted by non-native Arabs concerning Arab culture. The concept of Arab culture seems to be misunderstood by the non-native people.

Arabs came to US in order to get better life conditions. They needed to arrive to US to ameliorate their lives either socially, economically, or religiously. They saw a light of hope of better opportunities and comfortable lives. The US maintained certain policies to accept Arabs especially in time of war. However, the US treatment towards Arabs has changed over the years. The hope of better life conditions and equal opportunities has been lost between the three waves of Arab immigration to the US.

The journey that immigrants have been through to reach their dreamland was deceiving. Accepting the others' culture and being accepted in the US culture was not an easy task for Arab Americans. All the hardship that Arab Americans went through to get to the USA did not blossom. The US that had continuously showed acceptance and sympathy to first Arab immigrants, had recently changed its treatment to adopt harsher policies.

## Chapter Two

### **Acculturation: Theoretical Perspectives**

Since the beginning of time, world societies focus on recording their own culture. Each culture has unique aspects that differentiate it from other cultures. Knowledge of other's culture functions as means of communication; the best way to know a given society is to study their culture. Anthropologists, throughout the years, are interested in exploring different studies about different cultures. One of the most impactful phenomena in the last decade is the concept of acculturation.

Immigrants are the most targeted group for being a subject to acculturation process since they represent minorities and strangers in the host country and its culture. Being a new in an unfamiliar country and a new culture puts a major pressure on immigrants. The feeling of loyalty to one's own culture of origins meets the urge to change and to be accepted by the host country culture. The clash of cultures creates power gap between the two cultures, causing confusion for immigrants (Smith and Silva). Immigrants attempted to find balance between; the host and the heritage culture. However, it was not possible to balance the two cultures and maintain them equally.

Throughout the years, many researchers have dealt with the process of acculturation and presented detailed works about this multicultural phenomenon. This chapter attempts to explore the acculturation as a process presenting several definitions given by experts in the field of acculturation. In addition, the chapter covers the concept acculturative stress and gets in depth with causes and effects on individuals' health as well as presenting different acculturative models. The chapter also deals with the four strategies of acculturation presenting each strategy with its description, aspects, and characteristics. Equally, the chapter provides an idea about the acculturation process in the US introducing immigrants' attitudes

towards acculturation in the US. Finally, the chapter identifies the relationship between discrimination and acculturation as well as acculturative stress. The sources of the chapter would be based on the works of different anthropologists, psychologists, and experts in the field of cross-cultural studies.

## **2.1. The Concept of Acculturation**

In recent decades, acculturation phenomena have been studied by several anthropologists and cross-cultural specialists. The term “acculturation” is interpreted and defined differently by scholars throughout the years. One of the simplest definitions is given by John Berry, a professor at Queen’s University in Canada who is also considered as the father of acculturation studies. He defines acculturation as the process that the individual or groups experience when being exposed to a majority culture, a culture different from theirs. The experience of acculturation happens to either individuals, or groups of citizens; such as ethnic minorities (“Applied Psychology: An International Review”). The definition stresses on being a subject to superior culture of the host country. Acculturation results from an exposure of the majority culture to individuals or groups who are a minority to in that specific society.

The three American anthropologists; Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits focus on the outcome of acculturation on individuals’ culture of origins. In other words, a clash of cultures results in creating a culture that is more powerful than another. The process of acculturation urges individuals to sacrifice their heritage culture in order to adapt to the host culture. By adaptating of what was learned in one’s culture of origins into the new culture (Borrayo and Jenkins). When the two cultures contact, an inevitable culture loss would be present in the process.

The various definitions deal with acculturation as a process in which individuals or groups’ culture are subject to change. A change resulted from the continuous exposure to the dominant culture that is theoretically the host country’s culture. When the host culture meets

with the culture of origins, major clash occurs. This clash creates an unbalance between the cultures; resulting a more powerful culture and a weaker culture. The host country's culture would force a change to the culture of origins; original culture's norms, values, and language. The values, norms, and beliefs that were once acquired from the culture of origin would be replaced by new norms and values adopted from the host country's culture. The process of change occurs due to the unbalanced powers with the contacted cultures; a culture being superior and another being inferior. In this particular case, the culture of origins is drastically inferior to the host country's one.

## **2.2. The Acculturative Stress**

The process of acculturation does not only affect one's culture; norms, value and beliefs. It also has physical and psychological repercussions. Acculturative stress is "one kind of stress, that is which the stressors are identified as having their source in the process of acculturation" (Berry et al 492). The stress is a result of acculturation process. Its outcomes vary from depression, anxiety, and even alienation. Immigrants represent the most targeted group of individuals to be a subject to acculturative stress. The newly settled group is constantly forced to change; in values and standards. The feeling of frustration that comes with the complexity of acculturation process leads to various health issues. Acculturation process is heavily linked with the differences between immigrants' countries of origin and the host country (Miller et al.). Acculturation process puts a high level of pressure on immigrants. As a result, a personal crisis is generated due to the absence of original cultural norms in the host country's culture.

Acculturation stress occurs as a result of the acculturation process. However, immigrants suffered from different levels of acculturative stress. The levels of acculturative stress differ according to several factors. These factors were highlighted by Shryock and Nabeel as:

You will not fit in here unless you behave appropriately, and this will be possible only if the differences that set you apart from us – your language, your culture, your

religion, your attitude – are naturalized, normalized, muted, consigned to another time, or linked to a place and a way of life you have left behind (17)

When immigrants arrive to a new country, they become forced to speak the host language to communicate with the locals. They are not able to speak the language unless they learn the target language before arriving to the host country. The process of learning a new language is not easy; only motivated immigrants succeed in the learning process. These immigrants are likely to have less acculturative stress since they are motivated to learn the language and communicate with the locals. Similarly, individuals who have an academic degree are less likely to have acculturative stress. Immigrant students tend to be more open and aware to acculturation (Daraiseh). The prior expectations, either high or low affect the person's acculturative stress levels. When the individual finds the host society not meeting his prior expectations, his natural reaction is to panic and to stress.

