

“EID IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH”

FOR LESSON

*Eid and Ramadan
in Brooklyn*

NARRATOR **Faiza Ocasio**

RUN TIME **2:17**



ALI What were some of the kinds of ways that Alianza represented Islam as something that was familiar to Puerto Rican culture? How did — how did the celebration or — or, you know, demonstration of Islam in — in Alianza reflect the —

OCASIO Okay.

ALI — that culture?

OCASIO We — we would invite people, of course, to Alianza. We would give the **khutbah** in Spanish and in English, okay, which was not done anywhere. We had bilingual publications, which my husband was the head of. We had — we had dinners in front of the place, or give away food, or we would give away baked goods or sell some baked goods in front. And the **Eid** celebrations were very much reflecting our culture. And, you know, culture is a multifaceted thing, because you — the — culture’s not just music and the food you eat. Culture’s music, the food you eat, the manner in which you speak, how you treat people, how they treat you. So the — the celebrations, when you went to the Islamic Eid celebrations, they — we would have those things we were familiar with: food and everything. We had the congas, which are the, like, drums, but they’re tall. And we — we had **congueros**, who played the dru— the drums for us.

And we had — we even played some of the music. We didn’t try — we didn’t overdo it, but a little of the Puerto Rican music. We had people actually recite poetry. The — I’m trying to think of the — **Nuyorican** poets. We had some — some stuff from that. And we had the play — we had a play they put together, which made us laugh. And so they really made us feel happy in this time of Eid because we were imbibed with what was familiar to us.

KHUTBAH

a sermon or religious talk delivered by a Muslim leader.

EID

a Muslim holiday. There are two Eids in the Muslim calendar. Eid al-Fitr marks the end of the month of fasting in Ramadan. Eid al-Adha commemorates the sacrifice of Abraham.

CONGUEROS

a musician who plays the conga drum.

NUYORICAN

a person of Puerto Rican birth or descent who is a current or former resident of New York City.

BIO Faiza Ocasio was born in 1953 in New York City. She was raised in a Catholic Puerto Rican family in Manhattan’s Lower East Side. She married and reverted to Islam while studying at Fordham University in the Bronx. After Ocasio and her husband received their degrees, they moved to Washington, D.C., to work with the Islamic Party of North America. They returned to New York two years later and settled in Cypress Hills. Ocasio became active in several Islam-centered organizations, including Alianza Islámica, a Latinx activist organization co-founded by her husband; Islamic Family Services in Bedford-Stuyvesant, which provides support services for Muslim children in foster care in Brooklyn; and the Al-Madrassa Al-Islamiya school. She retired in 2015 and moved to Westminster, Maryland, in 2016 to live on the family farm.

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