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Is the Academic Freedom of Foreign-Born Professors in U.S. Universities Under Attack?

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Is the Academic Freedom of Foreign-Born Professors in U.S. Universities Under Attack?

A Qualitative Investigation Into the Experiences of Arab-Born and

Non-Arab Professors Who Teach and Conduct Research

About Middle East Issues

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APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE

Khulod Wahboubadr has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text of the doctoral dissertation for the **Ph.D.** during the **Spring 2021** Semester.

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Abstract

In this study, academic freedom was defined by 17 foreign-born professors:12 Arab-born and five non-Arab professors from nine different higher education institutions, as the ability to express different ideas, research any topic, and publish the results without fear of intimidation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to examine how foreign-born professors experienced academic freedom when teaching and writing about Middle East issues and how their views about the U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East influenced their experiences on the grounds of their foreignness (place of origin, race/ethnicity, and religion). Overall, participants reported positive experiences with academic freedom when teaching and writing about Middle East issues, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They also reported that expressing views from a Middle Eastern point of views added new values and brought different perspectives into the classroom, for the most part. However, they acknowledged that expressing an opinion about Israel and U.S. policies in the Middle East inside the classroom was risky, but what even riskier was discussing these topics outside the classroom. Some were blacklisted by private organizations as anti-American or anti-Semitic for expressing their political views on different social platforms. Whether Arab-born or non-Arab, discussing the Israel policy in the Middle East was seen as a red line, the crossing of which could threaten the academic freedom of professors.

Keywords: Academic Freedom, Freedom in Teaching, Freedom in Research, Middle East Studies, Israel-Palestine Conflict

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Lastly, I would like to thank my family and friends, whose love, encouragement, and prayers have made me finally reach this point. It has been a long and hard journey for

all of us, and I can never repay for your endless support. Thank you and God bless you all.

"To impose any straitjacket upon the intellectual leaders in our colleges and universities would imperil the future of our nation . . . scholarship cannot flourish in an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust. Teachers and students must always remain free to inquire, to study and evaluate, to gain new maturity and understanding; otherwise, our civilization will stagnate and die."

<div align="right">

Chief Justice Earl Warren, 1957
(Schrecker, 2010)

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation study to my late father, Saleh Badr, whom I did not have the chance to tell I DID IT. He would simply say: Alf alf maboork ya benti Alhamdullah [congratulations my daughter thanks God].

I also dedicate this study to my mother, Asia Madeni, who has been praying and making dua'a for me to fulfill my dream. Without her blessing, I would not have been able to complete the dissertation.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"If the rights of foreign-born academics were fragile before September 11 2001, they are almost non-existent now" (Rajagopal, 2003, p. 26). Rajagopal noted that foreign-born faculty members at American universities have fewer rights than native-born faculty. He added that their academic freedom of teaching and conducting research are violated and not secured. According to Doumani (2005), Salaita (2008), Terry (2012), and Bilgrami and Cole (2015), what these faculty members teach, what they assign for reading, and what they say in classrooms are monitored by the U.S. government and private organizations such as the David Project, Campus Watch, and StandWithUs. These pro-Israel private organizations target individuals and organizations that express critical views related to Middle East issues particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and accuse them of biases in classrooms (Terry, 2012). In fact, these organizations urge students to report on the political views of their professors, especially those who come from Arab/Islamic backgrounds, in an effort to undermine professors' academic freedom (Doumani, 2005; Terry, 2012).

Perhaps many are familiar with the war against professors of the Middle East Studies Department at Columbia University who have been attacked constantly by special groups for questioning or disapproving Israel and U.S. foreign policies in the Middle East. One example is the case of *Columbia Unbecoming*; a 40-minute film was produced by the David Project reporting incidents of intimidation in classrooms by some professors of Columbia's Department of Middle East and Asian Language and Cultures MEALC (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015; Dols, 2004; Newman, 2005; Senior, 2004). Joseph Massad, a Jordanian-born Assistant Professor at that time, who teaches the Israeli-Palestinian Politics and Societies course, was one of three professors

accused of intimidating students as a result of their pro-Israel views (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015; Dols, 2004; Newman, 2005). One student, a former Israeli soldier, claimed on camera that Professor Massad demanded to know the number of Palestinians that he had killed (Dols, 2004; Wilson, 2008). Another student also claimed that Professor Massad asked her to leave the classroom when she expressed pro-Israel views (Katznelson et al., 2005; Newman, 2005; Wilson, 2008).

The film was screened to a high level of Columbia administrators, as well as to a handful of alumni and trustees, and was later distributed to the media and dominated headlines in major news outlets such as the *New York Sun*, *The New York Ti*mes, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015). In result, Massad's class was canceled for the spring semester 2004, as he and a number of MEALC professors received racist emails and death threats (Dols, 2004; Senior, 2004). In addition, then-Congressman Anthony Weiner, a New York Democrat, demanded that the University fire Professor Massad and urged the Columbia officials to monitor classrooms' discussion and create speech codes to protect students from savage professors (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015).

Ultimately, the University appointed a committee of five faculty members to investigate the incidents in the film and the group found no evidence of intimidation or anti-Semitism and determined all claims were spurious and thus no formal complaint was filed against Professor Massad (Dols, 2004; Newman, 2005). This campaign, which Professor Massad referred to via *The Electronic Intifada,* was not the first; he has been attacked for years for his critical public writing about the conflict between Israel and Palestine (Massad, 2004). He added that the goal of *Columbia Unbecoming* is to suppress other opinions at Columbia University and other universities to ensure that only one opinion—defending Israel—is allowed (Massad, 2004). This

is similar to what Jonathan Cole, the former Provost and Dean of Faculties of Columbia University, said in his co-authored book *Who's Afraid of Academic Freedom?* (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015). Cole explained that during his 14 years in Columbia University, there were repeated efforts by outside groups to silence certain faculty members particularly who criticize Israel and defend Palestine (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015).

In response, academics from inside and outside the University perceived this film as a witch-hunt on campus that meant to damage Massad's reputation, just as he was about to file for his tenure (Senior, 2004; Wilson & Byrne, 2008). The New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) sent a letter to the University President Lee Bollinger, urging the University to protect diversity of discourse of academics even if topics are provocative, controversial, and unorthodox (NYCLU, 2004). Likewise, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the prime defender of academic freedom, wrote two letters to the University's administrators denouncing the violation of Professor Massad's academic freedom by politicians or any other groups (Kramer, 2005).

This academic freedom violation in the case of Massad is not the first incident raised against faculty of Arab origin since September 11, 2001. For instance, Palestinian-born Professor Edward Said and Syrian-born Professor Yvonne Haddad were under attack by media and individuals for criticizing the continued support for Israel and blaming the United States for the attacks of 9/11; yet, Massad's case is exceptional. The film *Columbia Unbecoming* was filmed during and after the peace initiatives collapsed between Israel and Palestine in 2003, coinciding with America's entry into Iraq in 2003 as well (Senior, 2004; Terry, 2012). These events re-escalated the tensions after the attacks of 9/11 between special interest groups on U.S. campuses and faculty members with ties to the Arab world, especially those who teach topics and conduct

research related to areas of the Middle East (Newman, 2005; Terry, 2012). Middle East Studies professors have become targets of private non-profit organizations such as Campus Watch and Canary Mission, which blacklisted a number of Arab and non-Arab faculty members, attacking them for presenting views that criticizing U.S. and Israel policies in the Middle East. Such attacks include, but are not limited to, calls for faculty dismissals, interference in academic programs, and manipulate in tenure decisions (Locher, 2013; Terry, 2012).

To explain the matter, Bilgrami and Cole (2015) noted that these attacks usually follow a clear pattern: criticizing a professor followed by media coverage that carries the allegations, which are often inaccurate or incomplete, ending with politicians and donors who demand the university sanction the professor. These attacks on academics, according to Terry (2012), Locher (2013), and Hudson and Williams (2016), may have dangerous implications on academic freedom. For instance, some faculty may choose not to engage in discussion about controversial issues to avoid attacks (Locher, 2013; Terry, 2012); or in contrast, other may choose to express views even if it costs them jobs.

Steven Salaita, for instance, a Palestinian-American professor of indigenous studies, was fired on September 2014 from a tenured position at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign UIUC after he posted on his personal Twitter account several comments criticizing the Israel government for bombing 2000 people including 500 children in Gaza in 2014 (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2014; Mackey, 2014). He tweeted statements including, "If you are defending # Israel right now you are awful human being" and "This is not a conflict between # Israel and Hamas. It's a struggle by an indigenous people against a colonial power # Gaza # Free Palestine" (Mackey, 2014).

Salaita was supposed to begin teaching in the fall 2014 at UIUC in the American Indian Studies Program; instead, he received a termination letter without any explanation. According to the University chancellor Phyllis Wise, the decision to fire Salaita was made due to his "uncivil" and "disrespectful" comments that were fueled with hate and violence, which the University cannot tolerate (Mackey, 2014). The University President also expressed similar concern, adding that Salaita's statements indicate his incapability to maintain a classroom environment where conflicting ideas should be given equal presentation (Mackey, 2014). Salaita, on the other hand, rejected those accusations and stated that the University's decision to terminate him was because their wealthy donors had threatened to withdraw financial support if Salaita was allowed to teach (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2014). Even worse, he added that this action threatens the principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech and place other faculty members at risk of termination if the University deems the tone of their speech "uncivil" (Salaita, 2014).

In response, many individuals and groups raised concerns about the implications for free speech and shared governance principles at the UIUC (Mackey, 2014). For instance, 16 of the University's academic departments, including American Indian Studies, voted no confidence about the University's decision; more than 5,000 academics from around the country called to boycott the University, which resulted in the cancellation of more than a dozen talks and conferences; a public petition that garnered thousands of signatures to reappoint Professor Salaita; and prominent academic organizations including the Society of American Law Teachers and AAUP condemning the firing of Professor Salaita (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2014, 2015). In fact, at its annual meeting, the AAUP voted to censure the University for violating academic freedom principles, standards of academic governance, and due process (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2014, 2015). Above all, the Center for Constitutional Rights and Loevy &

Loevy filed two lawsuits on behalf of the professor in federal court against the University for violating Salaita's constitutional rights to free speech and for breach of his employment contract (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2014).

After 15 months of investigations, demonstrations, and two lawsuits, the Center for Constitutional Rights and co-counsel Loevy & Loevy announced the settlement in which the University agreed to pay $875,000, including 600,000 to Salatia (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2015). "This is an important victory, even if the bigger fight isn't over," said Professor Salaita through his Facebook page. He added that this concerted effort by wealthy and well organized groups to silence faculty, especially Arab faculty, is not new; rather, it is part of a nationwide campaign that aim to punish who dare to express views related to the Palestine-Israel conflict (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2014; Mackey, 2014).

While these two cases of professors Salaita and Massad do not necessarily represent the full range of issues facing Arab faculty in the United States, they definitely provide examples of academic freedom violations against this group since 9/11. While many would perceive attacks on Arab academics as prejudice, discrimination, or even racism, others would perceive them as collective attempts to secure, defend, and retain American values and culture (e.g., civil liberty, justice, and independence). Natives or nativists believe that ideas or people who come from different backgrounds, religions, languages, or dissenting political philosophies may pose a threat to and harm the American nation (Berlet, 2001). This is a form of suspecting willingness and abilities of foreign-born/immigrant to function as loyal and patriotic Americans (Berlet, 2001).

These sentiments are not new; throughout U.S. history, unfavorable attitudes toward foreign people and their ideas have persisted, especially during times of national crisis. Cooper

(2003) stated that faculty members have always experienced attacks on their unpopular opinions, selection of course materials (Rajagopal, 2003), their political views or affiliation (Salaita, 2008), and scholarly research (Terry, 2012). For instance, during the McCarthy era in the 1950s, many faculty members were blacklisted because they were perceived as communists, and communism was viewed as a threat to the political structure of America (Cooper, 2003; Locher, 2013; O'Neil, 2005). During the Vietnam War in the 1960s, many professors were targeted under similar pressure, especially those who opposed the U.S. foreign policy (Cooper, 2003; Locher, 2013; O'Neil, 2005).

Given Cooper's (2003) perspective, it is not surprising that the attacks of 9/11, followed by the "War on Terror," resulted in fear of the Arab/Muslim community. They were seen as foreign enemies with an unfamiliar ideology that would damage the American values (Beinin, 2004). Academics, particularly Arab, have been accused of being anti-American and anti-Semitic when criticizing U.S. or Israel policies (Newman, 2005; Rajagopal, 2003; Salaita, 2008; Terry, 2012). Faculty teaching Middle East Studies have been accused particularly frequently for failing to predict some important area developments from the attacks of September 11 in 2001 to the Arab Spring in 2011 (LDB, 2014). The Arab Spring has added to the historical trend of attacking faculty during crisis because of their political views that blame U.S. and Israel policies in the Middle East. Spero (2017b) explained that anything that an Arab academic says might be defined as hate speech.

Furthermore, since the election of President Donald Trump, anti-Muslim/anti-Arab expression has dramatically increased throughout the country (Spero, 2017b). As a result, concerted efforts by pro-Israel organizations, members of congress, and state legislatures have intensified their attacks on academics, students, and activists for engaging in actions opposing

Israel policy in the Middle East (Spero, 2017b; Waheed & Hauss, 2018). Even worse, students and professors are threatened with discipline; colleges and schools are pressured to loss federal fund when supporting anti-Israel views (Waheed & Hauss, 2018). This may suggest that academic freedom of Arab-born professors, especially who teach and write about Middle East issues is under attack.

There have not been extensive studies to support such a claim; therefore, there is a need to examine and to explore further how Arab faculty experience academic freedom of teaching and conducting research related to Middle Eastern affairs. In this study, I will specifically focus on Arab-born academics for two main reasons. First, there is a lack of information on who the Arab-born professors are, where they work, and how they experience U.S. higher education. There has been increasing scholarly focus on the experience of foreign-born faculty in higher education over the last 2 decades, yet Arab faculty members were not included in most of these studies (Alberts, 2008; Collins, 2008; Foote et al., 2008; Kim et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2017; Lin et al., 2008; Mamiseishvili, 2008, 2009, 2011). The second reason is that while the literature is rich with studies of experiences of Arab immigrants in the United States before and after September 11 (Ameri & Arida, 2012; Cainkar, 2002; Daraiseh, 2012; Jamal & Naber, 2008; Mills, 2012; Wingfield, 2012), there is limited knowledge of Arabs in academia, particularly concerning academic freedom. This raises the question of why I chose to examine academic freedom in particular.

I was inspired by a research paper written by Altbach (2007) entitled "Academic Freedom in a Global Context: 21st Century Challenges." In this paper, Altbach noted that the academic freedom of Arab/Muslim academics such as in Egypt, Algeria, Syria, Gulf countries, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and Iran may be classified as insecure, limited, or nonexistent.

Professors can be arrested, fired, or even sentenced to death if they express views that contradict the policies of their governments. Such was the case of an Iranian social scientist who was sentenced to death for calling for democracy; however, an international protest led to this sentence being lifted in 2004.

This brought to my attention to examine and explore the academic freedom of Arab/Muslim academics within U.S. universities, especially with the knowledge that "Academic freedom is the lifeblood of faculty work" in the United States (Gappa & Austin, 2010, p. 15). Without this freedom, faculty members would not be able to search for truth or produce knowledge. Another reason to examine the experiences of Arab-born faculty concerning academic freedom is that many foreign academics come to the United States seeking opportunities to extend their education, access better research facilities, and enjoy academic freedom (Liu, 2012). The current study, therefore, represents an opportunity to know more about Arab academics by asking how they perceive academic freedom, whether they practice freedom in their academic work or not, and what experiences they have had concerning academic freedom.

It is important to note that the purpose of this study is not necessarily to examine whether or not the academic freedom of Arab-born faculty is under attack. Instead, I aim to gain insight into the lived experiences of the Arab-born faculty with an emphasis on their perceptions of academic freedom. I will attempt to explore their experiences with academic freedom and the meaning of their experiences. This may bring to attention any negative experiences they might have concerning their academic freedom. Findings also may enable researchers and policymakers to better understanding of the experiences and diversity of Arab-born faculty in higher education and improve efforts to protect their roles and responsibilities to educate

students and to advance knowledge without unreasonable constraints or fear of sanctions. In addition, this study seeks to provide the necessary support to all faculty members regardless of their religions, ethnicities, and country of origins.

Statement of the Problem

Since the attacks of September 11, a number of Arab-born faculty have been under serious attack by individuals and private organizations over their academic freedom (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015; Dols, 2004; Fessel, 2006; Horowitz, 2006a; Horowitz & Laksin, 2009; Newman, 2005; Salaita, 2008; Spero, 2017b; Terry, 2012), yet researchers have not paid enough attention to examining such a phenomenon. Previous researchers (Barger, 2010; Locher, 2013; Mahamane, 2011; Porter, 2006) have examined faculty's experiences with academic freedom for certain racial groups such as White, Black, Latinos, and Asians, while failing to recognize Arabs. Indeed, it was not clear whether Arab faculty members were included or not because throughout the course of U.S. history, Arabs have been varyingly classified either as White, Asian, Caucasian, or other (Jamal & Naber, 2008; Suleiman, 1999). The misclassification of this race, however, is beyond the scope of the current study.

In this study, I aim to explore the experiences of foreign-born professors particularly Arabs, with academic freedom in higher education. I propose to conduct semi-structured interviews, especially with those who study and teach Middle East, Arabic, or Islamic studies to answer the following research questions:

1. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors perceive academic freedom in the United States regarding Middle East issues?

2. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of teaching in discussing issues related to the Middle East?

3. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of conducting research related to Middle East issues?

4. To what extent do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in the United States believe their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have influenced their experiences in higher education on the grounds of their foreignness (origin, race/ethnicity, and religion)?

Theoretical Perspective

This study will be guided by a theory of Americans nativism in order to facilitate my examination of the lived experiences of Arab-born academics at higher education institutions on the grounds of their foreignness. This political movement known as an anti-immigrant movement perceives foreign-born/immigrant as un-American and as a threat to the nation because of their races, origins, religions, and languages that differ from the American culture. This anti-immigrant ideology provides a framework to understand the negative sentiments toward foreigners, Arabs in particular, and its development in relation to their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. It also aims to shed light if participants through their lived experience have experienced any kind of restriction and surveillance in regard to topics they teach, research, and publish, as well as its relation to their race and cultural differences. This theoretical framework of anti-immigrant will be used to analyze and interpret the collected data in order to explore participants' perceived experiences as Arab-born faculty members and to explore how anti-Arab sentiment may have influenced their experiences in academia. More details on this ideology will be discussed in Chapter II, the literature review.

Significance of the Study

Examining the experience of Arab-born faculty with academic freedom is significant for several reasons. First, it may be the first study that examines perceptions and experiences of Arab-born faculty members in higher education particularly concerning academic freedom, which will expand the limited body of literature on Arab-born faculty experiences in higher education institutions. Second, the findings of the study may provide information to better know and understand this group of faculty members. Evidence has shown that the events of 9/11 brought to light the lack of knowledge of, misconceptions about, and hostility towards Arabs or/and Muslims in general and academics in particular (Terry, 2012). Arab faculty have become an integral part of the American higher education system; therefore, there is a need to study and investigate their experiences in higher education.

Third, the findings of this study may highlight the important role of Arab-born faculty members in bringing diverse perspectives into the classrooms. This information could be the best means to fight racism, promote tolerance, respect, and understanding of others in such a pluralistic society. It also may help Arab academics to overcome some challenges that they may encounter while teaching, conducting research, and expressing opinion, which would be useful for other race/ethnicity groups to cope with their challenges as well. The fourth significance is that the information generated from the study will help to understand what Arab-born faculty know or do not know about the concept of academic freedom. Utilizing this information may assist administrators and senior faculty to design workshops for new or untenured faculty to foster better understanding of academic freedom (Gappa & Austin, 2010) and perhaps provide strategies to help in case of attacks. This step is important, especially after Gary Olson, the President of Daemen College in Amherst, New York, described how some professors may

jeopardize their jobs because of their misunderstanding about academic freedom. For instance, some professors may use their academic freedom as an excuse for saying anything they want or behaving unprofessionally with their colleagues and students, such as libel of a colleague, publicly rebuking students or staff members, or conducting a class in irresponsible ways (Olson, 2009). He pointed out to one professor who missed a substantial number of her classes and when she was confronted by the chair department of her absents, she said that she had the freedom to conduct her class the way she deemed appropriate (Olson, 2009). Accordingly, educating faculty about academic freedom is crucial to avoiding any misperceptions about the concept and reinforcing faculty's confidence about their academic work (Gappa & Austin, 2010).

Lastly, I hope this study inspires interested researchers to study and examine the experience of Arab-born academics in higher education from different perspectives in regard to their field, gender, or employment status regarding their struggles, success, or research productivity. It is also my hope that the findings of this study may motivate some researchers to examine the experiences of Arab-born with Arab-American faculty in higher education.

Definitions of Terms

In this section, I will provide the definitions of some key terms for clarification to ensure understanding throughout the study.

Academic freedom. This term commonly refers to the rights and responsibilities of professors to teach, conduct research, publish results, and express their opinions.

Academic freedom of teaching. This term describes the freedom to "determine the appropriate teaching methods for their content and development of assignments to fulfill course objectives. This includes course content, teaching methods, learning exercises, and examination methods related to the subject matters" (Barger, 2010, p. 45).

Academic freedom of conducting research. This describes the freedom "to study and to do research on topics both faculty and students choose and to draw what conclusion they find consistent with their research" (Nelson, 2010).

Foreign-born faculty. This term describes those professors who are not native-born U.S. citizens who come to the United States to work at U.S. universities (Collins, 2008). Some have come to the United States after having finished their doctoral degrees in their home countries and wish to pursue academic careers in the United States (Foote et al., 2008), while others have come to the United States to finish their graduate studies and remain to work (McCalman, 2007; Wells et al., 2007).

Arab-born faculty. This term includes faculty who were born in one of 22 Arab countries, of which there are 10 in Africa (i.e., Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, the Comoros Island, Tunisia, Mauritania, Libya, and Morocco), and 12 in Asia (i.e., Oman, Palestine, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen).

Arab American. According to the Arab American Institute (2014), Arab Americans are citizens of a diverse community of immigrants who are descended from immigrants from the Arab countries.

Middle East. According to Hassoun (2011), this is a geographical term created by the English Empire; it includes both Arab and non-Arab countries (i.e., Iran, Turkey, and Israel).

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. The first chapter included the introduction, statement of the problem followed by the research questions, theoretical perspective, significance of the study, definition of terms, and summary. In the second chapter, I

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provided a comprehensive review of literature on the historical development of academic freedom in the United States, its importance to higher education and its future, and the academic freedom experiences of Arab-born academics in higher education. I also briefly explained the theoretical framework of nativism in order to understand what Arab-born academics have experienced in higher education. In Chapter 2, I described the research method that was used to select participants, collect data, and analyze the findings in order to answer the research questions. In the fourth chapter, I provided a summary description of research participants including their personal and professional background information. In Chapter 5, I described the themes that emerged from the collected data, organized them based on the four major research questions, and presented the findings. In the last chapter 6, I provided a discussion of the findings, explained the implications of academic freedom for foreign-born academics in general and Arabs in particular, and provided recommendations for future research studies on this topic.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to explore how foreign-born professors, especially Arabs have experienced academic freedom in U.S. higher education institutions. Their foreignness related anti-immigrant sentiment have influenced their experiences and placed them under attack when teaching and conducting research about controversial issues of the Middle East. In this qualitative study, I interviewed a sample of 12 Arab-born professors and five non-Arabs in order to understand how their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East interact with their foreignness (place of origin, race/ethnicity, and religion) in building up their experiences in higher education. The recruited participants will be teaching subjects and conducting research in areas related to the Middle East from different academic disciplines, and they may range from instructors to full professors in order to capture a wide range of experiences. My aim is to not

only shed light on experiences of controversial professors, but to include all experiences to

defend the need for academic freedom in higher education.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I will provide a detailed understanding of academic freedom and its interaction with political developments in the U.S. and Arab region. I organized the literature review chapter into three sections. In the first section, I will explain the importance of academic freedom in American higher education, before discussing the historical development of academic freedom in the United States during 20th and 21st centuries, and its future. This explanation will enable the reader to make sense of and understand why academic freedom has been the central theme throughout the recent history of the American higher education. In the second section, I will review several cases of Arab-born faculty members and their experiences in higher education, then I will briefly address the history of Arab immigrants in the United States. In the final section, I will discuss the theoretical framework of nativism/anti-immigrant ideology to better explain the attitude toward immigrants particularly Arabs at large and how it has influenced the experiences of Arab-born faculty members in higher education.

The Importance of Academic Freedom to American Higher Education

Over the course of decades, many individuals and groups have written books, journals, and scholarly papers about the value of academic freedom to academia in particular and society in general ("Columbia U. Prof. Rashid Khalidi," 2005; Fessel, 2006; Franke & O'Neil, 2003; Hudson & Williams, 2016; Nelson, 2010; Robinson & Moulton, 2002). Rashid Al Khalidi, for instance, cited that academic freedom is important to push forward the frontiers of knowledge ("Columbia U. Prof. Rashid Khalidi," 2005). This requires protecting ideas that are unpopular or controversial and not ideas that everyone agrees with ("Columbia U. Prof. Rashid Khalidi," 2005). No political or even religious ideas are beyond being questioned or criticized; otherwise,

they are not worth having (McCrae, 2011). As long as the primary objective is to discover and pass on of new knowledge then neither knowledge nor people who create knowledge should be suppressed (Hudson & Williams, 2016; Locher, 2013; Robinson & Moulton, 2002). Even if the discovered knowledge may be painful or undesirable, protecting all knowledge is worth the risk of occasional harmful effects when thinking of the larger benefit, search for truth, according to Robinson and Moulton (2002).

According to a published report by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), the search for truth is never about making assertions of truthfulness or falseness of a matter as much as developing evidence for that assertion (2006). This involves presenting different ideas, subjecting them to empirical tests through reliable methods, analyzing results and then determining whether or not a certain claim meets accepted criteria for truth among specialized and well-trained experts (AACU, 2006). This process of creating knowledge can be best achieved when scholars or professors have the freedom to select topics, conduct research, and publish its results without fear of any sanctions or interferences by political, religious, or any other groups.

Indeed, academic freedom does more than protect faculty members' freedom to conduct research; it protects their freedom to teach students as well (Golden, 2010). Golden explained that faculty's freedom to teach is a prerequisite to students' freedom to learn. Similarly, Reichman (2015) pointed out that student freedom depends highly on the faculty's freedom. Faculty members cannot encourage free discussion in classroom if they have been deprived their right to teach (McCrae, 2011). Students must be exposed to different worldviews from the time that they enter university; otherwise, they leave with the same ideas that they arrived with ("Columbia U. Prof. Rashid Khalidi," 2005; Wilson, 2008).

Students often come to university with black-or-white views of the world ("Columbia U. Prof. Rashid Khalidi," 2005; AACU, 2006; Reichman, 2015). Faculty serve to break down these dualistic mindsets and help students to explore a wide range of ideas when discussing different views on controversial topics and real-world issues (AACU, 2006; Fessel, 2006). Even if other ideas challenge their preconceived views or values, students must be forced to consider all sides of a debate ("Columbia U. Prof. Rashid Khalidi," 2005; Fessel, 2006; Hudson & Williams, 2016; Wilson, 2008). Universities, as the first draft of the AAUP in 1915 declaration described it, should serve as "an experiment station," where new ideas can be tested even if they are not accepted by the community at large and that for developing knowledge or until they become part of accepted knowledge (O'Neil, 2005, p. 92).

Faculty and students must have chances to engage in intellectual debate—exchange ideas, challenge conventional wisdom, and discuss controversial ideas—without fear of censorship or any consequences (Nelson, 2010). This dynamic of learning promotes critical thinking that is needed to help students not only to develop their own independence of mind, but also to be tolerant and inclusive (Franke & O'Neil, 2003; McCrae, 2011). This is very important in a pluralistic society because when students discuss diverse perspectives, they begin to generate principles from conflicting ideas (McCrae, 2011). They begin questioning why some people hold opposition or unfamiliar ideas, as well as understanding why they should be heard not silenced (McCrae, 2011). This provides students with an opportunity to confront each other views as well as prepares them to receive criticism. This may sound intimidating for some, but critical thinking prepares students to relate to an argument when discussing a subject or problem and not to a person presenting that argument (McCrae, 2011). Above all, McCrae (2011) and Hudson & Williams (2016) shared a similar point when both asserted that discussing controversial issues is

the right way to educate students of the dangers of indoctrination or radicalization. Hudson and Williams (2016) even went further and explained that if students want to argue in favor of any radical Islamic groups, for instance, and invite speakers of that group, then universities should allow that, because banning radical speakers neither helps to build a cohesive society nor stops students from becoming radicalized. Banning radical Islamic speakers would deny students' opportunity to hear other voices in political debate and perhaps promote anti-free speech on campuses (Hudson & Williams, 2016).

For the reasons articulated above, students and faculty members must have a room to express all types of ideas without constraints. The former Provost and Dean of Faculties of Columbia University, Jonathan Cole, stated:

> The goal of academic discourse is not merely to convey information, but to provoke, to simulate ideas, and to teach students to think and provide them with the intellectual and analytical tools that will enable them to think well. Great teachers challenge their students' and colleagues' biases and presuppositions. They present unsettling ideas and dare others to rebut them to defend their own beliefs in a coherent and principled manner. The American research university pushes and pulls at the walls of orthodoxy and reject politically correct thinking. In this process, students and professors may sometimes feel intimidated, overwhelmed, and confused. But it is by working through this process that they learn to think better and more clearly for themselves. (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015, p. 50)

Historical Development of Academic Freedom in the United States in the 20th Century

The concept of academic freedom in the United States is relatively new. The concept emerged in the early 20th century when 9,000 or more American scholars returned from Germany after either receiving German doctoral degrees or taking advanced training as a part of

American doctoral programs (Gruber, 2007). These scholars brought back the idea of the German university as a community in which professors and students were free to discover and expand knowledge, rather than to transmit the revealed truth by faith and church, which was the case in the American universities during the 18th and 19th centuries (Gruber, 2007; Keith, 1997). During these earlier periods American universities were controlled by religious and political authorities that did not allow professors to explore new ideas or to discover new truths (Gruber, 2007; Keith, 1997). Courses of study were fixed and specialist teachers did not exist; thus, teaching was all about recitation (Gruber, 2007). Professors had no input to determine educational policy, what or how their work should be, and had no power to hire new faculty or establish a budget (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). There were no academic structures such as faculty senates, grievance committees, and tenure (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005).

On top of that, professors were monitored by university presidents and board members who could easily dismiss teachers and withdraw their teaching rights when they expressed unpopular ideas on grounds of religion, politics, and business or even challenged policies of their institutions (Shils, 1993; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). Such was the case of the liberal Economics Professor at the University of Wisconsin, Richard Ely, who was fired in 1894 because of his support for unions as well as Scott Nearing, a professor from the University of Pennsylvania, who was also fired for opposing the use of child labor in coal mines (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005).

When American scholars returned from Germany, they translated *Lehrfreiheit* as "the freedom of professor to teach" and *Lernfreiheit* as "the freedom of student to learn" (Gruber, 2007; O'Neil, 2005). The freedom of teaching, as Keith (1997) explained, provides professors leeway to discover new truths rather than pass on accepted truth. It gives them the right to decide the course content and publish the findings of their research without government approval or

church reproof (Keith, 1997). Further, it provides professors with the full right to express their political views inside the classrooms; yet, this German notion of academic freedom was modified—or, rather, Americanized—to include freedom of the extramural speech and action of faculty (Keith, 1997).

This modern American concept of academic freedom was not accepted by religious and political orthodoxy in American universities. Accordingly, many faculty members were fired because of their anti-war views during World War I (Keith, 1997; O'Neil, 2005). This raised a desire among faculty members to establish a national organization to protect the freedom of expression, represent the interests of professors, and to promote scholarship (O'Neil, 2005; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). Then the AAUP was founded in 1915 primarily to protect the academic freedom of faculty (O'Neil, 2005). The first report of the AAUP was a "Declaration of Principles" that viewed freedom of academics as a necessity and requirement of the contemporary public need for universities that aimed to increase human knowledge (O'Neil, 2005). The declaration insisted that an institution should call for professional freedom to tolerate a range of views no matter how controversial they are and if any institutions tried to silence such views, they would not be respected as higher education institutions (O'Neil, 2005). The declaration further insisted on the adoption of procedural due process for the dismissal of faculty and to limit the reasons for dismissal, which what is known today as tenure (O'Neil, 2005).

Many administrators and board members did not support these principles; thus, during the first 2 years of the declaration, the AAUP dealt with over 30 cases of academic freedom violation (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). In response, the AAUP joined the AACU in issuing a new set of declarations, *The 1940 Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure* (Locher, 2013; O'Neil, 2005). This statement addressed three basic rights of professors:

1. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

2. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter, which has no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.

3. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public might judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution. (Brandt, 2006, p. 269)

After founding a number of research universities with more faculty members returning from Europe, many research universities and liberal arts colleges adopted the 1940 statement into their policies to become the most accepted and used definition in American academia (Keith, 1997; O'Neil, 2005; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). Professors were given the freedom to teach courses in ways they regard as effective as long as they respect the general rules of propriety (Shils, 1993). They were allowed to conduct research on any topic, use whatever methods they

may think best, and analyze and publish results in accordance with reasonable evidence (Shils, 1993).