In a 2006 study entitled “The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology”, Berry managed to propose 2 coping strategies while dealing with acculturative stress; problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. The first coping strategy focuses on the problem itself and attempts to resolve or avoid the problem. A number of problems that cause acculturation stress are; the socioeconomic status, the sense of controls one's decision to immigrate, and the host country's willingness to accept cultural diversity (Hovey and Magna). Immigrants tend to have less acculturative stress when they deliberately immigrate to the nation. Also, acculturative stress decreases if the host country accepts cultural diversity. Berry introduces the second coping strategy in “The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology” which focuses on the ability of individuals to gain self-control of emotions over the problem that they face. Emotion-focused coping attempts to control the mental responses towards acculturation process (“The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology”). It

advises individuals not to be hostile to the host country culture just because it is different from their culture of origins.

Berry emphasizes on the impact of the coping strategies on decreasing acculturative stress. When immigrants with high levels of stress use coping strategies appropriately, their acculturative stress levels stay low. By contrast, when the coping strategies are not used appropriately, more health risks to the acculturated individuals are likely to emerge as the stress levels increase. In this case, immigrants suffer personal crises, subsequent depression, and anxiety symptom (Williams and Berry). The acculturation stressors' mental health may worsen if the coping strategies are not used properly. However, scholars in the field of acculturative stress emphasize the possibility of healing acculturative stress. The best way to produce a healthy acculturated immigrant into a new society is to promote cognitive control and positive coping skills (Williams and Berry). An immigrant, who looks at acculturation with positive attitudes, experiences better mental health results.

### **2.3. Acculturation Models**

The repercussions of the acculturation process present major health issues for individuals. The effects on individuals are not just physical; they are psychological as well. The physical and psychological status of acculturated immigrants is a subject of many studies. It is up to psychologists to step up and conduct multiple studies for the wellbeing and survival of individuals getting through acculturation process safely. Experts related to the phenomenon identify two major models of acculturation.

#### **2.3.1. The Unidimensional Model**

This model is primarily suggested by Milton Gordon who adds an important contribution to acculturation studies especially with his work *Assimilation in American Life* in 1964. In this model, the individual attempts to contact others through his own assumptions about the host country's culture. The expectation about the host culture values and beliefs creates a

sense of adaptation to that specific culture (51). The model does not even consider the influence of the original culture on the acculturation process; it only acknowledges the impact of the dominant culture on that of the immigrants (Gordon 52). Gordon points out that the more individuals contact with the host country's culture the more they distance themselves from their culture of origins. In this case, the culture of origin is replaced by that of the host country (Gordon 53). Most immigrants get disconnected from their own heritage after being exposed to the dominant culture. According to this model, the adaptation to the new culture differs from one individual to another. Complete acculturation, however, is an inevitable result.

### **2.3.2. The Bidimensional Model**

Berry believes that acculturation lies in two dimensions unequal dimension; high and low. The bidimensional model focuses on balancing both culture of origins and that of the host country (Berry, "Applied Psychology: an International Review"). Berry suggests this model to describe how an individual should respond to intercultural contact through which one can maintain his/her own culture of origins as well as accept the host country's culture and most importantly be able to identify himself/ herself with both of them together. According to this model, acculturation process does not strictly mean to abandon the culture of origins, it stresses on maintenance of one's own heritage. The immigrant culture of origins is to be respected and valued by the dominant culture (Berry, "Applied Psychology: An International Review"). This process of maintaining the culture of origins is joined by the process of accepting and embracing the host country's culture. The final result is a balance of the two cultures, and the ability of one's to identify with both cultures simultaneously.

### **2.4. Acculturation Strategies**

Various studies of acculturation had identified the physical and psychological effects of the process on immigrants. The next challenge for acculturation researchers is to identify ways to



avoid the negative repercussions of acculturation mainly cultural loss. In 1986 work of “Field Methods in Cross-Cultural Research”, Berry, Trimble, and Olmedo suggested four strategies of acculturation. These strategies ensure balancing the two cultures both of immigrants’ origins and of the host country. The strategies are integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization.

### **2.4.1. Integration**

The first strategy of acculturation stresses on maintaining balance between the two cultures; culture of origins and host country’s culture. “When there is an interest in both maintaining one’s original culture, while in daily interactions with others groups” (Berry, “Applied Psychology: an International Review” 9). Immigrants would be able to identify with the culture of the host country without ignoring the roots of their heritage. The strategy depends on the individuals as well as families to embrace the host culture and adapt to it. However, this process should not neglect the culture of origins or downgrade it in any matter. For integration, both cultures should live in harmony. People who maintain their heritage and embrace the new culture of the host country are unlikely to have mental health issues resulting from acculturation (Berry and Kim). Acculturative stress and mental health issues occur less likely if the people balance the two cultures the one of origin and the host country’s culture.

### **2.4.2. Assimilation**

The second category of acculturation emphasizes on identifying with the dominant culture rather than the culture of origins. As quoted in Alba and Nee:

Robert Park and E. W Burgess provided a widely known early definition of assimilation – a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of the other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in common cultural life (18).

In this category, immigrants abandon their culture of origins and replace it with that of the host country. This change is urged by the idea of being socially accepted in the host country. While assimilating to the host country's culture, immigrants practice the dominant's culture, values, and norms and use them as if they are their own. The act of abandoning the culture of origins under the effect of assimilation is connected to intermediate levels of stress (Williams and Berry). Assimilation causes moderate levels of acculturative stress and mental health issues that hinder the whole process of acculturation.

