

NEW YORK'S DIVERSE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Listening Tour ★ Thursday September 15th, 2011



1

8:00 AM (START HERE)

SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR
RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE

2

11:00 AM

INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

5

3:30 PM (END HERE)

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
KIMMEL CENTER

4

1:30 PM

LUNCH AT BEIT EL-MAQDIS
ISLANMIC CENTER

3

12:45 PM

WALKING TOUR OF
BAYRIDGE, BROOKLYN

FIVE BOROUGHS AT A GLANCE

BROOKLYN: Brooklyn has one of the largest concentrations of Arab Muslims, predominantly around the Atlantic Avenue area of Brooklyn Heights and Boerum Hill, and further south in Bayridge, now the most populous Arab neighborhood in New York City. Bedford-Stuyvesant is home to many African-American Muslims, while large numbers of Muslims from South Asia and Turkey are found in Prospect Park, Bensonhurst, Brighton Beach, Coney Island and Parkville.

BRONX: Small businesses and “bodegas” run by Yemeni immigrants are scattered along Jerome Avenue and the Grand Concourse. Neighborhoods with a strong Muslim presence include Mott Haven, Melrose, Mount Eden, Mount Hope, University Heights, Fordham, Norwood, Longwood, Clarmont Village, Westchester and Parkchester. Afghani, Albanian, South Asian, and West African Muslims (Gambia and Senegal) have established community mosques, and the South Bronx around Mott Haven is now home to Alianza Islamica, the New York association of Latino Muslims.

MANHATTAN: Numerous small businesses operated by Arab Muslims are clustered in uptown neighborhoods of Harlem, Hamilton Heights, and East Harlem; these same neighborhoods also have a large residential presence of African-American Muslims, West Africans (mostly Senegalese), and a smaller number of Latino converts. Two of the city’s most prominent mosques are located in Harlem: Malcolm Shabbaz on 116th and Lexington, and the Islamic Cultural Center of New York on 96th and 3rd Avenue. Commercial enterprises run by South Asians, Afghans, Iranians, Turks, and Arabs are spread out further south in Midtown and Lower Manhattan, including Chelsea, Union Square, SoHo and the East Village.