Yet while academic freedom was growing and gaining popularity, one decade after the issuance of the 1940 statement, many faculty members had experienced crisis (Locher, 2013; O'Neil, 2005). Nearly 170 tenured and tenure-track professors were fired from Harvard, Rutgers, and from other top research universities during the McCarthy era in the 1950s for their disloyalty (O'Neil, 2005). Universities' trustees and administrators were forced by the state to fire professors if they refused to sign an oath declaring they were not affiliated with a Communist group (O'Neil, 2005). This attack on professors' political beliefs or affiliations made some of them leave academia as they refused to sign loyalty oaths while many others, the majority, had to sign the oaths to save their career and reputations (Locher, 2013; O'Neil, 2005).

Many thought that firing faculty members did not damage faculty's academic freedom as much as signing the oaths, which made many professors bring a lawsuit into state court (O'Neil, 2005). For instance, professors of the University of California, especially those who did not sign the oath and did not want to leave their University, brought a lawsuit in the California Supreme Court to invalidate taking an oath not prescribed by the legislature (O'Neil, 2005). Luckily, the California Supreme Court invalidated all loyalty oaths, but this did not occur until 1967 (O'Neil, 2005).

The lawsuit that yielded a great victory to those in academia during the McCarthy era was the case of *Sweezy v. New Hampshire* (1957; Locher, 2013). This case brought academic freedom for the first time as a constitutional issue (Locher, 2013). In 1957, Paul Sweezy, a Marxist, the socialist coeditor of an article that condemned the United States for using violence to protect capitalism, was suspected of being involved in subversive activities. He subsequently

refused to answer the New Hampshire Attorney General's questions regarding his membership in the Communist party as well as the content of several lectures he had given as a guest speaker at the University of New Hampshire (Locher, 2013). In Sweezy's appeal to the New Hampshire Supreme Court, he complained about the Attorney General's questions that violated his academic freedom as well as his constitutional rights under the First Amendment. As a result, the Supreme Court later overturned the charge against Sweezy and recognized academic freedom as a protected constitutional interest and a special concern of the First Amendment for the first time (Locher, 2013).

Years later, after the McCarthy era came to an end, higher education faculty briefly experienced a relatively calm period. The Vietnam War in the early 1970s, however, brought another challenge to academic freedom and recreated a new tension between the government and academics (Cooper, 2003; O'Neil, 2005). Hundreds of professors were blacklisted when they expressed unpopular opinions toward the War and the U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia (Cooper, 2003); yet, many found that this sanction was milder and less harsh than in the McCarthy era, and dismissal was almost unknown, at least by the major universities (O'Neil, 2005).

In the 1980s and 1990s, issues such as gender, race/ethnicity, and religion emerged to increase the challenges to academic freedom (Locher, 2013; O'Neil, 2005). Several lawsuit cases were brought to state or federal court by faculty members claiming discrimination and violation of their academic freedom and tenure based on their race and sex (Rabban, 1988). For instance, *Al-Khazraji v. Saint Francis College* (1987) was one case of an Iraqi-born American citizen, an associate professor at Saint Francis College who was rejected twice from earning tenure by the tenure committee (Bayliss, 1988). Al Khazraji filed a complaint in the Federal District Court

claiming that his denial of tenure based on his national origin (i.e., Arab) and religion (i.e., Muslim) background is believed to be a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act 1964 and Section 1981 of the U.S. Code (Bayliss, 1988). Although Saint Francis College alleged that section 1981 of the U.S. Code did not apply to a person of Arab ancestry, the court rejected the college's claim and granted Al Khazraji the right to state his claim of racial discrimination against the college under section 1981, although he ultimately failed to provide sufficient evidence that he was subjected to any sort of prejudice (Bayliss, 1988).

Ironically, the AAUP had already recognized employment discrimination before Al Khazraji's case, and had adopted a 1966 policy to protect faculty members against any discrimination on the base of national origin, ethnicity, gender, or religion, asserting that decisions on tenure or reappointment of a faculty should be based on professional competences (Rabban, 1988). The AAUP also affirmed that academic freedom does not protect discriminatory decisions of committee members who would lose their protection if they acted unprofessionally (Rabban, 1988). These policies, however, did not receive much attention until several cases were brought to the courts. In fact, some believed that the Al Khazraji case was considered as a great victory for other minority groups from different races who could also raise similar claims under the section 1981 (Bayliss, 1988).

Another relevant court case that is considered the first academic freedom case related to sexual harassment was brought to a federal court by a professor, Dean Cohen, an English teacher at San Bernardino Valley College who claimed that the college violated his freedom of speech and his academic freedom (Locher, 2013). In 1993, the college ordered Cohen to modify his teaching strategy after one female student filed a complaint against Cohen for his use of vulgarity, profanity, and sexual themes in his class (O'Neil, 2005). The court ruled in favor of

the professor, although it did not conclude that the use of sexual themes was protected by the professor's free speech. Some years later, a federal court in Michigan was less tolerant with similar speech (O'Neil, 2005). For instance, "racial slurs" were used to motivate a minority group of athletes at a community college in the Detroit area by a basketball coach, who was fired apparently for misguiding a racially mixed team (O'Neil, 2005). In response, the AAUP called for new policies on harassment at its annual meeting in 1995 to define and to clarify issues surrounding the matter (Locher, 2013; O'Neil, 2005).

Since 1940, the AAUP has adopted policies and statements defending and protecting academic freedom and academics. By the end of the 20th century, over 95% of higher education institutions had adopted some form of tenure (Tierney & Lechuga, 2010). All professors at American universities are protected through formal institutional policy statements such as appointment letters, faculty handbooks, and grievance procedures (Gappa & Austin, 2010). Regardless of their background, religion, gender, age, race/ethnicity, national origin, or employment status, they are entitled to freedom to teach, conduct research, and to express their opinions without concerns over losing their job. Violation of this freedom can only be remedied through legal grievance procedures, not through arbitrary actions such as dismissal and nonrenewal of contracts (Gappa & Austin, 2010).

Academic Freedom in the 21st Century

At the start of the 21st century, higher education institutions began to experience a crisis or a "wartime," as Wilson (2005) described in his research, "Academic Freedom in America After 9/11." The tragic attacks on the World Trade Centers and the Pentagon in 2001 have changed everything and one thing was academic freedom, particularly freedom of speech (Wilson, 2005). Efforts to limit free speech and silence of faculty and students began

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immediately after the attacks (Wilson, 2005). One notable incident was the case of the history professor from the University of New Mexico, Richard Berthold, who said to his freshmen class on the week of the 9/11, "anyone who bombs the Pentagon gets my vote" (O'Neil, 2005; Wilson, 2005). Many demanded the University fire Berthold and after a semester long investigation, Berthold was dismissed (O'Neil, 2005). Also, at Orange Coast Community College on September 20, 2001, a political science professor, Ken Hearlson, was suspended for 11 weeks after four Muslim students accused him of being biased when he blamed Arab countries for provoking terrorism (Cooper, 2003; Wilson, 2005). Another incident which also put a professor's job at risk involved a history professor, Peter Kirstein from Chicago's St. Xavier University, who expressed anti-military views in an email sent to the Air Force blaming them for the attacks (Wilson, 2005). Kirstein was suspended immediately for 4 days, although many called for his dismissal (Wilson, 2005).

In response, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) published a report criticizing the academy for their responses and for being unpatriotic or un-American (Cooper, 2003; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005; Wilson, 2005). The report included almost 117 statements made by college and university faculty members around the country, including, "What happened on September 11 was terrorism, but what happened during the Gulf War was also terrorism," from a professor of English at Brown University; "Why should we support the United States, whose hands in history are soaked with blood?" from a professor of Hawaiian studies at the University of Hawaii; and "If I were the president, I would first apologize to all the widows and orphans, the tortured and the impoverished, and all the millions of other victims of American imperialism," from a journalist at University of North Carolina teach-in (Martin & Neal, 2002). These statements and similar ones that included in the report put those academics at risk of

losing jobs or in some cases placed them under censorship (Cooper, 2003). Either way, the tragic events of September 11 evidenced the diminishing tolerance for expressing dissenting opinions (Cooper, 2003).

Accordingly, Locher (2013) noted that academic freedom remains in jeopardy over 60 years after the McCarthy era, especially with the increasing power of the government on academia through passing the aggressive legislation USA-PATRIOT Act just 1 month after the attacks. This legislation act, which the former President Barak Obama signed on for a third extension in 2011, is thought to enhance the power of government to conduct surveillance on both foreigners and U.S. citizens (Bischoff, 2018; Locher, 2013). This relates especially to title II Section 217, which increases the scope of surveillance on higher education institutions and mandates them to share private information of students, faculty, and scholars with law enforcement agencies (Bischoff, 2018). For instance, federal officials can access private information with less restriction for a warrant to search (Bischoff, 2018; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005; Wilson, 2005). They can access voicemails stored on campuses and obtain records of the books that faculty and students check out of the library (Doumani, 2005; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). Tom Campbell, the Dean of the Haas School of Business at the University of California, called this Act a "serious breach" of the Fourth Amendment, which protects any person against unreasonable search (Wilson, 2005). This act is unconstitutional and violates civil liberties, as many have described, particularly after renewing some of its provisions in 2015 into a new law: the USA-FREEDOM Act (Bischoff, 2018). This new act, which is supposed to expire in 2019, continues the surveillance program on both U.S. citizens and foreigners (Bischoff, 2018). Under the Patriot Act or Freedom Act, government agencies can search private propriety of individuals without notice to the owner (Bischoff, 2018). They also can force bookstores, libraries, internet

services providers as well as universities to share business records of their clients such as wiretapping phones, accessing voicemails, and intercepting text messages (Bischoff, 2018).

Yet risks facing foreign scholars are much greater. After the events of 9/11, the federal government gained power to ban foreign scholars entering the United States, especially those who come from Muslim/Arab countries (Ahmadi, 2011; March et al., 2005; Rajagopal, 2003; Wilson, 2005). In 2004, Tariq Ramadan, a Swiss-Egyptian scholar, was not allowed to enter the United States, and his visa was revoked with no explanation (Ahmadi, 2011; Brand, 2007; Wilson, 2005). Many believed that Ramadan was a victim of campaigns to keep him out of the country because of his critical views on the United States' foreign and Israel policies (Brand, 2007; Jaschik, 2006c; Wilson, 2005). The AAUP, along with the American Civil Liberty Union, filed a lawsuit requiring the U.S. government to either state the reasons for banning Ramadan or to end the exclusion (Jaschik, 2006c; Locher, 2013). After 2 years, the Federal Judge, Paul A. Crotty, ordered an end to this exclusion based on the First Amendment (Jaschik, 2006c). The order also gives American scholars the rights to express their views and to meet with others to share their views (Jaschik, 2006c).

Another two Islamic scholars, Kemal Helbawy and Riyadh Lafta, were denied entry to the United States in 2006 and 2007 to work with American universities on projects. Whereas U.S. authorities repeatedly claim that the national security was the reason for these denials, many academics have posited that the main reason for denial the entry due to scholars' disapproval of U.S. foreign policy (Ahmadi, 2011). Other similar cases of Muslim/Arab scholars have followed and raised the concern of the AAUP's special report (2013) assessing academic freedom post September 11 (Locher, 2013; Wilson, 2005). The report addressed such an issue as a threat to

academic freedom, asserting that the denial of entry to such scholars would affect the international collaboration and expansion of academic and foreign subjects.

Many universities were concerned about their abilities to attract and keep the best and brightest scholars who have benefited the nation economically and have contributed significantly to scholarly publications across many fields in American scholarship (Ameri & Arida, 2012; Kim et al., 2011; Mamiseishvili, 2008, 2009; Peek, 2011). For that reason, a constituency made up of 25 national groups, including the higher education community, proposed changes in processing visas to foreign scholars who otherwise would go to another country to further their research (Speicher, 2002; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005; Vroom, 2003).

Same group that proposed the changes regarding the visa procedures warned that the existing regulations would harm international exchange and collaboration among scholars and would limit the exchange of ideas freely and openly as well (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). This contradicts the tradition of intellectual freedom, "the search for truth no matter where it comes from and where it may take an individual" (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005, p. 18). It threatens "the American tradition of civil liberty, tolerance, and inclusion" of all those foreign and denies the fact that "the search for truth should not be cordoned off when individuals disagree with other individual" (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005, p. 18).

Nevertheless, banning scholars because of their backgrounds or their unpopular political views was not the only effort made by the government. The government screens and monitors foreign students and scholars, especially those involved in any scientific fields or those who simply come from an Arab or Muslim region (Ahmadi, 2011; March et al., 2005; Peek, 2011; Rajagopal, 2003; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005; Vroom, 2003). The Department of Homeland

security monitors the activities of roughly 1 million foreign students and scholars each year, with the goal of protecting national security (Ahmadi, 2011; Peek, 2011).

It is probable that some level of screening and monitoring is not harmful and important to national security, but data have indicated that this screening is being over used (Rajagopal, 2003). Many leading universities chose to decline government grants for research when the government required extra screening or monitoring (Rajagopal, 2003). Yet this was not the only reason, Rajagopal explained, for which universities could risk and lose funds. He stated that many universities were even more concerned because these screening and monitoring programs would increase the control of the government to interfere in academic affairs more than ever before. Perhaps not coincidentally, in 2002 the majority of North Carolina House of Representatives voted to cut the state funds to the University of North Carolina because of the reading list for the freshmen class that included the Quran (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005; Wilson, 2005). One representative denounced the teaching of the Quran and declared that students should not be "required to study this evil," while another representative stated that it was insensitive to let students read about America's attackers (Wilson, 2005). In the same year, the University of Colorado was condemned by the governor of Colorado for hosting Hanan Alsarawi, a Muslim-Palestinian spokesperson and educator, to speak on campus (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). George Mason University also was forced by conservative state legislators to cancel the tour of Michael Moore, the director of the movie *Fahrenheit 9/11;* otherwise, the University could lose its money (Wilson, 2005). Similarly, the University of Southern California, Utah Valley State College, California State University, and other institutions were threatened with losing funds if they allowed campus lectures, hosted conferences, invited foreign scholars, presented films, or any

other activities that expressed controversial views related to September 11 attacks (Tierney &

Lechuga, 2005).

The 9/11 attacks placed colleges and universities under surveillance and intervention by

the government. O'Neil (2005) stated that the attacks made almost inevitable changes in the

relationship between the government and academia compared to the McCarthy era. Even worse,

the Iraq War or War on Terror in 2003 worsened this relationship and created an additional

tension that made academic freedom suffer in the name of protecting the unity of the nation

(Schrecker, 2010). O'Neil (2005) described the early years of the 21st century as the most

troubling in the history of American higher education enterprise. With that being said, in 2003 a

number of Houses of Representative passed resolution 3077 to establish an advisory board to

monitor, study, and evaluate activities of all area studies programs that are funded under the

Higher Education Act, title VI (Beinin, 2004; Doumani, 2005; Terry, 2012; Tierney & Lechuga,

2005). The primary purpose of this bill, according to the report published by the Louis D.

Brandeis Center for Human rights Under Law (LDB, 2014), is to update the programs to reflect

the needs for national security in the post-9/11 era and to ensure that the federal funds are spent

properly.

While many believe that this bill would apply to all area of international studies

programs, it was clearly targeting the nation's 17 centers of Middle East Studies programs

around the country (Doumani, 2005; Terry, 2012; see Appendix B for a list of the centers). This

has alarmed many scholars, as well as professional organizations such as the Middle East Studies

Association (MESA) jointly with the AAUP and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

that named this an "unprecedented government invasion of the classroom," according to

Doumani (2005, p. 22). These organizations were concerned if this bill was passed, it would

censor or limit academic freedom of professors particularly when teaching or writing about the Middle East. It, in fact, would infringe on colleges' decision-making process about curriculum and replace academic standards with political criteria (Doumani, 2005; Terry, 2012; Tierney & Lechuga, 2005; Wilson, 2005).

Although the bill died in the Senate by the vote (Doumani, 2005), many have tried to re-introduce the bill or similar bills to Congress. For example, Patrick J. Tiberi (R-Ohio; H.R.509) called for revision and reauthorization appropriations for international studies of 1965 for title IV in 2005 (Tierney & Lechuga, 2005). The bill was forwarded to the House Committee on Education and Workforce in February 2005 and then from subcommittee to full committee in June, 2005, yet no further information was found.

Similarly, in 2006, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights issued a report to President Bush and the U.S. Congress concerning several problems in the Middle East Studies programs including anti-Semitic views and the absence of diverse perspectives (LDB, 2014). The commission found that many Middle East Studies programs provide a one-sided political view and repress diverse viewpoints (LDB, 2014). The National Research Council also reported parallel findings in 2008 that urged the government to police these programs to determine whether they are being efficiently conducted (LDB, 2014). Eventually, the Higher Education Act was reauthorized and all title VI programs were required to change the language and policies of the existing programs to include a wide range of views (LDB, 2014). Some programs were required to submit an application to describe how the activities would meet the "diverse perspectives" requirement in order to receive funding (LDB, 2014). In addition, the government reduced the funding of title VI programs by 40% nationwide in 2011; yet, there was no

accountability system formed to monitor whether these programs meet the requirements (LDB, 2014).

Attacks on Faculty of the Middle Eastern Studies

As much as Middle East studies programs became the subject of surveillance by the government, faculty teaching Middle East studies also have become monitored by many private organizations. Organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), Campus Watch, and StandWithU*s* were found after 9/11 to monitor what faculty say or think about the Middle East and Islamic affairs (Beinin, 2004). Campus Watch, for instance, a well-known organization with its closest ties to a high level of government officials, is devoted to censoring activities and gathering information on professors of Middle East Studies (Beinin, 2004; Salaita, 2008). The two founders of Campus Watch, Martin Kramer and Daniel Pipes, have claimed that Middle East Studies programs are not working effectively and blamed faculty for not teaching fair about the Middle East history (Beinin, 2004; Gottesman, 2004). The founders both alleged that Middle East Studies programs have become dominated by Middle Easterners who have brought their bias views with them (Beinin, 2004; LDB, 2014). They also added that Middle Eastern scholars do not like their own countries, and think even more disparagingly of America (Beinin, 2004; LDB, 2014).

Persistent campaigns have been mounted against Arab/Muslim faculty members as well as scholars of Arabic or Islamic studies to delegitimize their thoughts about the Middle East (Benin, 2004; Palestine Legal & the Center for Constitutional Rights, 2015). Campaigns that extend from Columbia University to the University of California in Los Angeles have sought to distort professors' reputations and pressure universities to either carry out investigation against some professors or simply terminate them (Palestine Legal & the Center for Constitutional

Rights, 2015). For instance, in 2004, Campus Watch joined with the David Project and the American Jewish Committee to attack Professor Rashid Al Khalidi, a Palestinian-American professor and the director of the Middle East Studies at Columbia University. These groups condemned the words that Khalidi spoke during a workshop he co-conducted to describe Israel and its policy toward Palestinians, including "racist" and "apartheid" (Newman, 2005). Similar to the witch-hunt of professor Massad, Khalidi's statements were taken out of context and exaggerated to silence intellectual discourse, said Arthur Hertzberg, co-teacher with Khalidi (Newman, 2005). Eventually, Khalidi was removed from teaching in a New York after-school development program that trains teachers from kindergarten to high school to design Middle East curricula (Newman, 2005).

Newman (2005) cited that the issue in Khalidi's case was not only about terminating him from the program; it was about allowing those groups to interrupt classrooms and attack professors' teaching on campuses, especially when professors are Arabs or Muslims. Khalidi has been monitored for years by Campus Watch, which has consistently attacked him for his views on the Middle East (Horowitz, 2006a; Stillwell, 2008). Although Khalidi's case is not unique, as Newman (2005) stated, it certainly has exposed that the prey in this witch-hunt is the Arab/Muslim academics, especially because Khalidi was not the only one from Columbia University who has been attacked. A number of professors, including George Saliba, Hamid Dabachi, Nadia Abu El Haj, and Joseph Massad, have experienced similar attacks to undermine their academic freedom. They have been labeled as anti-Semitic, anti-American, enemies of civilization, terrorists, and radical Islamists after criticizing Israel or U.S. policies (Beinin, 2004).

Some have posited that these attacks on academics were part of a larger campaign targeting faculty at large to monitor their teaching to ensure that a wide range of views is

presented in classroom (Newman, 2005). Such a campaign was founded in 2003 by David Horowitz, best-known as a conservative and curricula activist, who called on universities to adopt an "Academic Bill of Rights" (see Appendix A for full text). The bill is a relatively short document containing eight principles that promotes two agendas: intellectual diversity and academic manners (Schalin, 2016). The diversity of these ideas, however, has been the center of controversy (Schalin, 2016), particularly the fourth and fifth provisions of the bill, which state:

4. "…while teachers are and should be free to pursue their own findings and perspectives in presenting their views, they should consider and make their students aware of other viewpoints. Academic disciples should welcome a diversity of approaches to unsettled questions."

5. "Exposing students to the spectrum of significant scholarly viewpoints on the subjects examined in their courses is a major responsibility of faculty. Faculty will not use their courses for the purpose of political, ideological, religious or anti-religious indoctrination." (Horowitz, 2010, p. 232)

Horowitz (2010) claimed that this bill was based on academic traditions that have been disregarded for long time by faculty and administrators, such as providing students with materials reflecting both sides of a controversial issue, not presenting opinions as facts, and allowing students to think for themselves rather than telling them what to think. According to Horowitz, these traditions are more or less educational rights, and they were created to protect students from abusive and radical professors, whom Horowitz claimed are teaching students their personal or political opinions rather than a scholarly opinion. Bruce Larkin, an Emeritus Professor of Politics, was accused by Horowitz of having anti-war views (Horowitz & Laskin, 2009). Larkin blamed Bush administration for invading Iraq and not Iran although the last posed

much more of a threat (Horowitz & Laskin, 2009). He also added that Bush administration failed to explain the connection between the war on terror and invading Iraq (Horowitz & Laskin, 2009).

According to Horowitz and Laskin (2009), that was not professional behavior by an academic who should not use his classroom to teach his students personal and political views instead of sharing scholarly and analytical views on the War on Terror. Horowitz emphasized that professors must not take unfair advantage of student's immaturity and indoctrinate them with the professor's own views before students have the chance to explore other views (Horowitz, 2010). He cited that students should learn *how* to think, rather than *what* to think (Horowitz, 2010).

Therefore, in order to protect students against indoctrination or radicalization, which he mostly referred to in his writing, especially because they had no formal representation in universities, Horowitz (2010) founded an organization for students called Students for Academic Freedom (SAF). He recruited hundreds of student volunteers and organized them in about 200 chapters on U.S. campuses (Horowitz, 2010). Some of them are to be found in the student body such as student governments at Brown University, Georgetown University, Brooklyn College, the University of Montana, Utah State University, and Princeton University (Horowitz, 2010). Besides promoting the academic bill of rights, the main task of such groups is to provide students with the right to academic freedom, or the right to learn without indoctrination (Horowitz, 2010; SAF, 2016).

Arguably, students must know their rights to academic freedom. This should not be a threat, because while academic freedom policies concerning faculty's rights and responsibilities are available to professors through faculty union contracts and employee handbooks, they remain

unavailable to students (Horowitz, 2010). The threat, however, was when Horowitz sought government intervention to pass a resolution endorsing the bill (Aby, 2007; Bell, 2004; Jaschik, 2006a). Even worse, he used students to fulfill his goal; tracking down opponent professors (Wilson, 2008). This bill, unlike H.R. 3077, has been already introduced in Congress and passed through roughly 20 state legislatures such as Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Georgia (Aby, 2007). Colorado, which was the first state to recognize students' academic freedom in their universities policies, provided students with instructions and guidelines to use when students feel discriminated against or harassed because of their political or religious beliefs (Horowitz, 2010). The American Council on Education, which represents 2,000 colleges and universities, has also urged its members to take similar action to create grievance procedures to protect students' academic freedom (David Horowitz Freedom Center, 2016). The universities of Penn State and Temple University as well adopted new policies in 2006 recognizing students' rights to academic freedom (Horowitz, 2006b; 2010). The universities have created a sort of grievance system that enables students to file complaints if they feel politically or religiously harassed by professors (Horowitz, 2006b; SAF, 2016).

Despite the fact that no state has approved the ABOR, including the states noted above, the issue is not dead (AAUP, 2003). ABOR or similar bills has been incorporated into the federal authorization Act for Higher Education using the phrase "intellectual diversity" and endorsed by a dozen universities such as seventeen Ohio universities (Horowitz, 2010). If approved, this bill would allow the government to oversee classes, academic programs, and even faculty promotion and hiring (Aby, 2007). It would require, for instance, firing of liberal professors and hiring more conservatives. Although Horowitz (2010) denied such a claim, the report he published in 2010 "Political Bias in the Administrators and Faculties of 32 Elite Colleges and Universities" showed

the opposite. The report shows that the overall ratio of Democrats to Republicans at 32 elite colleges and universities is 10 to 1; according to Horowitz, this is an issue because it explains the ideological agendas of liberal faculty and administrators, their views, and values that have affected the outlooks of Americans for a long time (Horowitz, 2010). The report also proclaims that universities should seek more political pluralism and diversity when hiring faculty (Horowitz, 2010).

While this result, as Horowitz (2010) expected, was supposed to alarm academics to address such an issue, many individuals and groups criticized and condemned Horowitz's bill and perceived it as an attack on academic freedom. William Scheuerrman, the head of United University Professions that represents 30,000 of the State University of New York employees, described Horowitz's bill as "a quota system for political extremists so they can deliver their right-wing political sermons in the classroom" (Horowitz, 2010, p. 33). Further, some called this "academic McCarthyism" or "affirmative action for Republicans" that would seek to hire more conservatives and maybe teach more classics in the curriculum (Horowitz, 2010, p. 55). In addition, members of the American Historical Association (AHA) shared the same concern about ABOR and issued a statement condemning Horowitz's bill as a serious threat that could limit academic freedom of faculty particularly freedom of expression (Jaschik, 2006b). AHA asserted that undermining professional standards by imposing political criteria in university classrooms would violate the principles of academic freedom (Jaschik, 2006b). Similarly, the AACU released a statement criticizing ABOR and blaming Horowitz for inviting political oversight of scholarly and educational work (Jaschik, 2006b). The statement also highlighted that the core objective of good education is not only about sharing a range of views, but also enabling students to engage differences and new ideas as well (Jaschik, 2006b). The AAUP, Committee A on

Academic Freedom and Tenure (2003) published a statement as well noting the danger of the academic bill of rights that would determine the quality of scholarship and teaching by political categories and thus corrupt the fundamental principle of academic freedom. The statement noted, "No political, ideological or religious orthodoxy should be imposed on professors hiring, promotion, and termination process."

Debate over the Academic Bill of Rights has become a controversial issue in American universities (Aby, 2007). Although it was not the first that attacked academic freedom rights, it was perceived as the latest in a long series of threats to academia (Aby, 2007). Within the first 5 years of its creation, hundreds of articles were published concerning the danger of the bill on academic freedom including 74 in major newspapers, about 143 in all newspapers nationwide, 20 in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 73 in *Inside Higher Ed*, dozens of others in major magazines, and some thousands of hits in Google search (Aby, 2007). In 2007, Professor Stephen Aby published a synthesis of critiques of Horowitz's bill. For example, Aby himself—who is a member of AAUP—criticized Horowitz for failing to provide evidence of a correlation between party affiliation and teaching perspective. In other words, Horowitz did not prove or explain how a Democrat teaching research method, instructional design, or any other discipline differs from a Republican—or rather, how hiring more Republicans would help to reform American universities, which Horowitz recommended for universities to work on (Aby, 2007).

While Horowitz (2010) insisted that the bill promotes intellectual diversity and equal representation of professors on campuses, others have criticized that Horowitz was neither interested in intellectual diversity nor in searching for truth (Abrahamian, 2003; Aby, 2007; Bell, 2004; Newman, 2005). In his view, intellectual diversity does not mean presenting equal converge of two or more sides of a controversial issue; it is more about silencing the other view,

particularly the opposition criticizing Israeli or U.S. policies (Abrahamian, 2003; Bell, 2004;

Newman, 2005). Ervand Abrahamian, a professor of Middle East and Iranian history at Baruch

College in New York City, shared AJP Taylor's sentiment, stating, "Years of experience have

taught me that one should never venture an opinion, favorable or unfavorable, on events

concerned in any way with Israel…the only safe course is never, never, never to have any

opinion whatsoever on the Middle East" (p. 529). Brand (2007) shared the same concern,

explaining that no one can critically analyze the U.S.-Israel relationship or certain aspects of

Israeli policy in this country without risking being charged with anti-Semitism.

This explains the war Horowitz has declared on academics who teach and write about

issues in the Middle East particularly the Palestine-Israel conflict. Creating an Academic Bill of

Rights, organizing SAF, and publishing a series of books that attack individual professors on

their personal political beliefs are efforts aimed to disrupt the learning process and threaten

professors' academic freedom. In perhaps his most dangerous book, Horowitz listed 100

academics around the country, mostly at research universities, describing them as radical, leftists,

and the most dangerous academics in the country (Jaschik, 2006a). The list includes professors

from fields such as ethnic studies, women studies, English, history, law, and the Middle East

studies that seems to be the field Horowitz had most attacked (Jaschik, 2006a). For instance,

Hatem Bazian, a Palestinian-American who is currently a senior lecturer of Islamic Studies at the

University of California, was described as anti-American (Horowitz, 2006a). Bazian took part in

a 2004 rally in San Francisco against the Iraq war, stating, "We are sitting here and watching the

world pass by, people being bombed, and it's about time that we have an *intifada* [uprising] in

this country that change (s) fundamentally the political dynamics here" (Horowitz, 2006a, p.

105). Similarly, Hamid Dabashi, an Iranian-American professor of Iranian and Islamic Studies at

Columbia University, was also named on the list for his anti-Israel views. On several occasions, Professor Dabashi cancelled his classes at Columbia University to attend rallies protesting the Israeli government and condemning its defense measures. He regarded all Israelis, including women and children, as cold-blooded and disgusting (Horowitz, 2006a).

Critics have described this book as "sloppy in the extreme," calling it a "blacklist of academics" that aims to mislead readers and weaken the academy (Jaschik, 2006a). Cary Nelson, the former president of the AAUP (2006-2012), regarded the book as a threat to academics to stop them from expressing their political views. In his review of the AAUP official journal, Nelson urged people to ignore the book and not buy it and he added that no one can take politics out of his classrooms (Horowitz, 2006b). Caroline Higgins, a professor of peace and global studies and history at Earlham College, who made the list as well, commented, "If I am dangerous, it's because education is dangerous. If you follow truth wherever it leads, I guess you open yourself up to risk" (Jaschik, 2006a).

Furthermore, a coalition of academics and civil liberty groups called, "Free Exchange on Campus," led by The American Federation of Teachers (AFT, 2007) condemned such attacks on academics and released a detailed analysis of Horowitz's book (Horowitz, 2010; Jaschik, 2006a). In this report, the authors pointed out that Horowitz manipulated professors' statements and took them out of contexts. They believed that Horowitz intended to punish professors for expressing views that he disagrees with. Bell (2004) added that Horowitz indeed seeks to hand over professors to the government to investigate their political affiliations in order to silence the opposition.

This is, in fact, what some politicians in the Republican Party aimed to do for decades— to become the rulers of universities to be able to fire academics who defend academic freedom or

criticize the government (Wilson, 2008). Wilson raised an interesting point that even if academic freedom is abused by some professors who express inappropriate or idiotic things, there is no need for a governmental system "a Big Brother" to monitor what professors say or do (p. 214). He added that professors should be criticized, not threatened or silenced.

History has always proved that politics lays out the boundaries of academic inquiry such as subjects of study, choices of research topics or approaches, possibilities for publication, and tenure (Brand, 2007). Although Horowitz's movement to legislate the academic bill of rights stopped around 2008, there have been new bills based on ABOR adapted by many universities (Schalin, 2016). Twenty-eight states have introduced ABOR or similar bills, including Virginia and Missouri (Schalin, 2016). In 2014 and 2015, the two states passed legislation concerning free speech on campuses. Even worse, lawmakers in Missouri and Iowa introduced legislation to end tenure for all faculty at public universities starting in 2018 (Flaherty, 2017). Joe Gorton, an associate professor of criminology at the University of Northern Iowa, opined:

> This bill is a terribly dangerous idea. Tenure does not prevent termination for just a cause. It prevents the discipline or termination of a faculty member who teaches or conducts research in areas that are controversial or politically unpopular. …when tenure ends the politically powerful or economic elite can control what goes on in universities. (Flaherty, 2017)

These attacks on professors' academic freedom have shown once again, a half century after the McCarthy era, that faculty members are still suffering from the influence of politics on universities. This suggests that another era of intolerance and repression is imminent (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015). The stakes are high, and the efforts made by outside groups and government to silence certain groups are rising (Bilgrami & Cole, 2015).

Future of Academic Freedom

When considering the future of academic freedom, scholars need to recognize threats to academic freedom for what they are (Hudson & Williams, 2016). The exploration of ideas has become restricted and endangered (Hudson & Williams, 2016). This is because protection of academic freedom has not yet become a constitutional amendment, according to McCrae (2011), while the enemies of academic freedom have often succeeded to use legislation to restrict debate over controversial ideas on campuses (Wilson, 2008). Some authors have suggested that academic freedom needs to be redefined to better respond to threats of this century (Locher, 2013). When redefining academic freedom, scholars should not allow free speech to be restricted, especially inside the classroom (Hudson & Williams, 2016). Academic freedom is absolute, and freedom of speech cannot be granted selectively; otherwise, it is not free speech (McCrae, 2011). Expanding the freedom rather than imposing limits is what academic freedom is about (Hudson & Williams, 2016). Faculty and students should continually exercise freedom in the classroom; in fact, there is no point of higher education without academic freedom (Hudson & Williams, 2016).