### **2.4.3. Separation**

The third category of acculturation refers to the individual, families, and groups of immigrants who have strong relations with their culture of origin. Immigrants' families practise their values, norms, and traditions in the host country regardless of the host country's culture. In this group, most of individuals do not even consider embracing the dominant culture since they see it as the "Other". Signs of separation include wearing traditional clothes, speaking the mother tongue, eating traditional food, and practicing rituals in the host country (Williams and Berry). Williams and Berry associated high stress levels with this category because individuals of these groups do not feel any sense of belonging to the host culture. As a consequence, those who choose to separate from the host culture suffer a high level of acculturative stress.

### **2.4.4. Marginalization**

The final category of acculturation is related to having the highest level of stress on mental health. Marginalized individuals do not identify with either their culture of origins, or the host country culture. As it was stated by Khshaiboon, researcher in cross-cultural studies:

Marginalization, which refer to the lack of identification with either the culture of origins or the host culture. In such situation, the individual or family will presumably fail to belong to either the host country or the heritage culture. As a result, there will

be a lack of belongingness to any culture, and an ambiguous sense of identity (Khshaiboon 22).

Marginalized individuals tend to feel a sense of non-belongingness about themselves, nor realize which culture they should accept as their own. In this case, individuals fail in adapting to the host culture and in maintaining their own culture of origins. The lack of belongingness causes several health problems to marginalized people. As Krishnan and Berry found out that marginalization is positively correlated with acculturative stress (“Psychology and Developing Societies”). Acculturative stress which causes several health problems, is heavily linked to marginalization. The table below shows the different strategies of acculturation.

Table. 1  
Strategies of Acculturation

Attitude toward maintaining own cultural identity	Attitude toward host culture	
	Positive	Negative
Positive	Integration	Isolation
Negative	Assimilation	Marginalization

Source:

[https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send\\_file?accession=bgsu1187204165&disposition=inline](https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=bgsu1187204165&disposition=inline).

The table exemplifies Berry’s four strategies of acculturation in a simple explanation. The strategies are applied to both individuals and groups. Isolation and separation occur when an immigrant has a positive attitude towards maintaining his own cultural identity but the attitude towards the host country is negative. However, when an immigrant has a negative attitude towards maintaining his own cultural identity and a positive attitude towards the host culture; the result is assimilation. As for integration, it occurs when both attitudes towards the culture

of origins and host country's culture are positive. By contrast, marginalization appears when the individual has negative attitudes towards both his heritage culture and that of the host country.

## **2.5. Acculturation in USA**

The USA has been always known as the land of equal opportunities for everyone. The slogan of the newly-made country turned a lot of immigrants' eyes to the country. Immigrants from all over the world came to US in search for the glorious American dream. A large numbers of immigrants arrived to the US in late 60s which consisted of mostly collection of cultures (Schwartz and Zamboanga). The huge number of immigrants had different cultures brought in to the US, however, not all cultures of origins survived.

The topic of acculturation in US was not recognizable by US population. The attention to acculturation was firstly introduced in the US after the arrival of large waves of immigrants in 60s (Schwartz and Zamboanga). Attention to acculturation meant acknowledging the issue of negative acculturation against immigrants. The different cultures of origins that have been brought to US were inferior to that of US leading immigrants to feel the need to adapt the US culture and throw their own culture of origins. Among many other studies interested in culture in diversified societies, a study was conducted in 2003 which stressed on the term of "culture change". It is the act of giving up on one's culture of origin in order to adapt to the new culture (Chun et al.). The newly adapted culture does not eventually promote the country's slogan since the culture itself is of dominant culture. In this instance, acculturation is rather forced than promoted.

Immigrants were diverse in terms of reasons to arrive to the host country. Based on these reasons, four types of immigrants have been identified; voluntary immigrants, refugees, asylum seeker, and sojourners (Berry, "Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology"). The voluntary immigrants are those who come to US on their own free will; they left their

country of origins based on their own free will without being forced to. As for refugees, they are those who were forced to leave their country of origins due to country's political conflict, wars, poverty, or natural disasters. Concerning Asylum seekers, they are those who want to settle in US because they are afraid to live in their own countries. Sojourners are those who want to achieve a certain goal in the US, in a specific time frame, and return to their homelands after achieving that goal (Schwartz et al.). However, acculturation levels differ from one immigrant to another. This process still affects all types of immigrants. One should take into consideration the different effects of acculturation on immigrant's including the impact on their social status.

## **2.6. The Relationship between Acculturation and Discrimination**

Acculturation process affects the individual's mental health. Mental health issues result from being a subject to acculturation in a negative manner. Researchers have identified many factors that negatively influence the acculturation process. Discrimination is the main negative factor preventing Arab immigrants from successful acculturation (Amer and Awad 36). The negative image that Arab Americans are subject to stops the acculturation process and results in a failure in the process. As a target of racial discrimination, Arab Americans could not fully acculturate to the US. Furthermore, the perceived popular, yet stereotypical, opinion about Arab Americans in US made the acculturation process overwhelmingly negative.

The diversity in both Arab Americans' culture and religion was not a reoccurring subject of discussion among US citizens; as a result, US citizens ignored the Arab American diversity. Arab Americans have diverse religious and cultural beliefs that have been substituted in the popular culture by images of terrorism and extreme violence (Amer and Awad). The US discrimination against Arab Americans resulted from being ignorant to the true Arab cultural and religious diversity. The US citizens accused Arab Americans for being

terrorists and violent. These accusations caused a cloud of stereotyping that followed Arab Americans.

## **2.7. The Relationship between Acculturative Stress and Discrimination**

Acculturative stress is an outcome of being a subject to acculturation in a negative way. Acculturative stress leads to mental and psychological health issues which were discussed in Chapter Two. As far as mental issues are concerned, several studies have confirmed the relationship between mental health issues and discrimination. Immigrants experience discrimination in the job market, in public places, in the workplaces, and in daily life overall (Jadalla and Lee 164). Being continuously exposed to discrimination in all areas of life isolates Arab Americans from the majority community. Discrimination causes several mental health issues like; depression, anxiety and trauma (Aprahamian et al.). Discrimination does not only affect Arab Americans' acculturation process, it also leads to acculturative stress and leads to mental health issues to Arab Americans.

