

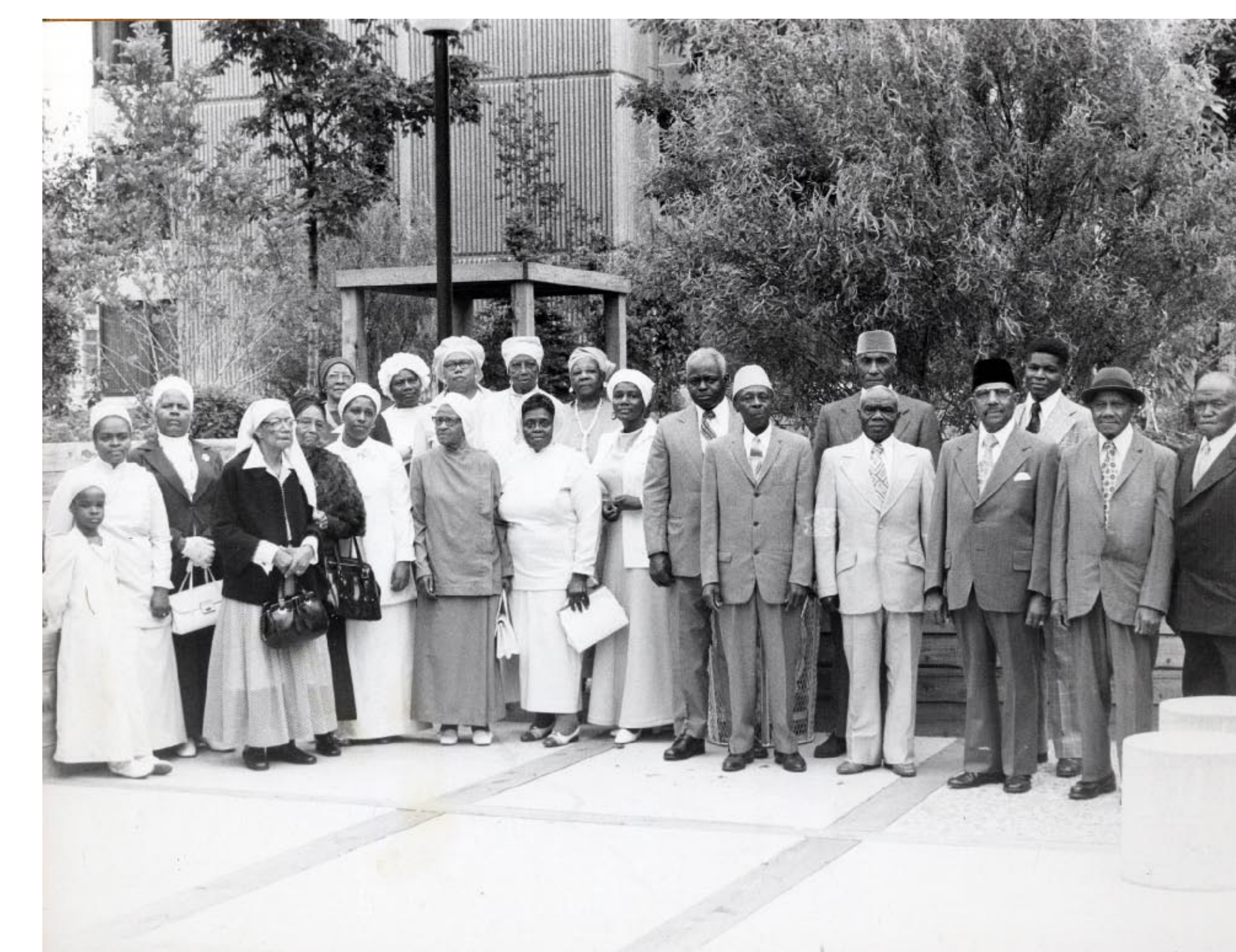
FOUNDATIONS

Detroit's early Muslims belonged to two groups: (1) immigrants from parts of Europe (Bosnia and Albania) and the Middle East (Turkey and Greater Syria) controlled by the Ottoman Empire; and (2) African Americans, most of them immigrants from the Deep South. The Europeans and Middle Easterners were either Sunni or Shi'a, traditions that can be traced back to the origins of Islam. African Americans, by contrast, embraced new, alternative versions of Islam framed in response to anti-Black racism in the US. These movements included the Nation of Islam (founded in Detroit in 1930 by W.D. Fard); the Moorish Science Temple (founded by Noble Drew Ali in 1913); and the Ahmadiyya movement (a group that originated in India in the 1880s and was led in the US by Mufii Muhammad Sadiq, who made great efforts to convert African Americans).

Detroit's early Muslims were drawn to the city by its booming industrial economy, and the first mosques were built near automobile manufacturing plants. In 1971, fifty years after the establishment of Detroit's first mosque, most area Muslims worshipped in only four congregations, each with a decidedly working class membership: the American Moslem Society (in Dearborn), Masjid Wali Muhammad (known, until 1976, as Muhammad's Temple No. 1, in Detroit), the Albanian Islamic Center (in Harper Woods), and the Islamic Center of America (in Detroit). Many of Detroit's newer mosques are linked, directly or indirectly, to these four institutions, all of which still function as houses of prayer.