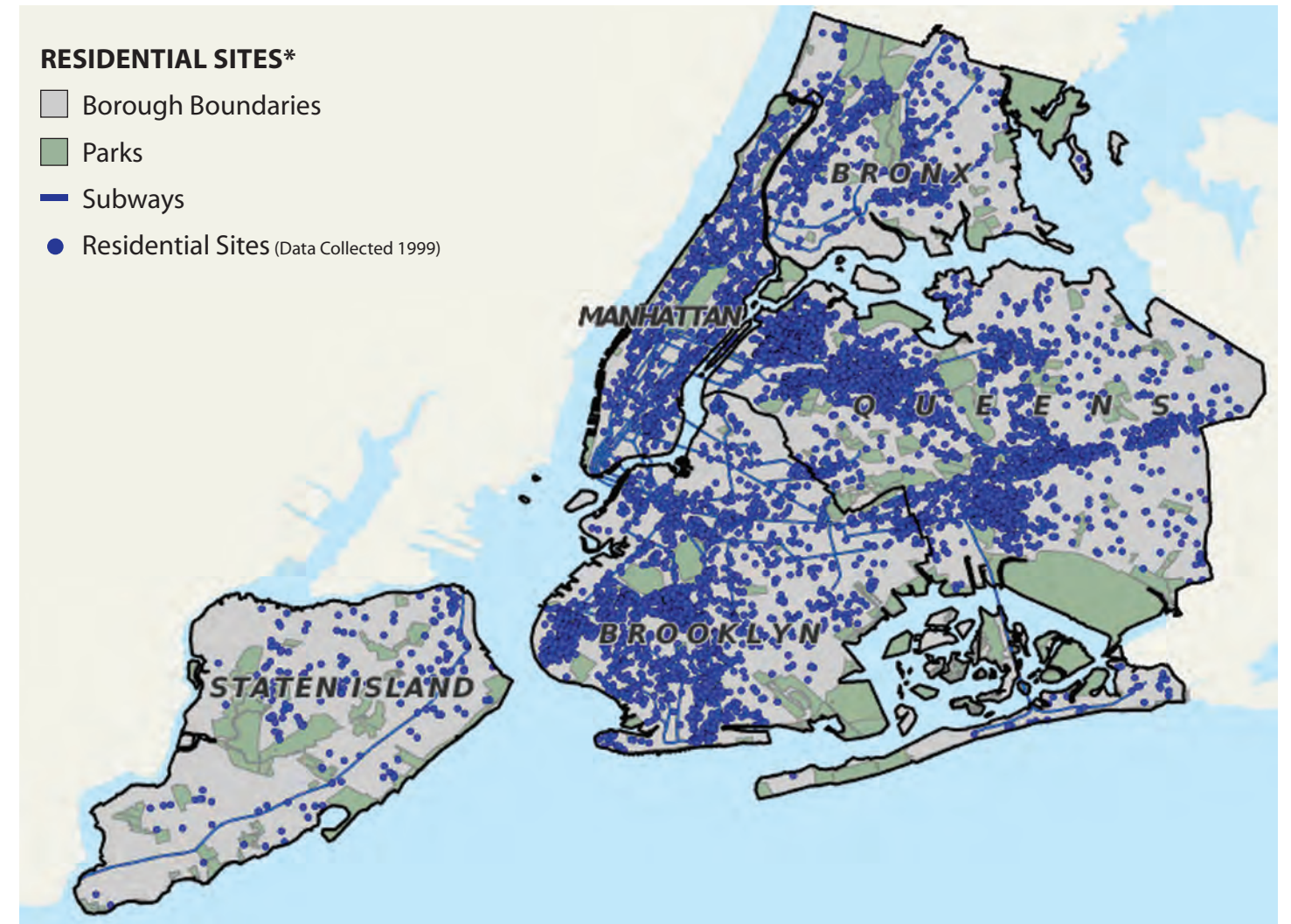
QUEENS: Queens is home to large enclaves of South Asian Muslims, concentrated mainly in Astoria, Corona, Flushing, Jackson Heights, and Jamaica. A modest number of Afghani communities are associated with small businesses and several community mosques in Astoria. Astoria is also home to a growing number of North African Muslims—mostly Moroccan and Algerian, whose numbers are relatively small compared to their South Asian neighbors and smaller still relative to their Arab cousins in Brooklyn, but a growing number of North African cafes and restaurants suggests emerging properties of ethnic enclave. A substantial Guyanese Muslim community—one of the largest Guyanese diaspora communities anywhere—is settled in Richmond Hill and has several large mosques, one of which is associated with a private school. A small but active Indonesian community is found in Long Island City and operates a dual purpose mosque/cultural center. Yemeni-run bodegas are found further south in Ozone Park, well away from the tight business competition of the South Asian neighborhoods.

STATEN ISLAND: Canvassing of Staten Island produced modest numbers of commercial sites and residential phone listings. This should not be construed as evidence of an absence of Muslims, however. There are at least eight mosques serving a mixed community of Albanians, Bosnians, Kosovars, Turks, Nigerians, and several Arab ethnic groups. The Albanian Islamic Cultural Center is one of the largest built mosques in all of New York City and it also supports an elementary school on its premises. The presence of these Islamic organizations and the modest number of small businesses suggests that Staten Island is a residential suburb for Muslims working elsewhere in New York City or in nearby New Jersey.

MUSLIM POPULATION OF NEW YORK CITY

RESIDENTIAL SITES*

- Borough Boundaries
- Parks
- Subways
- Residential Sites (Data Collected 1999)



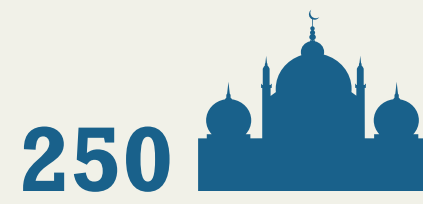
1%
of residents in New York State are practicing Muslims

Source: Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life



700,000
Estimated number of Muslim New Yorkers

Source: Louis Cristillo, PhD, Teachers College, Columbia University (August 2009)



250
Estimated number of mosques in New York City

Source: Based on NYPD records as reported by Associated Press (Sept. 6, 2011)



In addition to those who are US-born, Muslim New Yorkers come from across the globe

- AFGHANISTAN
- BANGLADESH
- PAKISTAN
- INDIA
- INDONESIA
- MALAYSIA
- IRAN
- JORDAN
- SYRIA
- LEBANON
- TURKEY
- EGYPT
- PALESTINE
- SAUDI ARABIA
- MOROCCO
- ALGERIA
- TUNISIA
- LIBYA
- BOSNIA
- KOSOVO
- ALBANIA
- AZERBAIJAN
- SENEGAL
- SUDAN
- MAURITANIA
- MALI
- GAMBIA
- NIGERIA
- TRINIDAD TABAGO
- GUYANA

A precise enumeration of religious affiliation is impossible because of federal restrictions on the US Census regarding religion. Nonetheless, academic surveys conducted since the 1990s suggest that the present Muslim population in the US is approximately 5-7 million, a figure generally accepted by most experts studying Muslim Americans. The population estimate of 700,000 Muslims in New York City is based on extrapolations of ancestry and country of origin data from immigration and US Census records from 1990 to 2000, and combined with recent demographic studies on Mosque affiliation suggesting that 1 in 10 Muslims in US reside in NYC.