Discrimination also generates a feeling of inferiority towards oneself. Arab Americans feel themselves inferior compared to other citizens due to constant discrimination and stereotypical image of their ethnicity in the eyes of the United States population (Aprahamian et al. 93). The discrimination and stereotypical image portrayed by US citizens leads American born Arabs to question themselves as a recognized minority in the nation. The feeling of inferiority emerges when they see the continuous hostile attitude and stereotyping directed towards them.

Acculturation is a topic of many cross-cultural studies by several anthropologists and psychologists. However, the studies that have been conducted about acculturation theories are not under the proper attention. Most of attempts done by researchers did not find hearing ears by government officials. It is unfortunate that acculturation is only recognized by researchers in the field even though it could potentially lead to serious mental and health issues.

Researchers have done their duties by defining acculturation, analyzing its effect on people, recognizing its dangerous repercussions, identifying its strategies, and even presenting solutions in order to cope with it. It is time for governments with multicultural backgrounds to shed light on the topic in hand and put it into practice.

Arab Americans represent a minority in the US and they have been a subject of acculturation regardless of the acculturation strategy. The status of Arab Americans has not been a well-analyzed subject of governmental or political decision-makers in the US. Contrary, there are negative talks about Arab Americans rather than siding with them. Even the media is shadowing the status of Arab Americans and always putting blame on them, sometimes, for things that they never did. The stereotyping and discrimination spread negative images that portray Arab Americans as bad people. An Arab American is classified and portrayed as a negative image; an image that is not related to his own values and norms but based on his/her looks, ethnicity, and religion.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Arab Americans Status in US Society post 9/11 attacks: Neither Arabs nor Americans?**

In the third chapter a case study is analyzed taking into account the discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Americans in US post 9/11. The discrimination that was promoted in US after 9/11 affected the lives of Arab Americans. A classification is made according to the discrimination practices that were directed towards Arab American; Muslims, Christians, women, as well as discrimination in education and workplace. Several recourses are provided to prove the discriminatory acts against Arab Americans post 9/11 attacks.

The Chapter deals with the impact of Media on discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Americans after 9/11. Different examples of Media discrimination in post 9/11 are provided in order to analyze the relation between the media and acculturation process of Arab Americans in post 9/11 America. The Chapter focuses on the role of George W. Bush in issuing discrimination against Arab American after 9/11. As a president in time of 9/11 attacks, George Bush reacted with a set of questionable policies. Policies such as Patriot Act of 2001 are analyzed in order to show its unlawful status. Several resources are used to show that Bush's policies were policies of terror especially against Arab-Americans.

The last section would present the status of Arab Americans' discrimination after the departure of Bush. Several incidents of US politicians that expressed discrimination towards Arab Americans would be provided. The main aim of the chapter is to show that US's continuous discrimination towards Arab Americans after the attacks of 9/11.



### **3.1. Discrimination and Stereotyping against Arabs and Muslim Arab Americans in the US post 9/11 attacks**

September 9<sup>th</sup> was a significant date for all US citizens especially Arab Americans. The attacks were seen as the ultimate threat to the US national security. As a result, a swarm of stereotyping and discrimination arose against Arab Americans blaming the whole community for 9/11 attacks.

Up until 9/11 attacks, Arab Americans were seen as a minority. They were fighting to be recognized as a part of US population. Arab Americans were referred to as invisible within the majority US culture (Naber). Arab Americans' invisibility symbolized inferiority to white American majority; inferior in terms of ethnicity and race representation in US. However, after 9/11 attack, the situation of Arab Americans changed from bad to worse. Arab Americans have transformed from "invisible citizens to visible subjects" (Naber 2). The visibility refers to Arab Americans being a subject of racism and stereotyping. The aftermath of 9/11 made US community perceive Arab Americans as racially and culturally inferior to the US majority. As a result, Arab Americans suffered from stereotyping and discrimination from both US society and US government.

In the aftermath of 9/11 attacks, discrimination towards Arab Americans has various forms. Discrimination against Arab Americans includes hate crimes, defamatory speech, harassment, job discrimination and Islamophobia (Abu Raiya et al.1). Discrimination forms varied from, hate crimes, damaging the reputation of Arab Americans, being a subject to harassment, discrimination in workplace and discrimination towards Muslims and Islam.

#### **3.1.1. Arab American Muslims**

Discrimination against Arab American Muslims post 9/11 was overwhelmingly high. Both Muslims and Christians were a target of discrimination in various levels. The Council on American-Islamic Relation made a study in 2006 reporting that approximately one in four

Americans believe that Islam is associated with hatred and violence (Council on American-Islamic Relations). The statistics show the high level of discrimination that is directed towards Muslims post 9/11 attacks. Discrimination against Arab American Muslims further worsens the acculturation process and puts more acculturative stress on this group. Studies find that religious affiliations with Islam is negatively associated with acculturation and positively associated with perceived discrimination (Awad 59-67). Arab American Muslims who form a religious community had difficulties in adapting to acculturation. They have also had a high level of discrimination directed against them.

Hate crimes directed against Arab American Muslim had a major increase after 9/11. In a study conducted in 2002, it was reported that there was an increase in hate crimes towards Arab Americans and Muslims with 1700 percent immediately after 9/11 (Human Rights Watch). The increase of hate crimes against Arab Americans and Muslims post 9/11 had an incredible increase in numbers in such a short period. This indicates the type of hostility that Arab Americans were subject to after 9/11. Additionally, according to a study made in 2003, there were 700 violent acts that targeted Arab Americans and Muslims and those who perceived as such were reported within the first nine weeks after 9/11 (Ibish). Violent acts were not just directed against Arab American Muslim, they included any group of people who was perceived as such despite not being Arab American or Muslims.