Others have suggested that scholars need to present facts to promote academic freedom (Fessel, 2006; Wilson, 2008). Scholars need to conduct more empirical studies to investigate topics such as the impact of intellectual debate on campuses upon students' education or the determination of doctorate-holding faculty members' faculty jobs by their political affiliation (Wilson, 2008). Wilson asserted that through such studies, it will be possible to protect academic freedom from forces of intolerance that seek to narrow down the free exchange of ideas on campuses and its value to academics and students as well.

Studies on Academic Freedom of Arab-Born Faculty

There was almost no existing literature in which scholars have directly linked Arab-born faculty's experience with academic freedom. In order to explore this topic, I made extensive use of prominent academic and non-academic organizations such as the AAUP, the Canary Mission, the Center for Constitutional Rights, and other websites such as *The New York Times*, *CBS, Fox News*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* and *The Examiner* to address the latest cases of a number of Arab-born professors who have come under attack for their academic freedom.

Rabab Abdulhadi, a Palestinian-American professor and the director of the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas (AMED) Program at San Francisco State University (SFSU), has been attacked by a series of posters along with some other professors and several students from different ethnicities including Jews, whose common thread is advocating for social justice and Palestinian rights (Dajani, 2017; Spero, 2017a, 2017b). The posters, which were placed all over SFSU and other campuses, named professors and students as supporters of terrorism (Dajani, 2017; Spero, 2017a). These posters were produced by the David Horowitz Freedom Center, which aims to vilify opponents of Israel (Spero, 2017b). No actions were taken to remove these posters; instead the president of SFSU claimed that the posters to be a legitimate free speech tool on campus (Dajani, 2017).

In addition, the Lawfare Project, the self-described legal arm of the pro-Israel Community, filed a lawsuit against professor Abdulhadi and a number of the university administrators for promoting terrorism and fostering a hostile environment for Jewish students at SFSU and other campuses (Dajani, 2017; Spero, 2017a, 2017b). Ironically, the findings of a study by Stanford University conducted at seven California campuses, including SFSU, indicated no presence of anti-Semitism on the campuses. Similarly, a survey conducted by the University

of California in 2014 found that 84% of Jewish students were more comfortable on campuses than any other groups surveyed (Spero, 2017a). Accordingly, on November 8, 2017, the federal judge of the U.S. District Court of Northern California dismissed the suit against Professor Abdulhadi and SFSU administrators for the luck of anti-Semitism evidence (Spero, 2017b).

Abdulhadi explained that this represented a victory for academic freedom, adding that the decision to dismiss the suit proves that these types of attempts by pro-Israel groups to get rid of her or any other advocates of Palestine will fail because pro-Palestinian activists do not discriminate against Jews or other groups (Spero, 2017b). As Dajani (2017) pointed out, Professor Abdulhadi has been attacked for years by pro-Israel groups since the foundation of the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities Diaspora Studies (AMED). Her name and personal information are listed on the Canary Mission as an individual who is extremist and sympathetic to terrorism (Dajani, 2017). This website is dedicated to attack individuals and organizations for their strong activism in support for Palestinian rights. Abdulhadi also was accused by a group called the AMCHA Initiative, a non-profit organization combating anti-Semitism at higher education institutions, for misusing the University funds when Professor Abdulhadi signed up for a 2014 research trip to Palestine and Jordan. These accusations were found also false after investigations were done by the University's officials; thus, Professor Abdulhadi was cleared on all claims (Dajani, 2017).

Mazen Adi, a political science professor at Rutgers University, has been targeted by the UN Watch, an independent non-governmental monitoring group based in Geneva, for his previous work as a legal adviser for a Syrian government under Bashar Assad at the UN from 2007 to 2014 (Jashinsky, 2017; UN Watch, 2017). During his 16 years at the UN, Adi defended Assad, who has been considered by the UN as a war criminal for killing his own people (CBS

New York, 2017). In a statement that Adi gave at the UN in 2012, he pointed out that Israel is the one that has committed crimes for years against Palestinians and encouraged international terrorism by trafficking weapon across the globe (UN Watch, 2017). The Executive director of the *UN Watch*, Hillel Neuer, urged the U.S. government to deport Adi and questioned how an American university would allow an apologist for the Syrian regime's genocide to be a teacher (UN Watch, 2017). She added that whoever allowed Adi to teach international criminal law should resign (CBS New York, 2017).

According to his university profile, Adi joined the university in September 2015 as an adjunct professor in the Political-Science department where he teaches courses such as International Criminal Law and Anti-Corruption; Extremism Violence and Political Change; and Theories of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism. Adi is scheduled to teach in spring 2018 a class on international criminal law and this has brought attention of UN Watch to launch an online petition in 2017, urging the university to fire Adi (Jashinsky, 2017). The university officials commented via multi news media such as CBS New York and Fox News, stating, "Rutgers will not defend the content of every opinion expressed by every member of our academic community, but the university will defend their rights to academic freedom and to speak freely" (Jashinsky, 2017). In the beginning of 2018, however, a number of websites such as Tap Into, Campus Reform, the Canary Mission, and the Washington Free Beacon reported that Adi is no longer employed at the university; however, it is unclear whether he was fired or left on his own (Munoz, 2018). Rutgers officials have not provided any statements to confirm or deny the matter.

Ghassan Zakaria, a Palestinian-born professor, was condemned in 2013 by StandWithUs, a non-profit Israeli education organization, for handing out a map of the Middle East to his

students reflecting the Arab world excluding the State of Israel (Gurment, 2013; Severance, 2013). Zakaria, who teaches an Arabic 101 course at San Diego State University SDSU, reportedly used inaccurate academic material in his classroom labeling the State of Israel as Palestine (Gurment, 2013; Severance, 2013). An anonymous student said via the organization's website, "This is a language class, it is not a class about conflict." Another anonymous student also stated that Zakaria seems biased and to bring such a map to the classroom it is not accepted. Accordingly, StandWithUs launched a campaign accusing the professor for his unprofessional act and demanded the professor to apologize and redistribute a correct map with Israel on it (Gurment, 2013; Severance, 2013).

Within 24 hours, the university issued a web statement, explaining, "While SDSU encourages scholarly debate and discussion of varying opinions, representing inaccurate information to students is not acceptable (Severance, 2013). Zakaria commented on his webpage that found the university's reaction strange because it came just months after he was elected "faculty of the year" by students and faculty from various departments for his excellence in teaching (Zakaria, 2014). According to Zakaria, the strangest part was the fact that there was no investigation made by the university on the matter, nor a search on what the Arab world map looks like before issuing such a statement. He added that a simple search on Google map of the Arab world would show the same map he handed out to his students, in addition to the fact the fact that he has been using it for years, while none of his students have ever complained about it or raised any concerns. Despite these concerns, Zakaria redistributed the same map with Israel's name hand-written on it (Gurment, 2013; Schwartz, 2013; see Figure 5).

History of Arab-Born Immigrants in the United States

The terms "Arab-born" or "immigrant" are used here interchangeably because according to the Census Bureau both terms refer to persons who were born outside of the United States (Camarota, 2002). This includes persons who are naturalized U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and those with long-term temporary visas (Camarota, 2002). Arab immigration to the United States can be traced back to at least 2 centuries ago in the late 1800s. Historians have divided this into three waves: the first wave from 1880 to 1924, the second wave from 1948 to 1965, and the third wave from the 1970s to the present (Daraiseh, 2012; Foad, 2013; Suleiman, 1999). In the following sections, I will provide a brief description of the three waves and recount the different characteristics and challenges that Arab immigrants faced in their new homeland.

The First Wave (1870–1924)

The first wave of Arab immigrants came during what scholars have termed "the mass migration" between 1870 and 1920 (Ameri & Arida, 2012). The door was opened to immigrants from around the world when America sought workers to help to build infrastructure such as roads and bridges and to expand its industries (Ameri & Arida, 2012). Researchers have estimated that approximately 20 million immigrants were allowed to enter the United States during this time. Most of them were from Europe, and only around 95,000 to 100,000 of them came from Greater Syria, which includes modern Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel (Ameri & Arida, 2012). This number might be insufficient because most of the Arab countries between 1500 and 1917 were colonized by the Ottoman Empire and so Arabs were classified as Turks or Greek until World War I (Daraiseh, 2012; Naber, 2008; Suleiman, 1999).

The vast majority of Arabs were Christian, ill-educated, mostly farmers or artisans, and poor (Daraiseh, 2012; Suleiman, 1999). Researchers have asserted that the reason that mostly

pushed these people for emigration was economic (Naber, 2008; Suleiman, 1999). They were mostly men who came with the intention to work temporarily for a few years to make enough money and then return home (Ameri & Arida, 2012; Ozdil, 2006). They worked in coal mines, steel mills, and agricultural settings, as well as in automotive and textile factories where more employment was needed (Ameri & Arida, 2012). They also worked as peddlers, moving from town to town selling different products, which was the most attractive job for almost 90% of Arab immigrants because it did not require much training or English (Ozdil, 2006). When these peddlers began to make sufficient money, they decided to bring their families and to stay permanently (Ameri & Arida, 2012; Ozdil, 2006).

By 1919, a larger number of Arab women began to join their husbands or relatives in America, which helped to increase the size of Arab population to 200,000 by the end of 1920 (Arab American National Museum Library & Resource Center [AANM], 2013). In 1924, the number of Arab immigrants as well as other immigrants started to decrease as a result of a series of immigration laws—known as "quota acts"—that restricted the number of immigrants from many parts of the world except immigrants from Northern and Western Europe (AANM, 2013).

Early Arab immigrants soon realized that they were undesirable, especially after they lost connections with their homeland because of the war and thus they decided to isolate themselves from the American society (Suleiman, 1999). They established their own clubs, newspapers, and churches, and avoided participating in any social or political activities with Americans (Suleiman, 1999). They soon realized, however, that this separation from the American society would not help them to attain citizenship; neither would it help their American-born children to gain their rights as American citizens (Suleiman, 1999). They knew that this would be the battle of their generation, especially when they were reclassified as Asians and Asians were illegible

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for citizenship (Suleiman, 1999). It took time and several lawsuits beginning in 1909 until 1944, when the first Arab immigrant was granted citizenship (Suleiman, 1999). These immigrants concluded that assimilation into the American society would be better for them and their children. They started to learn English, take citizenship classes, and study the American governmental system in order to understand their roles as American citizens (Suleiman, 1999). They also decided not to teach their children the Arabic language or to instill their heritage into their children in order to make them feel like citizens, not foreigners (Ozdil, 2006; Suleiman, 1999). Toward the end of this period, it was hard to distinguish Arabs from the host society members (Suleiman, 1999).

The Second Wave (1948–1965)

The second wave of Arab immigrants came after the World War II when the U.S. government allowed others than Europeans to come. At this time, the United States needed workers with special skills to help rebuilding the country after the war (Ameri &Arida, 2012). Thus, Arab immigrants during this period were professionals, highly educated, bilingual, and come from the middle and upper class (Ameri &Arida, 2012; Suleiman, 1999). In fact, some scholars have argued that many of the new immigrants came as students with the intention to remain and acquire citizenship except students from rich countries such as Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, who preferred to return home after they finished their studies (Ameri & Arida, 2012).

This second wave consisted of both Christians and Muslims from Egypt, Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria (Ameri & Arida, 2012; Suleiman, 1999). They were forced to leave their home countries because of the political conflicts in the Arab region—wars between Iraq and Iran and the civil wars in Lebanon and Yemen—that made many immigrants seek safer places where

they could live freely without political persecution and economic difficulties (Suleiman, 1999). Furthermore, the creation of Israel in 1948 forced more Palestinians to immigrate (Ameri &Arida, 2012; Foad, 2013). Some immigrated to Europe, Australia, Canada, and the United States, while others chose to go to neighboring countries such as Jordan and Lebanon (Ameri &Arida, 2012).

Unlike the first group of immigrants, this group was willing to participate and be more active in the American society (Ameri &Arida, 2012). The higher level of education and social status gave them confidence to engage in both political and social lives (Ameri &Arida, 2012; Suleiman, 1999). Hence political and social organizations were established to encourage Arabs to participate into the American political system in order to influence the foreign policy in America regarding the Arab region (Suleiman, 1999). Among the first organizations that were established was the Association of Arab American University Graduates in 1967 (Ameri &Arida, 2012). This organization sought to educate Americans about Arabs, defend Arabs against discrimination, and encourage Arab Americans to be more active in political and social scenes (Suleiman, 1999). There were also a number of organizations established in 70s and 80s concerned about reviving the Arabic heritage that was lost in the first wave and to educate them about their identity, especially the American-born children of the first immigrant arrivals (Ameri &Arida, 2012; Suleiman, 1999).

The Third Wave (1970s–Present)

This third wave of Arab immigration began to enter the United States after the changing of the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1965 (Ameri &Arida, 2012; Foad, 2013). This act ended the limitation of immigration from Asia and Arab countries and allowed them to naturalize as well (Foad, 2013). Immigrants started to arrive from new areas such as Sudan, Somali,

Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria, as well as Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, and Iraq (Ameri &Arida, 2012). The majority of this wave is Muslims and they came from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Some were highly educated professionals, some came as students, and some others with less or no education came to follow the footsteps of the first arrivals (Ameri &Arida, 2012; AANM, 2013).

This wave of Arab immigrants consists a combination of early and recent Arab immigrants, both foreign-born and native born. Both groups are known as Arab Americans. According to the United States Census, there are around 3.5 million Arabs in the United States, 80% of which are American citizens (Beydoun, 2013). Both Arab and Muslims have been well represented in different areas such as politics, business, and arts. For example, they have participated in public offices at high levels such as George Mitchell in the U.S. Senate (1980– 1995; Samhan, 2001); Donna Shalala, a former Secretary of Health and Human Services in the White House under President Clinton; and John Sununu, the White House Chief of Staff under the first President Bush (Samhan, 2001). More recently, Dalia Mogahed was appointed by President Obama in 2009 to his advisory council on faith-based partnerships. Furthermore, Arab Americans have held positions such as governors, mayors of U.S. cities, police officers, and other public offices (Hamdy, 2012; Samhan, 2001). In short, Arab immigrants have become an integral part of the American society.

Despite these successes, however, Arab Americans have been seen by some as dangerous to the nation due to the attacks on the World Trade Centers and the Pentagon in 2001. Arab and Muslim Americans have become targets by the government as well as media for being un-American or foreigners. The 9/11 attacks increased the rates of violence and anti-Arab/Muslim sentiment across the country (Daraiseh, 2012). Later in this chapter, I will provide a

comprehensive review of scholarly research on Arab and Muslim immigrants' experiences in the United States before and after September 11 and the rise of anti-Arab/Muslim sentiment. In the following section, I will explain the anti-immigrant movement of nativism in order to provide an analytical framework to help to examine the development of the anti-immigrant sentiments in order to understand the current experiences of Arabs and Muslims in the United States. This framework will help to explore or predict the future experiences of Arabs and Muslims.

Nativism as a Theoretical Theory

Nassir (2013) noted that nativism is a term that has been controversial in political discourse. John Higham, the most prominent historian of nativism, has defended this concept as "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign connections" (Nassir, 2013, p. 2). Throughout American history there have been several efforts against immigrants to limit their entry into the United States in order to retain the historical national identity of the country. Nativists seek to protect the American nation from foreign people and strange ideas that may harm or threaten the "American way of life" (Berlet, 2001; Nassir, 2013). Foreigners or immigrants have been perceived as enemies seeking to destroy the American values, culture, and religion, which Perea (1996) identified as Anglo-Saxon origin and White Protestant.

This movement was first found in late the 1600s when the majority of settlers (British) deemed foreigners who came from a country that was at war with United States as a threat to the national security (Knoll, 2010). Anti-French sentiments related to the French Revolution were raised to keep any foreigner out (Knoll, 2010). In response, the Alien and Sedition Acts were passed in 1798 to facilitate deportation and complicate the naturalization process (Knoll, 2010). In the 1830s, concerns were raised against the Irish and the Germans as they began to arrive in substantial numbers (Knoll, 2010; Nassir, 2013; Perea, 1996). Those immigrants were Catholic,

poor, and unable to speak English, which led to the second wave of nativism (Perea, 1996).

Many Americans felt negative about these new immigrants whose cultures and political traditions were different from the American (Knoll, 2010; Perea, 1996). They were afraid of the power of the Roman Catholic Church to take over the country (Immigration to America, 2013). Thus, nativists mobilized a backlash against immigrants that oftentimes led to violence such as murdering Irish and burning churches (Immigration to America, 2013). This anti-Catholic sentiment remained for 2 decades until the 1850s, when Protestants began to realize the importance of Irish and Germans for the U.S. industries, building infrastructure, and working at mills and textiles factories (Perea, 1996); therefore, they became less motivated to show open hostility toward immigrants (Immigration to America, 2013).

In the 1870s, the U.S. government opened the door to all immigrants regardless of their religions, especially for immigrants who came from south and east Europe and Asia (Wilcox, 2005). More immigrants were needed, as the United States had just come out of the war and thus new labor was critical to expand its economy (Perea, 1996). Immigrants from these countries worked cheaply and harder for long hours. The number of Asians and southern and eastern Europeans increased to 21 million between 1880 and 1900 (Perea, 1996). By 1920, they became the majority of the U.S. immigrant population (Wilcox, 2005). This demographic shift raised nativists' fears, who perceived that admitting more immigrants from these countries would cause a serious threat to the U.S. economy, primarily by taking jobs from American citizens (Wilcox, 2005). In addition, nativists thought of these immigrants as ethnically, culturally, and intellectually inferior to the American majority. They predicted that admitting new immigrants would create social problems such as increasing crime rates, poverty, and disease, as well as overloading school systems and welfare programs (Wilcox, 2005).

Consequently, the U.S. government enacted a series of immigration laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 and Gentlemen Agreement Act in 1907, prohibiting Chinese and Japanese for 10 years to immigrate to the United States, and refusing nationalized citizenship to all Chinse immigrants (Perea, 1996; Nassir, 2013). The most restrictive laws, however, were established between 1921 and 1924. These laws not only restricted the number of immigrates from many parts around the world to the lowest 2%, they also prohibited Eastern Europeans and Asians from working at certain jobs or in certain professions such as medicine, law, and engineering (Perea, 1996). Many of these immigrants were excluded from obtaining citizenship and legal permanent residence, which, in turn, prevented them from expressing certain social rights, such as education (Wilcox, 2005).

For the remainder of the 20th century, particularly between the 1940s and 1950s, nativism continued targeting European immigrants, especially southerners, due to suspicions of their ties to communism (Wall, 2007). Many Americans thought of communism as a strange and foreign ideology that might pose a threat to the American culture, particularly to the political system (Wall, 2007). The fear of communism led government officials to investigate thousands of their employees after many American citizens were found to be members of the Communist party (Wall, 2007). Many of these employees lost their jobs for not being loyal, and states began requiring a loyalty oath before getting a job (Wall, 2007).

These nativism movements were demolished when the civil rights movement of the 1960s began to put an end to these discriminatory laws that were attacking immigrants on the grounds of their race, country of origin, religion, or political philosophy (Wall, 2007). The Immigration and Nationality Acts of 1965 and 1990 were passed to allow immigrants from around the world to enter the United States and to naturalize. Such acts encouraged immigrants

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from Asia and Latin America to emigrate in larger numbers (Wall, 2007; Wilcox, 2005). Between 1970 and 1990, the number of Asian and Hispanic immigrants dramatically increased to 20% of the U.S. population (Wilcox, 2005).

This massive influx of Asian and Latino immigrants has often made many Americans uncertain about the open-door policy (Wilcox, 2005). Many have argued that allowing more immigrants to come to the United States without restrictions would cause serious social and economic problems (Perea, 1996). These fears were especially directed toward the Hispanic immigrants who started to enter in vast numbers (Immigration to America, 2013; Perea, 1996). According to Knoll (2010), the Hispanic population has dramatically increased by 30% since the turn of the millennium to become the largest racial group in the country. These immigrants were initially mostly illegal, poor, unskilled, and unable to speak English, which fueled a new round of nativism, known as "neo-nativism" (Immigration to America, 2013; Perea, 1996). In response, California enacted very restrictive laws in 1994 prohibiting Hispanic immigrants, especially illegal and undocumented immigrants, from utilizing many public services such as healthcare and education (Nassir, 2013; Wilcox, 2005). These restrictive laws were extended to include the legal and documented Hispanic immigrants to ban them from becoming political activists (Nassir, 2013; Wilcox, 2005). Unless they obtained citizenship, these individuals would not be able to receive any services (Wilcox, 2005).

This anti-Hispanic immigrant sentiment was not only toward illegal immigrants, but also toward legal immigrants, which may imply that the neo-nativism was motivated by their ethnicity rather than their legal status (Perea, 1996). The aggressive laws were purposefully aimed to discourage Mexican immigrants from immigrating to the United States (Wilcox, 2005). These immigrants were considered undesirable and undeserving for creating domestic social and

economic problems (Wilcox, 2005). Perea (1996) proclaimed that there should be a backlash against all aliens who are ethnically, culturally, and religiously different from Anglo-Saxon values and tradition. Perea also restated similar claims of Perter Brimelow, who asserted, "America needs to rethink immigration and call for a time out from immigration" (p. 67). He added also any failure to restrict immigration may threaten the national security of the country and cause domestic terrorism (Perea, 1996). Many nativists blamed the U.S. government for the "open door" policies that made America a coveted destination (Perea, 1996). Perhaps the bombing of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001 served as evidence of how immigration could cause domestic terrorism. The attacks fueled fear against Arab and/or Muslim immigrants, who became the target of modern neo-nativists (Immigration to America, 2013). Many Americans viewed Arabs and/or Muslims as potential threats and described them as enemies within the American society (Cainkar, 2008). These anti-sentiments against Arabs were not new and they have suffered from similar perceptions even before the attacks of September 11, perhaps even before their arrival in the late 1800s.

Before continuing to discuss the development of anti-Arab sentiment, it is crucial to make a clear distinction between Arabs and Muslims, because these two groups are different demographically and religiously from one another. Many Americans have viewed Arab as synonymous with Muslim (Beydoun, 2013; Joseph et al., 2008). This conflation of and/or misconception between the two identities is due to the fact that 93% of those in Arab countries (i.e., those in Middle East-North Africa) population are Muslims. The largest Muslim populations, however, are found in Indonesia, India, Pakistan, and Iran—none of which are classified as Arabic (Desilver & Masci, 2017). Naber (2008) also explained that the term *Arab* describes people who speak the Arabic language, practice a common culture, and may hold

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Christians, Jewish, or Muslim religious beliefs. In contrast, *Muslim* describes people who follow the religion of Islam, and who do not necessarily speak Arabic.

In addition, the Arabian Peninsula was the birth place of Islam; this is a principle reason for the linkage of Islam with the Arab identity (Beydoun, 2013). Furthermore, Naber (2008) added that part of this conflation is also due to the classification scheme that the American government established a couple of centuries ago for early Arab immigrants as well as other ethnic groups. Arabs and Muslims have been classified in various ways during the course of U.S. history. For instance, in the late 18th century, Arab Christian immigrants were classified as white, making them eligible for citizenship, while Arab Muslim immigrants were seen as non-white, and citizenship was not available to them (Beydoun, 2013; Naber, 2008).

Perhaps the main reason for the Arab/Muslim conflation, as Beydoun (2013) explained, can be traced back to American political history. This author wrote that the war between the United States and the Barbary States in 1785 helped to shape this conflation. After the United States gained its independence from England, the young nation declared a war against the Barbary States—which encompassed pre-modern Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria in North Africa—for enslaving a number of American citizens captured from an American ship along the Algeria coast (Beydoun, 2013). These countries were Arabic and Muslim, and thus, they were seen as one entity. Beydoun posited that such misconceptions explain why some group Arabs, Muslims, and even people of Middle Eastern descent are seen as one unit.

Anti-Arab/Anti-Muslim Nativism

As noted earlier, the negative perceptions toward Arab and Muslim were linked to the American political ideology three centuries ago (Beydoun, 2013). During the 18th century, both Arabs and Muslims were seen as the enemies of the United States and threats to its democracy

and liberty (Baydoun, 2013). Muslims, especially, were seen as a threat to the Christian identity in the United States (Beydoun, 2013; Young, 2017). They were perceived as polluted, evil, and bloodthirsty barbarians who invaded North Africa to spread Islam by forcing people to convert to Islam (Naber, 2008). These political ideologies passed down to the American people, thereby forming the initial perceptions of Arabs (Beydoun, 2013). These images of Arab remained throughout the 18th century; by the 19th century, these images were revived by the European colonization in the Arab region during the rise of Islam, as well as through missionaries and sailors who traveled to the eastern Mediterranean (Naber, 2008). Arabs and Muslims were perceived as backward and inferior to Protestants, and were described as captives and slaves for tyrants and cruel leaders (Naber, 2008). The fears of this religion or culture undermining the American civilization was deeply engrained in U.S. society (Beydoun, 2013; Hassoun, 2011; Shaheen, 2000).

Upon their arrival to the United States, the first wave of Arab immigrants in the 1880s confronted nativist and anti-foreign sentiments. They encountered what Naber (2008) described as "contradictory reactions." On one hand, they were needed to meet the American labor demand, but they were simultaneously seen as dangerous to the American culture. This echoes the similar experiences of other immigrants in the United States in terms of cultural and tradition differences from the native-born population (Hassoun, 2011; Naber, 2008; Young, 2017). During the period of 1870–1940, Arabs and Muslims experienced similar reactions to what Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and other Asian groups also underwent in terms of nationalization, social, economic, and political exclusion (Naber, 2008; Young, 2017). They were perceived as potential threats to the United States, similar to the anti-Semitism and anti-Catholic during the same time (Young, 2017).

These negative images against Arabs persisted through the 20th century. Indeed, the development of Arab-Israel conflict in the 1948 led to new negative images (Samhan, 2001; Semaan, 2014). The Arab Israel wars during 1956, 1967, and 1973 created "a highly-charged political arena," as Samhan (2001, p. 3) described, in which the United States became a strong supporter of Israel, particularly the 1967 war that increased U.S. involvement in the Arab region (Naber, 2008). According to Naber, this war was a turning point that marked Arabs and Muslims as evil, backward, and uncivilized. Arabs were seen as violent and terrorists (Naber, 2008; Samhan, 2001). Semaan (2014) reported that the media tended to misrepresent images of Arabs and Muslims while favoring Israel. He also cited that Arabs were negatively portrayed in American media, including newspapers, TV shows, movies, and even cartons. Semaan also added that most of the media coverage was biased against Arabs and did not show aggression to Israel.

A series of political events took place in the Arab region from 1970s to 1990s, in which Arabs or Arab Americans became targets of the government (Naber, 2008). These events included the 1970s U.S. Arab oil wars, during which the media portrayed Arabs as greedy oil sheikhs, the 1980s Iranian Revolution, the 1982 Israel invasion of Lebanon, and the 1990s Gulf War (Naber, 2008). These events helped to produce hateful images of Arabs with a political character, especially in conjunction with the continued support for Israel from the United States (Terry, 2012). This led the U.S. government to suspect Arab and Muslim connection with terrorist activities and hold them responsible for any possible attacks against America (Semaan, 2014). For instance, during the 1970s, government agencies such as the FBI and the Immigration Department carried out a wide range of campaigns targeting individuals of Arab descent, including but not limited to Arabs with American citizenship to spy, wiretap, and make visits

without evidence of criminal activities (Naber, 2008). Such tactics were intended to intimidate and discourage Arabs, especially Arab Americans, to express unpopular opinion about the U.S. and Israel policies in the Arab region (Naber, 2008).

One example was the case of the Los Anglos Eight (LA-8) in 1987, when seven Palestinians and one Kenyan were arrested for their political activities (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2007). The government tried to deport two members of this group, Khader Hamide and Michel Shehadeh, by claiming that these two members organized unlawful activities and demonstrations (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2007). Their case reached all level of federal courts, and after 20 years, on January 26, 2007, the Federal Supreme Court ordered an end of deportation against Hamide and Shehadeh and affirmed their constitutional rights for political free speech (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2007). Naber (2008) quoted Susan Akarma, clinical Professor of Law at Boston University, in stating that these efforts were initiated by a pressure from Israel to deny Arab Americans their constitutional rights, especially related to free speech, as well as to silence the voices that opposed Israeli and U.S. policies in the Middle East.

Such efforts successfully shaped public opinion to support Israel and demonize its critics; thus, any criticism of Israel was deemed anti-Semitic (Naber, 2008). Consequently, anti-Arab sentiments were raised once again and seeped into the public and became very popular subjects particularly in movies. According to Terry (2012), Hollywood movies played a huge role in shaping the American mind against Arabs. Scholars have reported that more than 1,000 movies released over the last half century promoted prejudicial attitudes toward Arab and Muslim. Films have portrayed Arabs as desert sheikhs, religious fanatics, abusers of women, and bombers who seek to destroy American civilization. Women were misrepresented as well, appearing only as belly dancers, or veiled and covered in black from head to toe (Naber, 2008; Semaan, 2014;

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Shaheen, 2000; Terry, 2012). Print and broadcast news sources tended to present Arabs within a negative political context (Terry, 2012). The result has been that Muslims and Arabs come first into the minds of Americans when considering terrorism (Terry, 2012).

It was not a surprise, therefore, that Arab individuals were the first suspects of the 1995 Oklahoma City tragedy. The negative images of Arabs had set the stage for a scenario in which the initial suspect for the attack was a Middle Eastern male (Bhattacharya, 2013; Samhan, 2001; Semaan, 2014). Law enforcement officials and the media quickly rushed to accuse Arabs and Muslims for the attack that killed 168 people (Bhattacharya, 2013; Naureckas, 1995); however, when later investigations led to the real bomber, who was not Arab or Muslim, the images of Arabs and Muslims had already been damaged (Naureckas, 1995; Semaan, 2014). Semaan (2014) and Naureckas (1995) posited that the speed with which the American government and media accused Arab for the attack was due to the assumption (i.e., nativist ideology) that any attacks were foreign and aimed at destroying America.

At the turn of the 21st century, the tragic events of September 11 spiked anti-Arab and anti-Muslim nativism; ever since, Arabs and Muslims have been linked to terrorism (Young, 2017). Nativists neither consider the wide range of cultural differences of the Arabs and Muslims worldwide, nor distinguish between the minority that committed the attacks and the majority that did not (Young, 2017). Arabs and Muslims have become targets of discriminatory actions by both government and media (Daraiseh, 2012; Young, 2017). A number of legislative provisions, executive orders, and laws were changed, most of which are still in effect, targeting immigrants and nonimmigrants predominantly from Arab and Muslim countries (Daraiseh, 2012).

The Patriot Act that was signed into law 1 month after the 9/11 attacks without Congressional debate allowed jailing citizens and non-citizens suspected of terrorism for days

and months with no warrant (Moore, 2010). It also increased surveillance of Muslims' phone calls, emails, speeches, bank accounts, and places of work and worship (Moore, 2010). Further, the State Department imposed a 20-day hold on nonimmigrant visa applications for men between the ages of 18 and 50 years from certain countries (Daraiseh, 2012). In addition, a special registration program was established for temporary visas holders, requiring them to report their entries to and exits from the United States to immigration officers (Moore, 2010). The FBI and the Immigration and Nationalization Service officials visited, arrested, or deported many Arabs for unknown reasons during this time (Ameri & Arida, 2012).

The results of these policies and programs devastated the relationship between Muslim/Arab and the U.S. government, and created feelings of anxiety and insecure of Arab/Muslim civil liberties (Moore, 2010). These violations and attacks of Arabs and Muslims encouraged additional physical abuse and social discrimination against them (Moore, 2010). Immediately after the attacks, complaints of abuses against Muslims increased by 1,600%, including telephone threats and vandalism of homes, businesses, and places of worship (Daraiseh, 2012; Moore, 2010). Data from a report from the United States Department of Justice (2011) indicated that Arabs/Muslims were still at risk and in danger even 1 decade after the tragic attacks.

Between 1998 and 2010, the number of anti-Muslims discrimination and hate crimes was still higher than among other ethnic groups (U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). While the rate of discrimination and hate crimes against Arab and Muslim was high after the attacks of 9/11, it has not significantly decreased almost 2 decades after the attacks (Kishi, 2016). According to a Pew Research Center analysis of a new FBI report, the number of physical assaults against Muslims in 2015 reached almost 9/11 era (Kishi, 2016). These numbers of anti-Muslim/Arab assaults are

expected to rise in the coming years as well for several reasons. First, Semaan (2014) believed that continued U.S. support for Israel has helped to develop anti-Muslims/anti-Arab sentiment. When Arabs and Muslims criticize Israel, they become at risk of being anti-American or anti-Semitic. This conflated criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism increased hatred and discrimination against Arab and Muslim and regarded what they say as hate speech (Spero, 2017b). Second, the ongoing war in the Middle East region—the so-called "Arab Spring"—since 2011 increased the fear of Arabs and Muslims in the United States (Arab American Institute, 2014; Semaan, 2014). Thirty-two states introduced 78 anti-foreign bills between 2011 and 2012, of which 73 targeted Muslim Americans (Arab American Institute, 2014). At least 37 organizations have been found to promote anti-Muslim sentiments in the United States since 2013 (Arab American Institute, 2014) such as the Richard Mellon Scaife Foundation, the Russell Berrie Foundation, and the Fairbrook Foundation, who have access to more than $205 million (Arab American Institute, 2014).

