

# The religion of islam through the ages assignment

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## The Religion of Islam Through the Ages 11/21/07 The Religion of Islam

Through the Ages The Islamic religion is by far one of the most misinterpreted today within the United States. Beginning as a branch off from Judaism, Islam preaches the same beginnings as that of Christianity. The religion itself respects other prophets as Jesus and Moses are considered within the Quran. The Quran differs in that its teachings followers believe to have been written by 'Allah', the one God, however, some argue it was by Mohammad the prophet.

The following will give a brief overview of the origins, the increase in America today, statistics of the growth, and the Architecture of the Islamic movement. Origins Islam originated in the Middle East. While Islam did not originate in the United States, Muslims have been present in the United States of America since the time of Columbus. Muslims immigrated into the United States from Spain and Africa. " In addition, between 14 and 20 percent of the African slaves brought to America from the 16th to the 19th century were Muslims, although they were forced to convert to Christianity.

Other Muslims, particularly Indians and Arabs, also immigrated as free persons during this period and were able to maintain their spiritual, cultural and social identity" (Esposito, 2007, p. 1) Most often Islam is attributed to Mohammed, as he is a holy figure in the world of Islam. Many believe prior to Mohammad's birth in c. 570, the writings of the Quran existed in some context, however, the written explanations are attributed to Mohammad revealing the sacred word of Allah during his lifetime as it was shown to him as a prophet of 'Allah'.

The Quran has the first five books of Moses and than similar stories of the Christian bible. However, 'Allah' and Mohammad put the Quran together during various stages of Mohammad's life. "The text is divided into chapters known as suras, and verses known as ayat, which means signs" (Bowker, 2002). In a short 100 years Islam spread around the Mediterranean. (Fischer, 2003, p. 125) Islam has had massive growth into the United States and remains one of the largest religions in the United States today. Islam in America Islam is one of the fastest growing religions within the world and is rapidly increasing within the United States.

About sixty percent of America's Muslims brought their faith with them upon migrating to the United States during the 1960's, while thirty percent of them have converted from other religions. African American's make up the majority of this scenario. Many slaves shipped through the Transatlantic Slave route were taken from the Eastern and Western coasts of Africa. Islam was introduced to the regions of Ghana, Mali and Songhai through multiple trade routes and trade centers. Trade and commerce also paved the way for new elements of material and religious culture through literacy, architecture.

America also gave birth to the movement of "Black Muslims" converted under a movement lead by the Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X and Warith Deen Muhammad. Malcolm X announced himself as a messenger of Allah. Many African American's converted from Christianity due to the belief that the religion was introduced as a way to impose oppression. A number proof movements developed to bring the former slaves back to here suppressed ancestral faith. In 1913 Noble Drew Ali began a movement called the Moorish

Science Temple of America, which gave African Americans a strong sense of their own identity.

The immigration of Muslims to the United States began in the late nineteenth century. Most came from Lebanon and Syria and some of these immigrants, both Christian and Muslim, settled in Boston area. Seven Muslim families who settled in Quincy Point worked to maintain their Islamic faith and practice in Quincy. In 1934, these seven families joined with other Arabic-speaking Muslims in the area to form a cultural, social, and charitable organization called “ The Arab American Banner Society. ” From 1937 to 1952, they met in an old house at 470 South Street in Quincy.

**Islamic Statistics** Statistics Approximately 1.5 billion people practice Islam in the world today. This makes Islam the second most populous religion practiced. After 33 percent of the world, which practices Christianity, Islam’s followers represent 22 percent of the world’s population. In the United States, however, Islam is the fifth most practiced religion. Less than 2 percent of the United States’ population considers themselves as followers of Islam. This translates to approximately 5 million Muslims in the United States.

**Ethnicity** The ethnicity represented by the Muslim community within the United States is fairly diverse. Among the top ethnic groups making up the majority of Muslims in the United States are African-Americans (2.1 million), South Asians (1.2 million), and Arabs (620,000). Iranians, Turks, and South East Asians together make up approximately 400 million Muslim followers in the United States. American Whites and Eastern Europeans account for the

less than three percent of the American Muslim population. Geographic Location

Similar to many other socioeconomic trends, the geographic location of Muslim followers in the United States can generally be found in culturally diverse urban areas. Utilizing the H1B visa many city centers, which require math and science expertise in the corporate sector, have created large Muslim communities in the surrounding areas. The greatest examples of the economy encouraging the growth of Islam in the United States can be seen in the states of California, New York, and Illinois which have close to half of the United States Muslim population.

Large urban populations of Islamic followers also can be found in the states of New Jersey, Michigan, Indiana, Virginia, Texas, and Ohio, which make up have another million of the Muslims in the United States. Architecture Islamic architecture has a long and complex history beginning in the 7th century CE and continuing today. Examples of Islamic architecture can be found throughout the countries that are, or were, Islamic, from Morocco and Spain to Indonesia. Even more examples can be found in areas where Muslims are a minority.

There can be no Islamic architecture without Islam (Hillenbrand, 1994). Arabs had little architectural tradition of their own. Instead, they absorbed and transformed the architectural styles of the two older empires they conquered, Byzantine and Sasanid. The relatively simple rituals of Islam gave rise to a unique religious architecture in the forms of the mosque (masjid) and the madressah (religious school). The mausoleum served a dual

purpose – as a tomb for a ruler or a holy man and as a symbol of political power.

In the realm of secular architecture come the palaces, caravansaries and cities. The most recognizable Islamic building is the mosque. Some form of mosque has been present since the time of the Prophet. Given this long history, it is not surprising that different styles have developed in different parts of the Islamic world. A prominent feature of the mosque is the dome. Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem is considered a great religious structure of the world. The Mimbar (pulpit) the first use of which was in the mosque of Medina (Dattoo, 1998).

In spite of the Islamic restrictions on the construction of elaborate mausoleums, tombs, erected as symbols of the power of departed leaders, became important structures of Islamic architecture. The most outstanding example of this form is the Taj Mahal at Agra in India, an everlasting reminder of the grandest alliance between man and nature (Dattoo, 1998).

Conclusion The Holy Wars today began almost as soon as a new branch broke off and took teachings to a different format from Judaism. Today we see the affects of those that are zealots of three religions interpreting their bibles literally instead of figuratively.

Those that take the beauty of the original messages left from the Quran could gain so much more knowledge in spirituality and acceptance. The above mentions the beginnings of the Islamic faith and the increase of followers from the Middle East to the United States with words and numbers. The Islamic faith is similar to Christianity in the rampage of wars destroying

those who do not agree. Both religions have impacted the world and still left the beautiful architecture to follow the origins of the religions and to leave a mark on the imagination. References: (2007, November 15).

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