Arab American Muslims were not just victims of hate crimes; they were also victims of other different forms of discrimination. After the 9/11 attacks era, a study was conducted. It consisted of interviews with 102 Arab Muslims in metropolitan Chicago. 53 percent of the participants reported experiencing different forms of discrimination after 9/11 attacks. These forms of discrimination include; discrimination in employment (39 percent), public places (22 percent), schools (11 percent), law enforcement (11 percent) and airports/airplanes (7 percent) (Cainkar, "Race and Arab"). The numbers show the various form of discrimination that Arab

Americans suffered from after 9/11 with discrimination in employment having the lion's share.

Another study sheds light on the discrimination of Arab American Muslims in Detroit. The stereotypical image that was directed against Arab American Muslims in Detroit made them a target of harassments by the public. In the book "Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11" researchers state that:

Only 38 percent of Americans in the Detroit metro area believe that Arabs and Muslims are doing all that they can to fight the war on terror. Muslims and Arabs across the United States are consistently asked to apologize for 9/11, as if they were behind the attacks. And yet, ironically, the numerous and countless condemnations emanating from mosques and organization in the United States that emphatically denounce the attacks have received little media attention...When asked whether Arabs or Muslims could be trusted, Americans in Detroit metro area ranked them as the least trustworthy subpopulation. (Jamal and Naber 120)

Arab American Muslims in Detroit were accused of being responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

Detroit population continuously demanded an apology from Arab American Muslims.

Furthermore, Detroit population was well-known for being hostile to Arab American Muslims especially when they ranked Arab Americans Muslims to be the least trustworthy group.

Discrimination also targeted the physical appearance of Arab American Muslims. The two researchers in US cultural studies, Jamal and Naber focused on Arab American Muslim males who had darker skin and beards and who wore Islamic attire. Many of them reported that they shaved their beards and considered changing the color of their hair to a lighter color. They also tended to avoid going to the mosque in order to prevent discrimination that might threaten their safety (Jamal and Naber 296). After 9/11 attacks, Arab American Muslims changed their cultural identity in order to avoid the high level of discrimination that they have

been a victim of. The change of cultural beliefs was made as a means of survival in a discriminating US society.

### **3.1.2. Arab American Christians**

Arab American Christians distanced themselves from Arab Muslims in order not to be discriminated against and to gain acceptance (Howell and Jamal 107). Contrary to Arab American Muslims who were under a high level of discrimination after 9/11 attacks, Arab American Christians did not suffer from the same degree of discrimination, compared to Muslims. The reason lays in distancing themselves from Arab American Muslims. In this run, it was explained that “Christian Arab American may be able to use their Christian identity as a bridge to the American mainstream, thereby distancing themselves from 9/11” (Read 305). Arab American Christians took advantage of their religion in order to blend with the American society while being detached from Arab American Muslim community.

The way Arab American Christians avoided discrimination and stereotyping was through avoiding being categorized with Arab American Muslims. In an interview, a male Arab American Christian answered a question about whether he was affected by 9/11 attacks. He replies “Not really, being Christian I do not identify at all with terrorist” (qtd. in Weaver 72). In this instance, the Arab American Christian attempt to indicate that Christianity has nothing to do with terrorism that occurred after 9/11 attacks.

Another interview was conducted but with a female Arab American Christian. She answered the same previous questions stating “As an Arab Christian female I haven’t felt the effects of 9/11 directly, but many of male friends and relatives, along with my female Muslim friends, felt a lot of animosity from many people after the attack” (qtd. in Weaver 72). Female Arab American Christians were not as discriminated against as Arab American Muslims. In contrary, they were not overly exposed to discrimination in both race and gender patterns.

Female Arab American Christians had survived the discrimination and stereotyping post 9/11 attacks when compared to their Muslim counterparts.

### **3.1.3 Arab American Muslim Women**

Arab American Muslim women were under the spotlights. Several researches stated that Arab Muslim women had more discrimination, compared to men. Female Arab American Muslims suffered from discrimination in both gender and religion. “Arab/Muslim women reported experiencing hate encounters at twice the rate of men” (Cainkar, *Homeland insecurity: The Arab...*, 230). Many Arab American Muslim women suffered from a high number of discrimination; estimated to be the double of that number of men’ discrimination.

Another study that was conducted by Jamal and Naber in 2007 reported that women feel that they suffer from a higher level of discrimination compared to men especially if they wear Hijab. Various participants have reported being released from their jobs after wearing their headscarves (Race and Arab Americans...). The Americans Muslim community was discriminated not only on basis of their religion but on the basis of their gender too.

The discrimination against Arab American Muslim women was heavily linked to their attire. Wearing hijab led Arab American Muslim women to be subjects of stereotyping. In this run, Cainkar argues in *Homeland Insecurity: The Arab American and Muslim American Experience after 9/11* that:

Rather than violence or terrorism, the threat of women in hijab rests in the perception that these women openly, even proudly, conform to a set of prescriptions and values that are interpreted as un-American, a meaning imputed to them by messages diffused throughout American culture. As perceived adherents to an un-American way of life. American women in hijab are easily transformed into aliens who can be commanded by neighborhood defenders to “Go home”. (30)

The discrimination that targeted Arab American Muslim women who wore hijab was motivated by the ignorance of US population of the Arab American Muslim culture. US population saw Muslim women who wore hijab as a threat to their culture that should be confronted. The discrimination against Arab American Muslim women was purely a reaction to being ignorant of the culture.

### **3.1.4. Discrimination in Education**

The 9/11 attacks aftermath reached educational institutions. The discrimination and stereotyping against Arab Americans presented itself in US educational settings, even though the US Civil Rights Act of 1964 clearly forbids any act of racism, discrimination, or stereotype in schools, colleges, and universities. The act of 1964 grants equal rights and discrimination free environment to all students. The learning settings such as schools, colleges and universities were instructed not to be racially hostile towards any race or ethnicity. However, the Civil Right Act was not respected in the practical field since many Arab Americans were victims of discrimination in educational institutions.