The third reason for increasing anti-Arab/Muslim sentiments, according to the Arab American Institute (2014) and Young (2017), is the 2016 presidential campaign. In 2017, South Asian American Leading Together (SAALT), a nonprofit organization that fights for social justice and advocates for civil rights, released a report addressed the increasing number of anti-Muslim incidents to 46% during the election cycle from 2016 to 2017 such as deadly shooting of individuals, vandalized home and business, and harassed students at school (Fuchs, 2018). The report also suggested a connection between the increasing number of attacks on Muslims and the new administration agenda (Fuchs, 2018). In short, Arabs and Muslims have become the "victims of politics," according to a report published by the ACTA (2017, p. 15).

This is consistent with what Dalai Mogahed—the Director of Research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding in Washington D.C.—discovered after analyzing polls from the last 14 years (Mogahed, 2015). In an interview on MSNBC, Mogahed cited that the spikes on anti-Muslim sentiments are in fact correlated with the Iraq War and presidential election sessions. Mogahed suggested that anti-Muslim/Arab sentiment is a political phenomenon, indicating that once again, the United States is entering an era in which nativism drives national policy and legislation.

Summary

Since World War II, university professors have become privileged members at most American universities. They have been given the freedom to teach subjects in which they are interested, select course materials, choose their research topics and publish its results, and discuss difficult topics in the classroom. This freedom has helped them to create knowledge; without this freedom, American society would have lost many professors' best inventions, scholarship, and creative products (Franke & O'Neil, 2003). History has proven, however, that sometimes it is painful to create knowledge or search for truth, especially in times of national crisis (Cooper, 2003). The tragic events of 9/11 and the War on Terror are two examples indicating that expressions of opinion on controversial matters are not permitted; faculty members often perceive that they cannot express critical views about certain aspects of the U.S. policy without being charged of anti-American or anti-Semitic.

The risk facing professors who come from an Arab or Muslim background, however, is much greater. Arab-born individuals have been seen as foreigners within American society who aim to harm and destroy the nation. They have historically been perceived as the enemy who pose a threat to the national security if they dare ask questions or oppose U.S. policies toward the

Middle East. These negative attitudes toward Arabs and Arab immigrants are grounded on nativist ideologies that cause individuals to fear those from different races, religions, and countries of origin. Researchers have written many scholarly papers explaining the development of anti-Arab sentiments during political disturbances and the effects of these sentiments upon their academic work, yet few have examined how anti-Arab sentiment may shape their experience in higher education. Although scholars have shown that Arab-born faculty have come under sustained attacks by the government, the media, and private groups to limit their ideas regarding U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and Israel policy as well (Ameri & Arida, 2012; Beinin, 2004; Brand, 2007; Doumani, 2005; Horowitz, 2006b; Newman, 2005; Salaita, 2008), there is a need to specifically examine their experiences concerning academic freedom in teaching and writing.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will introduce the methodology and research design of this study and provide a description of the sampling procedures that I used during the selection of the study sample. I will also discuss the data collection methods, data analysis procedures, and the credibility and validity of the study. This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors perceive academic freedom in the United States regarding Middle East issues?

2. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of teaching in discussing issues related to the Middle East?

3. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of conducting research related to Middle East issues?

4. To what extent do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in the United States believe their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have influenced their experiences in higher education on the grounds of their foreignness (origin, race/ethnicity, and religion)?

Research Design

I used the qualitative research approach to guide this study because information about the topic was limited, the variables were unclear, and a relevant theory base was missing (Tavallaei & Abu Talib, 2010). There was a need to understand, describe, analyze, and interpret the aspects of the phenomenon under investigation, rather than to test hypotheses (Tavallaei & Abu Talib, 2010). In this study, I explored how Arab-born professors experience academic freedom of teaching and conducting research within the context of politics. In order to achieve this, I used a

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methodological strategy grounded in constructivist theory and thematic analysis. Following constructivism, I focused on participants' views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East that may have helped to shape their experiences in U.S. higher education. This idea came from Berger and Luckmann's (1967) explanation of how individuals construct their own understanding of the world they live and work in through interaction with others and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives (as cited in Creswell, 2009). Mogashoa (2014) further described constructivism as an epistemology or "theory of knowledge" that offers an explanation of how individuals create knowledge. Creswell (2009) identified three assumptions: (a) humans construct knowledge when they interact with the world; (b) while interacting, humans make sense of the world based on their social and historical perspectives; and (c) individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences toward certain objects.

This approach holds true for the study and supported the quest to understand how Arab-born faculty member participants perceive academic freedom, how their previous and current knowledge have created their experiences in higher education, and how these experiences may produce varied and multiple meanings of the phenomenon under study (Amineh & Asl, 2015). My goal was to rely on participants' views; therefore, each participant was provided with opportunities to share his or her perceptions and work experiences in higher education through semi-structured interviews. The data collected from in-depth interviews provided a framework for carrying out a thematic analysis in order to answer the research questions. Thematic analysis is a commonly used data analysis method in qualitative studies in which the researchers analyze and make sense of a set of field notes and transcripts from interviews and observations (Guest et al., 2012). It is particularly useful when a study is exploratory and collected data generate themes, key words, or phrases that describe implicit and explicit ideas in the data to help outline

the analysis later (Guest et al., 2012). The data analysis was informed by the theoretical framework of nativism (i.e., the anti-Arab/anti-foreign movement) to explain how Arab-born professors' views about the U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East have influenced their experiences with academic freedom of teaching and conducting research in higher education. With this theoretical perspective in mind, the interview guide included open-ended questions to encourage participants to provide any information that they feel is relevant to their experiences concerning the topic under investigation.

Participants

I used purposeful sampling to select the participants for this study. This technique is typically used to identify and select "information-rich cases" (Etikan et al., 2015), meaning that participants should meet certain criteria in order to participate. Criteria include (a) identification of faculty members as Arab-born who (b) currently teach subjects and write topics related to the Middle East, and (c) are willing to participate voluntarily and share experiences and ideas related to the topic (Etikan et al., 2015; Palinkas et al., 2015). The sample consisted of male and female faculty members, including instructors, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. I included both Muslims and non-Muslims, as well as non-Arab professors. The reason to broaden the sample pool, according to Etikan et al. (2015), is to increase the chance to identify those with related experience, thus providing deep understanding and rich information about the topic under investigation. These researchers also added that including participants from a broad spectrum relating to the area of study is useful when the sample size is small and the area of research is new.

Initially, I was able to recruit 10 participants by using my social network. Decades of research have proven that social networking is an attractive and effective channel for recruiting

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(Kitt, 2000), especially when it is hard to reach the target population, when there is need to increase or encourage a number of participants to join a project, and when it is necessary to find relevant participants for the study (Kitt, 2000). Utilizing my social connection with two well-known public figures at the Arab community center in Union City, New Jersey, of which I am an active member, I was referred to four Arab-born professors. I contacted them via email and asked them if they were willing to be part of the study after I briefly explained their potential roles (see Appendix C for recruitment letter). They showed enthusiasm to participate, and two of them provided contact information for some of their colleagues they thought would be interested in participating as well. I therefore utilized another sampling technique, snowballing, to recruit additional participants. This method basically relies on primary participants to provide and identify additional subjects with whom they most likely share similar characteristics (Johnston & Sabin, 2010). After employing snowballing, I was able to make a list of 10 participants, three females and seven males, after applying the selection criteria of (a) Arab-born faculty members (b) who currently teach and write about Middle East issues and (c) are willing to share their perceptions of and experiences with academic freedom.

In addition, there is a possibility of recruiting more participants by asking the recruited participants for referrals. This is critical if selected participants do not yield rich information. Qualitative methods rely on "obtaining comprehensive understanding by continuing to sample until no new substantive information is acquired" (Palinkas et al., 2015). Each participant was regarded as an expert and narrator of his/her experience as an Arab-born faculty member who teaches and conducts research related to Middle East issues. They were expected to reflect the theoretical framework of the study (nativism/anti-immigrant/Arab movement), which I used to

explore how their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East have been shaping their experiences with academic freedom of teaching and conducting research.

Prior to the interview, I obtained IRB approval to conduct the study. I then provided the participants with the informed consent forms (see Appendix D) to ensure ethical research. This form explains the participants' roles in the study, as well as their rights, and how I maintained confidentiality during data collection. The informed consent is an agreement that consists of elements such as (a) an identification of the researcher, (b) the purpose of the research, (c) the benefits of the research, (d) the voluntary nature of participation, (e), assurance of their right to withdraw at any time, and (f) guarantee of confidentiality. To ensure confidentiality, I assigned each participant a pseudonym when transcribing data and reporting the results; additionally, the names of their institutions remain confidential.

Once participants returned the signed consent forms, I scheduled appointments to conduct the interviews with each participant (see Appendix E for the interview protocol). All interviews were recorded with a digital recorder, and I transcribed the recordings into Microsoft Word documents and stored the transcriptions in a password-protected USB flash drive. All data files—including audio files, transcribed interview, and any other print materials—were destroyed once the study was completed.

Data Collection

I collected data for this study from two sources: semi-structured interviews and field notes. In the following section, I will briefly describe each source.

Semi-Structured Interview

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews are the most used method for data collection in qualitative research. I conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews with Arab-born faculty

at locations determined by participants. The interviews were carried out during the spring and fall of 2019, and although I had initially planned to conduct all in person, I conducted 13 face-to-face interviews, one interview via Skype, and three interviews via phone. Face-to-face interviews are helpful in creating a connection with participants in order to make them feel comfortable, particularly when talking about sensitive topics. This method helps researchers to capture facial expressions and body language that might be useful later for interpretation and analysis.

The interview questions are divided into four sections (see Appendix E for the list of interview questions). I designed the first section of the interview to explore participants' personal and professional backgrounds, such as country of origin, residency status, rank, years of teaching, and areas of teaching. I designed the second section to answer the four research questions: "How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors perceive academic freedom in the United States regarding Middle East issues?" and "To what extent do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in the United States believe their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have influenced their experiences in higher education on the grounds of their foreignness (origin, race/ethnicity, and religion)?" Then, the interview questions addressed the two sub questions, (a) "How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of teaching in discussing issues related to the Middle East?" and (b) "How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of conducting research related to Middle East issues?" Toward the end of the interview, I asked each participant an open-ended question to encourage each to provide more details or information that he or she might have forgotten to share such as incidents, feelings, or any other experience they have had regarding the research topic.

Field Notes

Field notes served as an extra source of data collection to obtain additional data. Some researchers (Mack et al., 2011) have described this as one form of observation that involves recording what the researcher sees, hears, and experiences during data collection. The field notes could capture silent moments or absence of speaking by participants, as well as facial expressions or gestures. Taking notes during interviews, according to Mack et al. (2011), may help researchers to generate new information or questions that need to be considered for further explanation. Mack et al. also noted that these notes might be used as an actual data source when analyzing data.

Data Analysis

Analyzing data for thematic analysis is not new; it is similar to other qualitative research methods for data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is very flexible in terms of the ability to move back and forth as much as needed throughout the steps. Braun and Clarke provided six steps for analyzing data: (a) familiarizing oneself with data, (b) searching for themes, (c) generating initial codes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining themes, and (f) writing the analysis.

After transcribing the interviews, I reviewed all transcripts and field notes and read once, twice, and three times, when needed, to familiarize myself with data. At this point, I searched for themes or patterns by finding frequencies, comparing similar and different themes among participants, and capturing complexities of meaning in order to identify major themes that best describe experiences of Arab-born faculty with academic freedom and freedom of speech. Then codes were developed based on how professors' views about U.S. foreign policy may have shaped their experiences regarding academic freedom of teaching and research. Coding was done manually because I feel more comfortable with this method as a newcomer to qualitative study.

In addition, the sample size was small enough that this was not problematic. After coding the data, I grouped different codes into potential themes and organized them in tables or theme-piles. I wrote the name of each code with a brief description. This step was important to help me begin thinking of the relationship between codes/themes and between different levels of themes. It also helped me to discover a structure of sub-themes and to discard concepts that did not belong or match the themes from the research questions about the experiences of Arab-born faculty in higher education.

As a result, I developed a list of themes/codes across the data set to begin the analysis. Although the analysis was guided by the theoretical framework, which I explained in the earlier chapter, narratives are exploratory in orientation. This means that when writing up and reporting findings, vivid examples or extracts within textual data are needed to capture the essence of the data collected and to make an argument related to the research questions rather than simply describing data.

Trustworthiness

Creswell (2009) asserted that using more than one strategy of analytical methods is essential to achieve accuracy in the study results and enhance the validity of qualitative data. In this study, I used triangulation by gathering multiple data sources to examine evidence from the sources to build up themes that are matched across data sources in order to add the validity to the study (Creswell, 2009). Scholars can obtain evidence from transcribed interviews, field notes, and the use of a wide range of participants within several sites (Anney, 2014; Morrow, 2005).

The use of a wide range of participants increases the validity of the study results. It provides the researcher the opportunity "to check out bits of information across informants" or to verify individuals' experiences against each other (Shenton, 2004, p. 66). According to Shenton,

this adds richness, breadth, and depth to the data findings. Including participants who work at different institutions also promote the accuracy of the qualitative data findings. It reduced the effect of a particular factor pertaining to one institution and increased the possibility of similar results emerging at different sites, bringing greater credibility to the findings (Shenton, 2004).

Another method that I used to achieve the validity of the study was conducting a pilot testing for the interview questions before carrying out the interviews (Dikko, 2016). This strategy was very important to ensure that the interview questions adequately fit the area I wasm exploring, which is how professors' views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have shaped their experiences with academic freedom (Dikko, 2016). I used my social connections again to search for at least two Arab-born faculty with the same criteria that I used to select the study participants to pretest the interview questions. By doing so, I was able to make final adjustments to the interview questions, identify biased questions, determine missing information that should be included, and realize repeated or unrelated questions (Dikko, 2016).

Limitations of the Study

This study had a few limitations. First, this study was limited only to examine Arab-born faculty members and not native-born Arab American. Although it may not be difficult to find similarities between both groups in regard to their experiences in higher education as they both are of Arab descent, there is a slight different between the two groups in terms of their demographic backgrounds. Arab-born faculty immigrated to the United States either for better life, education, or freedom, unlike Arab Americans, who were born in the United States and are more likely to have different experience than the foreign born. The second limitation is that the findings of the study cannot be generalized to all Arab-born faculty members due to the small

size of the study sample and the diversity of participants who range from professors to instructors at multiple sites.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the methodology of the study. I first explained thematic analysis in qualitative research by utilizing data from in-depth interviews and note taking during the interviews and observations. I explained how I used qualitative research methods to conduct this study. After reading and re-reading the transcribed data and field notes, themes, key words, and phrases emerged to best describe the experiences of Arab-born faculty with academic freedom in higher education. Since each participant shared his or her views about academic freedom and freedom of speech, common themes were introduced in order to understand the full picture of how politics has—or has not—shaped Arab-born faculty members' experiences with academic freedom. Finally, after coding and analyzing the collected data, I provided answers to the research questions. In the next three chapters, I will introduce each participant through creating profiles for each one of them, including description of the background of each. I will then analyze the data and report the findings. Finally, I will discuss the findings, provide implications, and suggest recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

This study aimed to explore perceptions and experiences of Arab-born professors with

academic freedom in teaching and conducting research about Middle Eastern affairs and how

their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East have influenced their experiences in

higher education on the grounds of their foreignness (country of origin, race/ethnicity, and

religion). In this chapter, I describe the 17 research participants: 12 Arab-born and 5 non-Arab

professors, including their personal backgrounds as well as their professional achievements. The

reason I added non-Arab or foreign-born professors to the sample study is to highlight perhaps

some similarities or differences about their experiences with academic freedom when teaching

and writing about the Middle East.

I conducted one-to-one interviews with 13 participants, one interview via Skype, and

three interviews via phone to gain insight into each participant's lived experience to better

understand how these professors experienced academic freedom in higher education institutions.

I asked each participant at the beginning of the interview to provide some background

information such as country of origin, race/ethnicity, legal status in the U.S., when they came to

the United States, as well as their professional accomplishments such as the highest degree they

earned and from where, academic status and rank, years of teaching, and any social activities in

which they have been involved inside or outside their institutions. This information provided

much insight into what kind of personal/ professional backgrounds they have brought into their

classrooms and research.

In the following sections, I will provide an overview analysis of all participants' personal

and professional backgrounds information, followed by three tables to identify the similarities

and differences within each group: Arab-born and non-Arab/foreign-born professors. Thereafter, I will include profiles for each of the 17 participants, describing their personal information and academic achievements. Finally, I will conclude the chapter with a summary of overall commonalities and differences of participants.

Participants' Backgrounds Analysis

The 17 participants of this study are currently working at different higher education institutions in various academic disciplines, and their ranks range from full professor to lecturer in six different states from the East Coast to the West Coast of the United States. In the following, I provide an overview of the common characteristics that the participants shared in their responses to the background questions in the beginning of each interview. In total, there were 11 males and 6 females, including 9 Arab-born males and 3 Arab-born females who were identified based upon the sample study criteria: Arab-born professors; currently teach and write about Middle East, Islam, or Arabic affairs; and voluntarily agreed to participate and shared their professional experience. As for the non-Arab professors, there were 3 females and 2 males who were foreign born with different legal statuses in the United States. Thirteen participants had American citizenship, two were green card holders, and two were working on visa. Regarding country of origin, four participants were born in Palestine, four in Egypt, two in Jordan, one in Morocco, one in Iraq, two in Israel, two in Iran, and one in Turkey.

With regard to participants' race and ethnicity, it seemed very challenging for all of the participants (Arab-born and non-Arab) to identify their race/ethnicity. All 17 participants expressed difficulty in self-identifying their race or ethnicity. Four Arab-born professors did not answer. Majed stated, "I normally do not answer this question because I see there is racism in it, we are not White or Caucasian." Jamal said, "I insist to identify myself as a universal human

being." Other participants such as Ali said, "It's a very precarious kind of question," and Saleh stated, "that's what we call a complicated question." Yet all participants ultimately provided answers as follows: 8 answered White (five Arab-born and three non-Arab), two said other (Arab-born), four did not answer (Arab-born), one Arab-born said Caucasian, and two non-Arab said Caucasian as well. It was interesting and confusing at the same time to see half of the participants identify their race as "White" although they come from different descent or culture (five Arabs, two Israelis, and one Iranian). Followed by "other" as a second option that is most likely to be selected, especially by Arabs when identifying their race or ethnicity. The two categories "White" and "other" that were listed in the 2015 U.S. Census Bureau, became the most likely responses by people who come from Middle East, North Africa, or Europe (Miller, 2018).

In terms of age, the average age of these participants was 51, while ages ranged from 30 to 71. Sixteen participants are married with families who live in the United States, and one is single. Most participants came to the United States either as students to complete their education or for post-doctoral fellowships, and all remained afterwards to work. Nine of the participants came to the United States to complete either their master's /doctoral degrees or both; four came for doctoral fellowships; three came at a very early age with their parents, like Arman (Iranian-born) at 12 years old, Noor (Egyptian-born) at 7 years old, and Emma (Israeli-born) at 11 months old. The last one, unlike the majority of participants, Mona, came after she finished her master's and doctoral degrees in Jordan to work in the United States. Fifteen of the participants have doctoral degrees, and the remaining two are in the process of completing a doctorate.

The idea of coming to the United States to complete their education/post-doctoral and remaining afterwards, as described by most of the participants, was for a better life and better job

opportunities. In fact, receiving their higher education in the United States has helped to shape part of their teaching experience in terms of developing or promoting debate and critical thinking. Noor, for instance, explained the difference between education here in the United States and in Egypt: "We were not raised to be a critical thinker . . . it was mostly like spoon-fed stuff . . . here they ask you about your opinion." Azeez also stated, "Some of the positive things [referring to the U.S. education system] how to think clearly and rationally and differentiate between an opinion and a fact." The participants' teaching experience will be covered in detail in the next chapter.

Participants teach a variety of subjects about Middle Eastern affairs, including teaching about Islam or Arabic language under different departments/divisions: seven have worked in Near Eastern history and Middle East studies, four in modern languages and culture, three in political science, three in religion. The average number of years of teaching in the United States is 12 years, with a range from one year to 35 years. All participants work at different types of institutions: eight work at public institutions; eight at private institutions; and one at two different institutions—one public and the other private. In fact, three participants work at institution A, three work at institution B, three work at institution C, two work at institution D, one works at institution E, two work at institution F, one works at G, one works at two institutions (H and I), and the last one works at institution (J). In terms of locations of these institutions geographically, participants currently live and work across six states at nine institutions: six institutions are located in Northeast, one is located on the West Coast, one in the Midwest, and one in the Southeast.

In the following section, I will summarize participants' personal and professional backgrounds in three tables for easy visualization. Table 1 includes the country of origin of

participants, race/ethnicity, and social status; Table 2 summarizes participants' academic and professional backgrounds, including highest degree earned, area of expertise, academic status, institution type, and the geographic location of their institutions. In Table 3, I provide a pseudonym for each participant with details about their country of origin, race/ethnicity, age, social status, years of experience, and legal status in the United States.

Then at the end of this chapter, I provide a brief profile of each participant in order to recognize each individual's unique journey that helped to build their personal and professional characteristics. Participants were very cooperative and excited to be part of this study, and so they opened up and shared their personal and work experiences in higher education institutions. The information they shared added richness to the study and provided a better understanding of who they are, where they work, how they experience the U.S. higher education, and most importantly, how their backgrounds as foreign-born have helped to shape their teaching and writing experiences.

Table 1

Participants' Personal Background Information (n = 17)

Features	Frequency	Percent of Participants (%)
Birth origin		
Palestine	4	23%
Egypt	4	23%
Jordan	2	12%
Iraq	1	6%
Morocco	1	6%
Iran	2	12%
Turkey	1	6%
Israel	2	12%
Race/Ethnicity		
White	8	47%
Caucasian	3	18%
Other	2	12%
Not answered	4	23%
Social status		
Married	16	95%
Single	1	5%
Family/Children in the United States		
Yes	15	88%
No	2	12%

Table 2

Participants' Academic and Professional Information

Features	Frequency	Percent of Participants (%)
Highest degree earned		
Master's degree	2	12%
Doctorate	15	88%
Area of expertise		
Political science	3	17%
History and Middle East studies	7	42%
Modern languages and literature, and culture	4	24%
Religious studies	3	17%
Current academic status		
Full professor	5	29%
Assistant professor	4	23%
Associate professor	2	12%
Adjunct	3	18%
Lecturer	3	18%
Institution type		
Public	8	47%
Private	8	47%
Both	1	6%
Geographic location		
Northeast (Tri-State)	14	82%
Southeast	1	6%
Midwest	1	6%
West Coast	1	6%

Table 3

Participants by Country of Origin, Race, Age, Social Status, Years of Experience, and Legal Status in the United States

Pseudonym	Country of Origin	Race as Identified	Age	Social Status	Years of Experience in United States	Legal Status in United States
Adel	Palestine	Not answered	53	Married with children	13	American citizen
Ahmad	Palestine	Other	63	Married with children	11	American citizen
Ali	Morocco	White	50	Married with children	18	American citizen
Azeez	Iraq	Other	62	Married with children	16	American citizen
Jamal	Egypt	Not answered	59	Married with children	6	Green card holder
Majed	Jordan	Not answered	71	Married with children	12	American citizen
Mona	Jordan	White	40	Married with children	6	American citizen
Noor	Egyptian	Caucasian	36	Married, but children live outside	1	Business visa
Saleh	Palestine	Not answered	55	Married with children	22	American citizen
Salem	Egypt	White	30	Married with no children	6	American citizen
Rami	Palestine	White	69	Married with children	18	American citizen
Reem	Egyptian	White	45	Married with children	9	American citizen
Amir	Israel	White	53	Married with children	17	American citizen
Arman	Iran	Caucasian	86	Married	35	American citizen
Azra	Iran	White	36	Single with no children	2	Immigrant visa
Elif	Turkey	Caucasian	37	Married with children	4	Green card holder
Emma	Israel	White	45	Married with children	12	American citizen

<h1 align="center">Participants' Profiles</h1>

I describe in this section each participant in terms of how they identified their race/ethnicity, age, when they came to the United States, academic achievements, area of expertise, years of experience, and any social/educational activities they have been involved inside/outside their universities that they shared during the interviews. I first describe the 12 Arab-born professors, followed by the 5 non-Arab professors.

Arab-Born Participants

Participant 1: Adel

Adel is a 53-year-old, Palestinian-born man with dual citizenships: Palestinian and American, who was not sure about how to identify his race/ethnicity, stating, "This is one of the questions that I had never like. I have never understood them. I do not really know what to say." He first came to the United States in the late 1990s to complete his master's and then he went back to Jerusalem, Palestine, to finish his doctorate in political science. In 2003, he came back to the United States for a post-doctoral fellowship and remained to start teaching at his current institution in 2005. Adel is an associate professor of religious studies in the Department of Religion working at a private university (A) in northeast. Currently, Adel teaches two world religions courses and introduction to Islam. His area of research and interest is religions, nationalism, and colonialism, with a special focus in Islam and Palestine/Israel. Adel speaks multiple languages: Arabic, English, and Hebrew, and he lives with his family in the United States.

Participant 2: Ahmad

Ahmad is a 63-year-old, Palestinian-born man with dual citizenships: American and Palestinian, who identified his race as other. After he finished his bachelor's degree in Iraq, he

came to the United States in 1989 to complete his master's, and then he went back to Palestine and taught for couple years in one university. Then in 1996, he came back to the United States as an immigrant and started teaching in 1997, and he is currently in the process of completing a doctoral degree in linguistics. Ahmad is a full-time instructional specialist of modern languages and literature at a large public research university (B) in the Northeast and has been teaching at multiple institutions for a total of 22 years, including 11 at his current institution. This semester, he teaches two Arabic courses for beginners, two for advanced, and one culture course. Ahmad has participated in several conferences and talked about the education system in Palestine-Israel, justice in the Muslim world, and Muslim women in America. In addition, he organized a rally at his current institution condemning the executive order of banning residents of 7 Muslim countries from entering the United States in 2017. Ahmad lives with his family in the United States.

Participant 3: Ali

Ali is 50 years old, a Moroccan-born man with three citizenships including American who identified his race/ethnicity according to the U.S. categorization as White, although he preferred to identify himself based on his nationality rather than race, as a Moroccan from the Middle East. Ali finished his bachelor's degree in Morocco and completed his master's degree and doctorate in England in English literature and culture studies. In 2001 (two days after 9/11), he came to the United States for his doctoral fellowship, to remain afterwards, and started teaching at multiple institutions for 18 years, including four years at his current institution. He is an assistant professor of Middle East studies on the tenure-track in the Department of Languages and Literature at a large private institution (A) in northeast. Ali has been teaching various courses such as classical Arabic literature, political history of the Middle East, critical theory,

philosophy of religions, and theology of different traditions including Islam and Catholicism, and advanced Arabic as well. Ali research's area focuses on the relationship between literature and theology, faith and reason within the Arab and Islamic contexts. Ali is married and lives with his family in the United States.

Participant 4: Azeez

Azeez is 62-year-old, an Iraqi-born man with dual citizenships: Iraqi and American, who identified his race/ethnicity as other. He came to the United States in 1992 to finish his bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctorate in religious studies, and he remained to start teaching in 2003. Currently, he works at a large public research university (B) in the Northeast as an associate professor affiliated with the Religion Department. Azeez teaches courses such as Jihad and war and religions of the world, and his area of research focuses on Islamic laws. Azeez is married and has three children who live with him in the United States.

Participant 5: Jamal

Jamal is a 59-year-old, Egyptian-born male with dual citizenships: Egyptian and American, who did not want to identify his race according to the U.S. categorization scheme, insisting "I am a universal human being." He first came to the United States in 1985 to complete his master's and doctoral degrees in cultural studies. Then in 2000 he went back to Egypt and taught at a large public university until 2012. Between 2000 and 2012 he used to come to the United States twice a year either for teaching as a visiting professor or for other academic engagements until 2013, when he became a permeant resident with a green card. Overall, Jamal has been teaching for 35 years between Egypt and the United States, including 6 years in the United States, at two higher education institutions: public (H) and private (I) institutions in Minnesota. Jamal is a tenure-track professor teaching multiple courses this semester: one cultural

studies course, one Islamic studies course, and one African studies course. Besides his academic profession, Jamal is actively engaged in human rights and social justice organizations, and he has been invited to speak at many public events that call for Egyptian democracy, justice, and freedom.

Participant 6: Majid

Majid is a 71-year-old, Jordanian-born man with dual citizenships: Jordanian and American, who did not want to answer the question about his race and refused to identify his race/ethnicity according to the U.S. racial classification scheme. He came to the United States in 1973 as a student to finish his master's and doctorate in political science, and he remained to start working as a journalist. In 2007, he retired and decided to join academia and started to teach at a large public university (C) in the Northeast as an adjunct professor. Majid has been teaching for about 12 years in two departments: political science and Middle East studies, where he mostly teaches courses about Arab-Israeli conflict, Arab politics and society, Islam and democracy, media in the Arab world, and contemporary politics in the Middle East. Beside his academic profession, Majid writes a weekly columnist for an Arabic newspaper advocating human rights in general and Palestinians' rights in particular. In addition, Majid invited me, as a Saudi, to one of his classes about women in Islam to talk about women's rights in Saudi Arabia. It was such an amazing experience in which students and I talked and discussed women's life in Saudi Arabia.

Participant 7: Mona

Mona is a 40-year-old, Jordanian-born woman with dual citizenships: Jordanian and American, who identified her race as White. While she was working on her master's and doctoral degrees in Arabic language and literature in Jordan, she was teaching in middle and high

schools for 7 years, and then she moved to teach as an assistant college professor in a public university in Jordan. Then in 2013, she came to the United States to teach as an adjunct professor of Arabic language and culture at a large public university (B) in the Northeast. Currently, she is teaching Arabic for beginners and advanced Arabic, as well as culture courses. She co-presented multiple projects at conferences about women pre and after Islam, and Muslim women in America. Mona is married and lives with her family in the United States, and currently she is applying at different institutions in the United States and beyond as well.

Participant 8: Noor

Noor is a 36-year-old, an Egyptian-born woman with dual citizenships: Egyptian and Canadian, who identified her race/ethnicity as Caucasian, according to the U.S. categorization scheme. After she finished her master's degree and doctorate in international relations and politics in Canada, she came to the United States in 2017 for postdoctoral work on an H-1B visa (business/employment visa from 2017-2020). In 2018, she started teaching at her current institution, which is a large public research university (C) in the Northeast as an assistant professor of political science. Currently, Noor is on the tenure track, teaching one course about the Middle East and one course about gender and politics. Her research interest focuses on gender and politics, Islam and politics, and Middle Eastern studies. Noor is married, but her husband and children still live in Canada.

Participant 9: Saleh

Saleh is a 55-year-old, Palestinian-born man with only American citizenship who did not want to identify his race according to the U.S. Racial Classification scheme and said, "We are not white, other, or Western Asian." Saleh came to the United States in 1982 to complete his doctorate in Islamic studies, and then in 1992 he started to teach at multiple institutions as an

adjunct professor. Currently, Saleh is a senior lecturer in Near Eastern and ethnic studies at a public institution (J) on the West Coast, and he has been teaching for 27 years including 10 years at his current institution. In general, Saleh teaches different courses such as Islam in America, Islamic law and society, Middle East courses, and religious studies. In addition to his academic profession, he writes a weekly column for a foreign newspaper about human rights, especially for Palestinians, and he is actively engaged in social justice and human rights organizations as well.

Participant 10: Salem

Salem is a 30-year-old, Egyptian-born man and newly has been granted American citizenship. He came to the United States in 2013 as a student to complete his master's in linguistics, and he is currently in the process of completing a doctoral degree as well in language and literacy at the same institution he is working for, which is a public research university (G) in the Southeast. Salem identified his race/ethnicity as White, following the instructions of the U.S. racial categorization scheme. While he is studying, he is a part-time instructor teaching Arabic courses, and he is preparing to teach course about women in Islam in the spring 2020. His research interest focuses on intercultural communication, transnationalism, and Arabic literacy. He and his wife live in the U.S. and have no children.

Participant 11: Rami

Rami is a 69-year-old, Palestinian-born man with dual citizenships: Israeli/Palestinian and American, who identified his race as White. He came to the United States in 1992 to complete his master's and doctoral degrees in sociology, and he remained afterward to start teaching in 2001 at different institutions (two days before September 11). Currently, Rami is a tenured professor of Middle East studies and global studies in the Department of Social Science

and History, and he has been teaching for 18 years at his current institution, which is private (E) and in the Northeast. This semester, he teaches three sociology courses, although he has been teaching many different courses about the Middle East and religion. His area of research and interest is nationalism with a focus on identity, citizenship, culture, and religion.

Participant 12: Reem

Reem is a 45-year-old, Egyptian-born woman with dual citizenships: Egyptian and American, who identified her race/ethnicity according to the U.S. racial scheme as White. Reem came to the United States in 1980 when she was 7 years old with her parents who were immigrants, but after few years they were granted citizenship. Reem is a tenured professor of Middle East and legal studies at a large public university (C) in the Northeast, and she has been teaching for nine years, including two years at her current institution. In general, she teaches various courses for undergraduate and graduate students, including national security, Middle East human rights law, and critical race theory. Her research interest focuses on examining the impact of national security laws and policies on different race, ethnic, and religion groups within the United States. Reem has received two awards for her writing and she has been a very active number of human rights and social justice organizations; she talks at public events and is active on social media, as well. She is married and lives with her family, including her parents, in the United States.