W.D. Fard (in framed portrait) established his version of Islam in Detroit in 1930. One of his early converts, Elijah Poole, took the name Elijah Muhammad and led the movement after W.D. Fard's disappearance in 1934. The teachings of the Nation of Islam spoke powerfully to the experiences of Black Americans living in Northern cities, but many of its central doctrines were at odds with Sunni and Shi'i Islam. Elijah Muhammad's son, Warith Deen Muhammad (standing), leads the movement today and has transformed it into a dominant trend in American Sunni Islam (photo courtesy of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture)



The Pioneers. Original members of the Nation of Islam, 1975 (photo by Shedrick El-Amin).



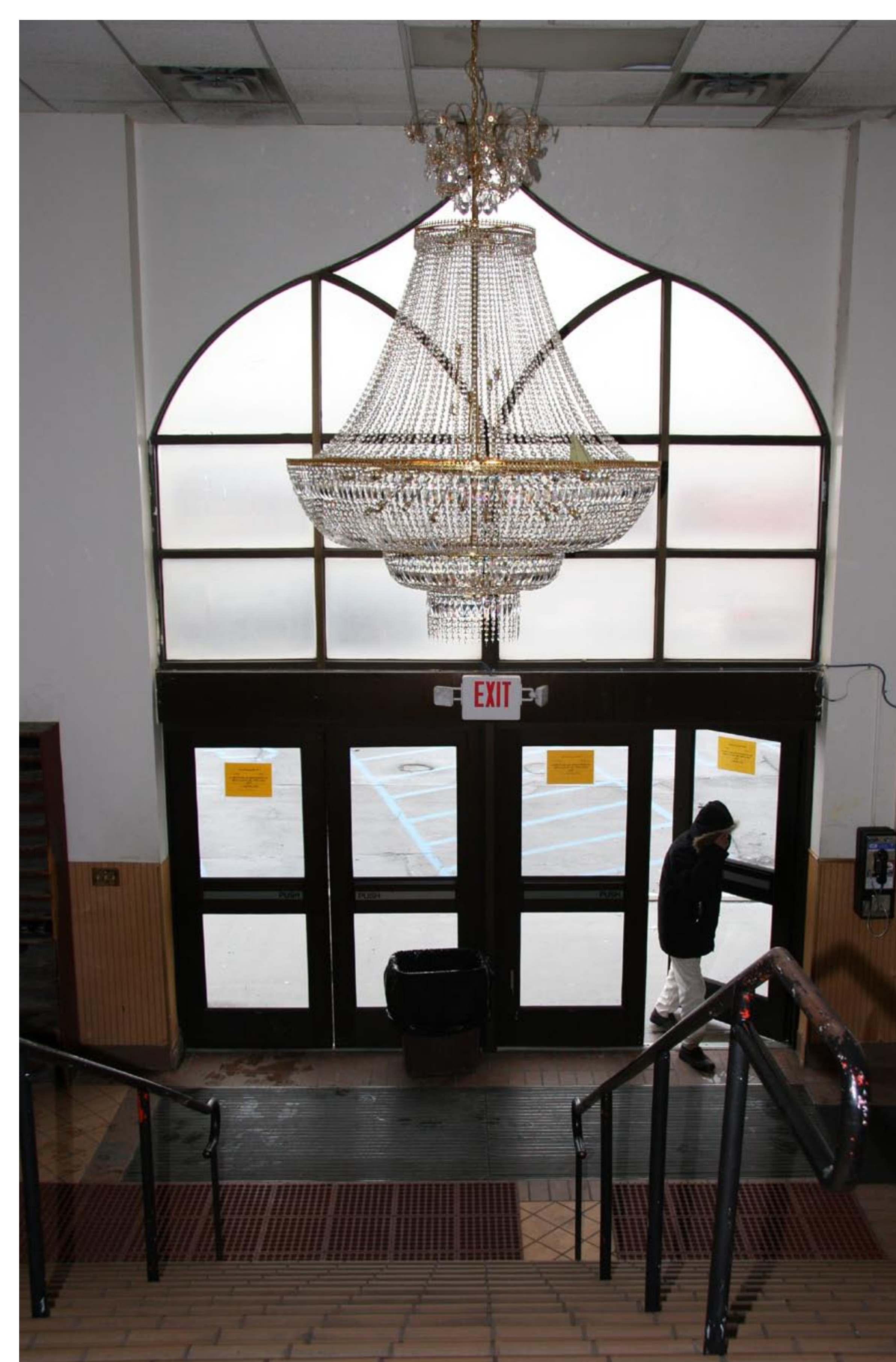
A gathering of the Fruit of Islam, a NOI men's group, 1976 (photo by Shedrick El-Amin).



Imam Hussien Karoub in front of the American Moslem Society (the "Dix Mosque"), circa 1957.



The American Moslem Society. The current facility has been expanded twice, each time doubling its size.



Muhammad's Temple No. 1, 1960, now called Masjid Wali Muhammad (from Salaam Magazine).



Masjid Wali Muhammad today.