* Residential Sites Map: In 1998-1999, a research team of graduate students canvassed NYC and recorded the location of mosques, Muslim-owned stores, professional offices, and service and cultural centers. Residential patterns were extrapolated by mapping the results of a search of telephone book listings associated with common male and female Muslim names. Based on the assumption that these residential telephone listings likely reflect the geographic distribution of residents, the above maps indicate the probable demographic distribution of Muslims across the five boroughs.

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

The **Arab American Association of New York** a social service organization located in Brooklyn, supports and empowers the Arab immigrant community by providing services that will help them to adjust to their new homeland and become active members of American society. Its aim is for families to achieve the ultimate goals of independence, productivity, and stability.

The **Arab American Family Support Center (AAFSC)** provides comprehensive social services to Arab-American immigrant families and children. It addresses language barriers, encourages positive leadership, and promotes a stronger and more united Arab-American community. Since the events of September 11th, AAFSC has given greater voice and presence to the Arab-American community by strengthening and expanding its programs in several critical areas - outreach, mental health, youth development, and legal services.

Chhaya CDC (ChHaya), which means "shelter," seeks to create more stable and sustainable communities by increasing civic participation and addressing the housing and community development needs of New York's South Asians, new immigrants and their neighbors.

The **Council of People's Organization (COPO)** assists low income immigrant families, particularly South Asians and Muslims, to reach their full potential as residents of New York City. COPO empowers marginalized communities to advocate for their rights. It provides ESL classes, computer classes, legal services, youth and women empowerment programs. It also helps to build community relations amongst Muslim and non-Muslim community groups.

DRUM (Desis Rising Up and Moving) is a multigenerational membership led organization of working class South Asian immigrants, founded to build the power of South Asian low wage immigrant workers, youth, and families in New York City to win economic and educational justice, and civil and immigrant rights.

The **Interfaith Center of New York** seeks to make New York City and the world safe for religious difference by increasing respect and mutual understanding among people of different faith, ethnic, and cultural traditions and by fostering cooperation among religious communities and civic organizations to solve common social problems.

The **Islamic Center at NYU** is dedicated to fostering a sense of awareness, activism and scholarship amongst the Muslim community both on and off campus. The Islamic Center motivates its membership to find new ways of harnessing their resources and expanding their relationships with the wider community.

The **Muslim Women's Institute for Research and Development (MWIRD)** is a faith-based, multiservice, nonprofit organization committed to community and individual development. Organized with Islamic values, MWIRD works to do: organize and empower immigrant women (particularly Muslim women); enhance and sustain disaster preparedness and relief in the urban environment; service the transitional needs of new immigrants, and facilitate a greater role for women in the public discourse about Islam in the United States.

The **Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture** is a national research library devoted to collecting, preserving and providing access to resources documenting

the experiences of peoples of African descent throughout the world.

South Asian Youth Action (SAYA!) is the nation's only secular youth development organization dedicated to South Asian youth. Its mission is to create social change and opportunities for South Asian youth to realize their fullest potential. Since inception in 1996, SAYA! has brought comprehensive youth development and after-school programs to nearly 7,000 youth across New York City, and an average of 600 youth each academic year.

Turning Point for Women and Families addresses the needs of Muslim women and children through crisis intervention, individual and group counseling, advocacy, outreach, education and training. It offers culturally competent services, especially in the area of domestic violence. In a safe and nurturing environment, Turning Point helps women empower themselves and transform their own lives as well as those of their families and children. Through partnerships, it also aims at mentoring a new generation of social workers trained to address the unique needs of the Muslim community.

Women in Islam, Inc. was established to advance the spiritual and intellectual development of women to empower them as dynamic participants in civil society and as advocates for human rights and social justice.

PARTICIPATING MOSQUES

Beit Al Maqdis Islamic Center

Iqra Masjid Community and Tradition, Inc.

Islamic Cultural Center of North America

Masjid Aqsa Mosque

The **Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood**

Muslim American Society (MAS)

SPONSORS