Non-Arab Participants

Participant 13: Azra

Azra is a 36-year-old, Iranian-born woman with dual citizenships: Iranian and Canadian, and currently she is in the process of applying for an immigrant visa. She identified her race as White, although she did not perceive herself fitting in any of the U.S. racial categories. She came

to the United States in 2015 for a postdoctoral fellowship after she finished her master's and doctorate in Canada in Near and Middle East studies. Azra worked for two years at a public research university in the Southeast and then she moved to the Northeast to work at a private university (A). She is a tenure track assistant professor of history of modern Iran and the Middle East and has been teaching various courses about the Middle East including World History II and the history of the Middle East, including history of Iran. Her research area focuses on culture, modernity, nationalism, and revolutions in the Middle East, particularly Iran. Azra is not married and has no children.

Participant 14: Elif

Elif is a 37-year-old, Turkish-born woman with a green card (permanent resident) who identified her race/ethnicity as Caucasian. She came to the United States in 2009 to finish her master's and doctoral degrees in history and then she started to teach in 2015, but she has been teaching at her current institution. Elif is an assistant professor of history and Middle Eastern studies teaching at private institution (D) in the Northeast. She teaches undergraduate and graduate students different courses about the early history of the Middle East, including Sunni and Shiite conflict, and modern history of the Middle East. Her area of research focuses on politics of sectarianism in the Middle East, the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and Iraq. She has received a number of awards for her writing. Elif is married and lives with her family in United States.

Participant 15: Emma

Emma is 46-year-old, Israeli-born woman with two citizenships: Israeli and American, who self-identified her race/ethnicity as White. Emma came to the United States when she was 11 months old with her parents, and thus she received her education in the United States. After she finished her master's and doctoral degrees in history, she started teaching in 2004 at one

institution in the Midwest for three years and then in 2007 she moved to the Northeast to start teaching at her current institution, which is private (F). Emma is a tenured professor of history and international affairs teaches various courses for graduate and undergraduate students, such as modern Middle East history, Israel and Palestine: Land and Power, and world history. Her research interests focus on the social and cultural history of the Middle East with emphasis on colonialism and nationalism in the Arab world, including Palestine-Israel conflict. She is active on social media, but not in a sense of organizing or participating in events. She is married and lives with her family in the United States.

Participant 16: Amir

Amir is 53-year-old, Israeli-born man with two citizenships: Israeli and American, who identified his race/ethnicity according to the U.S. categorization as White, although he preferred to say "Iraqi-Jew." He came to the United States in 1995 with his parents, but he went back to Israel to finish his bachelor's degree in East Asian studies. Then he went to China for his master's degree in Chinese history and then came back to the United States to complete his doctorate in history. Amir is a tenured professor and has been teaching for 20 years, including 17 years at his current institution, which is private (D) in the Northeast; he is a faculty member in the Department of History and Middle East and Islamic Studies. He teaches several courses including War and Knowledge, Early Islam in China and Europe, and Islam and Judaism. His research area focuses on interaction between religions and cultural exchanges. Interestingly, he speaks four languages: English, Arabic, Hebrew, and Chinese, which helps him to teach outside the United States, sometimes in two different foreign countries. He is married and his family lives in the United States, as well.

Participant 17: Arman

Arman is an 86-year-old man, Iranian born and an American citizen, who identified his race as Caucasian. Arman came to the United States with his family when he was 12 and went to public schools in a metropolitan area, then completed his bachelor's degree in physics, master's degree in geology and geophysics, and doctoral degree in history of science and philosophy. In 1958, he went back to Iran and worked at Iranian universities and quickly rose through academic ranks to become a president of one of the distinguished Iranian universities. After the Iranian revolution in 1979, Arman came back to the United States with his family and settled. Arman is a tenured professor of Islamic studies at his current private institution (F) in the Northeast, teaching for 35 years various courses about Islam and interfaith relations. He has published numerous articles and over 50 books in four languages: Persian, Arabic, English, and French. His research interest focuses on classical Islamic philosophy, Sufism, the relation between Islam and the West with respect to science and civilization, natural environment, music, and art. Additionally, Arman speaks and reads four additional languages: Italian, German, Spanish, and Greek. Arman is a well-known scholar both in the Islamic world and the West and has met a number of world leaders such as popes, Saudi Arabian kings, and Egyptian presidents. He used to be an active scholar, speaking at academic conferences and public events about different topics including the environmental crisis.

Summary of Participants' Profiles

In the previous section, I provided 17 profiles briefly describing each participant's personal and professional backgrounds. All participants have unique characteristics as individuals in terms of where they were born, raised and received levels of education before coming to the United States. Yet they shared some common things regarding their desire to

complete their higher education degrees in the United States and their interest to teach and write about Middle Eastern affairs. Overall, Arab-born professors as well as non-Arab in this study represented a full spectrum of well-educated and experienced professors who ranged from Muslim and non-Muslim, male and female, and full professor to instructor. Each individual added richness to the study with the information they shared during the interviews. In the following chapter, I will focus on the findings and interpretations of data collected from the interviews I conducted with each professor.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore how foreign-born professors, especially Arab-born, perceive and experience academic freedom when teaching and conducting research about Middle East issues. Particularly, I sought to understand how their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East have influenced their experiences in higher education on the grounds of their foreignness. The study sample included 17 participants: 12 were Arab-born and 5 were non-Arab (two Israeli-born, two Iranian-born, and one Turkish-born). These five non-Arab participants were added into the sample upon the committee members' request in order to highlight similarities and differences between the two groups and to urge interested researchers to conduct further investigation. More than half of the participants (13) were American citizens, two were green card holders, one participant was on business visa, and one was on immigrant visa. The majority of participants (seven) were tenured professors, five were on tenure track, three were adjunct, and two were full-time instructors. Yet all 17 participants were at critical point in their career whether to express views and risk to become targeted by politicians or private organizations, or remain neutral to hold off any attacks. Specifically, their decision was whether to express their views about U.S. policy in the Middle East or the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine.

In this chapter, I will provide answers to the research questions that guided this study:

1. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors perceive academic freedom in the United States regarding Middle East issues?

2. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of teaching in discussing issues related to the Middle East?

3. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of conducting research related to Middle East issues?

4. To what extent do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in the United States believe their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have influenced their experiences in higher education on the grounds of their foreignness (origin, race/ethnicity, and religion)?

To answer these questions, I created four major themes and related sub-themes that emerged from the transcribed data. In this chapter, I will present what participants shared during the interviews, and I will use direct quotes to support and capture the essence of what they have been experiencing at their institutions. After collecting some personal and professional information from all participants (see the previous chapter), I began each interview by asking them about their perceptions of academic freedom. Then I asked them to share their academic experiences, starting with how they described their experiences inside the classroom when discussing issues about the Middle East, what experiences they had when writing about Middle East issues, and how these experiences were shaped. Particularly, I asked them about their experiences as foreign-born professors and if their views on U.S. politics in the Middle East influenced their experiences with academic freedom, especially when teaching and writing about Middle East issues.

Based on the analysis of the interviews, four major themes and subthemes emerged, consistent with the research questions: (a) participants perceived academic freedom as the ability to express different views and explore various topics without fear of intimidation, (b) participants were able to discuss issues related to the Middle East inside the classroom with caution, (c) participants were able to write and publish without restrictions, and (d) participants' views on

U.S. policy in the Middle East influenced their experiences with academic freedom when teaching and writing about issues of the Middle East on the grounds of their origin, race/ethnicity, and religion.

The first major theme explained how professors defined the concept of academic freedom. The second major theme addressed professors' freedom of teaching by describing positive experiences when discussing issues about Middle East, yet they encountered a few challenges when confronting students' personal views. The third theme described freedom of writing, unlimited freedom to write and publish on issues related to the Middle East. The fourth major theme addressed how professors' views about the U.S. policy in the Middle East influenced their teaching and writing experiences. In this theme, the analytical framework informed by the theoretical perspective of nativism (political ideology) or the anti-immigrant/anti-Arab movement became an essential instrument in explaining how professors' origin, race, and religion might put pressure on their academic freedom in a way that compelled them to self-censor when teaching and writing about issues related to Middle East—particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These major themes and subthemes are organized in Table 4, with codes and representative quotes by participants, along with the number of participants who expressed the ideas in each of these codes.

Table 4

Numbers of Participants by Themes and Subthemes (n = 17)

Research Questions, Themes, and Subthemes	Number
Research question 1: Participants' perception of academic freedom	
Major theme 1: Freedom to express different views and explore various topics without fear of intimidation	
Ability to express different ideas and research about any topic without Restrictions	13
"Academic freedom means responsibility"	3
"Academic freedom is not absolute"	6
"I have the freedom to be wrong"	2
Research question 2: Freedom of teaching	
Major theme 2: Overall positive experiences with few challenges related to discussed topics	
Freedom when discussing issues about Middle East	16
Pattern participants followed when teaching about Middle East issues	6
Precautious: "I am careful because I do not want to offend anyone"	3
Self-censored: "I censor myself about what I say in class"	3
Avoiding expressing personal opinion inside the classroom	10
Concerns about some organizations	1
Professional reasons	7
Students do not like it	2
Sharing personal opinion inside the classroom	7
Students need to be challenged to think rationally, not emotionally	1
Students need to be exposed to different ideas	4
Students need to be challenged to understand and respect differences	1
Students should be able to distinguish between an argument and the person who is making the argument	1
Academic freedom within political context	4
Challenges related to discussed topics about the Middle East	5
Israeli-Palestinian conflict	5
Sunni/Shiite/Sufi	4
Iran and the U.S.	2
Gender and race	7
Being female	3
Teaching about women in Islam	2
Being an Arab and Muslim	2
LGBTQ	1
Research question 3: Freedom of writing	
Major theme 3: Overall freedom to write and publish without restriction	
Group A: Participants had a freedom to write about Middle Eastern affairs and experienced no issue	8
Group B: Participants were careful and self-censor about what they write	4

Research Questions, Themes, and Subthemes	Number
Group C: Participants received threats/complaints for writing about certain issues of the Middle East	3
Group D: Participants were rejected to publish one or more of their work	2
Research Question 4: Views influence academic experiences	
Major theme 4: Experiences were influenced by participants' views on the grounds of their foreignness	
Positive influence	10
Proud to be Arab: "I am a product of the Arabic and Islamic culture"	2
Bringing different perspective: "I added values and new perspectives into the classroom"	2
Appreciating different backgrounds: "It is an advantage"	4
As an Arab: "Your opinion matters"	2
Undefined influence	7
Hesitation: "I am not sure"	3
Biased: "I am a female, Arab and Muslim, and activist"	4
Threats to academic freedom	
The danger of political power	11
The danger of having further restriction	4
Pressure from interest groups	3
Decreasing state funding	3

Major Theme One: Professors Were Free to Express Different Views and Explore Various

Topics Without Fear of Intimidation

In response to the first research question: "How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors perceive academic freedom in the United States regarding Middle East issues?," 16 out of 17 participants described their perceptions of academic freedom. The concept appeared familiar to most of them, perhaps because 14 out of 17 received their master's or doctorate in the United States. However, they have never attended any seminars, workshops, or even department meetings to discuss policies or issues related to academic freedom.

I identified three common keywords/subthemes that participants seemed to agree with when defining how they perceived academic freedom. While the vast majority of participants shared their perceptions about academic freedom as the ability to express different ideas, research any topic, and publish the results without restrictions, some went further and added,

"academic freedom means responsibility," "Academic freedom is not absolute," or "I have the freedom to be wrong." In the next section, I listed all the 17 responses including that of Mona, the only participant who did not share a clear view on the academic freedom.

Ahmad, a Palestinian-born and full-time professor of Arabic language and literature, perceived academic freedom as, "The freedom for the professor to express himself/herself the amount of knowledge that this person earned through his or her education and experience to the students freely without limitations without any constrictions without any concerns of anything."

Ali, a Moroccan-born tenure-track professor of Arabic language and comparative studies, said, "There are different ways of defining academic freedom, but it seems to me it is the ability of academics, lecturers, teachers, and educators to share information to share outcome of their research with students without fear of reprisal or fear of intimidation or fear of interventions."

Azeez, an Iraqi-born tenured professor of world religions, said, "The freedom of the professor or the teacher to express their opinions and conclusions of their research in any topic without being afraid of censure of any kind or action that may jeopardize their career."

Jamal, an Egyptian-born tenure-track professor of cultural studies, defined academic freedom as

> The ability to teach what you think is beneficial to the students what opens up the minds of the students what widens up their world with no limitation whatsoever. The classroom is the most democratic place on the face of the Earth. It's a free style of relationship between professors and students and there should not be any limitations whether on the material you choose to teach or the method by which you teach or the outcome of the teaching process.

Majed also, a Jordanian-born adjunct professor of political science, stated, "Academic freedom means you are entitled to express your findings and research and teaching and selecting the books you want to and select the courses you want to teach without pressure from administration."

Noor, an Egyptian-born assistant professor of political science, explained academic freedom as "The freedom to write openly about my point of views, about my opinions as long as I am supporting them with the facts without fear of jeopardizing my career, my promotion, and my relations with my colleagues."

Similarly, Rami, a Palestinian-born tenured professor of sociology and Middle East studies, defined academic freedom as

> The ability of the professors to explore any field they wish to explore, express their ideas and share their ideas with other people including on topics related to the economy, politics, culture, and social issues freely without restrictions without fearing of expressing ideas.

Saleh also, a Palestinian-born senior lecturer of Middle East studies and Islamic studies, perceived academic freedom as

> The foundation of intellectual and scholarly pursuits, which is the ability to engage in research, in teaching and explorations of subject of interest to the faculty within a broader sense of pursuing as accurately as possible and understanding of the subject matter that is being explored which means that academic freedom does allow for exploring an idea that actually might be or might reach to being wrong, but we cannot arrive at it without actually going through the process of exploring and engaging in such academic pursuit with a sense of academic freedom.

Salem, an Egyptian-born part-time instructor of Arabic language, said,

The academic freedom for a researcher or faculty member should be able to say opinion

freely and write without any problem. However, sometimes due to some political issues

you might try to be careful when you talk about certain topics because you do not want to

offend anyone.

Reem, an Egyptian-born tenured professor of Middle East studies, gave a long definition,

saying that academic freedom is

The ability to research, write, speak publicly and teach without interference from the

university or politicians or the government. The ability to do so based on professors

independent thinking independent research and without feeling that you have to say

something or write something or teach content based on political pressure or from your

institution, but to be able to make those decisions of what are you going to write about?

What are you going to do? How are you going to write about it? What arguing are you

going to make? What materials are you going to use in class? How are you going to teach

your class? What are you going to say in public lectures?

Azra, an Iranian-born tenure-track professor of Middle East history, described it as

The freedom for academics, students as well to be able to express their opinions, freely

teach different perspectives be able to explore various topics on issues related to the

Middle East and North Africa without any penalties or being punished by any way.

Arman, an Iranian-born tenured professor of Islamic studies, defined academic freedom

as

Freedom for professors and scholars to be able to examine whatever they're doing

according to both rational and intellectual principles involved on the quest for knowledge

without the interruption or intrusion into that quest by any powers for political reasons or otherwise.

Elif, a Turkish-born assistant professor of history of the Middle East described academic freedom this way:

In a very basic sense academic freedom is freedom to say but also to do research on whatever you want to do and write whatever you want to write freely. So, this is not only about speech, but it is also about teaching writing researching and everything that comes with that.

Emma, an Israeli-born tenured professor of Middle East history, said,

Academic freedom is the freedom to ask questions and explore ideas and come to conclusions without fear of retribution political retribution or retaliation or fear to work and do research and teach and study without being quashed for political reasons.

The vast majority of the participants described how they perceived academic freedom by directly answering the question, "How would you define academic freedom?" They largely agreed that it was the freedom to express ideas, write about any topic, and publish the results without fear of intimidation or interference from politicians or their university. Yet some elaborated with similar views, such as academic freedom means responsibility, "Academic freedom is not absolute," and "I have the freedom to be wrong." Each of these subthemes is explained in the following sections.

Academic Freedom Means Responsibility

Three participants described how they perceived academic freedom as carrying some responsibility. Azeez, for instance, explained that expressing ideas should not include insulting anyone's beliefs or opinions, as "this is not a responsible academic freedom." He added that

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students should feel free to express their ideas without fear of being punished or receiving lower grades. He further explained,

> My job is to tell students you have the freedom to express your opinion. I am judging you or grading you based on the quality of your research not on your opinion and that's what I call responsible academic freedom.

> Saleh, too, shared a similar view and added, "Students need to be nurtured in the classroom to express their opinion even if they are wrong, they should be graded on their efforts and making sure that they are undertaking systematic engagement in the subject matter." Saleh explained that this conception of academic freedom included students, who should be free to express their ideas without fear of receiving low grades or getting things wrong. Instead, he asserted that his responsibility was grading students for making an effort and undertaking academic standards when discussing a topic.

> Noor, on the other hand, offered a different perspective on academic freedom as a responsibility:

> in teaching, academic freedom is the ability to expose students to different point of views that they might not be familiar with and they may not necessarily agree with, but in a way that's not harmful or disrespectful and that's my responsibility as a professor.

She explained that part of her academic freedom lay in (a) helping students to face their own prejudice and their own stereotypes without necessarily changing their views, and (b) challenging them to look beyond their biases and respect each other's views. She felt a responsibility to protect students when they expressed opinions that might be offensive to others and she shared an incident from one of her classes,

There was a male student talked about how veiled women are submissive and oppressed

[for wearing the head cover] and I have two female students who were wearing the veil,

they were looking at him and wondering, what the hell he is saying?

She added, "Here I have the responsibility to not kick him out, but I need to challenge this

student to see beyond his own stereotype and respect others."

Academic Freedom Is Not Absolute

While the majority of participants agreed that academic freedom was the freedom of

expression without restriction, six felt that this academic freedom is not absolute. They have

expressed the same meaning, but in different ways. For instance, Adel, a Palestinian-born

associate professor of world religions, said,

Academic freedom is not necessarily that you can say anything you want. There is a

freedom, but not absolute freedom. It is like a game it has referees. It has its rules and it

has its judges. It is like playing soccer, not everybody can play soccer. So, the academy

has its own rules and you need to be engaged in a very particular game, you need to be

rational and you need to provide an argument. It's a particular game."

He further added, "academic freedom has been produced for professors to protect professors

from the arbitrary force of the government and to allow them to explore things that otherwise the

political power is not entrusted." Adel used an analogy to explain how he perceived academic

freedom, describing it as a game and that professors need to play by certain rules. These rules are

very simple, "You [professors] need to be rational, you need to provide an argument . . . and

when you are in class you should not be in your personal capacity. We [professors] should

remain reflective to others." On the other hand, he clarified that when invited to a conference or

participating in a public event, he would have the absolute right to say whatever he wanted as that was a different game.

Using the same analogy, by Emma called academic freedom "A fair game" or the freedom to teach different opinions based on historical and academic research rather than personal opinion that might include discriminatory actions or intolerant speech:

I define academic freedom, as operating in a free scholarly environment while still adhering to scholarly standards so I don't believe that academic freedom necessarily means free speech of all costs. I don't believe that academic freedom includes hate speech. I don't believe that academic freedom includes the freedom to engage in hate speech or did discriminatory teaching etc., but it has to adhere to scholarly rigorous scholars' standards.

Unlike the other participants, Emma used the term "hate speech" to explain that freedom of expression should not include bigoted or offensive opinions, but rather should be based on scholarly or academic standards. As a matter of fact, most of the participants thought of academic freedom as the freedom to express any ideas as long as they were expressed with respect.

Ali likewise did not consider academic freedom to be absolute. He said that, in theory, academic freedom is the freedom to express ideas without fear of consequences, and that it is easy and should not be intimidating, while in practice, academic freedom is much more complicated. He added,

We [professors] will always find people who are against academic freedom in practice. There will be always people who will intimidate professors for expressing ideas they do

not agree with. I do not believe there is a perfect academic freedom, especially in the

United States, there is no such a thing. It is a fiction.

Similar to Adel, Jamal said,

Academic freedom does not mean absolute freedom you do anything you want. I mean if

you harm me that's not a freedom. It is not a freedom to drive when the traffic light is red

and you cannot claim all its freedom. There has to be some organizations.

Jamal compared academic freedom to a traffic light, stating that rules for academic freedom in any institution are made to protect people's freedom and not limit them from thinking, expressing opinions, or making choices as long as they respect and do not harm each other. Amir as well, who is an Israeli-born tenured professor of Islamic studies, agreed with Adel and Jamal's view and said, "There are things I can say and there are things I can't say. I think we need to understand what are the boundaries of academic discourse rather than thinking of academic freedom as freedom to say anything I want." He explained that as a professor, he should not say anything he wanted simply because the university made a commitment to protect his academic freedom. Instead, "I have certain responsibilities . . . I need to think hard about how I say whatever I want to say rather than thinking to say it or not."

Finally, Mona, a Jordanian-born adjunct professor of Arabic language and literature, said, "I honestly, personally, I do not believe there is a freedom in the world." However, she seemed unsure about her statement and asked, "Wait, are you talking about freedom of speech?" She paused, as she was trying to think of a better response to how would she define academic freedom and continued,

I talk in a professional way, I do not talk about my personal opinion and if we [students

and I] talk about, let's say Palestine and Israel conflict, we usually talk about history, we

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talk about politics, and we talk about everybody's opinion, including Israeli not just

Palestinian.

To me, Mona's perspective sounded unclear, most likely for two reasons. Mona was the only

participant who finished her master's and doctorate in Jordan before coming to the United States

in 2013, and she did not receive any training or guidance on academic freedom policy when she

was hired seven years ago. In fact, she had not attended any department meetings because she is

an adjunct professor, as she explained, and department meetings were only for tenured

professors. In her point of view, academic freedom is similar to common sense, which is often

taken for granted rather than considered to be a value, principle, or even a right: "to be honest,

most of the time everybody talks about it [academic freedom]. We talk about it in the

conferences. We talk about problems with the department but not about academic freedom."

I Have the Freedom to Be Wrong

Amir and Saleh offered an interesting perspective on academic freedom. Both stated that

they had the freedom to be wrong or reach a wrong conclusion until convinced otherwise. They

believed in the freedom of exploring any idea they are interested in regardless of what the result

might be. Saleh explained,

Academic freedom does allow for exploring an idea that actually might be or might reach

to be wrong, but we cannot arrive at it without actually going through the process of

exploring and engaging in such academic pursuit with a sense of academic freedom.

Likewise, Amir said, "There should be room for mistake. I have the freedom to be wrong

and my freedom to debate with somebody else either to convince him that he is wrong or to say I

am wrong and you are right." In his opinion, people won't be able to know what is right or what

is wrong unless they have a debate and "that's how I define academic freedom," he said.

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Summary

The professors in this study (Arab-born and non-Arab) shared a similar perception of academic freedom as the ability to express different ideas, research any topic, and publish the results without feeling threatened. Although they differed in how they expressed their views, they felt freedom of expression included respecting others' opinions without offending anyone. Each participant had developed their own understanding of the concept through their career and that based on their years of experience, the courses they taught, the types of institutions they have worked in, and academic status. As the majority expressed, completing their higher education degree—either master's or doctorate—in the United States had a major influence on how they viewed academic freedom. Most of them were confident and well-informed when describing how they perceived academic freedom, and that many of them provided examples to explain their views.

Major Theme Two: Overall Positive Experience With Few Challenges Related to Discussed Topics

In response to the second research question, "How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of teaching in discussing issues related to the Middle East?," overall all participants expressed positive experiences. They described how much they enjoyed freedom in teaching and how lucky they were to work in U.S. universities where they could think freely, decide how to teach different subjects, and discuss various topics without restrictions. This is unlike the situation in their home countries, as some participants expressed, where professors could not express ideas or conduct research discussing different issues of the Middle East without risking of being fired or arrested by the government.

Rami, for instance, described his field research about the education systems in Jordan, Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia, saying,

> Professors are not allowed to deviate from the text they teach. They are not allowed to add external materials. They are not allowed to explore some fields that might be questionable by either religious or radical political group in the country.

While most participants described positive experiences with freedom in teaching, their experiences were varied. In the following sections, I describe the subthemes representing these experiences. The first subtheme describes the patterns participants followed when teaching about the Middle East, how careful and self-censoring they tried to be when discussing certain issues, and why some participants shared their personal opinions inside the classroom and some did not. The second subtheme addresses some perspectives of participants who explained academic freedom within a political context. Some found it challenging for some participants to express views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East without being perceived as anti-American or anti-Semitic. The third subtheme represents some challenges participants have encountered inside the classroom when teaching about certain issues pertaining to the Middle East such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Patterns Followed When Teaching About Middle East Issues

The vast majority of participants said that they have total freedom to decide how to teach their courses, including selecting course materials, assigning textbooks, and inviting speakers into the classroom. They often began their classes by presenting documentaries, videos, or films to introduce the assigned topic of the week, followed by presentations made by groups of students about the weekly reading to share their thoughts on the topic. At the end of class, professors opened a discussion and encouraged students to raise questions, make comments, and

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express opinions. For instances, Adel, a Palestinian-born tenured professor teaching world religion, described his classroom experience as "dynamic" and added, "I try to make the class like a convention. I like engaging, speaking, giving students examples and talking about my personal experience, which makes the class more dynamic and students like that and appreciate it." He said that students really enjoyed sharing ideas and expressing opinions freely without violating the law, which by his definition, "the law that protects their dignity and right to dissent." He also spoke about his friendly relationship with his students and colleagues and how lucky and privileged he felt working for 13 years at his current institution without problems.

Similarly, Rami, a Palestinian-born tenured professor of Middle East studies, said, "In most cases, my experiences are interesting and pleasant." He explained that students came to class after reading about the assigned topic and shared their thoughts, discussed issues, and analyzed different ideas. He explained,

> I encourage students to express different opinions whether about Palestine and Israel
> conflict, China, or Venezuela. I rely on debate; it is an open discussion, and we talk about
> anything; it does not matter . . . I do not limit them to just one perspective. They have to
> be exposed to different opinions. This is the whole idea of education and I have never had
> any problem with my students.

He also talked about his warm relationships with students and how he encouraged them to visit him during office hours to talk about academic or even personal issues.

> Elif, a Turkish-born tenure-truck professor of history and Middle East studies, shared,
> I don't do long lectures so we have an assigned reading every week and then we basically
> sit down and discuss the readings and then I provide them with necessary background in
> terms of understanding who or what this context is about, and they are more than

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welcome to disagree with me or disagree with each other as long as it is done in a fair and civilized way. I'm not here to indoctrinate you; I'm here to show you and guide you to form your opinion.

Similarly, Azeez, an Iraqi-born tenured professor teaching about Islam and religions of the world, said, "It is very good experience. In general, I first lecture for a while then I show them a video and then I open the discussion and encourage students to ask questions." He had developed a course years ago called Jihad and War, stating, "Students really like this course and they appreciated Islam as a religion . . . in most cases students came to class with negative views about Islam, but after taking the course, they understood better." He recalled one incident that happened between some students in one of his classes when talking about Sufism and Salafi. Students were divided between supporters and opponents and the discussion was intense, as each group was defending its views strongly. He reminded students, "It does not matter who is right or who is wrong, what matters is how to respect each other and accept differences."

Noor, an Egyptian-born assistant professor of political science, shared an interesting story about her first-time teaching in the United States. She was hired in 2018 and she was assigned to teach a course about politics in the Middle East; the textbook had a chapter about the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was her first semester teaching, and on top of that she had to teach about Israel and Palestine, so she was nervous, wondering "how to get away from teaching it," she expressed. She further continued,

> This class this course, you expect certain kind of anxiety when teaching it, right? I really did not want to teach it. I seriously did not want to teach it so lets put someone else to do it and I ended up inviting a guest speaker who was very balanced and nuanced. He is a Palestinian and I won't say his name. I know this doesn't completely take away the

responsibility if something goes wrong. It still would be on me who brought the speaker, but it shows you how I was careful especially when it comes to the Arab-Israel conflict. It was like treading a fine line.

Overall, she said that the class went well, and students really enjoyed listening to someone who combined history with his personal stories and provided examples they could relate to in order to understand the issue. After this successful experience, Noor taught the course two more times without any problems, and she described how comfortable she now was when discussing the issue of Israel and Palestine, compared to the first time.

Majed, a Jordanian-born adjunct professor of political science, also described his classroom experience:

I could say in general is positive experience . . . from day one of the class I set rules, especially with the course of Arab-Israel conflict, the most-touchy course I teach and tell students, you are going to be exposed to ideas you may not agree with but please listen nicely, politely, and argue the way you want to, and nobody will stop you as long as you are respectful to others.

He further commented that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could be a sensitive topic to some students who could get emotional when listening to views that did not match their own. Therefore, he came up with an interesting mechanism called a "peace conference" to make the classroom peaceful and productive. He assigned students into groups to discuss different issues, such as refugees, settlement, water, violence, terrorism, etc. Then, based on their research and reading, students put up different proposals reporting their findings, ideas, or suggestions. Majed had been teaching this course for many years, and he found this mechanism very rewarding for

students, as they enabled him to teach them how to represent their position/country professionally.

Cautious: "I Need to Be Careful I Do Not Want to Offend Anyone."

Three participants reported being very careful they were when discussing Middle East issues to avoid offending others. For example, Salem, an Egyptian-born part-time instructor of Arabic language and culture, said, "I have to be careful because I do not want to offend anyone." He explained,

> I teach a class about media in the Middle East and we read articles and talked about conflicts in the Middle East about Palestine, Israel, Syria, Egypt and all that . . . so you want to be careful not just because of the organization's policy but for a human level.

Similarly, Ahmad said, "I try to be careful not to hurt anyone's feelings regardless of their own political views." He added, "In my opinion, Trump is doing a terrible job for the country and for those in the Arab world, but I always say with all due respect to those who love him because they are people who like him . . . I say my opinion in a way that does not insult anyone."

Jamal, an Egyptian full-time professor of Islamic and cultural studies, gave a similar response:

> There are certain issues I need to be careful about, especially about Palestine and Israel issue. I need to make sure that the two perspectives are presented . . . . I believe in debates, conversations and engagements I do them in an atmosphere of free exchange of ideas and I try to present all perspectives.

He noted further, "Some students record my classes and I do not mind. It is their right, but I become more careful."

Self-Censorship: "I Censor Myself About What I Say in Class."

Other participants were more cautious or rather they engaged in self-censorship when discussing issues of the Middle East. For instances, Azra, an Iranian-born assistant professor of history and Middle East studies, said, "Sometimes I censor myself because of certain sentiments that we have on campus and with sensitive topics, it's important to be able to separate yourself and your own opinion from what you convey in class." She added, "I think it is better to be more diplomatic and professional than taking risk of any kind." Noor as well said, "I censor myself because I write about women's rights in the Middle East particularly in Egypt. I want to be able to go back to Egypt. I want to visit my family so I am very careful." Elif also shared a similar point:

> I censor myself in a way that, you know, that conversation between you and yourself. It doesn't even have to be a controversial topic. It's about any topic you have you should ask yourself those questions; should I teach this from this angle or that angle? Or is this the way to say that or not? Or if this is a good book to assign or not, right? Those types of questions you need to ask yourself when teaching about Islam or Middle East.

Avoiding Sharing Personal Views Inside the Classroom

Ten of the participants, more than half of the sample, preferred not to express their personal opinions inside the classroom. They reported three reasons, which are addressed in the following sections.

Concerns About Organizations: **"There Are Some Websites Ask Students to Report on Their Professors . . . Campus Watch."** Noor, who was hired in 2018, said, "This is my first year and I am trying to understand everything before I say anything or add my touch." She added, "When I want to say something, but I hold it back and tell myself 'no, not yet. I should

not say anything now and I should wait." She expressed caution and concern over some websites that blacklist professors who question U.S. foreign policy regarding the Middle East or discuss certain issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Accordingly, she said,

> I do not share my views because some students would try to appeal to you by echoing your views . . . . I tell them "I cannot give you a short answer. My job here is not to tell you what to think or what you should think. My job is to give you the tools for you to think."

Professional Reasons: **"I Refrain From Sharing My Personal Opinion."** Ahmad expressed that he preferred giving academic materials rather than his personal opinions, stating, "I try to present facts scholarly material rather than my opinion because I believe this is the role of a professor. If somebody asks me about my opinion, I tell them 'come and see me after the class." However, he would express his opinion occasionally to challenge students to look at different ideas and respect differences even if they did not agree with them. Jamal likewise preferred not to express his views in class: "I usually do not. I remain neutral. I refrain 95% from sharing my perspective." He explained that students must be able to think independently and not to be told what to think. A similar idea was shared by Azra who said,

> I refrain from providing my own opinion. I try to provide different point of views and allow students to discuss them . . . . I think with sensitive topics it's very important to be able to separate myself and my own opinion from what I want to convey in class.

She explained, "I think it's professional and a little bit of censorship on the part of professors, especially I think as an Iranian professor in this political climate it is difficult to talk about everything freely in class."

Furthermore, Emma expressed,

I try to keep barrier between my personal opinion and what I teach in class. I do not involve in students' politics and I feel the best way to isolate myself politically is to focus on doing my job and let students do their job on their own time do their own political work. I advise them if they come to me and say, "how do I make this argument? or what should I read?" I feel like that's my job. I educate them and advise them. It is just the way I have decided to run my professional life.