In a study that was conducted in 2004, two years after 9/11, by Moradi and Hassan. The statistics show that a number of students were victims of discrimination in educational institutions either by teachers or colleagues. Many other discriminatory acts are demonstrated in the table below.

Abbreviated item content	1(Never Sample happened)	2(Once in a while)	3(Sometimes)	4(A lot of the time)	5(Most of the time)	6(Almost all of the time)	Sample M	Mdn
1. Treated unfairly by teachers/professors	73	20	2	2	3	1	1.45	1
2. Treated unfairly by employer/boss	82	10	3	2	3	1	1.37	1
3. Treated unfairly by colleagues	63	22	5	7	1	2	1.68	1

Table 1: Percentage of sample reporting specific discrimination events

**Source:** Moradi, Bonnie, and Nadia Talal Hasan. "Arab American Persons' Reported Experiences of Discrimination and Mental Health: The Mediating Role of Personal Control." *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 51.4 (2004): 418-28. Print.

The table shows that Arab American students were subject to discrimination by both teachers and colleagues. 20 students indicated that they were discriminated once in a while by the teacher/professor. 2 students stated that they were discriminated sometimes while 2 other students declared that they were discriminated many times by the teacher/ professor. The study indicates that 3 students were discriminated most of time by the teacher/ professor. Last but not least, only one student declared that' s/he was discriminated by the teacher/professor almost all the time.

### 3.1.5. Discrimination in Workplace

The events of 9/11 made discrimination and racial harassment a recurring theme in the US society. Discrimination against Arab Americans did not only include education it also involved jobs and workplaces. In 2011, a study by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission stated that there was: "increased public harassment, hate mail, and workplace discrimination toward Arab individuals" (EEOC). The attack s of 9/11 contributed to the rise

of hate crimes in workplaces. Arab Americans were victims of different workplace discrimination such as hate mail and public harassment.

Another study that was made by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), states that there was a 64% increase in discrimination complaints by the end of 2002. In the next 2 years; 2003 and 2004, complaints increased by 70% (Anti-Muslim Incidents Increase). The growth in discrimination complaints indicated that workplaces in US provided hostile environment for Arab Americans especially after 9/11 attacks.

The safety and well-being of Arab Americans were not the only concern. After 9/11, the low earnings problem made its way to the Arab American workplace. The discrimination included earnings and payment. Researchers in Arab American Muslim cultural studies, explains the phenomenon as the following:

The attacks were associated with about a 14-16 percent decline in the real weekly earnings of 21 to 54 years old Muslim and Arab men. Changes in occupation and industry account for some of the decrease in wages. The distribution of Arab and Muslim men by occupation and industry changed after 9/11 and that these changes adversely affected earnings of Arab and Muslim men. (Kaestner et al.)

The 9/11 attacks caused a decrease in the number of Arab and Muslim men workers in occupation and industry. The changes in occupation and industry engendered a decline in earnings. In other words, Arab Muslim men received less wages. The lower wages represented one of the outcomes of post 9/11 discrimination of Arab Americans in workplaces.

### **3.2. Media's Role post 9/11**

9/11 attacks caused a lot of turmoil between Arab Americans and American population. The media representation of Arab Americans further fueled the animosity towards them. Media stereotyping of Arabs portrayed them as uneducated immigrants, Muslim



fundamentalists or terrorists, violent and barbaric, sexual perverts (concerning men), rich sheiks (those who want to buy American women), or victimized, and subservient sexual objects (concerning women) (Morsy 15-19). The false stereotypical image of Arab American Muslims put them in a socially unaccepted environment. The images that media delivered to the public were overwhelmingly popular especially after the 9/11 attacks.

Media caused widespread of negative stereotypes against Arab Americans. The continuous stereotyping that was presented by media against Arab Americans normalized their negative image among US population. “For Muslims, the media victimized all the 1.6 billion of us with each news cycle” (Al-Khatahtbeh 106). Media’s continuous negative portrayal of Arab and Muslim Americans in news reaffirmed the stereotypes against Arab Americans especially in 9/11 era.

Newspapers were another effective tool of media to draw a particular image of Arabs and Muslims in America. After 9/11, many newspapers publicly harassed Muslims Americans and accused them of the operation. *New York Post* printed the headline “Simply Kill These Bastards” one day after 9/11 (Dunleavy). The headline had an offensive tone towards Arabs and Muslims, as Dunleavy points out to the language used to not be directed towards the responsible for the operation but to Muslims in general.

Post 9/11 Arab Americans stereotypes present in Media did not just involve Newspapers and TV, they also involved movies and series. The Arabs and Muslims portrayal in Hollywood encouraged stereotypical views. “The stereotypes and demonization of Arabs and Muslims by American films may well have gone largely unnoticed because these characteristics are entirely consistent with widespread attitudes in U.S. society” (Akram and Johnson 15). Hollywood movies reaffirmed the already perceived false perceptions of Muslims in America. The stereotypical images that were portrayed in movies matched misconceptions about Arab Muslim Americans especially post 9/11.

Arab American Muslims were frequently referred to as violent people. The media further emphasized the inferiority of Arab Muslims. The concept of “otherness” of Arabs and Muslims included depicting them as inferior group compared to the dominant culture. The reason being that Arab Muslims were portrayed as “violent stereotypes” in the American media (Jamal 121). The media stereotypes attempted to relate violence to Arab Muslims. In addition, this relation led to the emergence of group inferiority depicting Arab Muslims as inferior to other groups.

