

Belief systems; islam in afghanistan



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Islam traditionally is said to have begun when the prophet Mohammed received a visit in Mount Nur during the Ramadan, from the angel Gabriel who recited the in Qur'an. The message given to Muhammad slowly spread among the people of Mecca. Years after, Mohammed was told by Allah to spread his message and condemn paganism and idolatry which was prominent in Mecca. However Mohammed was rejected and forced to leave the city. The Islamic conquest of Afghanistan occurred later in the 7th century when Muslim Arabs took control of Persian territories and headed to the East Afghan region. This area was rich in different cultures and religions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism ect. After this area was conquered by the Muslim Arabs they spread the faith of Islam to the area. Mohammed later established himself as religious, political, and military leader and with his guidance the community became more prominent. Many tribes and areas were " converted" under duress with threats of war and conquest. When Muhammad returned to Mecca, where he was previously extradited, he had gained such support over the years that no resistance was offered. Muhammad's forces destroyed the idols of Mecca, declaring the Kabah to be a place of worship for Allah. When Muhammad's died, Islam continued to expand under the leadership of Muhammad's successors such as his father in law Abu Bakr. In his two years of leadership, Abu Bakr was able to spread the Muslim faith throughout the entire Arabian Peninsula. Islam now is prevalent in North Africa and the Middle East, however due to the growth in technology and travel people who follow the Islamic faith can be found in most communities around the world. Power within Islamic Afghanistan appears to be consolidated to the government and the religion itself as it has an incredibly dramatic effect on the behaviour and ideals of

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the Afghanistan people seeing as the nation is almost entirely comprised of people who follow the Muslim Faith. Although it is common for government to hold a great amount of power in most countries, religion (Islam) plays a major role in within government and power. It seems that due to conflicts such those with Soviet Russia and the West more recently Afghanistan is attempting to rebuild its state and legal system. Within this process Islamists are attempting to influence this reconstruction and thus gain greater power and authority within this particular society. Islam essentially provides Afghan life with its belief system, a system of norms and cultures, dictating behaviour, ethics, and morals and values expressing the power that the belief system emanates. However the physical, not spiritual, power which exists in Afghanistan appears to be dictated entirely by politic, influenced by Islam, as confrontations with particularly the West intensified, people were concerned and challenged by Western ideals and globalization. Muslim people became increasingly aware of this religious and political threat this proposed and the solution was a modern political Islamist government which wished to create a larger influence of power in social relations. Islamists pushed for a role which allowed a consolidation of power throughout the entire society in aspects such as religion, politics, law, and culture. As the Islamic role in power had never occurred to such an extent it became a political movement driven by religious texts and tradition entirely. Islam has such a powerful role in Afghanistan due to these political ambitions. Thus this role in power greatly influenced culture and Islamised Afghanistan society and politics. Proof of this influence in politics and government is the rule of the Taliban, although it was viewed negatively by society it had immense amounts of power and authority of the Afghan people and their

daily lives, showing the extent of the power of within government and this belief system. This Islamic role in power is supported by the experience of Fareed Tokhi who states that under the rule and oppression of the extremist Islamic government “ The majority of Afghanistan, including its major cities (Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Herat) was under Taliban” oppression.