Along with the majority of participants, Arman said, "The course is not from my point of views, I tried to be objective as possible as I can and present historical facts, religious facts, events and so forth . . . 95% of what I teach are scholarly materials." However, he did share his lived experiences as he traveled to many places and met with some world leaders such as Indira Gandhi, the Shah of Iran, President Anwar Al Saadat, and King Faisal Al Saud. For instance, when a discussion about the U.S. invasion of Iraq came up, he told students about his meeting with President Saddam Hussein. He said that he shares his opinion without any concerns, which students loved and which piqued their interest, leading them to ask questions so they could learn more about the Middle East history. In the same vein, Rami expressed,

I refrain from sharing my personal opinion because I do not see it as part of my role as an instructor to impose my opinion on my students. My private opinion is my private opinion I do not share it although students know where I stand, I mean they are smart and they have sense of where I stand on human rights, race relations, gender relations and Palestine and Israel issue.

Adel also shared a similar sentiment: "Students are smart and they know where I stand in terms of human rights or Palestinian rights . . . . I do not really share my personal opinion, but if students ask me, I have to tell them. I need to be honest." He explained, "to be honest as a human

being, nobody can deny our [professors] own ideas and our own values. We cannot come to class and strip ourselves from that. It does not work this way." He further added that professors should remain reflective to others and they should operate as a moderator who moderates discussions between students.

Students Do Not Like That. Mona stated, "Some students will not like my opinion, so I avoid to say it. I do not want to hurt their feelings. Plus, I do not want to enforce my opinion on students." She also added, "I do not want to put myself in a situation, especially where I feel the other party is stronger." Particularly she spoke about her experience working in a community college where there was a strong Jewish presence and described how she was not comfortable talking about Palestine and Israel. She further pointed out that some students might take it personally and not differentiate between an argument and the person making the argument. For that reason, she avoided expressing her personal opinions in class. Majed also added, "Students do not expect me to express my personal opinion, and if I do, then I am not going to be appreciated." For example, he told a story about two Muslim female students who were arguing about the hijab in his class Islam and Democracy. One supported the Hijab and the other one was against it. He explained that he could have said his opinion to end the dispute, but he chose not to and left it up to them. He said,

> If I say my opinion that means I am trying to influence them and they would interpret it
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> differently. I tell them this is not a religion class you will not hear my opinion . . . . It is a
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> class about Islam as culture as a religion as a history as the container of this civilization.

Sharing Personal Opinions Inside the Classroom

Unlike the 10 participants discussed above, seven reported that they expressed their personal opinions inside the classroom to challenge students. However, each explained the term "challenge" from a different perspective as followings.

Students Need to Be Challenged to Think Rationally, Not Emotionally. Amir asserted that students need to be challenged to think more rationally rather than emotionally. He said, I want students to think and reach to conclusions on their own, so if I begin to think that I cannot say this or that because I have Muslim students or Christian students, or Jewish students then I will be betraying my job to teach . . . already there is a lot of pressure from all sort of directions and students can be offended by anything you can say.He added that professors cannot control what could offend students, so he believes in the value of open a debate. He explained to students,

> You can ask questions I can ask questions and you may say things that offend me I may say things that offend you, how can we know? We only know if we exchange ideas. Then you can correct me and vice versa.

Amir, who is an Israeli Jew, but Iraqi/Arab teaching about Muslims minorities around the world, shared a different understanding of academic freedom and freedom of professors, especially inside the classroom. He said, "If I have to say something that is a problematic, I need to think hard about how I say it not whether I say it or not. That's a big difference: how to say it." He further added, "I like nothing more than one student challenging me in class and say I think you are wrong professor. This is great because it means you are capable of thinking."

Students Need to Be Exposed to Different Ideas to Form Own Opinions. This was a common reason that four out the seven participants shared when explaining that while discussing

Middle East issues was challenging, shying away from or remaining silent about expressing

ideas was not an option. As noted earlier, Saleh was one of the participants who has been

blacklisted for years by many organizations for his political stances on issues such as Israel-

Palestine, the Iraq War, and Islamophobia. No matter the consequences, he continued teaching

and writing like many others who also were blacklisted. He further said that students must be

exposed to different ideas even if they disagreed with them, pose questions, and search for

evidence to make their own argument. Similarly, Elif shared,

> To a certain extent I do share my opinion. Students know that I am not a supporter of this
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> current administration here or the current administration in my own country . . . I actually
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> push boundaries I push certain narratives . . . . I always tell them "you are more than
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> welcome to discuss and disagree with me as long as it is done in a fair and civilized
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> way." I'm not here to indoctrinate you. I'm here to show you and guide you and you are
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> going to form your opinions.

Also, Salem, who has been teaching in the United States for six years in two different

institutions, described how much he enjoyed the freedom to teach and express opinions freely.

He said, "I do share my opinion . . . I use jokes, I make fun of different governments in the

Middle East and United States That's fine I have never gotten troubled for any of this."

However, even though he expressed his opinions freely, he did not take this freedom for granted,

explaining how he provided different resources to cover all different perspectives on any topic.

Although Reem would share her personal views in class on many issues, such as gender and

race, for the most part she would call on students to debate with each other. She said that her

goal was to teach students to look at different sides of an issue, explaining to them, "My opinion

does not matter; your opinion does not matter; you have to make your own argument based on evidence."

Students Need to Be Challenged to Understand and Respect Differences. Azeez said that even though expressing opinions could be challenging, it was inevitable as students needed to be challenged to look at other perspectives to understand others and respect differences. For instance, in his course Jihad and War, Azeez would challenge Salafi, Sufi, and even non-Muslim students with some ideas that they might not like just to make them think more, discuss controversies peacefully, and accept each other's differences. He added that even though some students were more sensitive now than before about discussing certain topics such as the Iraq War and 9/11, they were open and asked many questions without problems.

Students Need to Be Challenged to Distinguish Between an Argument and the Person Making the Argument. Ali noted that students know who is teaching them in terms of where professors came from (background, race/ethnicity, and religion). Therefore, he said, "Absolutely I do share my opinion sometimes it's better to be honest for a professor to express views." He added, "I try to tease them out to think, read, and consider other perspectives," explaining his goal is to teach students the difference between an argument and the person who is making the argument. He said that students should not think of people who disagree with them as their enemies, but rather as trying to help them to sort out their ideas and feelings. He further described his relationships with students as very open and comfortable; students feel free to discuss in his classes any issues, including political issues, without problems.

Overall, the common concern among all 17 participants was how to train students to open up to other ideas and respect differences rather than merely share their personal opinions. Sharing personal opinions was not wrong, as seven of the participants noted, as long as it was

used to challenge students to think independently and encourage them to express their ideas freely, respectfully, and without fear of any consequences. However, expressing personal opinions could be challenging for professors due to political pressure. Some explained how their academic freedom had been targeted by some organizations or politicians when they expressed political opinions, especially about Middle East issues or U.S. policy in the Middle East. Further details are explained in the following sections.

Academic Freedom Within a Political Context

Five participants further described academic freedom within a political context. They paired the violation of professors' academic freedom with some major international crises, such as the 9/11 attacks and the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine. Ali, a Moroccan-born and assistant professor of Arabic literature and culture, explained, "To better understand what has been changed with academic freedom since 9/11 is to understand it within the political context, and political here means that if professors question certain national convictions such as terrorism, 9/11 attacks, or Palestine and Israel, they would have become subjects of intimidations." Ali, who arrived in the United States four days before the 9/11 attacks, described how careful and conscious he was about what he said in class because "the level of antagonism, the level of Islamophobia, the level of stereotype and violence against Muslims and Arabs was very high." He further discussed,

> the intimidation of Arab and Muslim professors was motivated by politics, and politics is based and rooted in emotional misappropriations . . . an emotion of hatred and aggression. It is political from the very beginning to where we are now. Academic freedom has always been political.

Adel also shared a similar view:

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Academy cannot be disconnected from the larger political structure and for long time

academic courses about Palestine and Islam are dominated by pro-Israel and Zionist

views . . . so like when Muslims or Arabs have different views then of course you have a

clash and then they try to censor what you say to maintain power.

Especially those who teach Middle East studies are the most to be attacked "vehemently" and

labeled as anti-Semitic and anti-American, he added.

Saleh agreed that there has been an assault on academic freedom for more than 50 years

if professors dare question or criticize U.S. foreign policy, especially during national crises. He

expounded,

The university is wedded to the political social cultural religious reproduction of the

society. We are invested in military industrial complex like at [. . .] university will

receive close to $$ million dollars a year from the Department of Defense you are aware

right now of the whole debate of the Middle East studies programs, claiming that they are

very hateful people of Israel, which is not true. This attack has been going on for almost

for 30 years . . . . The United States wanted to utilize the academic enterprise and benefit

from education and research in order to administer the post-Second World War.

He also added,

If you take the 70s and 80s for example, those [academics] who were critical of U.S.

policies in Afghanistan and the intervention in Latin America and so on they were chased

out of academia and their research was hampered and limited . . . I think that 9/11 shifted

academic landscape . . . 9/11 in essence brought the whole paradigm of a 50-year into

crystallization rather than being the cause of it.

Additionally, he said that the expansion of Middle East studies and Orientalism, the emergence of women's studies or any studies that dealt with marginalized communities contributed heavily to limiting academic freedom and exploring new ideas. As was the case during Communism and the collapse of the Soviet Union, that also limited the scope of academic freedom and exploration, he explained.

Ahmad also said, "Politicians control our lives, they decide what rate the tax is, what the minimum wage is, politicians decide everything in the country. They do not want students to know the truth and no professors must get involved in politics." Azra similarly asserted, "I am sure absolutely that academic freedom and politics are associated." She added a further concern:

> U.S. policies in the Middle East have an impact on our research and our teaching. It is difficult to teach a class where you have students with biased views. They listen to media and come to class with those opinions. That is very difficult to challenge them.

Professors cannot teach about certain issues in the Middle East or oppose U.S. policies in the Middle East without the risk of being labeled as anti-American, she explained. Azra raised a point that some researchers might find interesting to examine: that scholars, who are vocal on social media or have a voice on different public platforms, are more likely to be targeted by the government or some private organizations. That is why she turned down offers by CNN and BBC for interviews, explaining that expressing her views through the mass media might cause her problems, especially when traveling back and forth between Iran and the United States.

Who Is Being Targeted?

Following the above, four participants reported that they have often been targeted by some private organizations such as Campus Watch and *Canary Mission* due to their political views. For instance, Saleh said, "I am feeling unease discussing Middle East issues, especially

about Israel and Palestine conflict. It is a very minefield and shark- infested water." He further explained these sentiments:

> I became target of spying operation on me by private organizations that targeted me on campus to silence me on issues of Islamophobia, Palestine and Israel, Iraq War . . . I am labeled as number one enemy or the most dangerous professor in the United States.

He also pointed out that many Arab professors try to avoid teaching courses about Palestine and Israel, fearing they will be the subject of complaints. As a result, he said that only Jewish or Israeli professors are brought in to teach about Palestine and Israel at his institution, explaining, "academic freedom with an alternative point of view is almost non-existent if not quashed."

Emma, an Israeli-born tenured professor of Middle East studies, also reported being targeted by one organization that labeled her as anti-Semitic for her pro-Palestinian views. She said, "I am on Canary Mission I am already labeled by some people . . . in my classes, especially my larger classes I get comments from one or two students every year or every semester that I am anti-Semite or I am anti-American." She expressed concern about being arrested if she expressed her political views, especially on social media. She illustrated, "I hope I did not mess it up by saying something about Trump. I hope I am not going to get told off by the police or something." Similarly, Reem, an Egyptian-born tenured professor of the Middle East, shared that her name appeared recently on the Campus Watch list because of her pro-Palestinian views. She said that she was blacklisted once she started discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as she described, although she had taught about other controversial issues like gender, race, and human rights. She noted that speaking about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a risk, especially without tenure, but it is also a risk after tenure. She said, "Once you get on that map of Arab-Israeli issue, you get labeled." Reem is an active professor in one organization that advocates for human rights

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and said, "I do a lot of programming I have a center for [. . .] rights and we have different events and that's where I engage with students outside the classroom and talk about current events."

Rami was another participant who shared some stories about how he has been targeted by individuals and organizations for his political position on Palestine. For instance, he stated that he was targeted by a group of senior citizens who attended a program that was offered by his institution to educate the public about the Israeli- Palestinian conflict. This group petitioned the university president concerning what they claimed to be his "radical views" about terrorism and Israel. However, the university did not take any action against him, although he was not tenured at the time. He described himself as vulnerable and easily targeted: "I am not sure if I was lucky only or there were other factors, but this is what happened." He believed that these citizens were sent by politicians to pressure the university to silence professors who advocate for certain positions in internal or foreign policy, otherwise the university would lose donations. Currently, Rami is a tenured professor, and he has been targeted by some organizations such as Campus Watch that backlisted his name for standing up for Palestinians' rights. In addition, he said that he has received threatening emails calling on him to leave and go back to his country.

Apparently, Saleh, Emma, Reem, and Rami were active and expressed their political views on various public platforms and were subsequently targeted by certain organizations to undermine their academic freedom, especially when discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. No wonder, Azra tried to bring attention to such a phenomenon, which was beyond the scope of this study. Having said that, nearly all participants experienced some challenges when discussing certain issues of the Middle East inside the classroom; I identify these challenges in the next section.

Challenges Encountered When Discussing Middle East Issues

The majority of participants reported challenges that they have encountered when teaching about certain issues related to the Middle East. I sorted out these challenges according to the most to least controversial: Israel and Palestine, Islamic sects (Sunnis/Shiites/Sufis), gender, race, and LGBT topics.

Israel and Palestine

Five participants agreed that the Israel and Palestine issue constituted the most controversial topic inside or outside of class. For instance, Majed, a professor of political science, said, "In our university, freedom of expression and freedom of opinion is completely guaranteed when it comes to American and U.S. policy. The only issues and I said is when it comes to Israel there that's a red line." He added, "Criticizing Israel has moved to another stage because of the lobbyist it is easy to accuse anyone with anti-Semitic and anti-American." He said that there were always one or two students who accused him of being biased or unfair.

Emma also, a professor of Middle East studies, explained her view on the divide between Israel and Arab-held views in the United States:

Jews in this country have privilege and Arabs do not and that post 9/11 period that disparity is even more intense… so it is safer for Jews to talk about Israel critically than for Arabs . . . . I have a certain immunity that some of my Arab and Palestinian colleagues do not have.

She added, "It is easy to beat up on Arabs in the post 9/11 moment. It is easy to accuse them of being terrorists of being ant-Semites. That's the reality that we live in unfortunately." Emma was born in Israel, and her most charged class, as she described, was about Palestine and Israel from 1967 to the present:

The book I assigned for that week is called Children of Stone and it is about sort of life

and history of the occupation through the lens of a refugee boy who grew up in a refugee

camp and became a violinist and starting in a music school in Ramallah . . . . I have had

some students complain that its biased and they were sort of offended about it. They were

"why are not we getting Israel's perspective" and I said to them, "you are reading all

these quotes from Israeli army spokespeople and prime minister and parliamentarians like

what or which perspective are you not getting?" and so I think they got nervous.

To highlight the perceived controversy of this topic, Saleh, a professor of Islamic studies

and the Middle East, described discussion of Israel and Palestine as a "minefield and shark-

infested water," as it was one of the most contested issues on which students always clashed with

each other. As a result, he said, "So I try to navigate between them allow each of them to express

their point of views without attempting to shut the others even if their opinion is erroneous."

However, he said that the real challenge was when some students recorded what he said in class

and used the material improperly and sent it to Campus Watch or Canary Mission to disturb the

class. As noted before, he pointed out that many Arab professors tried to avoid teaching courses

about Palestine and Israel, fearing they would become the subject of complaints, so only Jewish

or Israeli professors were brought to teach about Palestine and Israel at his institution, and for

that matter he believes, "academic freedom with an alternative point of view is almost non-

existent if not quashed."

As mentioned earlier, Reem likewise found her name on Campus Watch once she started

talking about the Israel-Palestinian conflict. She said, "I knew that would put a bull's-eye on my

head and I knew that was the easiest way to have your career sabotage from the outside." This

has affected her in multiple ways:

On one hand, this makes me very aware and about everything I say and how I say things

in the classroom is not interpreted in the same way. However, it also makes me more

courageous and bolder especially in my research. So, my teaching mainly is not as

political but my research is much more political.

Mona, who chose not to share or discuss anything about Israel and Palestine to avoid any

problems, said, "I tried to not talk about Israel and Palestine issue. Sometimes students take it

personal, so I tried to avoid it because I do not want to enforce my opinion on students."

Sunnis/Shiites/Sufis

Discussion of different sects of Islam can be challenging as well, especially for those

teaching Islamic studies and Arabic language and culture. For instance, Ahmad told a story about

an argument between students in one of his classes, Introduction to Islam. Students were

answering each other back—almost shouting at each other—about the issue, and it took him a

while to calm them down. Azeez shared a similar incident between Sunni and Sufi students who

did not like each other's views. He proceeded with a smile, "Sometimes talking about Sunni and

Shiite or Sunni and Sufi could be more tense and harder than talking about Israel and Palestine."

Elif related the following story:

This is one of the controversial classes that I have taught so far . . . it is challenging for

students to see more like academic background with bringing politics and economy and

history and sociology and anthropology into that and it is challenging for me . . . . I have

had students come and tell me "my grandpa used to tell me this" or "I heard this story

from a different perspective" . . . . I am not perpetrating certain sectarian biases or

stereotypes; I am teaching the historical backgrounds of Sunni and Shiite.

Elif invited a Sunni and a Shiite imam to one of her classes to have an open discussion about both sects. She found students were fascinated and enjoyed the class. She added that it could be hard for some students to open up to other views, but overall, they were very understanding and respectful of each other.

Amir also said, "Everything I would say is potentially a challenge." Explaining why some students might not like him teaching about Islam, he said, "Imagine that I teach Islam as an Israeli." Some Muslim students did not his interpretation of the Quran. He said that when he talked about the Quran as a linguistic creation, rather than a creation of God, some students rejected that viewpoint, arguing that it was not true and disrespectful. He responded, "I have a lot of respect for your religion, but I do not believe it is created by God; if I believe this was God's creation, then I became Muslim."

Iran and the United States

Two Iranian-born participants expressed how much pressure they felt when talking about Iran and the United States. Azra said, "I have faced some challenges. I was surprised, actually, I am still surprised that in my class I got these comments that are sometimes racist or very stereotypical when I talk about Iran and U.S. issue." She added,

> I have had biased experiences from students who clearly see me as the enemy. I have had
> comments that put me in that direction . . . for example, I criticize U.S. policy in the
> Middle East all the time because that's the course I teach—Middle East History from Mid
> 19th to 20th Century—but students see that as being not patriotic.

Therefore, she said being an Iranian professor teaching Middle East history or Iranian history was very difficult and placed great pressure on her to think before expressing any opinion.

Similarly, Arman said that a faculty member being a well-known scholar could be intimidating for many students. He said,

> My students are afraid to challenge me and ask me questions. I keep telling them 'if there is any question,' very few who ask questions . . . so I make jokes with them to make them feel easy to talk.

Gender and Race

Three participants expressed challenges associated with being a female professor, including Noor, originally from Egypt, who said,

> "As a female professor or professor of color has its own set of challenges . . . students have their own sexes and genders stereotype and they're not going to call you a professor . . . you need to stress that "I am not Mrs. or Ms., I am a professor."

Similarly, Reem, an Egyptian-born professor, said, "Students had a very hard time dealing with not necessary because I am a Muslim or Arab; it was because I am a woman a minority woman and I was liberal progressive and I had power." She expounded,

> For instance, there was a Latino woman who was very rude, very rude even everyone was looking at her. I realized that she would never do that to a White man, but she saw me or looked at me, as I am not qualified person. The other thing I've noticed with students particularly minority students and particularly women minorities is they tend to automatically try to talk to me as if I'm their peer, as if I'm a friend and not someone who's higher than that, and when I make it clear that you know, I am your professor not your friend. They can get very upset, so they have this sense of expectation that "oh, you're supposed to treat me special and you're supposed to be extra nice to me" and I've noticed it with the Muslim and Arab students as well if they're immigrants. They think

somehow I'm going to have lower standards for them and that's not true and they're very

surprised that I treat everybody with a high standard and I treat everybody equally.

Emma also noted that talking about gender in Islam could be very challenging and

stressful sometimes. While discussing some ideas English officials had about the hijab that were

quoted by famous Egyptian writers in Egypt between late the late 19th and early 20th, centuries,

some students became very upset, particularly one Iranian student who despised the veil and all

"Islamic precepts on gender," as the student described. She said that the student was very angry

with the English perspective that veiled women were a reason for backwardness in Egypt. In

fact, the student blamed the Quran for oppression against women. Although it was stressful,

Emma was not worried about this discussion, as much as about Campus Watch and her name

being on its list. She commented, "This was different," suggesting that discussion about Islam or

Islamic views seemed less risky than debating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Salem, the only man in this category, shared a similar concern, but from a male

perspective, saying, "Teaching a class about women in Islam is a little bit challenging, especially

from a Muslim male perspective came from Middle East." He added, "There are lots of

stereotypes . . . so it is hard to talk and teach about women in Islam since I am a man and Muslim

from the Middle East." Therefore, he tried to select textbooks and materials that were written by

men and women to have different perspectives.

Being an Arab and Muslim Is a Challenge. Saleh thought his race, as an Arab and

Palestinian, was very challenging. Quoting one of his colleagues, he said, "I think you have three

strikes against you; one you are Palestinian, second, you are Muslim Arab, and third, you are

actually a spoken person." He continued, "I am already marked as a sympatric terrorist or a

terrorist in the making." Therefore, he said that teaching or expressing views about Israel and

Palestine, Islamophobia, the Iraq War, or U.S. policy in the Middle East would make him a number one enemy in the country. Mona expressed a similar sentiment: "Being an Arab and at the same time American is a challenge." She explained, "The stereotype against Muslim or Arab is all bad and you always have to behave in a certain way because any little mistake from you is not like a mistake from a White professor." She further talked about her struggles being seen as a foreigner when she used to live in Saudi Arabia and Jordan. Although she was born in Jordan, her family came from Palestine and for that reason she was seen as a second-class citizen. This was not much different from what she has been feeling in the United States: "being an Arab, Muslim, and American, honestly, it is an issue, it is a challenge . . . sometimes I do not know what I feel."

LGBT

Jamal was the only participant who described discussing LGBT topics as being challenging, especially from a Muslim's perspective. He said,

> When we were discussing the topic, some students showed biases against gays and one student raised up his hand and said, "I am gay, and what is being said is not right." I said "I did not know you are gay. Now how about if you present something next week about gay culture and who are? What are you doing? How does it feel? What are the problems you are suffering from?" He was shocked and told me "you are the first professor I talked to and welcomed me."

As a self-described progressive Muslim, Jamal did not talk about this issue from a Muslim point of view because students would not like this, so he talked about it as an integral part of a larger community that needed to be heard.

Summary

Overall, the majority of participants described positive experiences when teaching about Middle East issues and shared how much they enjoyed the freedom to think and express ideas without constraints. They contrasted this experience with many Middle Eastern or Arab countries, where professors were more restricted and at risk of being arrested or fired if they discussed or opposed any religious or political group. However, discussing certain issues about the Middle East or U.S. policy in the Middle East in U.S. universities could be risky as well for many professors if they question or criticize U.S. policy in the Middle East, particularly its position on the issue of Israel and Palestine. More than half of the participants were careful and cautious about not sharing any personal political opinions to avoid having problems with students or becoming targeted by special-interest groups. Yet few of them who chose to share their personal opinions seemed to be intimidated by some organizations for expressing views that they deemed anti-Semitic or anti-American.

Major Theme Three: Professors Were Free to Write and Publish Without Restriction

In response to the third research question, "How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of conducting research related to Middle East issues?," almost half of the participants said they had freedom to conduct research about Middle Eastern affairs and publish without restrictions. They shared how much they enjoyed the freedom, even when writing about controversial issues. Ali, for instance, said, "I have written about controversial topics, for example, my book for example [. . .] the way I wrote a controversy is really by moving away from the controversy focusing more on a reason . . . a rational evidence-based." Arman also said, "While I am sitting in my office in the middle of

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Washington, DC, few blocks away from the White House, I have more freedom to write about various Islamic issues than if I live somewhere else in Muslim countries."

On the other hand, some were attacked for writing about controversial issues, especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I divided all the 17 participants into four groups based on their shared experiences with freedom in writing as follows:

Group A: Participants had the freedom to write about Middle Eastern affairs and experienced no problems.

Group B: Participants were careful and self-censoring in their writing.

Group C: Participants were intimidated/criticized for writing about certain Middle East issues.

Group D: Participants were rejected to publish one or more of their work because of its content.

Group A

Slightly more than half of the participants (eight) reported experiencing broad freedom to write and publish with no restrictions. Ali (Arab-born) and Azra (Iranian-born) said that the most comments they received, especially from publishers were related to the style of their writing; other than that, they did not experience any issues. Azra stated, "I have more freedom with my own research because it's my interpretation of sources of course based on evidences . . . I provide all sources in footnotes and so people could make their own interpretations." She added, hypothetically, that if she wanted to write about the Israel-Palestinian conflict, it would be easier than discussing it in the classroom because students could call her out as anti-Semitic.

Similarly, Adel (Arab-born) and Elif (Turkish-born) stated how much they enjoyed the freedom of writing perhaps because nothing they wrote was controversial. Adel published a

number of studies in Hebrew as well as English and recalled no problem with any publishers or journals, nor did he receive any negative feedback. His special research focus was on Islam, and Elif's was on the early modern Middle East. Ahmad, Mona, Salem, and Jamal, who teach Arabic language and culture, also experienced freedom of writing, as their research focus was on Arabic language and culture with nothing controversial.

Group B

Four participants were careful and self-censoring about what they wrote for mostly the same reason. Azeez, for instance, a tenured professor of religious studies, said, "I need to be careful when I research or write about something . . . my focus is how to do a good research and how to write clearly . . . usually, I do not write about politics I only write about the Islamic law." His main concern was to be sure of certain Arabic expressions that might be misunderstood when translated into English. Amir, a tenured professor of Islamic studies, similarly explained, "When I publish, I read several drafts; I correct things and usually I do not correct because of political correctness, I correct because I want to make sure that I publish something that is true." For example, he shared his experience with one article he wrote three years ago about certain Islamic traditions that were invented by the Chinese that he found to be unrelated to Islam. He stated, "The question was not whether it is true or wrong; my question is like why Muslims in China invented that tradition? If an imam read my work, he would say, 'this guy wrote nonsense and ridiculous stuff.'" For a non-Muslim professor teaching about Islam, his concern was more about how different Muslims in the world interacted with each other and with other religions rather than teaching the tradition of Islam.

Arman, a tenured professor of Islamic studies, stated, "I self-censor myself not in the political sense, but in a sense of objectivity." He explained that if he wanted to write a book

about Saudi Arabia and allocated a chapter to its second king, whom he described as a terrible king, he would not be able to publish it in Saudi Arabia because books are censored more heavily there and no one would read it. He added, "I try to write in such a way not to sacrifice the truth but to be judicious when necessary." According to him, "someone has to weigh and balance in such a way not to sacrifice the truth, but at the same time to help people to be able to get access with truth." Arman shared that he has written about 50 books and about 700 articles, some of which some were published and republished in different languages, and so he has not experienced any issue.

On the other hand, Noor, an assistant professor of political science, gave a different perspective:

> I write about women's rights and politics in Egypt. I am self-censoring myself . . . . I want to be able to go back to Egypt to my family, and so I am very careful about how I frame my arguments and where I publish them.

Of particular note, Noor lives in the United States on a business visa while her husband and children are back home; therefore, she prioritized the safety of her family above all else, she clarified.

Apparently, the three tenured professors of Islamic and religious studies agreed that being careful and self-censoring when writing was for objective reasons rather than political reasons. In other words, they were not concerned about being attacked by politicians or others as much as they wanted to be neutral and make sense when discussing controversial issues, especially about Islam. As for Noor, a tenure-track professor of political science, being able to safely visit her family back home was her motive for being cautious when writing about sensitive issues,

especially about Egypt. As far as they described, they had not received any complaints or restrictions in their research and managed to publish their work like the participants in group A.

Group C

In contrast to the participants in groups A and B, three participants have had received complaints or threats for writing about Israel, Palestine, and/or Islam. For example, Emma, a tenured professor of the Middle East history, said, "I have been writing a lot about Zionists and Israel, and I have gotten threatening emails and hate mails . . . they are distasteful . . . I do not respond to [them], but I do save some and keep a record for my own safety." She spoke about her latest book and the comments she received via email from some readers, such as, "The introduction and conclusion to your book were just ideological breach," or "You should go back to the oven something like Holocaust." She added, "I have been on Canary Mission and I am on a list called the s*** self-hating Israel . . . it is responsible for monitoring what faculty and students say on campus about Israel." However, Emma expressed how lucky she was, stating, "I have a certain immunity that some of my Arab and Palestinian colleagues do not have," adding that, "Jews in this country have privilege and Arabs do not and that in the post 9/11 . . . so it's safer for Jews to talk about Israel than it is for Arabs."

Saleh, a senior lecturer of Islamic studies, also shared,

I have many complaints of my writing and my perspectives and the university always knock on my door and say "you should not have done this" and my response these days [is] "I am not your therapist." That's my immediate response I said, "if you do not like what I am writing, then write a response and send it or do not buy my writing."

Despite the threats he received, he added, "I do not want to be silent on issues of Islamophobia, Israel and Palestine, and U.S. policy in the Middle East." Reem, a tenured professor of the

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Middle East studies, also described a similar experience: "So if you're a Muslim and have a political opinion about Arab Israeli or Palestinian, then you are their first target." She added, "I have had alumni sent letters to the dean of [. . .] telling them that they should fire me, it was mainly because I was writing on Islamophobia and I was arguing anti-Muslim bias and racism as anti-American." These threats affected her sense of safety, and she said,

> I was starting to get threatening phone calls and then I started to worry about my kids. It is easy these days to find where someone lives, right? These people are crazy, they were leaving all kinds of threatening voicemails, sending me mails . . . so I decided not worth it.

That's why she left the institution where she used to teach and moved to the East toward a more left-leaning environment, she explained.

Notably, Reem and Saleh are both human rights activists and express their views on different public platforms, while Emma is a self-described informal activist, more like an outspoken person on her private pages on social media. Additionally, Reem and Emma are both tenured, but Saleh is not, and yet the commonality among them was how they all received threats and complaints when they wrote about Islam or Israel and Palestine. Despite this, they were glad to have the academic freedom in the United States that they would not have in some other countries, especially in the Middle East.

Group D

In this category, some of the work of Rami and Majed (two Arab-born professors) was rejected by publishers because of the content. Rami, a tenured professor of Middle East studies, said,

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If I write about nationalism and how education system portrays some issues in Jordan and

Palestine, I noticed I receive acceptance for publishing within three to four weeks. But if

I write about Israel, most cases, I either receive rejection or revision.

He recalled one specific article about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that was rejected by one

European journal. It was a shock to him because he knew the editor, who Rami claimed was

"Jewish and sympathetic to Israel, therefore he could not morally allow himself to publish my

article and that was the most direct rejection that I have ever received."

Majed, an adjunct professor of political science, did not necessarily experience a rejection

so much as he was asked not to write about certain topics. He said,

I told them [editors of the newspaper he is working for] in advance that I want to write

about the mass executions for a number of clerks and social activists in Saudi Arabia in

2019 as well as the relationship between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, but they asked me to

keep the tone down and not roll the boat.

He added that "otherwise, they do not interfere, and I have the freedom to write and publish

about any topic." Interestingly, Majed chose to write in Arabic, explaining,

I could have written in English but I am sure I will be targeted. I will not be stronger than

Edward Saed, Rashid Al Khalidi, or Norman Finkelstien [well-known Arab and non-

Arab scholars] if you write about Israel and Arab conflict, then you be targeted and they

will destroy you. They will find a way to kick you out. If I publish one article about

Israel, they will say "look at his ideas, how can we trust this professor to speak about

Israel or how can you trust him with the mind of young generation." I used to work in the

center of the Middle East Studies with so many Iranian professors, Turkish professors,

and Arab professors and many of them were eliminated.

He further added that writing in Arabic, purposely, would help to educate Arabs. He explained that Arabs have been fed false narratives about the world history by the regime, so he felt the need to educate them than draw drawing the attention to himself if he were to write in English. Majed seemed careful about not risking his job, similar to a few others who also were careful and self-censoring when writing about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or Middle East issues in general.

Summary

The majority of the participants in this study reported having freedom in conducting and publishing research on Middle Eastern affairs. Their research focus, however, was more on history and culture as opposed to potentially controversial topics. In contrast, those who wrote on controversial issues were at risk of being targeted by certain groups. The five who wrote about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or Islamophobia in the United States, encountered threats, complaints or in some cases rejections. Perhaps the common thread among them was their influence on the public.

Major Theme Four: Experiences Influenced by Participants' Views on the Grounds of Foreignness

The fourth and last research question asked, "To what extent do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in the United States believe their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have influenced their experiences in higher education on the grounds of their foreignness (origin, race/ethnicity, and religion)?" All of the participants acknowledged that their views about U.S. politics in the Middle East influenced their experiences in higher education in many ways and were for the most part positive. The majority, 10 out of 17 participants, described that students appreciated them, as foreign-born, for bringing different values and new perspectives or

"qualities," as Adel worded it, into the classroom. Such qualities included speaking English as a second language or coming from the Middle East/Islamic countries in order to teach Middle Eastern affairs at a U.S. university. Nevertheless, some seemed unsure or indecisive as to whether their views on U.S. politics in the Middle East had a positive or negative influence on their academic experiences.