Media helped spread the stereotypes against Arab Muslims in America. Media used its power to reach the public to display hatred to Arab Muslim population in US. It contributed in increasing the number of hate crimes against Arab Muslims after the 9/11 attacks. “Very Quickly after 9/11 a virtual anti-Islamic and anti-Arabic hysteria materialized in the American media, among some sectors of the American public, and among many politicians...Some even declared the civilization clash or war had started” (Farsoun 139). The American media launched an attack on its own after 9/11. Media promoted anti-Islamic and anti-Arabic campaigns to damage the reputation of both Arabs and Muslims in the US. The stereotypes were promoted by American public and even politicians, to carry out the discriminatory ideas against Arab Muslims in the US.

Media reports continued to portray Arabs Muslims in the worst way possible. After the 9/11 attacks, the American media only focused on accusing Arab Muslims of the operation. However, media only mentioned few stories that praised Arab Muslims. There are only few accounts, 300 Muslims that had worked in the towers and had also been killed; “over ten-percent of the total” killed (Orfalea 301). Media tended to avoid mentioning the Muslims casualties that were killed in the 9/11 attacks. The number of the Muslim casualties surpassed ten percent of the total number of casualties. The instance further indicated the biased media tactics against Arab Muslims in US.

### **3.3. The Bush Administration Impact on Arab American Muslims**

Post 9/11, US president George W. Bush enacted several governmental policies that were seen as a reaction to the attacks. Scholars referred to Bush's policies after 9/11 as the "most aggressive campaign of ethnic profiling since WWII" (Lustick 44). Bush's policies encouraged even more discrimination and hatred against Muslim Arab Americans. The policies were adapted by Bush's government as a tool to gain more authoritative power.

Bush's policies had unfairly treated Arab Muslim Americans, to say the least. Bush's government referred to the terrorists as those who "hate freedom" and specific nations as part of "Axis of Evil" which created a clash between "American Democracy" and "Arab Islamic terrorism" (McAlister 289). Also, Bush associated terrorism with Arab Muslims, the accusation further reaffirmed the perceived public stereotypes against Arab Muslims in the US. Bush continuously associated the "Muslim World" with terrorism portraying it as a threat to the nation's security (Cole). After 9/11 attacks, President Bush pictured stereotypical images against Muslims that depicted them as a threat to the American national security.

#### **3.3.1. The Paradoxical Patriot Act of 2001**

After the events of 9/11, George W. Bush's government proceeded to use its power against Arab Americans. Several government legalizations were created including the US Patriot Act of 2001. The act affected four major fields that are: (1) enhancing the federal government's capacity to collect intelligence, (2) strengthening the criminal laws against terrorism, (3) removing obstacles to investigating terrorism, and (4) updating the law to reflect new technology (Johnston). The act granted more power to the government especially in gathering information such as; surveying E-mails and recording phone calls of anyone who is suspected of being a "terrorist". In addition, the act allowed the government to detain people suspected of being associated with terrorists.

Bush's government deliberately used its power to harass and abuse Arab Muslims in America. Bush's policies engendered more hostility against Arab Muslims in US. The Patriot Act prevented citizens from their rights; rights which are protected by the US constitution. Bush's declaration of Patriot Act has violated Americans' basic rights and the US Constitution in particular. The First Amendment to the US Constitution puts it clear that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievance" (First Amendment). The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech and press. It also emphasizes the freedom of religion and it forbids any laws that violate the promoted freedoms and rights. Bush's Patriot Act stands in complete contradiction with the First Amendment.

The Patriot Act of 2001 did not just violate the First Amendment; it also contradicts the Fourth Amendment. The US constitution reads:

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and the effects, against unreasonable searches and seizure, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable causes, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seize.  
(Fourth Amendment)

The Fourth Amendment insures the preservation of people's possessions, as well as, protection from unreasonable searches and seizures without conceivable cause. The Patriot Act promotes surveying E-mails and phone conversations of people who are just suspected of being terrorists. The authorized access to the Arab and Muslim Americans' Emails and phones, violates the values of the Fourth Amendment since it is based on probable reasons. Arab Muslim Americans experienced several unlawful treatments especially after the creation of the Patriot Act in 2011. At least 10,000 Arab Muslims had experienced specific actions as a

result of the Patriot Act including property seizure, FBI home and work visits, and mandatory registration (Cainkar, "Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies"). Arab Muslim Americans were unfairly treated by Bush's government. Bush used the Patriot Act as a tool to further discriminate and stereotype Arab Muslims in America.

The Patriot Act had also challenged the Fifth Amendment to the US constitution that protected individuals from being jailed without due process of law. The Amendment clearly states that people should not be jailed unless they were lawfully proven guilty. Bush's Patriot Act disregarded the Fifth Amendment and proceeded to violate its core values. After 9/11 attacks, FBI was reported to hold responsible for incidents of racial profiling, indefinite detention and active suspension of Arab American citizens' rights without due process (Ibish). Patriot Act allowed the government to jail Arab Muslim Americans indefinitely without judicial trial. The imprisoning of Arab Muslim Americans without having judicial trial prevents due process of law and consequently violates the Fifth Amendment to US constitution.

### **3.4. Arab Americans' Status post Bush's Administration**

After President Bush's departure from the White House, a new government was elected. Arab Americans were hopeful that the new government will treat them fairly. However, stereotypes against Arab Americans continued with the new government. When Senator John McCain, held a meeting in town hall in 2008, he addressed the allegation towards presidential candidate Barack Obama. When Barack Obama was accused of being from Arab decent, Senator McCain responded, "No...he is a decent man citizen" (Speigel 18). The language used here was definitely provocative. Senator McCain comments did not just deny the Arab origins allegation of Barack Obama, it accused people from Arab origins to be not good, and not decent citizens. McCain associated "being a decent citizen" to equal means "not being

from Arab origins". The message clearly emphasizes on the stereotypes images towards Arab Americans.

