Muslim-Americans
Identity, Prejudice & Assimilation

Once in the United States...

Although subordinate since arriving in the United States, Muslim-Americans still possessed a grip on their ideals and epistemology. Their ideology was exhibited through the establishment of the first mosque in the United States, built in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1914. It remains in place to this day.

Ideals Adopted by Americans – Nation of Islam

Nation of Islam was perhaps the greatest exhibition of supposed Islamic ‘ideals’ adopted by Americans - more specifically African-Americans. Nation of Islam was an organization first established in Michigan in 1930 by Wallace F. Muhammad. His purpose was to adopt the epistemology of Muslim and use it to teach African-Americans how to stand up against the prejudice they faced within the United States.

Assimilation

1924 Immigration Act

The passing of the 1924 Immigration Act and its quotas would eventually affect the immigration and distributive justice experienced by Muslims wishing to immigrate to the United States. By blocking the amount of immigrants from the Middle East and Asia, this would effect the lives of many Muslims throughout the world until the 1965 Immigration Act. This Act would effect the lives of many Muslims throughout the world until the 1965 Immigration & Nationality Act.

1924 Immigration Act

Assimilation

Even through constant positive contributions to society, Muslim-Americans continue to belong to a subordinate group within America. This effects their assimilation process in many ways. However, Muslim-Americans are no different than other ordinary Americans. President Obama has publicly tried to help ease the tension and also portray the normality of Muslim-Americans in American society. Even huge networking channels on television, such as TLC, have created shows to portray Muslim-Americans' lives and struggles, through the new hit show 'All American Muslim.'

Invitation of Prejudice

The Nation of Islam stirred up class and disobedience towards the general dominant group within the United States (Caucasians). Nation of Islam never actually utilized Islamic ideals, although they claimed to. As a result, other groups, both dominant and subordinate, began to discriminate against all Muslim-Americans, fearing that their ideals were those exhibited through the members of Nation of Islam.

Further discrimination of and prejudice towards Muslim-Americans continued post establishment of Nation of Islam, and worsened post 9/11 terrorist attacks. The attacks created a false perception of Muslims and Muslim-Americans in the minds and eyes of other Americans. This prejudice effected the lives of many Muslim-Americans and their access to ethical distributive justice.

Islamic Religion

The Islamic religion is a monolithic religion revolved around the holy book, Qur’an. The Qur’an is said to be to the verbal messages and followings of Allah. Muslims believe that one’s existence is to worship Allah. They believe Abraham, Jesus and Moses to be prophets, as well. The Islamic Religion further branches out, mainly to two main groups considered to be ‘Sunni’ (majority) and ‘Shia’ (minority).

Islamic Ideas – Western Civilization

Assimilation does not come easily for Muslim-Americans. Their general epistemology seems to contrast that of which is possessed by ‘Americans.’ Muslim-Americans’ ideology is perceived as strict in comparison to the ideology possessed by many living in America during modern times and therefore is misunderstood by many.

Invitation of Prejudice

Migration

Muslims have migrated to the United States since before the founding of the Republic. Original Muslim Settlers came either as slaves, or in search of work as farmers or peddlers. The vast majority of these Muslim immigrants came from the Ottoman Empire and smaller regions throughout Asia. The slaves were able to offer knowledge, labor and military service. However, they would always belong to a subordinate group in the United States.

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