Two subthemes emerged from the interviews that helped answer the fourth research question. The first subtheme describes the experiences that made participants feel positive about the influence of their origin, race/ethnicity, and religion when discussing U.S. policy in the Middle East. The majority perceived their ethnic background/foreignness as "qualities," an "advantage," or "unique" when teaching from a Middle Eastern point of view. The second subtheme reports cases where participants felt uncertain or pressured about the influence of their ethnic background on academic freedom when discussing U.S. foreign policy. They were alert as to how their views could be interpreted according to their ethnic background. This subtheme was analyzed through the lens of nativism, the theoretical framework of the study. It explains how the experiences of foreign-born professors can be influenced by the anti-foreign-born/anti-immigrant political movement that perceives their foreignness as un-American. Especially if they criticize or question the policy of the United States in the Middle East, they risk being called anti-American or anti-Semitic.

Positive Influence

Proud to Be Arab: "I Am a Product of the Arabic and Islamic Culture."

Majed, a Jordanian-born U.S. citizen, shared the following,

Students normally appreciate when I give my personal experience. I have so much

knowledge about the region . . . when I talk about the Gulf War, I lived in Iraq I have an

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experience there, when we speak about Gaza, Palestine, I have been there . . . . I tried to

bring these stories not to emphasize a point but to share my experiences . . . . I showed

students some documents made by Americans about the War in Iraq and how the United

States was unprepared and based on fouls assumptions . . . then students said, "oh we did

not know that" . . . they express opinions about U.S. foreign policy they disagree with

each other and I have never had any trouble.

He further emphasized discussion as an important tool that has added richness to his classes and

helped students to argue with each other in a civilized manner and listen to other opinion

politely. Ali, a Moroccan-born and U.S. citizen, also had a positive outlook:

My background has never been an issue inside the classroom . . . as someone from the

Middle East and someone who also have a European citizenship it is a plus for the

American. I am a productive, useful, effective investment in their education.

He explained that students recognized the worth of his academic, Arabic, or multiple cultural

background as well as his personal experience, which allowed them to understand the Middle

East or Islam from different points of view. Even when he questioned U.S. policy in the Middle

East, students were open to listen to different opinions.

Bringing a Different Perspective: "I Added Values Into the Classroom."

Ahmad, a Palestinian-born U.S. citizen, explained how his Arabic background helped

him to teach and add another perspective into the classroom without any problems. He said, "I

grew up in Palestine. We went through so many things, so we have in-depth knowledge of

politics and history and I try to bring that to the class." He spoke about how some students,

including Israeli and Jewish students, came to class worried or scared of him as a Palestinian

professor, but ended up taking many courses with him, appreciating his different perspective on

Middle East issues, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict. Another Palestinian-born U.S. citizen, Adel gave a similar response:

> When you teach about Islam, you do not speak as a Muslim scholar only you bring some
> values and add different perspectives that non-Arab or non-Muslim can bring. You are
> not just speaking about Islam as an abstract object, but also you bring something new.

He shared that his personal stories allowed students to better understand Muslims and Islam from a different perspective rather than only through the lens of Fox News or other mass media.

Appreciating Different Backgrounds: "It Is an Advantage."

Rami, a Palestinian-born U.S. citizen, described how much students appreciated his Arabic background when he was teaching about the Middle East politics. He said, "My colleagues encourage me to teach courses related to Middle East conflicts or religions because I have more knowledge than other people and that students will benefit from that." He continued, "For example, when we discuss the War in Iraq, we talk about the American policy and try to contrast two sides of the issue and find a logical argument to raise." This is an advantage, as Rami described, because students really looked for different opinions, especially from a person who came from that region and was trying to help them to better understand different issues from a different perspective.

Elif, a Turkish-born green card holder, also shared that her Turkishness is nothing but an advantage:

> It is an advantage because with me they have something that they wouldn't have had
> unless they go to Turkey and take the same class from a Turkish professor but here
> instead I am teaching them from a different perspective.

She expounded on why her background was an advantage:

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I bring certain stories from my background to diversify the conversation. I bring stories

and from my childhood that is extremely different than their childhood stories or their

parents' stories . . . I try to use that to enrich my teaching experience and my students'

understanding of who we are.

Even when discussing U.S. policy in the Middle East, she said that she has never had any

problems, probably because most of her students were from different backgrounds as well and

did not mind hearing different stories.

Amir, an Israeli-born U.S. citizen, stated, "I am a little unique; I grew up in a city that has

all religions. I grew up in Israeli family and Arabic culture, and that helps me a lot." This

uniqueness, he explained, came from the fact that he taught Islam from an Israeli or Jewish point

of view. This was fascinating because Amir tried to find intersections or common characteristics

between religions to help students to see the commonality rather than the differences and be open

and tolerant with each other. Emma, another Israeli-born U.S. citizen, said, "Being an American

and Jew is a privilege and I try to be responsible." She added, "I am trying to use this power

positively." The power that she described multiple times was, "the immunity" that protected her

more than her Arab and Muslim colleagues when criticizing Israel.

As an Arab: "Your Opinion Matters."

Noor, who was born in Egypt, stated, "Here they ask you about your opinion," in

reference to the students interested in her personal experience and opinions about women in

Islam or other issues in the Middle East. She felt her opinions mattered, and her Arabic and

Islamic background were perceived as a plus when she was hired in 2018. She said,

When I was doing my interview, there was one person who made the point of letting me

know where I come from is appreciated and said, "this department welcomes freedom of

speech, but it doesn't mean that you're not going to get pushback by students because

you will get pushback and if there is no pushback, it means there is something wrong."

She further added that students were eager and humble to learn about the Middle East from an

Arab point of view. Salem also, an Egyptian-born U.S. citizen, similarly spoke of how much his

opinion was worth more in the United States than in Egypt. He added that even though his

Middle Eastern background seemed challenging sometimes due to many stereotypes that

students brought to the class, his students have showed nothing but respect and openness to

different perspectives.

Undefined Influence

Hesitation: "I Am Not Sure."

Unlike the above, some were unsure about whether their views had had a positive

influence on their academic experiences, especially from a foreign-born perspective. For

instance, when I asked Mona how she believed her views about U.S. policy in the Middle East

had influenced her experience with academic freedom in higher education, she replied, "I do not

know. It is maybe yes, maybe no." She explained that while she was entitled to express her

opinion freely as an American citizen, she was also an Arab and Muslim. She clarified that she

might be perceived differently, as a foreigner, once she expressed ideas questioning certain U.S.

policies in the Middle East. She also added that some students might take whatever she said very

personally, so she did not discuss certain topics particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Similarly, Azeez shared, "I think there are some positive and negative things." In other

words, he felt free to express his opinion about any topic, as an American citizen; however, as an

Arab/Iraqi, he was concerned about the sensitivity of some students, who might take what he

said personally. Although some students might find his Iraqiness and Islamic background

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relevant, particularly when discussing the Iraq War or Islam, he preferred to be careful about how and what to say to avoid misunderstanding. Jamal offered a similar opinion:

> My ethnic background can be viewed in relation to the ideas I present so sometime it is positive because I know the area better than many as, I am part of that region and sometimes can be viewed as biased.

He explained that when students disagreed with ceratin ideas he expressed in class, especially about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they might think "I am biased because I am an Arab and so 'you are siding with Arab.'"

A Challenge: "My Ethnic Background Makes Me Aware of What I Say."

Reem, an Egyptian-born U.S. citizen, explained, "My ethnic background certainly makes me very aware and cognizant that everything I say in the classroom is not interpreted in a different way." She explained in greater depth,

> Arab and Muslim are vulnerable because we are few in number, we do not really have a tribe. We are legally White but we're not socially White and we're not Black and we're not Latino, we're not Asian and there's so few of us so we can't like have our own an Arab club, and that, I think that makes us very vulnerable to internal attacks and then the external stuff.

Especially when Arab professors speak from the perspective of Palestinians, they are more likely to be attacked whether they are tenured or not. Saleh, as well, shared that being an Arab, Muslim, and an activist could be very challenging in terms of what ideas he expressed. Not necessarily any or every idea, but criticizing the United States and its relations with Israel outside the classroom could make his in-class experience difficult and uneasy. As an extreme example, he found his face and name listed on posters around the campus labeling him as a terrorist. He

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said that some students came to his class to spy on him and record his lectures for use out of context by some organizations that aimed to undermine the freedom of professors.

Likewise, Azra, an Iranian-born professor, shared, "It is difficult to teach a class where students have biased views because they listen to the media and formulate these opinions against you. I have had biased experience from students who clearly see me as the enemy." On the first day of her class, students always ask questions such as, "where are you from?" and make comments such as "you look different" and "you have an accent." She further said,

> If I were American and I want to convey an opinion, that would be fine but the fact that I am Iranian, students would see that as not patriotic . . . so I tell them criticizing U.S. policy in the Middle East can be actually very patriotic because you are working toward the betterment of your policy.

Arman, who was also born in Iran, said, "Students are intimidated by me. First of all, I am from Iran and very prominent scholar who has published over 50 books and about 700 articles in many languages. That's why they feel a bit intimidated." With this in mind, he shared with his students real-life experiences, places he visited, and the world leaders he met to make students feel more comfortable. He added, "Students love that because hardly you find professors in American universities who have had real-life experiences."

Threats to Academic Freedom

Participants in this study identified several threats to academic freedom. The four most common, which mainly came from outside the university, are political power, further restrictions, pressure from interest groups, and loss of state funding.

Political Power

  The majority listed the power of politics as the biggest threat to academic freedom. Seven Arab-born and four non-Arab participants described different ways politics could potentially be dangerous in limiting academic freedom. The threat was not only to their academic freedom to express different perspectives from foreign-born/Middle Eastern points of view, although the majority were American citizens, but also to the academic freedom of all professors in the American universities. Their detailed responses are given below, starting with non-Arab professors:

Amir: That's a very good question and the easy answer is the pressure from politicians . . . if a politician tells me what I can say or not, he would be infringing on my academic freedom. If I have to say something that is problematic, I need to think hard how to say it whether I say or not.

Arman: We live in a very difficult intellectual situation in the Islamic world right now because of our governments (referring to the Middle East). Every government has some kind of ideology that if you support one, you are against the other. For example, if you write about Shia [a religious minority] in Saudi Arabia, you go to prison . . .

Azra: Politics in terms of feeling that you are not comfortable speaking about certain topics in certain time from certain point of view that's definitely something impacted by politics . . . . Iranian professors who are also Canadian or U.S. citizens are being targeted by organizations that are funded by the U.S. government. They would target academics who oppose U.S. policy in the Middle East . . . they would see you as not patriotic especially when it comes to Israel it is such a sensitive topic . . .

Emma: There is a pressure coming from the government basically from Congress that passed a

law that said, if colleges or universities were found to be tolerating a climate not just a

racism homophobia or sexism but anti-Semitism, they could lose funding . . . what would

that mean. If I am sitting in a room and talking about Israel or criticizing the occupation

as a colonial project or saying that Zionism was a terrible idea or anything, I could be

held liable by my university for violating Title IX and I could be potentially losing my

job.

Adel: Zionism and pro-Israel I think are the biggest threat. I do not know the exact number, but

almost more than 27 states have laws to make illegal for the state university to engage

with boycott Israel campaigns. Can you imagine that in America?

Ahmad: Politicians and lobby groups would be the biggest threats to the academic freedom.

Politicians do not want somebody to face them with facts because we professors present

facts. They are trying to impose their opinion on others.

Ali: The impact of national politics that tend to leak into and overcontrol the academia. For

example, with the current administration, there are lots of conservative voices that want

to say things that could be controversial especially with regard to race . . . lobbyists who

fund the institutions can have a negative impact on academic freedom because of their

financial power and so they made the determine what should be said or should not be said

and how academic freedom can be redefined in the Constitution . . . national politics has

a big role and that role can be damaging on the academic freedom.

Azeez: I think the biggest threat to academic freedom in this society and other societies is

dictatorship. To have some views or point of view and you do not compromise between

liberal and conservative, this is dangerous. Most professors who teach liberal arts tend to

be Democrats and so conservatives think they are discriminated against because they are registered as Republican.

Jamal: There is a tendency with some faculty members who are associated with the conflict in Palestine to have other perspectives so when a Palestinian, Muslim, America, European, or African expressed his support to Palestine there are voices that try to silence them. No one should be silenced about anything. We should have the courage because this is academic freedom to express yourself whether some like it or not.

Majed: Arab or non-Arab professors who teach social sciences or teach about Israel and try to expose students to different narratives and speak the truth about the issue of Palestine, they became target of campaigns no exception . . . their contracts will not be renewed or they are fired or they [referring to these campaigns] try to find something against professors to discredit them and that's why professors have to be careful not to express strong opinion not at least before they get tenured . . . . we love America and we want to stay; we are American citizens, but it does not mean we should be more loyal to Israel than to America.

Rami: A dictatorship is the biggest threat to academic freedom. It can happen in any country. It is not limited to one country. So sometimes people can take advantage of democracy and flip the whole system turned it into police state like what's happening in the Arab countries and some European countries. All those countries are where basically right-wing political parties are rising to power basically attacking any form of freedom in the name of national security . . . this is the issues is the fear of one group of politicians takes over and prevent other from expressing ideas and silence people. This can develop a form of dictatorship.

Further Restrictions

The second major threat to academic freedom as described by four of the participants was limiting what should or should not be said in the classroom. In their views, setting up restrictions on academic freedom was like losing it, and if it was lost, there would be no real education. Furthermore, losing academic freedom is a threat to public freedom. Three Arab-born professors and one Iranian-born described how having restrictions on academic freedom could pose a threat, as demonstrated in the following excerpts from their interviews.

Jamal: That is a very good question, the threat to academic freedom. Any threat to public

freedom is a threat to academic freedom. Ignorance, racism, supremacy superiority,

inferiority these are all serious threats to academic freedom. We have to reject them all.

Majed: The worst thing in academia in America is if there is a restriction on academic freedom

or freedom of expression and freedom of opinion in the classroom. If professors are being

told what to say, what to teach, which book to use, then that the is the real threat . . . . The

more you put restrictions, the less education you can give to students.

Mona: The biggest threat is to lose the freedom. Once you lose your freedom as a professor

that's it. You become like a machine. You come and say whatever they told you to say. If

they do not like what you say, they will fight you and find something to ruin your image,

to ruin your career—discredit what you are saying.

Arman: One of the biggest threats to academic freedom in the United States is presumed

freedom, which is really not freedom at all, but pushing of the scientific rationalistic

worldview, which are dominated in academia and have combined skepticism doubt and

so forth. Philosophically they are pushed into the academia.

Pressure From Interest Groups

Based on the interviews, three Arab-born professors perceived pressure from outside interest groups, especially pro-Israeli groups, as a threat to their academic freedom or to academic freedom in general. These professors felt the danger that is coming from outside groups aiming to control what should be said or read inside the classroom. They asserted that professors should be free to decide and control their academic programs because they are the experts in the field of the Middle East, adding that fear of any outside groups could make the universities vulnerable and easier to attack.

Rami: There is more pressure from lobbyist today and more scrutiny behind the scenes that you are not aware of. The kind of books you read and books you order things like that . . . the whole general atmosphere is more of fear and kind of witch hunting. It depends on the community where you live. Some communities are more liberal and you are less vulnerable and less exposed to any attacks.

Saleh: There is an assault on the university that is taking place from particular interest groups within the United States. On one hand, the Christian coalition that has an intense campaign against the liberal academia and on the other hand you have the heavy-handed presence of the pro-Israel organizations on campuses, so all of that is impinging on the university and impacting the university.

Salem: There is a pressure from big organizations that support one case or the other and then they might have pressure on the university or on journals to not publish about certain topics.

Loss of State Funding

The fourth major threat to academic freedom that was apparent in participants' responses was a loss of state funding for higher education. Three Arab-born participants explained the negative impact not only on the university's operating system but also on academic freedom. According to them, determining who should be teaching and what should be taught in order to receive funding was a major threat to academic freedom. Participants felt donors could be included in this power paradigm as they tried to influence hiring and firing at universities.

Ali: I think one of the huge problems that institutions of higher education are facing in in America is the external pressure that comes from money. Many universities and colleges are closing down or merging. Lobbyists people who fund the institutions can have a very negative impact on academic freedom because of their financial power and so they determine what should be said or should not be said and how academic freedom can be redefined outside the Constitution.

Saleh: I think the biggest threat to academic freedom is the continued and overextending reliance on the state and the state funding and institutions that are wedded to a paradigm of power. The intrusion of the state with its massive funding to reorient the university into the machinery of power and statecraft is one of the major threats to academic freedom.

Reem: The biggest threat to academic freedom as a general matter is a privatization of the funding of public schools. The more the public universities are dependent on alumni and individual donors, the more vulnerable they are to being pressured in ways that can compromise academic freedom . . . these donors, especially the big donors are not shy at all about making ridiculous demands and most donors have no idea what academic freedom is. They don't understand it. They think that because they pay money, they can

tell you to fire that person or you should not let him teach that class or you should not let our students be exposed to these ideas so that's just a big picture of the issue.

Summary

While many participants felt ethnic background/foreignness positively influenced their experiences in higher education, for some that background could be challenging or threatening. In other words, they were aware of how far they could go when expressing opinions about U.S. policy before it became controversial and thus risk their career. They came to realize that their academic freedom ended when they opposed certain Israeli and U.S. policies in the Middle East. This opposition would be perceived according to their origin, race/ethnicity, and religion as un-American or anti-American. Although the majority are American citizens, they were deemed not Americans by default.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter answered the four research questions by describing the four major themes and interpretation of findings that were supported by quotes from participants' lived experiences. This final chapter will provide an overview of the study, summary of the methodology, and brief description of the participants. It then will include a summary and discussion of the major findings, connections to the literature, implications for practice, and recommendations for future studies, and the chapter will conclude with final thoughts and comments.

Overview of the Study

This study explored how foreign-born professors experienced academic freedom when teaching and writing about Middle East issues. It also examined how their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East influenced their experiences in relation to their place of origin, ethnicity, and religion. The individual lived experiences of the 17 participants (12 Arab-born and 5 non-Arab) revealed how they experienced academic freedom when discussing Middle Eastern affairs, especially inside the classroom, and how their views, as foreign-born, influenced their experiences in higher education. The study was guided by four research questions:

1. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors perceive academic freedom in the United States regarding Middle East issues?

2. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of teaching in discussing issues related to the Middle East?

3. How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of conducting research related to Middle East issues?

4. To what extent do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in the United States believe their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have influenced their experiences in higher education on the grounds of their foreignness (origin, race/ethnicity, and religion)?

The findings in this study offered insight into the lived experiences of foreign-born Middle Eastern professors regarding their academic freedom to teach and research about Middle East issues. The majority of participants came to the United States seeking better opportunities to teach and write more freely about various issues in Islam and Middle Eastern affairs. They reported positive experiences when expressing different ideas and discussing sensitive topics about the Middle East, but they also tried to be cautious, especially when discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and certain issues related to Islam. This is because they were concerned about the potential backlash from organizations that track professors who criticize Israel or defend Islam. This happened to some of them who expressed strong views against Israel and U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and were intimidated and labeled as anti-American or anti-Semitic.

Unfortunately, there has been no substantial literature examining the experiences of Arab-born professors in higher education regarding academic freedom to teach and conduct research about Middle Eastern affairs. However, many studies have examined Arab immigrants' experiences in the United States (e.g., Ameri & Arida, 2012; Cainkar, 2002; Daraiseh, 2012; Jamal & Naber, 2008; Mills, 2012; Wingfield, 2012). The findings of such studies have demonstrated that anti-Arab/anti-Muslim sentiments have been developed throughout history and correlated with certain major events, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict (Naber, 2008; Samhan, 2001; Terry, 2012). This ongoing conflict, in which the United States remains a strong supporter

of Israel; the 9/11 attacks; and the Iraq War increased the prejudice against Arab immigrants (Ameri & Arida, 2012; Daraiseh, 2012; Moore, 2010; Naber, 2008; Semaan, 2014; Young, 2017). Arab or Muslim professors who criticize Israel and U.S. policies in the Middle East are often deemed anti-Semitic and anti-American (Abrahamian, 2003; Beinin, 2004; Brand, 2007; Newman, 2005; Salaita, 2008). For example, Rabab Abdulhadi, a Palestinian-born professor of Arabic and ethnic studies; Ghassan Zakaria, a Palestinian-born professor of Arabic; and Joseph Massad, a Jordanian-born professor of Middle East studies are a few of many who have been attacked by the government, media, and private organizations in an effort to silence them and undermine their academic freedom. The interviews with Arab-born and non-Arab professors in this study reflected this anti-Arab/anti-immigrant ideology documented in the literature.

Methodology

This qualitative study employed in-depth semi-structed interviews to gain insight into an understudied phenomenon (Tavallaei & Abu Talib, 2010). Such interviews are useful when a study is exploratory and intends to generate themes, keywords, and phrases from data collected to make sense of participants' lived experiences individually or collectively and place them within a certain context. Therefore, it was imperative to collect rich data about participants' personal and professional backgrounds in the beginning of each interview to find stronger connections when analyzing and interpreting the data. Once I received the approval from the Institutional Review Board, I made use of my social connections to recruit participants and I contacted about 40 professors, 17 of whom agreed to be part of the study. The 12 Arab-born professors were selected based on the criteria sampling, and the five non-Arabs were added later to enrich the sample. Some of the interviews were conducted in person and some by phone, ranging in duration from 40 minutes to 150 minutes. The interviews took place over a six-month

period from spring to fall of 2019. All the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and saved on a passworded-protect USB drive. Participants were assigned pseudonyms and the names of their institutions were not revealed to ensure confidentiality.

The interviews were guided by prepared questions to collect personal and professional information. Open-ended questions were employed to encourage participants to share more of their experiences and provide any information that might be relevant to answer the research questions. Traditional coding methods of thematic analysis were used to analyze the transcribed data and identify common themes and patterns across the experiences of all participants. The individual experiences shared by participants were combined to construct shared perspectives as a representation of collective experiences. The data analysis was informed by the theoretical framework of nativism (Guest et al., 2012), to explain the sentiment toward immigrants in higher education. An anti-immigrant ideology perceives foreign-born professors as un-American and a threat to the nation on the grounds of their origin, race/ethnicity, and religion. This ideology influenced participants' experiences within a political context. During analysis, I focused on the views that participants conveyed to make sense of their experiences with academic freedom. I combined their views and stories in a narrative that represented all the experiences.

Participants

The participants in this study consisted of 17 foreign-born professors with different personal and academic backgrounds. Four of the 12 Arab-born participants came from Egypt, four from Palestine, two from Jordan, one from Morocco, and one from Iraq. As for the non-Arabs, two were from Israel, two from Iran, and from one Turkey. In terms of gender, 11 were men and six women. Thirteen held U.S. citizenship, two had a green card, and two were working on a visa. With regard to race/ethnicity, participants had difficulty identifying their race, but

provided the following answers: eight said they were "White" (five Arab-born and three non-Arabs), two said "Other," four Arab-born refused to identify their race based on the U.S. racial classification scheme, and three said "Caucasian" (two non-Arabs and one Arab-born). In terms of age, participants ranged from 30 to 71 ($M = 51$). Sixteen were married and lived with families in the United States. Nine of the participants came to the United States as students and stayed to pursue a career in higher education, four came for a post-doctoral fellowship, three immigrated with their parents at an early age, and only one came after finishing her master's and doctorate outside the United States. With regard to educational background, 15 of the participants had a doctorate, and two were in the process of completing a doctorate. In terms of their academic status, there were seven tenured professors, five tenure-track, three adjuncts, and two full-time instructors.

Participants taught a variety of subjects about Middle Eastern affairs under different departments/divisions: seven worked in Near Eastern history and Middle East studies, four in modern languages and literature, three in political science, and three in religion. On average, they had been teaching in the United States. for 12 years ranging from one year to 35. Participants were living and working across six states at nine institutions. Six institutions were in the Northeast, one on the West Coast, one in the Midwest, and one in the Southeast. Participants worked at different types of institutions: eight worked at public institutions; eight worked at private institutions; and one participant worked at two different institutions, one public and the other private. These foreign-born professors represented a variety in terms of personal backgrounds, educational achievements, academic status, department, institution types and locations. The majority of the sample were Arab-born, as they were not well represented in the literature.

Summary of the Findings and Discussion

The following is a summary of the study findings and a discussion of the four major

themes outlined in the previous chapter.

Major Finding One: Participants' Perceptions of Academic Freedom

In the first research question, participants were invited to define the concept of academic

freedom in the U.S regarding Middle East issues. The findings revealed three major aspects of

the definition of academic freedom. In general, academic freedom has largely been defined by

the vast majority as the ability to express different ideas, research any topic, and publish the

results without fear of intimidation or interference from the university or politicians. One

Iranian-born professor defined it as

> The freedom for professors and scholars to be able to examine whatever they're doing
>
> according to both rational and intellectual principles involved on the quest for knowledge
>
> without the interruption or intrusion into that quest by any powers for political reasons or
>
> otherwise.

Another Arab-born participant, stated, "Academic freedom means you are entitled to express

your findings and research and teaching and selecting the books you want to and select the

courses you want to teach without pressure from administration."

In essence, this was consistent with the AAUP definition from the *1940 Statement of

Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure*, which I briefly summarize as the following:

1. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the findings

   based upon on an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

2. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject (Brandt, 2006, p. 269).

The first major aspect of participants' definition of academic freedom was that it was a responsibility. They emphasized the responsibility that comes with academic freedom, and they described it in terms of the professional behavior by professors toward students. As one participant noted,

My job is to tell students "you have the freedom to express your opinion. I am judging you or grading you based on the quality of your research not on your opinion," and that's what I call a responsible academic freedom.

Essentially, this means that students should be able to express any ideas they want to as long as they are following the academic standards in making an argument. They should not be punished or offended by professors or peers when they share their opinions about a topic. Another participant remarked that academic freedom also entailed protecting students from "harmful and disrespectful views." In her opinion, all ideas are welcomed, including unfamiliar or controversial ideas, when articulated in an inoffensive, respectful way. This was consistent with Mahamane's (2011) findings that described academic freedom as professional and academic responsibility by tenured and non-tenured faculty members, who believed any opinion needs to be spoken, even the "inconvenient truth," as they referred to, but not "malicious opinion."

Related to the first aspect, the second was that academic freedom does not free anyone to say anything they want, because there are limits. A number of participants who thought of academic freedom as not absolute described these limits. Six of the participants admitted that, most often, professors are not free to say anything they want. There are rules and guidelines for

expressing ideas that cannot be ignored on the grounds of an absolute interpretation of academic freedom. An Arab-born tenured professor of religious studies said, "There is a freedom, but it is not absolute freedom. It is like a game. It has its referees; it has its rules and it has its judges." To be able to engage in this game, as the participant illustrated, professors need to offer a rationale for providing an argument and be aware of what can and cannot be said in class. Another tenured professor commented, "I think we need to understand what are the boundaries of academic discourse rather than thinking of academic freedom as freedom to say anything I want. There are things I can say and things I cannot say." Going a step further, one participant hinted that racist or offensive opinions should not be protected by academic freedom, stating, "Academic freedom does not include hate speech or discriminatory teaching, but it has to adhere to scholarly rigorous standards."

The third aspect of the participants' perspectives on academic freedom was that expressing ideas, even baseless ideas, was never wrong because professors have the freedom to be wrong. Only two of the participants noted that academic freedom was the freedom to explore any idea regardless of the results. Academic freedom should provide leeway to make mistakes, and only through the investigation allowed by academic freedom do people arrive at the truth. This is the core of debate, as one of the participants explained, which allows people to make assumptions, test possibilities, discuss options, and search for evidence to make their argument. This aspect of the academic freedom has been emphasized by the AACU. According to their report in 2006, the search for truth is never about making assertions of the truthfulness or falseness of a matter as much as developing evidence for that assertion.

As these sometimes-contradictory responses show, participants in this study had developed their own unique understanding of academic freedom. According to Creswell (2009),

individuals can develop their own meanings for certain objects by interacting with others and based on their social and historical perspectives. Interestingly, all participants, whether Arab-born or non-Arab, tenured or non-tenured, acknowledged that they had not attended any department meetings or seminars to discuss any policy or issue related to academic freedom. They did not even recall perusing their faculty handbook to familiarize themselves with their institution's academic freedom policy. This was exemplified by a Turkish-born assistant professor of Middle East history who had been being teaching for five years at a private university:

> I do remember I went through some type of an orientation when I started my position here but I don't remember a specific conversation taking place in terms of what academic freedom is or how [the university] defines academic freedom maybe in one of the paperworks or handbooks or things like that.

An Iranian-born professor of Middle East studies who had been teaching for three years touched on possible confusion between academic freedom and freedom of speech:

> When the history department interviewed me and hired me, no one discussed academic freedom policy because everyone knows that in academia, we have the freedom, especially in the United States, and it is part of the Constitution of the United States. It is kind of implied that you have academic freedom but no one necessarily discussed that with me.

A Palestinian-born professor of Islamic studies who had been teaching for 22 years made another illustrative comment:

I do not think at any point my department has articulated anything relative to academic

freedom relative to policy. I do not think there was any explanation or a sit-down or

meeting to say 'here's what academic freedom is all about.

One way or another, all the participants clearly suggested they viewed academic freedom as

being governed by common sense.

Major Finding Two: Overall Positive Experience with Few Challenges

The second research question asked, "How do Arab-born and non-Arab professors in

U.S. universities describe their experiences with freedom of teaching in discussing issues related

to the Middle East?" The overall finding was that the vast majority of the participant reported

positive experiences when teaching about the Middle East or issues of the Middle East. Listening

to the stories from all of the participants about how they experienced academic freedom in the

classroom was very inspiring and informative. They shared how they enjoyed teaching in the

U.S. universities, where they could exchange ideas with students about various topics openly and

select course materials with total freedom. They also spoke about their friendly relationships

with students and described how open-minded and respectful students were when discussing

different topics about Middle Eastern affairs. However, participants overwhelmingly expressed

concerns about discussing certain issues. Four findings emerged from the data describing how

participants experienced academic freedom when teaching about the Middle East.

The first major finding was that some participants were cautious and censored themselves

when teaching about such issues as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, U.S. policy in the Middle

East, and Islamophobia. These participants, including four Arab-born and two non-Arabs, were

not tenured and believed that part of their professional roles as educators was not offending any

students regardless of their political opinion. One participant, for example, said,

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In my opinion, Trump is doing a terrible job for the country and for those in the Arab world, but I always say with all due respect to those who love him because they are people who like him . . . . I say my opinion in a way that does not insult anyone. I try to be careful not to hurt anyone's feelings regardless of their own political views.

Others felt stressed about organizations that targeted professors who discussed the Israel and Palestine issue, so they decided to be cautious about what they said in class to avoid taking any risks. As one participant noted: "There are websites that specifically asked students to report on other professors when they talk about Middle East politics or Arab-Israeli conflict." Another participant shared,

As a Muslim professor I am very careful about what I say. . . . I hear that some professors elsewhere were attacked and accused for expressing views on social media. I speak carefully, I emphasize that I believe in peace, I do not believe in attacks on civilians or innocent people.

These participants found they could make classroom discussions more productive and less tense by discussing such issues from different perspectives and never insulting or devaluing any ideas. This could be seen in one participant's comment:

There are certain issues I need to be careful about, especially about Palestine and Israel issue. I need to make sure that the two perspectives are presented. . . . I believe in debates, conversations and engagements. I do them in an atmosphere of free exchange of ideas and I try to present all perspectives.

This finding suggests that when participants carefully discussed Middle East issues they were more likely to have positive experiences with academic freedom. In contrast, Mahamane (2011)

warned of the danger of self-censorship as a serious violation of academic freedom where professors refrain from discussing issues due to fear of intimidation.

The positive experiences reported could also be related to the fact that the majority of participants chose not to share their personal political opinions inside the classroom for several reasons, which constituted the second finding. Seven Arab-born and three non-Arab participants would rather present scholarly materials than express their personal opinions. As one Arab-born participant stated, "I try to present facts scholarly material, rather than my opinion because I believe this is the role of a professor. If somebody asks me about my opinion, I tell them 'come and see me after the class." They also would rather teach students how to think, not what to think. One participant, for instance, replied to some students who asked for her thoughts about a particular topic, "I cannot give you a short answer. My job here is not to tell you what to think or what you should think. My job is to give you the tools for you to think and reach your own conclusion." As noted earlier, participants were concerned about organizations that tracked using their classroom as a platform to promote a personal agenda. Thus, some foreign-born professors may prefer to avoid expressing controversial ideas to protect themselves from any possible attack. This might lead to a conclusion that refraining from expressing personal views in class could be a way for professors to protect their academic freedom. This was recognized by the AAUP, which discourages professors from expressing their political opinion inside the classroom (Mahamane, 2011).

In contrast, five Arab-born and two non-Arab professors purposefully shared their personal opinions to develop students' critical thinking skills. One argued that professors need to challenge students to think rationally and objectively about various issues and understand and respect the differences. Similarly, Mahamane (2011) claimed, "Professors should be able to

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challenge dominant paradigms as an effort to develop their students' critical thinking abilities"
(p. 141). These participants also generally expressed positive experiences when they discussed
different Middle East issues, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Two Arab-born professors
experienced challenges in expressing views about Israel, but this occurred mostly outside the
classroom.

The third finding was how all participants ranked topics that were very challenging to
discuss in the classroom from the most heated to the least. Four Arab-born professors and one
Israeli-born professor ranked the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the most challenging. A senior
professor of Islamic studies described the topic as a "minefield" and "shark-infested water." In
his opinion,

> Faculty in general try to shy away from addressing issues pertaining to the Middle East,
> especially if it is critical of Israel role in the region. Even professors who are progressive,
> they shy away from that because they are most likely to be subject to complaints.