Another instance of politicians' discrimination of Arab Muslim Americans occurred in 2008. At that time, Barack Obama was a Senator campaigning for presidency, his campaign staff refused to allow a female Muslim supporter to sit behind the candidate's camera shot. The female Muslim was denied to sit there because she wore hijab. Obama staff feared that when people see a women wearing hijab setting behind Obama, they would assume that the Senator supports Muslims (Christoff and Warikoo). When politicians associate themselves with Muslims they were more likely to be seen as Muslim supporters, consequently, "terrorists" supporters. The negative stereotypes against Arab Muslim Americans did not stop when Bush departed from presidency; instead, they stayed present within the US political sphere.

The Chapter tackles the issue of discrimination that Arab Muslim Americans were subject to after 9/11. It sheds light on the discrimination and stereotypes that were practiced against Arab Muslim Americans regardless of their gender, educational level or occupation. The chapter uses discriminatory acts to emphasize that Arab Americans did not positively acculturate to US post 9/11.

The sources of discrimination were diverse; it varied from US public, media, Bush's policies to Politicians after Bush's departure. The discriminatory practices that Arab Americans suffered from made it hard to acculturate in a proper way, especially for Muslim Arab Americans. In order be fully accepted as Americans, Arab Americans must denounce and distance themselves from "bad Arabs/bad Islam", and cultivate "good Arab/Muslim" identities (Shryock 107-108). The only way for Arab Americans to positively acculturate to the US society is to abandon their culture and their identities.

Abandoning the identity and culture of Arab American was not an option for most Arab Muslim Americans. The act of giving up on forcefully leaving their culture of heritage and identity contradict with the promoted values of US formation. Arabs came to US because it promoted diversity in culture and allowed all comers to have equal opportunities reaching the American dream. However, these values were neglected in post 9/11 America. Arab Americans found themselves victims of forced acculturation and they are still suffering from its negative outcomes.

## Conclusion

There is a strong misconception about not only Arabs, but Arab Americans as well in USA. “Arab” and “Islam” are used interchangeably, they, however, do not mean the same thing. The word Arab refers to the ethnicity while Islam refers to the religion. Arab is heavily linked with citizens from Arab League countries while Islam is worldwide religion that all ethnicities can have. Arabs came to US from different Arab countries in search of better life conditions, economic wellbeing, political stability, religious freedom, and equality under the law. The United States has always positioned itself as a land of equal opportunities and freedom for all comers

The concept of acculturation is a prominent theme in cultural studies. Many researchers conduct several studies about acculturation especially in relation to multicultural societies such as the USA. Different studies identify the terms of acculturation, its strategies, models and acculturative stress that result from the process of acculturation. A failed acculturation process causes high levels of acculturative stress and mental health issues. Discrimination and stereotypes function as a trigger to acculturative stress. They lead to mental health issues and prevent individuals and groups from blending in with the host country’s population. Not only that, they also downgrade the targeted individual and groups’ culture and put it below the host country’s culture. In this run, Arab Americans represented no exception; they suffered from social, cultural, and political difficulties that prevented them to be accepted as full citizens of the United States

Acculturation is not a new topic in the USA. Studies about Arab Americans acculturation emerged mainly after the 9/11 attacks which put huge spotlights on Arab Americans especially Muslim Americans. The US population accuses Arab Muslim Americans of being supporters of 9/11 attacks. The systemized discrimination and stereotypes against Arab



Muslims promotes animosity against the group and anyone who is perceived as Arab Muslims.

Discrimination against Arab Muslims functions as a barrier preventing proper acculturation in US. Mislead by false news, stereotypes, and propaganda, the US government along with media and people mistreated Arab Muslims and accused them of terrorism; a term that is heavily linked to Arab Muslims. Several studies show the overwhelming discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Muslims post 9/11. The numbers of discrimination events highly increased after 9/11 which led to another increase in hate crimes and reported mistreatment in schools, workplaces or public places. Furthermore, the media encouraged the discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Muslim Americans. It emphasized on portraying Arab Muslim Americans as terrorists. Many newspapers tended to write hateful and stereotypical headlines against Arab American Muslims. Even Hollywood contributed to the discrimination by portraying characters from Arab origins to be terrorists, violent, ignorant, and perverted individuals. In addition, Politicians attempted to further emphasize on Arab Muslim discrimination and stereotypes.

The Patriot Act of 2001 legalizes discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Muslim Americans. It allows the government to violate individuals' privacy by accessing to their email and recording phone conversations without their permission. Also, the government has the right to jail anyone who is accused of terrorism without having a trial. As a result, Arab Americans especially Arab Muslim Americans, and anyone who is perceived to be as them, are the main target of this act. Bush's administration played a crucial role in the systemized discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Muslim Americans. The Patriot Act itself contradicts the Amendments to US constitution. Thus, the Patriot Act of 2000 remains questionable as far as basic principles of the US Constitution are concerned. The

discrimination continues after Bush's departure from The White House as several politicians tend to reaffirm the discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Muslim Americans.

The continuous discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Muslim in US leads to a failure in acculturation process. Arab American Muslims are marginalized by US population, media, and politicians. Thus, they did not acculturate to US post 9/11. The discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Muslim Americans put them in an inferior level compared to US population. US forced Arab Americans to acculturate by neglecting their own culture and religion. Arab Christian Americans success in acculturation is related to their distance from their Arab culture and Islam religion. However, Arab Muslim Americans fail to acculturate post 9/11 because they refuse to abandon their culture and religion. The attacks of 9/11 are not the only reason that prevents Arab Muslim Americans from acculturating to US. US discrimination and stereotypes against Arab Muslims dated back to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. 9/11 attacks are just justifications for an inherently act of US towards any ethnic minority who is different from US.

Even after Bush's administration departure, US policies continue to marginalize Arab Americans and treat them as if they are immigrants and not American born citizens. US population, media, and politicians exclude Arab Americans from their legitimate rights as US citizens. Arab and Islamic origins have automatically prevented Arab Americans from enjoying the sought equality their parents had dreamt of. Being born and raised in the US does not prevent Arab Americans from treated as second class citizens.

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