Additionally, a tenured professor of Middle Eastern studies said that talking about Israel and
Palestine "would put a bull's-eye on my head." She explained, "it is the easiest way to have your
career sabotage from the outside." The second-most heated topic, as two Arab-born and two non-
Arab participants described, was teaching about different Islamic sects (Sunni/Shiite/Sufi). One
tenured and Arab-born professor of Islamic studies stated, "Sometimes talking about Sunni and
Shiite or Sunni and Sufi could be more tense and harder than talking about Israel and Palestine."
The third-most listed topic, described by the two Iranian professors, was Iran and the United
States. One participant, for instance, explained,

> I have had biased experiences from students who clearly see me as the enemy. I have had
> comments that put me in that direction . . . for example, I criticize U.S. policy in the

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Middle East all the time because that's the course I teach Middle East history from mid-19th to 20th century, but students see that as being not patriotic.

Gender and race were rated as the fourth most heated topics. Three female professors, including two born in Arab countries, described being challenged by some students, not because of their Islamic faith or ethnicity, but because of their gender. They felt these students doubted their competency to teach sensitive, difficult topics about the Middle East. A tenured Arab-born professor said, "Students had a very hard time dealing with not necessary because I am a Muslim or Arab it was because I am a woman a minority woman and I was liberal progressive and I had power." From their point of view, some students had trouble respecting an unveiled Muslim woman teaching about Middle East issues and Islamic issues, possibly because of the stereotypes and misconceptions about Muslim women and the way they dress.

Two male Arab-born participants believed that being Arab and Muslim professors was a challenge when discussing certain issues, such as women in Islam or even the Israel and Palestine issue. It is important to note that none of these participants used expressions like "discrimination" or "racist" to describe their gender or race/ethnicity. Instead, they were aware of the stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims from the Middle East and decided to challenge these stereotypes. This suggests that gender and race can be a stressful topic for some, but is often not necessarily a serious issue in class. As one participant commented, "My ethnic background has never been an issue inside the classroom, but outside the classroom."

This leads to the fourth finding, describing how four Arab-born participants and one Israeli-born participant had been intimidated by some organizations over their views about Israel and U.S. involvement in the Middle East. Although most of the participants discussed these issues, only these five came under attack for their opinions. These professors were much more

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vocal outside the classroom by expressing their views on different social platforms, particularly about the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. An Arab-born tenured professor of the Middle East Studies said, "I do a lot of programming I have a center for [. . .] rights and we have different events, and that's where I engage with students outside the classroom and talk about current events." In addition, an Israeli-born tenured professor of Middle East studies said, "I am on Canary Mission. I am already labeled by some people . . . in my classes, especially my larger classes, I get comments from one or two students every year or every semester that I am anti-Semite or I am anti-American."

This finding suggests that expressing political opinions outside the classroom brings more attention to what professors might say, especially regarding Israel, inside the classroom. In addition, not only Arab-born professors are called anti-Semitic or anti-American, as non-Arab participants reported this as well. Even so, this risk is higher for Arab-born professors, as an Israeli-born professor pointed out: "I have a certain immunity that some of my Arab and Palestinian colleagues do not have." In her opinion, her Jewish background was a privilege that made her feel safer than Arabs when criticizing Israel.

Some conclusions can be drawn from the above findings. Arab-born and non-Arab professors in this study did not show a clear difference in how they experienced academic freedom when teaching about different issues. Comparing their experiences side by side, it was evident that discussing the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in class could be a tense, difficult topic. More than half of the participants (nine out of 17) discussed the issue in class, but only five were called anti-American or anti-Semitic. However, these five spoke about such issues on social media as well, which might have been a contributing factor. Barger (2010) gave a

relevant suggestion, "Faculty members must be careful when expressing their opinions, since the public associate a professor with his or her institution of employment" (p. 119).

Major Finding Three: Overall Freedom to Write and Publish

The third research question asked Arab-born and non-Arab professors in U.S. universities to describe their experiences with freedom of conducting research related to the Middle East. The majority of the participants had not experienced any restrictions when writing about the Middle East or encountered any problems with publication. However, this could be because their research focused on Islamic traditions, Arabic literature, or Middle East history and did not examine controversial topics. Nevertheless, writing about Islamic laws and traditions can be controversial sometimes if professors are not objective, as one participant noted. This was in line with Mahamane's (2011) suggestion that "academic freedom does not cover poor research that has no scientific basis and manipulated research" (p. 141). Researchers must follow academic standards and stick to science-based opinion to be protected by academic freedom (Mahamane, 2011).

On the other hand, there were instances where five of the participants were intimidated because of certain issues they wrote about. Once again, writing about the Israeli-Palestinian was at the top of the list, as was Islamophobia. Four Arab-born professors and one Israeli-born professor were attacked for defending human rights, especially Palestinian rights, and blaming Israel and the United States for their policies in the conflict. Three of them received death threats and complaints, and the other two had work that was rejected for publication. These participants believed that writing about these issues was what brought attention to them and made them a target for organizations that discourage dissenting ideas. An Arab-born tenured professor said,

"When you say things, when you write things and when you go on the media, you get attacked a lot by the public and that can cause professors to self-censor."

Participants were conflicted about self-censorship. Some perceived it as a violation of academic freedom, while others saw it as part of being professional, believing professors should be fair when discussing issues. However, according to Mahamane (2011), devoting equal time to all views may go against scientific principles and severely limit the exercise of academic freedom and scientific inquiry. Therefore, researchers should be allowed to report their research findings even if these results make some groups uncomfortable, "that is academic integrity, when compromised, academic freedom is lost (Mahamane, 2011, p. 141).

Major Finding Four: Views Influence Participants' Experiences on the Grounds of their Foreignness

The last research question examined how participants' views about U.S. policy in the Middle East influenced their experiences with academic freedom in relation to their origin, ethnicity, and religion. The findings in this study suggested that for most participants, views about U.S. policy in the Middle East did influence their experiences–positively, in most cases. Not only that, but the majority believed that being foreign-born or coming from the Middle East added value and new perspectives to the classroom. They described how many students appreciated them for helping them understand Middle Eastern culture and issues from a native point of view. Several participants used words such as "qualities," "advantage," and "privilege" to describe the positive influence their origin, race/ethnicity, and religion had on these teaching experiences. This finding supported participants' earlier descriptions of positive experiences when teaching about and discussing different Middle East issues.

According to many, discussing U.S. policy in the Middle East in the classroom was never an issue, but could still be risky. Discussing these issues outside the classroom, however, was far more of a risk. In other words, when professors were more outspoken on social media criticizing U.S. and Israeli policies in the Middle East, they put themselves at risk of being attacked for these views. As one Egyptian-born professor said, "I think who speaks in public, he put himself out there and that's it." Similarly, an Iranian professor commented,

> I am a scholar who decided not to be vocal on the media in news although I had many offers from BBC and CNN. I do not want to be associated to any organizations because it might cause problems when I go back and forth to Iran.

Five participants, who were social and human rights activists, reported being blacklisted by some organizations that labeled them as anti-American and anti-Semitic. These participants were vocal on social media. In this sense, one could conclude that participants' freedom of speech might be threatened more than their academic freedom, an issue which I will discuss in the recommendation section.

Considering the analytical framework, it was unsurprising that Arab-born and non-Arab professors would eventually experience nativist sentiments when they opposed U.S. and Israeli policy. These sentiments toward foreign-born participants were consistent with the way other immigrants have been perceived by American nativists. The place of origin, race/ethnicity, and religion of these participants were major factors that limited their freedom to discuss topics from a Middle Eastern point of view. A Palestinian-born participant, for instance, stated, "Professors who teach social science and they could influence students about Israel practices in occupied Palestinian territory become targeted with no exception. Being American from Latino roots, African roots or Arab origin."

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This political ideology was viewed by all of the participants as major threat to their academic freedom, making them constantly cautious about what to say, especially in the classroom. The 17 participants described in different ways how the expansion of this ideology has shaped their perceptions of and experiences with academic freedom in higher education. They identified several major threats to academic freedom, starting with political power and extending to the threat of further restrictions. The threats were consistent with what is in the literature, in which the fear of political power was the most common threat negatively affecting professors' experiences in higher education (Mahamane, 2011; Newman, 2005; Rajagopal, 2003; Salaita, 2008; Terry, 2012).

Implications for Policy and Practices

Nelson (2003) said, "Education does not happen in standardized, restrictive and fearful settings. It also does not happen when the profession does not provide support" (p. 71). The findings of this study have suggested several implications for how foreign-born professors can be better prepared to teach and write about controversial issues of the Middle East without risking their academic freedom. One way for professors to do so is to familiarize themselves with academic freedom policies through their faculty handbook and their contracts. When I asked participants to what extent they thought their academic freedom was protected at their institution, their typical responses included "I think it is protected," "I do not know," or "It has not been tested yet." Barger (2010) found that if professors believed they were protected by their institution, they would be more likely to teach and research more freely. Faculty members, policymakers, and university administrators should, therefore, make every effort to ensure that policies on academic freedom are clearly stated to protect faculty members' right to teach and write in their respective fields. To start with, I found *Handbook for Scholars and Teachers of the*

Middle East, offering college professors the necessary tools to manage their teaching and protect academic freedom (Barnes et al., 2012).

Refraining from discussing certain issues could harm education. Professors should be able to discuss different issues of the Middle East freely and without fear of intimidation; otherwise, only one side of a story is told. At the same time, there is an expectation that professors will discuss topics from the perspective of experts in the field rather than sharing their personal opinions without scientific basis. Although there were no major differences found between Arab-born and non-Arab professors when discussing and writing about controversial issues, still a lot can be learned. First, Arab-born and non-Arab felt free to teach and write about different issues to a certain extent, but criticizing Israel or U.S. policies in the Middle East was seen as a red line, the crossing of which could be a risk to their careers. Second, tenured and non-tenured professors were seen as equally at risk when criticizing Israel. Thus, tenure was not viewed as essential to protecting academic freedom of professors (Mahamane, 2011).

Clarity of policies and responsibilities related to academic freedom are crucial for university professors to ensure that their academic freedom is protected not only inside the classroom, but outside as well, especially with the new challenge that has been posed by the use of different social media platforms. The AAUP urged "each institution to work with its faculty members to develop policies governing the use of the social media" in response to the increasing number of professors whose academic freedom of speech was violated by their institutions for expressing ideas on social media ("Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications," AAUP; 2016). As result, Committee A on academic freedom and tenure published a report titled *Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications*, stating, "Professors should have the

freedom to address the larger community with regard to any matters of social, economic, or other interest without institutional discipline or restraint" (AAUP, 2016).

Recommendations for Future Research

While this study has brought to light numerous insights based on the experiences of foreign-born professors regrading academic freedom, several areas call for further investigation. Since the study only looked at the experiences of two professors from Iran, two from Israel, and one from Turkey, further research could gather more data from these backgrounds to provide insight into how each of them experiences academic freedom when teaching about the Middle East. No major difference was found between Arab-born and non-Arab professors' experiences with academic freedom. Based on this finding, future research could be beneficial to compare and contrast the experiences of native-born U.S. and non-native or immigrant professors who teach and write about the Middle East. The interviews suggested that expressing a controversial opinion outside the classroom on various public and social platforms led to a greater threat of intimidation from private interest groups. A case study could examine the life and work of professors who have been intimidated by such groups.

Arab-born and non-Arab participants struggled to identify their races/ethnicities. Therefore, another study could ask more questions targeting specific ethnicities or groups to better understand this difficulty. Furthermore, some indicators showed that participants seemed confused between freedom of speech and academic freedom. It could thus be helpful to create workshops or seminars to educate newly hired, part-time and full-time professors on these concepts. In addition, participants were unfamiliar with their institutions' policies regarding academic freedom. Further research is needed to outline the responsibilities this freedom entails. Finally, participants described enjoying the academic freedom in U.S. universities, but it would

be helpful to study the importance of academic freedom to student performance. Finally, a call for an annual forum to discuss issues related to Middle East studies is necessarily. This project could offer opportunities to all professors of Middle East studies programs, whether Arab or Jewish, to share experiences when teaching and writing about different issues of the Middle East. Perhaps a combined effort of all the Middle East studies programs in the country, of which there are 17, along with other Middle Eastern associations or other interest groups would be helpful to make improvements and set principles to protect academic freedom of professors working in this field.

Conclusion

The findings of this study shed light on a group of 17 Arab-born and non-Arab professors' experiences with academic freedom in the United States when teaching and writing about Middle East issues. The study also explored how their views on U.S. policy in the Middle East influenced their experiences in higher education in relation to their country of origin, race/ethnicity, and religion. Although previous studies had looked at some experiences of different racial groups with academic freedom through quantitative data, no other study had explored foreign-born, particularly Arab-born professors' experiences with academic freedom. The participants were open to sharing their lived experiences in higher education and telling stories about how fortunate they felt to work in U.S. universities and freely educate students about Middle Eastern culture and issues. They spoke proudly of the positive influence of their ethnic backgrounds on their academic experiences and described how they were appreciated for bringing new perspectives into the classroom.

However, participants gradually realized their ethnic backgrounds made them feel uncomfortable, especially when discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and U.S. policy in the

Middle East. They were aware of how far they could go when expressing critical views about these issues before they got in trouble. Being foreign-born/immigrants was thus challenging for many due to being seen as un-American or anti-American when opposing the U.S.'s Middle East policies. However, there is a hope for the future of foreign-born professors, and Arabs in particular, to be seen as an integral voice in U.S. higher education rather than as an enemy to be silenced.

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Appendix A

Academic Bill of Rights

The Mission of the University.
The central purposes of a University are the pursuit of truth, the discovery of new knowledge through scholarship and research, the study and reasoned criticism of intellectual and cultural traditions, the teaching and general development of students to help them become creative individuals and productive citizens of a pluralistic democracy, and the transmission of knowledge and learning to a society at large. Free inquiry and free speech within the academic community are indispensable to the achievement of these goals. The freedom to teach and to learn depend upon the creation of appropriate conditions and opportunities on the campus as a whole as well as in the classrooms and lecture halls. These purposes reflect the values — pluralism, diversity, opportunity, critical intelligence, openness and fairness — that are the cornerstones of American society.
II. Academic Freedom
1. The Concept. Academic freedom and intellectual diversity are values indispensable to the American university. From its first formulation in the *General Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure* of the American Association of University Professors, the concept of academic freedom has been premised on the idea that human knowledge is a never-ending pursuit of the truth, that there is no humanly accessible truth that is not in principle open to challenge, and that no party or intellectual faction has a monopoly on wisdom. Therefore, academic freedom is most likely to thrive in an environment of intellectual diversity that protects and fosters independence of thought and speech. In the words of the *General Report*, it is vital to protect "as the first condition of progress, [a] complete and unlimited freedom to *pursue* inquiry and publish its results."
Because free inquiry and its fruits are crucial to the democratic enterprise itself, academic freedom is a national value as well. In a historic 1967 decision (*Keyishian v. Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York*) the Supreme Court of the United States overturned a New York State loyalty provision for teachers with these words: "Our Nation is deeply committed to safeguarding academic freedom, [a] transcendent value to all of us and not merely to the teachers concerned." In *Sweezy v. New Hampshire,* (1957) the Court observed that the "essentiality of freedom in the community of American universities [was] almost self-evident."
2. The Practice. Academic freedom consists in protecting the intellectual independence of professors, researchers and students in the pursuit of knowledge and the expression of ideas from interference by legislators or authorities within the institution itself. This means that no political, ideological or religious orthodoxy will be imposed on professors and researchers through the hiring or tenure or termination process, or through any other administrative means by the academic institution. Nor shall legislatures impose any such orthodoxy through their control of the university budget.
This protection includes students. From the first statement on academic freedom, it has been recognized that intellectual independence means the protection of students – as well as faculty – from the imposition of any orthodoxy of a political, religious or ideological nature. The 1915 *General Report* admonished faculty to avoid "taking unfair advantage of the student's immaturity by indoctrinating him with the teacher's own opinions before the student has had an opportunity fairly to examine other opinions upon the matters in question, and before he has

sufficient knowledge and ripeness of judgment to be entitled to form any definitive opinion of his own." In 1967, the AAUP's *Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students* reinforced and amplified this injunction by affirming the inseparability of "the freedom to teach and freedom to learn." In the words of the report, "Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion."

Therefore, to secure the intellectual independence of faculty and students and to protect the principle of intellectual diversity, the following principles and procedures shall be observed. These principles fully apply only to public universities and to private universities that present themselves as bound by the canons of academic freedom. Private institutions choosing to restrict academic freedom on the basis of creed have an obligation to be as explicit as is possible about the scope and nature of these restrictions.

1. All faculty shall be hired, fired, promoted and granted tenure on the basis of their competence and appropriate knowledge in the field of their expertise and, in the humanities, the social sciences, and the arts, with a view toward fostering a plurality of methodologies and perspectives. No faculty shall be hired or fired or denied promotion or tenure on the basis of his or her political or religious beliefs.

2. No faculty member will be excluded from tenure, search and hiring committees on the basis of their political or religious beliefs.

3. Students will be graded solely on the basis of their reasoned answers and appropriate knowledge of the subjects and disciplines they study, not on the basis of their political or religious beliefs.

4. Curricula and reading lists in the humanities and social sciences should reflect the uncertainty and unsettled character of all human knowledge in these areas by providing students with dissenting sources and viewpoints where appropriate. While teachers are and should be free to pursue their own findings and perspectives in presenting their views, they should consider and make their students aware of other viewpoints. Academic disciplines should welcome a diversity of approaches to unsettled questions.

5. Exposing students to the spectrum of significant scholarly viewpoints on the subjects examined in their courses is a major responsibility of faculty. Faculty will not use their courses for the purpose of political, ideological, religious or anti-religious indoctrination.

6. Selection of speakers, allocation of funds for speakers programs and other student activities will observe the principles of academic freedom and promote intellectual pluralism.

7. An environment conducive to the civil exchange of ideas being an essential component of a free university, the obstruction of invited campus speakers, destruction of campus literature or other effort to obstruct this exchange will not be tolerated.

8. Knowledge advances when individual scholars are left free to reach their own conclusions about which methods, facts, and theories have been validated by research. Academic institutions and professional societies formed to advance knowledge within an area of research, maintain the integrity of the research process, and organize the professional lives of related researchers serve as indispensable venues within which scholars circulate research findings and debate their interpretation. To perform these functions adequately, academic institutions and professional societies should maintain a posture of organizational neutrality with respect to the substantive disagreements that divide researchers on questions within, or outside, their fields of inquiry.

(Horowitz, 2010, pp. 231–233)

Appendix B

List of the Middle East Studies Programs in the United States

Retrieved from the National Resource Centers and Foreign Language and Area Studies (2005)

1. Middle East Institute, Columbia University; NY,
2. National Resources Center on the Middle East, Georgetown; Washington, DC
3. Georgia Middle East Studies Consortium, Georgia State University; GA
4. Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University; MA
5. The Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, New York University; NY
6. Middle East Studies Centre, Ohio State University; OH
7. Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University; NJ
8. Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Arizona; AZ
9. Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of California, Berkeley
10. Center of Near Eastern Studies, University of California, Sothern California
11. Center for Middle East Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara
12. Center for Middle Eastern Studies, The University of Chicago, IL
13. Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, The University of Michigan; MI
14. National Resource Center in Middle Eastern Studies, University of Pennsylvania, PA
15. Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Texas at Austin; TX
16. Middle East Center, University of Utah; UT
17. Middle East Center, University of Washington; WA
18. Council in Middle East Studies, Yale University; CT

Solicitation/Recruitment Email

Dear Potential Study Participant,

My name is Khulod Wahboubadr, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education Leadership, Management, and Policy Program affiliated with College of Education and Human Services at Seton Hall University in New Jersey. I am inviting you to participate in my dissertation study titled "Is the Academic Freedom of Foreign-born Professors in U.S. Universities under Attack? A Qualitative Investigation into the Experiences of Arab-born Faculty who teach and conduct research about Middle East Issues."

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions and experiences of Arab-born professors with academic freedom in teaching and conducting research about Middle East issues and to explore to what extent they believe their views about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have shaped their experience in higher education institutions on the ground of their foreignness (race, place of birth, and religion).

I am looking for Arab-born faculty members (immigrant, non-immigrant, green card holder) who currently teach and conduct research related to the Middle East with a title ranging from instructor to full professor. Interested participants will be provided with an informed consent to be signed before I conduct an interview. The interview will take between 60 and 90 minutes at a place and time that are convenient for you between May 1st and October 30, 2019.

I will record your response with a digital voice recorder and take notes during the interview. You will be asked questions about your perception and experience with academic freedom when teaching and conducting research about the Middle East issues and how your views about the U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have shaped your experience in higher education institutions.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. I am not going to explain the study to you, but if you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, I will be happy to address them in detail.

All information you share will remain confidential. Your name and your institution's name will not be used in reports and presentation. Information from this study will be used merely for the purpose of this study only.

All data files: audio tapes, interview scripts, and any other print materials you may provide will be stored and password protected on a flash drive. Only I will have access to data files. Your consent to participate in this study is really important and highly appreciated. If you have any questions or would like to participate, please contact me at
██████████ @ ████████ .edu
I look forward to hearing about your work experience.
Sincerely,
Khulod Wahboubadr

Appendix D

Research Participant Informed Consent

Is the Academic Freedom of Foreign-born Faculty in U.S. Universities under Attack?
A Qualitative Investigation into the Experiences of Arab-Born Faculty who Teach and Conduct
Research about the Middle East Issues

Researcher's Affiliation: Mrs. Khulod Wahboubadr is a doctoral candidate in Higher Education
Leadership, Management, and Policy Program affiliated with College of Education and Human
Services at Seton Hall University, South Orange; New Jersey.

Purpose of the Research: The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions and
experiences of Arab-born professors with freedom of teaching and freedom of conducting
research related to Middle East issues and to what extent politics has shaped their experience in
higher education.

Research Procedures: Participants will be audio recorded for approximately 60 to 90 minutes at
a time and location that are suitable to them. An in-depth, open ended, semi-structured interview
will be conducted by the researcher. Participants are not required to answer all questions and
they may refrain from answering any question they feel uncomfortable to answer. Personal
information of all participants will not be released. The interview questions will focus on the
participants' experiences with academic freedom, especially who teach and write about Middle
East issues and how politics have shaped their experience on the ground of their foreignness
(race, place of origin, religion, and language).

Research Instrument: A sample of interview questions to be asked in the interview:
* Can you explain what does academic freedom of teaching mean?
* What challenges, if any, have you encountered when discussing unfamiliar/unpopular
  views in the classroom with your students?
* Do you share your opinion about any controversial issues with your students in class? If
  not, why? If yes, how do students react?
* Have you been challenged in terms of topics you are writing about or results you have
  published? If yes, can you provide an example?
* How often do political events such as the Arab Spring affect your professional work?

Voluntary Nature: Participation in this study is voluntary. It is participants' choice to either be
part of the study or refuse participation and their decision will not be revealed. If participants
decide to participate and later on decide to discontinue, they will have the right to end
participation at any time without penalty.

Anonymity/ Confidentiality:
Anonymity is not possible because the researcher will know the participants as part of the
interview process. However, confidentiality will be ensured by using a pseudonym for both
participants and their institutions and by not revealing any personal information that would allow
to identify participants. All information participants share with the researcher will be kept

confidential. Participants' name will not be reveled in preliminary and final reports and the researcher. Only the researcher will have the key to indicate which answer belongs to which participant. However, the dissertation mentor and committee members will have access to the coded information through the researcher. If participants' responses are used as illustrative example in the study or in any published materials, no personal or work information about participants will be revealed.

Data Storage: After participants agree to audio record their interviews, the researcher will store all data files on a flash drive USB that is password protected and locked in the researcher's home office. The researcher will transcribe the interview with assigned number and pseudonym. Both the electronic copies and the interview transcripts will be on USB that is also password-protected. Once the study is completed, audio files, transcribed data, and any other print materials will be destroyed.

Access to Records: Only the researcher will have access to records of this study. The dissertation mentor and committee members may have the right to view transcribed data upon their request as well. Participants also may have access to their respective data as well as have a copy of their interview for both audio and transcribed if they are desired. After the research is completed, all audio files, scripts, and any other print materials will be destroyed.

Risk or discomforts: Participation in the study has no foreseen risk, emotional or physical. The researcher will ensure confidentiality of participants withholding any personal and work information unrevealed including their names or any other information that could be used to identify participants.

Benefits: While participation has no direct benefits to participants, it is expected that the results of this research will help participants to better understand the relation between their experience in higher education and politics on the ground of their race, language, religion, and place of origin. This study intends to provide a voice for Arab-born faculty to describe their challenges they may face in discussing and writing about Middle East issues. By bringing these to light, the researcher hopes that administrators and policy makers improve efforts to protect Arab-born faculty's academic freedom. The study also seeks to provide the necessary support to all faculty members regardless of their religions, ethnicities, and country of origins.

Participation Compensation: There is no monetary compensation given to participants in this study. Participants will volunteer their time to participate in the study.

Contact Information: All questions or concerns regarding this research study and participants' rights can be addressed to one of the following contacts:
- Principal Researcher, Khulod Wahboubadr at ██████████@███████edu
- Dissertation Mentor, Joseph Stetar at ████████@██.edu or at (███) ███-████
- Director of the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subject Research, Mary Ruzicka: █@██.edu or at (███) ██-█

Audio Recording Consent: When participants provide consent, the researcher will use a digital recorder to audio tape the interviews. The audio files will be transcribed into word documents by

the researcher and stored on a password protected USB and only the researcher will have direct access to data. However, the dissertation mentor and committee member will have the right to access files upon request. Only pseudonym will be used in the interview transcriptions.

Participant Consent: In order to participate in the study, please sign and date the space provided below. Participants will be given a copy of this informed consent after it is signed.

_____ I have read the above information and my questions and concerns about the purpose of the study, procedures, and voluntary nature have been addressed and I choose to participate

_____ I agree to be audio reordered during the interview.

Name of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Interview Protocol

Study Overview: This qualitative study intends to examine the experience of Arab-born faculty with academic freedom particularly in teaching and conducting research related to the Middle East issues and to explore how politics have shaped their experience in higher education.

Procedures: Study sample will participate in an in-depth, open-end, semi-structured interview that will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. This qualitative study pursues a methodological strategy grounded on thematic analysis method. Thus the interview questions will be used as a guide to generate themes, keywords, and phrases to help to answer the research questions. The sample study will have the opportunity to share their relevant experiences as much as they feel comfortable and all stories will be accepted. In the beginning of each interview, there will be several questions to obtain background information about the subjects.
Participants will be contacted via the researcher's Seton Hall University email as soon as they are identified. They will be asked to read the recruitment letter and once a subject agrees to participate in the research, I will ask them to read and sign two copies of the informed consent form. They will retain one copy for their records and send back the other copy to me.

Interview Protocol: Before I start the interview, I will do the following:

1. I will thank participants for their time and contributions in regards to the research study.
2. This will be followed by "ice-breaker" questions to create connection and make participants feel comfortable. For instance, "How is your day?" or "Is this your first time taking part of a research study, etc.?"
3. Then I will introduce myself and the study,

> My name is Khulod Wahboubadr, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education Leadership, Management, and Policy Program at Seton Hall University in New Jersey.
>
> You were invited to participate in my research because you are an Arab-born faculty member who currently teaches and writes about the Middle East, and you agreed to be part of the study voluntarily and share your professional experience.
> The research study title "Is the Academic Freedom of Foreign-Born Professors in U.S. Universities under Attack? A Qualitative Investigation into the Experiences of Arab-born Faculty who teach and conduct research about the Middle East Issues."
>
> The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions and experiences of Arab-born professors with academic freedom in teaching and conducting research about Middle East issues and to explore to what extent politics has shaped their experiences in higher education institutions." In the interview, you will be asked

questions about your background, work experience, and its relation to politics in regard to your race, religion, and place of origin.

As stated in the informed consent that you signed, the interview will be audio recorded and I will take notes as well. All information from this study will be used merely for the purpose of this research and any publications that may result from this study. Your name, your institution's name and any other identifying information will remain confidential and will not appear in the final report.

4. Then after the interview is finished, I will thank participants again and acknowledge their interests to be part of the study.

Interview Questions:

Participant number/pseudonym: _____

Location: _____

Date of interview: _____ Start time: _____

Gender: Female_____ Male_____

Research Question Addressed	Interview Questions
Section (1): **Background information** Establishing backgrounds will help to ensure eligibility of participants to participate and to make a sense of their work life experiences as well.	1. What is your country of origin? 2. Do you hold a citizenship from your birth country? 3. What is you legal status in the U.S.: Immigrant___ nonimmigrants_____, green card holder_____, or other_____? 4. How long have you been in the U.S. and when did you come? 5. What is your social status: married_____ single_____ 6. If married, does your family live with you in the U.S.? 7. How would you identify your race/ethnicity: White_____ Asian-American_____ African-American_____ Multiracial_____ Other, please identify_____ 8. What is the highest degree you have earned and from where? 9. What is your academic status: tenured professor, on tenure-track, annual contract (part-time, full-time)

	10. What is your rank: Full professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, or other?
	11. How long have you been teaching at your current institution?
	12. What is your current institution type: private____ public_____ religious_____ research_____ two years_____ four years_____ ?
	13. What courses do you teach this semester?
	14. What is your current department/division?
	15. Are you affiliated to any political party?
Section (2): **RQ 1. How do Arab-professors in the U.S. perceive academic freedom regarding Middle East issues?** Overall perception	16. How would you define academic freedom?
	17. What has changed about academic freedom since 9/11?
	18. Did your department explain academic freedom policies to you? If yes, how it was explained?
	19. Does the department you work in meet to discuss policies/issues regarding academic freedom? If yes, how often?
	20. To what extent do you believe your academic freedom is protected at your current institution?
RQ 2. (a)How do Arab-born faculty in the U.S. describe their experience with academic freedom of teaching in discussing issues related to Middle East issues?	21. How would you describe your classroom experience regarding your freedom in discussing controversial issues related to the Middle East?
	22. To what extent are you able to choose courses you are interested in to teach, select course materials, choose the methods to present them, and grade students?
	23. How do you prepare for the course/subject you teach particularly if you are introducing materials regarded as controversial?
	24. What does "controversial" mean to you?
	25. In the beginning of each semester, do you draw up certain guidelines for classroom discussion, or in other words, do you remind your students about what constitutes proper and productive classroom participation?
	26. Do you share your political view about issues in the Middle East with your students in class? If not, why? If yes, can you provide an example?
	27. What do you enjoy about academic freedom when you teach your subject?
	28. How would you describe your relationship with your students?
	29. Can you tell me about your students' demographics inside your classroom in terms of race/ religion/ gender, etc.?
	30. What challenges, if any, have you encountered when discussing unfamiliar/unpopular views? If there is, can you provide an example?

RQ.2 (b) How do Arab-born faculty describe their experience with academic freedom of conducting research related to Middle East issues?	31. How would you describe your experience with freedom to conduct research related to Middle East issues? 32. Have you shared/ discussed any of your publications with your students? If yes, can you provide an example? If no, can you explain why? 33. Have you been challenged (by student, colleagues, or other groups) in terms of topics you are writing about or results you have published? If yes, can you provide an example?
RQ. 3 To what extent do Arab-born professors believe their views about the U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East may have shaped their experience in higher education?	34. In what ways do you believe your views about U.S. policy in the Middle East have shaped your experience with academic freedom in teaching and research? 35. In what ways do you think your race/ethnicity (Arab) has shaped your experience with academic freedom of teaching and research? 36. What do you think about some campaigns that have been attacking a number of Arab professors for their political views, especially regarding Palestine and Israel conflict? 37. What do you think about non-Arab professors, do they experience similar attacks, especially when they discus or write about Palestine and Israel conflict? Why or why not? 38. In case of attacks for your views, what procedures, if any, you follow to protect your academic freedom? 39. What do you think would be the biggest threats to your academic freedom? 40. What do you think should be done to protect the academic freedom of professors? 41. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix F

Institutional Review Board Approval

SETON HALL ⛪ UNIVERSITY.
1 8 5 6

April 29, 2019

Khulod S. Wahboubadr

Dear Ms. Wahboubadr,

The Research Ethics Committee of the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board office has reviewed and approved as revised under expedited review your research proposal entitled "Is the Academic Freedom of Foreign-Born Faculty in U.S. Universities under Attack? A Qualitative Investigation into the Experiences of Arab-Born Professors Who Teach and Conduct Research about Middle East Issues."

Enclosed for your records is the signed Request for Approval form.

Reflecting the process for federally funded research, there will be no longer be a continuing review. Informed Consent documents and recruitment flyers will no longer be stamped.

Thank you for you cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Ruzicka, Ph.D

Mary F. Ruzicka, Ph.D.
Professor
Director, Institutional Review Board

cc: Dr. Joseph Stetar

Please review Seton Hall University IRB's Policies and Procedures on website (http://www.provost.shu.edu/IRB) for more information. Please note the following requirements:
Adverse Reactions: If any untoward incidents or adverse reactions should develop as a result of this study, you are required to immediately notify in writing the Seton Hall University IRB Director, your sponsor and any federal regulatory institutions which may oversee this research, such as the OHRP or the FDA. If the problem is serious, approval may be withdrawn pending further review by the IRB.
Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, please communicate your request in writing (with revised copies of the protocol and/or informed consent where applicable and the Amendment Form) to the IRB Director. The new procedures cannot be initiated until you receive IRB approval.

Office of Institutional Review Board
Presidents Hall • 400 South Orange Avenue • South Orange, NJ 07079 • Tel: 973 313 6314 • Fax: 973 275 2361 • www.shu.edu

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